



Portland St. Patrick Catholic School

Open House News

Catholic Education Provides Lifelong Benefits

Millennials who attend Catholic School are 7x-8x more likely to attend Sunday Mass

Catholic school alumni, on average earn 13.6% more than their public school counterparts

Of those who believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior, more than 85% made that choice while in K-12

National Assessment of Educational Progress data shows Catholic School students across the country outperform their peers in core subjects like math, science, reading, technology, and engineering literacy.

All are invited!

We are proud of our school! We know good things are happening at St. Patrick and we want to show you.

On March 1, 2020, following the 11:30 Mass (12:30-2:00 p.m.) all are invited to attend the Annual All-School Open House. Teachers and principals will be available, and the school will be open for tours.

Families with preschool and/or kindergarten age students should meet at 1:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall for a short presentation on our multi-age programs. Teachers and other staff members

will be there to answer questions.

If you are already a school family, you are invited to stop in and take a look at your student's latest work.

If you have school-age children who are not enrolled at St. Patrick School, you are

invited to stop in and talk to our teachers, principals, and families.

If you don't fit into either of those categories, please stop in anyway and see why we are so proud of our school, our staff, and our students.



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Changes in Kindergarten screening

St. Patrick School no longer holds a typical Kindergarten Screening Day, opting instead for ongoing screening which is done throughout the school year.

Previous experience has

shown that spring screening, which is simply a snapshot of one particular day, is not always the best way to determine a student's readiness for the following academic year. Now teachers

spend time throughout the multi-age year evaluating benchmarks and establishing learning goals.

Multi-age Preschool and Kindergarten



“My multi-age kindergarten classroom helps me meet the children right where they are. Children of different ages learn the material they are ready to learn.”
—Stacy Russman

School experts across the country are increasingly recognizing that young children develop academic and social skills at different rates. Placing all children of a particular age into one group and expecting them to advance at the same pace no longer makes sense.

In recognition of this research, St. Patrick School introduced multi-age kindergarten in the fall of 2019. The new multi-age classrooms integrate the Young 5/DK students with the Kindergarten students.

These two classrooms are taught by Mrs. Stacy Russman and Mrs. Amy Weems, who have a combined 40 years of classroom experience. The two teachers work collaboratively and independently to

meet the needs of all the students, using whole group, flexible smaller groups, and individual instruction.

Bringing these children together assists the development of all involved. The multi-age classrooms allow more customized instruction and has been found to increase student engagement and achievement. Social development has also been shown to increase in multi-age classrooms as younger students interact with older ones and learn from them.

Mrs. Russman says, “My multi-age kindergarten classroom helps me meet the children right where they are. Children of different ages learn the material they are ready to learn. The ‘olders’ provide mentorship and encour-

agement while the ‘youngers’ gain confidence.”

Principal Courtney Smith is also a proponent. “Multi-age kindergarten encourages learners to grow and develop without a determination up front as to what their Kindergarten plan will look like. Students are instructed as individuals alongside multi-age peers. This is a practice that allows instruction and learning to be fluid and flexible. It’s definitely best for the children.”

St. Patrick Preschool has also transitioned to multi-age classrooms, which provide our families with many more options.

These multi-age programs will be presented at a 1:00 session on March 1, 2020, in the Parish Hall.

Students consider vocations

Data from the 2013 National Religious Vocation Conference indicates that students who attend Catholic Schools are 3x-6x more likely to consider a vocation to the priesthood or religious life.

On November 7, 2019, after Fr. Mike gave an incredible homily about vocations to the elementary students, he asked all the

children who are feeling called to the priesthood or religious life to come forward and the congregation prayed over them.

More than 25 students from preschool through 8th grade came forth.

This is the church! Both now and in our future! Encourage them, pray for them and support them!



“With all the negative press we see and hear with regard to the Church how beautiful is it that our young people are alive in faith...that they truly seek to find meaning and are so willing to know a God that loves them.” —Father Mike

Why do our students take the ACT?

Michigan law requires high school students to take a college entrance exam. At one time, nearly all high school students in the state of Michigan took the ACT, but in 2015 that changed when the state awarded a \$17.1-million, three-year contract to have the SAT as the high school assessment.

At St. Patrick School, we choose to test using the ACT because, unlike the SAT, it also tests on science and provides our students with a STEM and ELA score. This allows us to gain a comprehensive analysis of what our students have learned.

The average ACT score for the class of 2019 was

24 and the average ACT score of the class of 2020 is 23. Using information from ACT test norms, we can conclude that the average student of the class of 2019 scored better than 74% of recent graduates and the average student of the class of 2020 scored better than 69% of recent graduates.



Small school. Big opportunities.

For the students who enjoy athletics, attending St. Patrick School will often mean the difference between playing on a team and being cut from the team. At St. Patrick School, we never make cuts. Our coaches work hard to ensure all athletes get sufficient playing time. Our Shamrock teams have had incredible success throughout the years, and have brought home a lot of trophies. These include 10 state championships, 7 individual state championships, 16 state runner-up titles, and 6 individual runner-up titles.

We are as proud of our sportsmanship awards as we are of our state titles. The school received the letter below, which references this year's state runner-up football team.

For students who prefer non-athletic extracurricular activities, we offer Quiz Bowl, Liturgical Music, Science Olympiad, and clubs devoted to Chess, Coding, Drama, and Art.

Hello Portland St Patrick,

I am from Tekonsha. I am 69 years old. I recently attended a football game between Portland St. Pats and Tekonsha, I have never in all my years of attending high school games seen anything like Portland St Pats. Every man played to his absolute best and with pride and at the same time was completely respectful and caring of the opponent at all times. You have a team that I would consider the poster team for sportsmanship and just being good human beings. They not only ran all over Tekonsha but at the same time your players were coaching the Tekonsha players in how to do better at their position. I go to the football finals every year at Ford Field and I have never seen a team more deserving of a title than Portland St. Patrick. Few things have impressed me in my life but that game did and whatever you have the world needs it. Bless all of you for setting an example that could solve all our problems if followed. Those boys are our future and the future from that view looks good.

Thomas Hampton
Tekonsha MI



Located in Portland, Michigan, St. Patrick Catholic School has been educating the minds, bodies, and spirits of its students for over 110 years. Our school mission statement contains six powerful words that are a guide for life: ***We Pray! We Learn! We Achieve!***

St. Patrick School is open to all families who are looking for a faith-based education for their children. For more information about our top-rated academic, athletic, and extracurricular programs, please visit our website or call the school office. Also, please come and meet us at the Open House on March 1, 2020. Hope to see you there!



122 West Street
Portland, MI 48875
Phone (517) 647-7511

We Pray! We Learn! We Achieve!



Save the Date!

St. Patrick School Open House

Are you or is someone you know interested in an alternative, faith-based education for your children?

Meet the principals and teachers, take a guided tour of the school, talk to school families.

Sunday, March 1, 2020
Following the 11:30 Mass
12:30 - 2:00 p.m.

www.portlandstpats.com/school

All families with preschool and/or kindergarten students should meet in the Parish Hall at 1:00 pm for a short presentation on our multi-age programs. Teachers and staff will be there to answer questions.