

PSAS APPLICATION DEADLINE IS MARCH 31, 2017!

A few weeks ago we sent home the new information concerning the applications for the SOS, BEF and OSTC. As mentioned PSAS was recently purchased by F.A.C.T.S and things were delayed because they redid the application process. Usually the forms had to be post marked by March 15. Given the fact the forms were not ready the company and the diocese extended the deadline. All applications are now due by March 31, 2017.

Following is the basic information concerning the **PSAS application for the SOS, OSTC, and BEF tuition assistance application.**

- **On March 15 I called to inquire when paper applications would be available to distribute to those people requesting one. I was told they will try to have some available for principals at our Principal Meeting on Friday, March 17. That means I hope to have a few available on Monday, March 20. PLEASE NOTE THAT THE COMPANY WANTS FAMILIES TO USE THE ONLINE APPLICATION PROCESS. Very few paper applications will be given to us.** If there is a hardship in reaching the new deadline they will try to be flexible.

Some differences for 2017-18 PSAS online applicants:

- **Principals will be asked to log in and confirm Pre-School tuition for each student as opposed to signing a paper form.**
- **Principals will be asked to log in and confirm Special Education status, when applicable, as opposed to signing a paper form.**
- **A form will be provided to Catholic families for their pastor's signature on the diocesan website. (see below)**
- **The EITC Income and OSTC school forms will be discontinued. Eligibility for these programs will be determined from data gathered from the application.**

Some similarities for 2017-18:

- **The diocese will still collect K-12 tuition rate information in the spring and provide these rates to FACTS.**
- **Parents will still receive a family award letter with their grants.**
- **Schools will still be provided, either via paper or online reports, the same family information as in the past (e.g. need per student, EITC/OSTC eligibility, aid awards, etc.)**
- **The same aid funds will be available to parents depending upon their eligibility:**
- **Bishop's Education Fund- for Catholic families with students in grades K-12 will still be available. Look for this listing on the homepage.**

Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program (EITC) - This is open to any student in grades PS to 12 from families meeting maximum income levels. (Families from certain private schools who have established their own funds are not eligible.)

Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit Program (OSTC) - This is open to any student in grades K-12 who meets the EITC income guidelines and would be attending a low achieving public school as defined by the Commonwealth.

- **Please note the state does not give us additional money. The amount available to distribute comes from the businesses who participate in the EITC Program.**
- **In the past some families have been under the impression that the state funds the OSTC from a different fund and that they pay for a full tuition to the school. The letter that they send to the families in the low performing schools makes it sound like the tuition would be covered.**

Diocesan Website Link- All information needed to apply for aid, including the link to the FACTS online application, is on the diocesan website under the “Catholic Education” tab. The Diocesan website direct link is <http://diopitt.org/2017-2018-tuition-aid-application-process>

- **If you would like to use a school computer to complete your PSAS application please call me. We can accommodate anyone who can come after school or in the evening. We would not be able to have people using them during the school day.**

FUNDRAISING UPDATE

We had 20 winners in the **February Lancer Loot Raffle Ticket** Fundraiser. We are now selling the April Lancer Loot Raffle tickets for \$5 each (ivory colored ticket). The green March Lancer Loot tickets are now being played. If someone would like a specific number, and it is still available, we will pull the number for April, May and June. The cost for three of the same number would be \$15.

We would love to say we sold all of our April tickets! You are doing a wonderful job of selling the \$5 ticket and we did a really good presale so that really helped! Basically we still have approximately 200 tickets left. Need a small thank you or birthday treat? Consider an April Lancer Loot Raffle ticket. The minimum payout, should your number win, is \$50 for week-day winners. If you do the Math that's 10 times the \$5 investment and we've had numbers hit more than once. Top prize on the last Sunday of the month is 40 times the \$5 cost of a ticket. You have 30 chances in April to win a Lancer Loot prize. You have to play to win!

Our **NIGHT at the RACES** was truly wonderful! Mrs. Donnelly and her crew of volunteers found amazing prizes for the Chinese Auction, sold all of the horses in each race, and provided a great meal cooked by Chef Steve. She even had a group from Kohl's volunteer to help serve the food. It was announced that evening that the Kohl's Cares Fund would be sending a \$1,000 check in addition to providing volunteer hours.

The annual St. Sylvester's Calendar Party is off to a good start! I have heard from several “Table Chairpersons” who are busy planning the theme and activities for their table. Please look at the information that went home and save the date! Sunday, April 2nd is the date to circle on your calendar. This would be a great way to enjoy an afternoon with your card club, bowling buddies or maybe your siblings. This is a very popular fundraiser for the school so buy your ticket while they are still available.

ONLINE MATH PROGRAMS: THINK THROUGH MATH & FIRST IN MATH

We came in Second in the State in the Keystone Competition of Think through Math! There were 392 schools from across the state, representing 92,000 students in the contest. Our 5th through 8th grade students completed enough lessons to come very close to taking First Place we have been told. Our second place award is a TTM Banner and a \$100. Amazon Gift Certificate. Each class has also set a goal to earn a class Pizza Party. Eighth Grade has worked diligently to earn enough points to capture the prize ... their own Pizza Party in Mr. Moore's room!

FRIDAY, MARCH 24 IS A TEACHER IN-SERVICE / CLERICAL DAY. NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS.

Students in St Sylvester School will not be in school on Friday, March 24th. Teachers have an In-service/ Clerical Day on Friday, March 24.

LUNCH / RECESS VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Please look at your schedule for the rest of March and see if you can help us at Lunch / Recess. We have been down to two volunteers on several days this week. Sister Antoinette has had to take off a number of days as well because of the weather. (Sister covers the desk at lunchtime for Mrs. Long so that she can have a lunch break.) When we are short on volunteers it means that Mrs. Long and I have to figure out how to rearrange our duties to help cover the lunch / recess period with the children.

Just sign in to SignUpGenius if you think you can help us this month. Place your name on the day you, or a friend, can work, and Mrs. Long will see it when checking in to see how we are covered for the day. We have been very fortunate to have so many good volunteers. We understand it's a little easier to volunteer on a day when they go outside and so some do not want to volunteer if we have to have inside recess.

MISSING ASSIGNMENT REPORTS WENT HOME ON THURSDAY!

The parent portal in Option C is one of the ways we try to keep you posted on your child's current grades, missing assignments, etc. You may have received notes from teachers or received a list of what is past due on Thursday, March 16 from the school's office. We have Friday, March 25 off which should give children extra time to work on past due assignments. This week-end, and the long next week-end, should be enough time for the majority of missing assignments to be completed and turned into school. **The end of the report period is March 29.** Students can check with their teacher if they have questions about the information sent home on Thursday.

HOMEWORK HELPER

We offer time and space for students who would like to work in school on homework or assignments or complete those who are listed as "missing". We only require that you send a note on any Tuesday morning that tells us your child will be staying. from 3 until 4 that day to work on homework. Please call Sister Barbara Anne if you have a question about this service.

SPECIAL EVENT

Mrs. Carole Brennan sent the following message in to share with the St. Sylvester Community. Her grandsons are in our Kindergarten and Fifth Grade. Her father, Mr. Zippi would have been honored at this event but he died six weeks ago. Perhaps you know a veteran or family who would be interested in attending the viewing of this documentary?

Carole Brennan wrote: My father, Elliott Brennan's great-grandfather, Vittorio Zippi, is one of the three veterans featured in this documentary.

Also, ELLIOTT BRENNAN (grade five) is featured as well. Following is the flyer that went out advertising the event.

LOCAL VETERANS TO BE HONORED.

Three local WWII veterans will be featured in a documentary entitled Monte Sole Landing Memories which made its debut in Singapore and has been shown throughout Italy, France, Australia and elsewhere. The movie profiles Italian-Americans who served in WWII. Producer/Director Stefano Ballini, who has won awards for his documentaries, will be in the USA to present the American premier in NYC and from there come to Pittsburgh. The Pittsburgh screening will be presented at 6:30 pm on Wednesday, March 22, at the Alle-Kiski Valley Historical Society, 224 E. 7th Avenue, Tarentum. **Admission is free.** For more information: Kevin@veteranvoicesofPittsburgh.com or call 412-423-8034.

If anyone can make it to this presentation, please come and help pay tribute to my father and all veterans of the Greatest Generation -- and see a clip by one of St. Sylvester's students in a documentary that is being shown all over the world.

SPORTS UP DATE

Our Boys' Varsity Basketball team is playing in the St. Anne's Tournament. Their next game is Saturday, March 18 at St. Anne's.

The Girl's JV Team is playing in the Northside Catholic Tournament.

Our Spring Sports are Boys' Volleyball, Soccer and Track. Mrs. Melissa Imling takes care of the coed Track Team. Mrs. Brenda Schneider takes care of Boys' Volleyball. Mrs. Kevin Boland takes care of our coed Soccer program. We are fortunate to have such a wide variety of programs and the very dedicated parents who see that all of the above is possible.