

2012
Frequently Asked Questions,
Current Issues
Information

- What is the maximum number of students per class? Are there Teacher Aides in the primary grades?
*The limit is 28 students per homeroom, 56 per grade.
Each kindergarten homeroom has a full-time aide all day, every day.
First grade homerooms have one aide everyday for four hours.
Each second grade classroom has an aide for ten hours each week.*

- Do you offer a half-day Kindergarten program and how is it different, in terms of curriculum covered, from the full-day program?
Normally each of the two kindergarten homerooms begins the school year with some children whose parents have opted to begin the year attending classes from 8:10 to 12:15. Nevertheless, all students transition to full-day by January. Every month until January students may transition from half to full days. Half day students do not participate in lunch and noon recess. Half-day students also do not participate in the specials classes (Art, Music, Computer, PE, and Spanish) which are scheduled in the afternoons. In the afternoons, in addition to lunch, recess, and the specials classes, full-day students have opportunities for reinforcement, enrichment, and review of concepts taught in the morning.

- Is there a waiting list for Kindergarten?
Not at this time.

- Are there computers in the classrooms and how are they used? Where is the school in terms of technology – computer equipment, software, student use of technology, etc.?
Each classroom is equipped with a Dell Pentium IV computer. Teachers use classroom computers for communication with parents, grade and record keeping, and class preparation. The school has several digital cameras, a digital VCR, one multi-media projector that can be connected with any classroom computer, and a video-editing machine. The computer lab is equipped with 28 PCs. Software is adequate. As new software becomes available, we are ready for it. Students are encouraged to use all equipment including the digital equipment. Many older students are doing Power Point presentations in place of traditional reports. Teachers can use Cable in the Classroom and the Internet for instructional materials. Since the spring of 2007, sixteen (16) “Smart Boards” have been installed in our school. The second through eighth grade homerooms plus the Computer Lab and the Art room all have Smart Boards. Later this spring the kindergarten and first grade classrooms will be fitted with Smart Boards technology.

- Do you offer a world language?
In the spring of 2007 the decision was made to offer Spanish on a part-time basis in the curriculum for grades K-8 beginning in the fall of 2007. We are now offering Spanish to all our students for the fifth year. Students in grades K-5 attend Spanish class for 30 to 40 minutes each week, students in grades 6-8 attend class for 45 minutes each week.
- Do students switch classrooms?
All students switch classes to attend the specials. PE classes are held in the Kent Center (gym) or outside, Music is in the Music room, Computer class is in the Computer Lab, Art is in the Art room, Spanish is taught in the Spanish classroom, and each class goes to the Library once each week to boost library and research skills. In 2nd and 3rd grade, students also switch teachers for science and social studies. In 4th and 5th grades, students rotate among two teachers for math, science, reading, English, and social studies. In 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, students have at least five different teachers specializing in math, science, religion, social studies, literature, and English. Students in the upper grades are also assigned to different groupings for different subjects. Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students are assigned to two different groupings for academic classes. Grades 6 and 8 have the same teacher and class groups for English and literature. Additionally, the junior high schedule rotates each quarter so that most subjects meet at three different times of the day during the course of the year, for example, early morning, late morning, or in the afternoon.
- How often do students attend “specials” (art, music, PE, computer, and Spanish)?
The schedule for specials classes varies a bit from grade to grade, and is flexible from year to year. Generally speaking, students in grades K-8 follow six-day rotating schedules as follows:
 - *Kindergarten: Music, Art, PE (2 times each), Spanish and Computer (once each)*
 - *1st through 5th grades: Music and PE (2 times each), Art, Spanish, and Computer (once each six-day rotation)*
 - *6th grade: Music and PE (twice each) Art and Spanish (once each)*
 - *7th, and 8th grades: Music, Art, PE, and Spanish (one time each), Studio Days (twice each)*
- What is Studio Days?
Studio Days is a program designed to offer our 7th and 8th grade students more choice in their specials classes. Each quarter our students are offered a variety of specialized classes which enables them to study a topic of interest in depth. These topics originate from their specials classes and meet twice every six days during their regular scheduled specials class time. Some examples are Art-Mosaics and Sculpture, Physical Education - Lifetime Fitness and Nutrition, Spanish – Holidays and Holy Days and Be a Reporter, Technology – Multi-media Presentations and Introduction to Computer Literacy, and Music – Drama Club and School Musical.

- How are your instructional materials updated?
Each year the faculty evaluates the present instructional materials to be sure they are in line with our Catholic faith, school curriculum and that they meet the academic needs of our students. Incarnate Word has updated instructional materials for every core subject area in the last eight years. We are committed to this on-going evaluation especially in the area of technology. All of our core curriculum textbooks have Web sites students and parents can visit for extra help, lesson extensions, and enrichment activities. An instructional materials adoption timeline is available on our Curriculum Director's (Mrs. Janet Dolan) Web site at www.incarnate-word.org

- What accommodations are available for students with special needs?
Our school mission statement commits us to recognize, encourage, and support the unique and diverse gifts of each member of the school community. We are in our eleventh year of providing the assistance of a Learning Consultant. She works with teachers, parents, and students to meet every student's needs through:
 1. environmental adaptations (such as preferential seating, options for movement, physical arrangement of the classroom),
 2. instructional modifications (such as peer assistance, modification of content, and varying instructional modalities)
 3. alternative assessment (such as oral testing, project-based evaluation, extended time, alternate places for testing).

- How do you teach students at different levels within the same grades (Differentiated Instruction)?
This question relates to the immediately preceding question, specifically to instructional modification. As a faculty we are always working to improve via workshops, reading, opportunities for observation, and personal goal setting. The challenge is for the teacher to design tasks, activities, assignments, and assessments that students of all learning styles and all levels of ability will find engaging and that will bring them into profound and meaningful interaction with the concepts and skills that have been designated as curriculum priorities. While this is nicely built into our K-5 reading program through leveled readers and activity centers, it is an area every faculty member is committed to improving in all academic areas.

- How is discipline maintained and enforced in the classroom?
The Parent-Student Handbook outlines our basic philosophy of discipline which is based on student and teacher relationships of mutual respect. Our handbook also delineates our discipline policies and procedures. Additionally, most of our teachers have been trained in Discipline With Purpose, a nationally known and effective program for teaching students of all ages fifteen lifetime skills for self-discipline.

- Do you have a hot lunch program?
Yes, our hot lunch program is run by Food Service Consultants, Inc. and offers a variety of healthy selections daily. Prices are: \$2.95 for K-2, \$3.20 for 3-5, and \$3.45 for grades 6-8.

Current Issues

- Last year we established a Worship and Liturgy Committee, made up of teachers from all grade levels, to plan and execute meaningful liturgical and prayer experiences for our students and staff.
- In the fall of 2010 Incarnate Word School introduced:
 - A new religion text in grades 1-6: *We Believe With Project Disciple*, published by Sadlier
 - New religion books in 7th and 8th grades: *We Live Our Faith* (Sadlier)
 - New Sadlier sacrament preparation texts for 2nd grade (*We Believe and Celebrate*) for Reconciliation and Holy Communion and for 8th grade (*The Spirit Sets Us Free*) for Confirmation
 - New reading series for 4th and 5th grades, *Journeys*, by Houghton-Mifflin
- Grades K and 1 have individualized learning centers with parent volunteers involved.
- Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 have access to their Social Studies textbooks on line through an E-edition. The 7th, and 8th grade math books are also available to our students on line.
- Grades 7 and 8 participate in an elective specials class (Studio Days) two days of each 6-day rotation.
- In the fall of 2010 Incarnate Word School introduced the new reading series *Journeys*, in grades 4 and 5, published by Houghton-Mifflin.
- In the fall of 2011 we updated the following textbooks:
 - The new reading series *Journeys* was introduced in grades 2 and 3. (Grades K and 1 will implement *Journeys* in the fall of 2012.)
 - Science grade 6 *Sound and Light*, grade 7 *Motion Forces and Energy*, from Prentice Hall, 2006.
- Spanish is offered on a part-time basis for grades K-8 during the school day. Grades K-3 receive 30 minutes of Spanish instruction per week, students in grades 4 and 5 have class for 35 minutes, and students in grades 6-8 receive 45 minutes of instruction weekly.
- Through Junior Achievement students in grades 5, 6, and 7 study economics in depth and cap the experience with a day-long visit to the Junior Achievement Free Enterprise Center.
- First and third grades will have a trained Junior Achievement volunteer visit their classrooms five times during the second semester. The main focus is on age-appropriate core skills that young people need to understand financial literacy.
- *Right START (Students Tackling Abortion Realities Today)* program explains and discusses the basic life issues of our Catholic faith for our 8th grade students
- IW Web site with parish, school, athletic association, ministry information. Links to communications from school (principal's weekly letter, *What's Up* news sheet)
www.incarnate-word.org
- Individual Teacher Web sites are available on *TeacherWeb.com* and can be accessed through the Incarnate Word Web site.

- Automation of our school library began in the 2005-6 school year and was completed in 2007. Our Automated School Library follows Missouri State and St. Louis Archdiocesan media center standards.
- Implemented computer software *Kidspiration* and *Inspiration* that teachers and students can use as teaching and a learning tool.
- Progress Reports for grades 5-8 are posted on line for parents every 2-3 weeks.
- Report Cards for grades 5-8 are posted on line every quarter.
- New parish and school logo and mascot were introduced in September 2008.
- Parent-Student Handbook for 2010-2011 is currently being updated and revised. See the Handbook on-line on our school Web site.
- This year, in conjunction with our book fair, our students collected \$2,638.54 for "One for Books." This effort will benefit children all over the world as well as St. Mary's School in Joplin, Missouri. Our Student Council also organizes a food collection at Thanksgiving time.
- Continue to provide CPR training to 4 faculty members each school year

Miscellaneous Information of Interest

- All-School Mass every Tuesday morning. Grades 2-8 (or 1-8) also attend Mass every Friday morning.
- Adoration (Holy Hour) and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament once a month
- Stations of the Nativity in Advent
- Stations of the Cross on most Fridays during Lent
- Prayer Partners in grades 1-8. Younger and older grades are paired off.
- 7th and 8th Grade Prayer Group meets every Tuesday morning at 7:30am.
- Roles/responsibilities the eighth grade students willingly take
PE aide, daily raising and lowering of flag, office duty at lunch time, morning assistance of younger students, computer maintenance, primary aides, afternoon dismissal bell, traffic cones
- Incarnate Word Athletic Association sponsors variety of team sports – **currently registering for baseball/softball – info. and forms available on parish website**
- Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts (parish sponsored)
- Life Teen – Retreats in 7th (Luke 18 in November) and 8th grades (Confirmation retreat in late winter or early spring, Timothy 4 in early June).
- Extracurricular activities offered in Bellarmine Speech League, Math Club, Year Book, Student Council, School Ambassadors, 6-8 grade Math League, and Abra-Kid-Abra.
- Three student musical performances by Grades 1-3, 4 and 5, and 7 and 8.
- Special Emphasis given to health and nutrition in PE and in lunch program.
- 4th and 5th grades participate in *Mark Twain Book Awards*; grades K-3 participate in the *Missouri Show Me Award* book program.
- School Scholastic Book Fair each year features a Family Night.
- CPTO sponsors an evening Science Olympiad for the parish every other year.
- Voluntary participation in the Greater St. Louis Science Fair for grades 5-8.
- Scrips Spelling Bee for grades 4-8.
- National Geographic Bee for grade 5.

- Smart Boards used in sixteen classrooms.
- Ice Cream Social for incoming Kindergarten students and families in early August.
- Vacation Bible School through Parish in first week of June.

Professional Development

All Incarnate Word religion teachers are either Paul VI certified or are working toward certification. Each faculty member is encouraged to attend at least one professional development opportunity per calendar year. Thirteen faculty members have advanced degrees. Two more are working on them.

Professional Organization Affiliations

Incarnate Word School or individual faculty members are active members of the following professional organizations. Active membership involves receiving newsletters and periodicals, and attending conferences when possible.

NCEA – National Catholic Education Association

ASCD – Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

NCTM – National Council of Teachers of Math

MCTM – Missouri Council of Teachers of Math

NCSS – National Council for the Social Studies

NSSSA – National Social Studies Supervisors Association

MCSS – Missouri Council for the Social Studies

LDA – Learning Disabilities Association

IRA – International Reading Association

CHAD – Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder