



# STF WEEK AT A GLANCE

Week of September 4 - 8, 2023

**No School**  
**Monday, September 4, 2023**

**LABOUR**  
**- DAY -**



We are so excited to present  
Disney's Frozen Jr. as our production this year.  
There will be an important information meeting  
on Tuesday, September 5 @ lunch time in Mr.  
Demuynck's classroom #1162 for those  
interested in participating



## September - Welcome - Newsletter

### Important Dates - September 2023

#### Important Dates

- August 31 - First Student Day
- Sept. 4 - Labour Day (No School)
- Sept 5 - Regular Schedules Commence - including Options
- Sept 6 - Meet the Staff Evening (6:30 - 8:00pm)
- Sept. 13 -Valery Brosseau Presentation ( 6 & 7 then 8 & 9 )
- Sept. 18 - School Council AGM @ 7:00 PM
- Sept. 19 - Dawe/ St. Patrick Run
- Sept 21 - Opening Mass in the gym - 10:30 - 11:30 AM
- Sept. 22 - Professional Development Day (No School)
- Sept. 25 - Rainout day for St. Patrick's/ Dawe Run
- Sept 28 - Legacy 1 Presentations
- Sept. 29 - Orange Shirt Day/Indigenous Appreciation Activities
- Sept 30 - National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Day



### Senior Volleyball Tryouts

September 5 - Sr. Girls Volleyball @ 7:15 a.m.

Sr. Boys Volleyball @ 3:45 p.m.

September 6 - Sr. Boys Volleyball @ 7:15 a.m.

Sr. Girls Volleyball @ 3:45 p.m.

September 7 - Sr. Girls Volleyball @ 7:15 a.m.  
Sr. Boys Volleyball @ 3:45 p.m.



## Meet the Staff Evening

Please join us on Wednesday, September 6th anytime from 6:30 to 8:00 pm for our annual Meet the Staff Open House. This is a great opportunity for students to tour their parents/guardians and introduce them to their teachers. This event is on a drop-in basis only. We will not be gathering as a group in the gym this evening. We look forward to seeing you there!



## Cell Phone Policy

At St. Francis of Assisi Middle School, we recognize that cell phones have become an important part of people's lives and they make student / parent communication easier. Over the past several years, we have noticed that these devices have become a huge distraction in class and in the school. A continued focus for us is to ensure the very best climate for student learning for all students in a safe and caring environment. To support this goal, we have made the decision to institute school wide cell phone/smart technology use expectations regarding the use of mobile devices during class time because of the ongoing negative effect on student learning.

This decision was not made lightly and is based on research to help understand the issues being presented in classrooms. (Please see the links at the end of this letter for research regarding cell phone use in schools). Our experience at St. Francis of Assisi Middle School is that these mobile devices are highly distracting, are being used inappropriately, and also create confrontation between students and staff. The situation is further complicated by a number of students and parents seeing it as their "right" to have constant use of a device. Please note that in the case of any special needs or family emergencies, we have a landline (403-314-1449) that is answered from 8:00 am - 4:00 pm.

Despite our efforts to help students facilitate appropriate mobile device use, including digital citizenship lessons and working through various solutions, these devices continue to cause significant distraction to the point where their presence has an addictive quality.

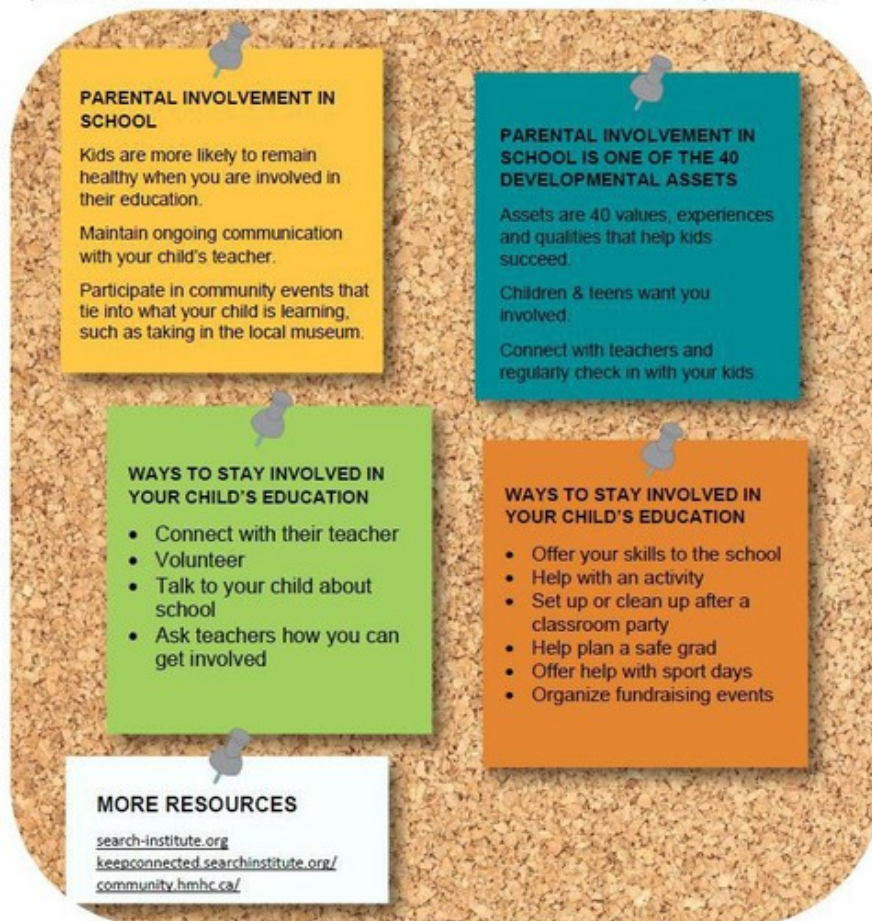
Students will be informed at the beginning of the school year of expectations by their classroom teacher and administration. The expectations are listed below, and our school website reflects these practices.

1. Mobile devices should be 'off and away' during all class times in learning communities. In school, this means that the cell phone should be turned off and placed in a student's locked locker. For academic purposes, the teacher may require the students to use their mobile devices. This use of a mobile device and the time frame will be clearly communicated by the teacher and time will be given to return the device to their lockers before the next class.
2. If any mobile device/earbuds/phones are seen or heard in class, in the hallways or during lunch eating time during non-designated times, the student will be asked to take their mobile device to the office.
3. Devices delivered to the office will be returned at the end of the students' school day in the first and second instances. Should there be a third occurrence, a call will be made home requiring a parent/guardian to collect the child's device.
4. Students are still able to use their devices prior to school, during lunch recess, and after school
5. Any students who require an exception to these expectations, based on previously implemented strategies at the school level will require permission from the principal.

Ultimately, school is a microcosm of wider society. Just as most workplaces have mobile phone policies in place to ensure minimal distractions during work hours, so it is in the classroom. Knowing that certain behavior is acceptable in some places, but not in others is at the crux of how young people can better use mobile devices' and develop socially responsible behaviors. Practicing moderation is a good discipline. In fact, self-control is one of the qualities that the Holy Spirit produces in the life of a believer (Galatians 5:22-23). When we are not living in moderation-when we lack self-control in a certain area of our lives-it can indicate that we're not allowing God fully into that area. Let's work together to help the children find that all things should be practiced in moderation and that includes the use of mobile devices.

Thank you for your support as we continue to work towards providing a safe learning environment where quality instruction and learning occurs.





Information on mental health, community supports, programs and services in your area:



Addiction Services Help Line  
1-866-332-2322  
Mental Health Help Line  
1-877-303-2642



Health Link  
Health Advice 24/7



Alberta Health  
Services

Here are 5 questions to ask yourself:



- 1. Are your fears and concerns about school rubbing off on your children?** Anxiety is the most contagious emotion. If we as parents have concerns about the upcoming school year, it's easy for our children to pick up on it. We need to find healthy ways to manage our thoughts and feelings about the upcoming school year without involving our kids.
- 2. Have you talked to your children?** With curiosity, ask them how they're doing, how they're feeling, and if there's anything they're worried about at this time of year. Not knowing who will be in their class and not knowing who their teacher will be or what their new school will be like are common sources of stress. I teach some specific problem-solving skills that can help.
- 3. What's your intention for your family this school year?** How do you want your family to feel at the end of the semester? I'd like my family to feel calm and in control, and I'd also love for them to have fun and grow. It's important to think about what conditions need to happen for us to feel this way.
- 4. Do you have too much on your plate?** When our families are overscheduled, we don't sleep enough, we don't eat properly, and we don't get enough time to connect with each other and have downtime. This is when it's important to make hard decisions about what we put on our calendars and to-do lists.

5. **What's your biggest stress as a family?** It's helpful to use planful problem-solving to help mitigate that stress. If weekday mornings are stressful, how can you think ahead to creating new routines, let's say at night, to make the mornings easier?

A new school year brings up lots of emotions. Think about when you're busy or what the stressful times of the day are, and plan ahead to an experiment to see if there are ways that you can help those times of the day become less stressful as a family.

If you (or your kids) feel uneasy about heading back to school, you'll want to listen in to the newest episode on the **Therapy Explained Podcast – Episode 16, [Managing Back to School Anxiety: Strategies for a Smooth Transition](#)**.

## FREE PARENT WORKSHOP



**There are 40...how many does  
your child have?  
Learn about the 40  
Developmental Assets!**  
**When your child has more assets,  
it can help them grow up caring,  
healthy and responsible.**



**DATE:** Sept 21

**TIME:** Noon to 12:45pm

**LOCATION:** Virtual Zoom Session

**REGISTER by Sept 20th**  
**[www.sparcreddeer.ca](http://www.sparcreddeer.ca)**



**St. Francis of Assisi Middle School**  
is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters