



NAVIGATING KINDERGARTEN



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KINDERGARTEN, HERE WE COME!

HELLO PRESCHOOL FAMILIES,

St. Francis Xavier Kindergarten Program encourages development of the whole child: spiritually, academically, socially, and emotionally. In our program, your child learns both formally and informally through a wide range of activities. We believe parents and teachers are partners in their children's education.

Among the academic classes of math, reading, writing, phonics, and religion, the kindergarten experience is designed to engage students in learning activities reinforcing life skills concepts including:

- Taking turns and sharing
- Listening to others
- Working independently in large and small groups
- Following directions and rules
- Caring for self

- Self-control and personal responsibility
- Confidence
- Perseverance
- Critical thinking skills
- Making good choices

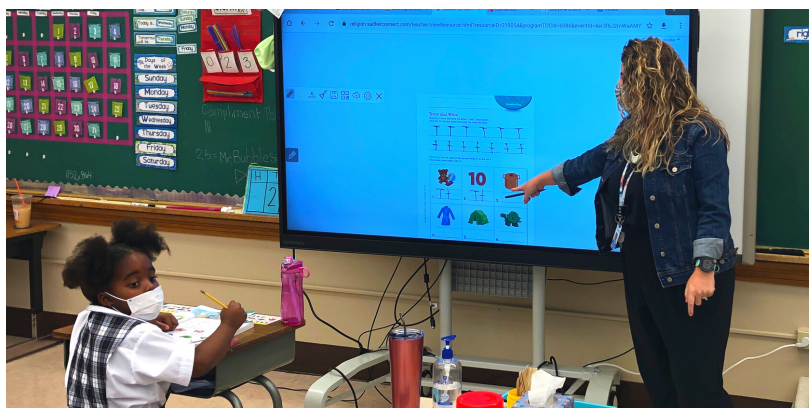
St. Francis Xavier kindergartners are well prepared to meet the challenges of 1st grade. St. Francis Xavier School utilizes the STREAM model; Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts, and Math. Using integrated learning, students enhance their understanding and develop their ability, and the confidence, to present information that offers complete and logical structure. Teachers and staff at St. Francis Xavier School recognizes every student individually and seeks to ensure they are safe, engaged in learning, and demonstrating progress socially, academically, spiritually, and personally.

God Bless,

Mrs. Danene Beal



*"All I really need to know... I learned in kindergarten."
-Robert Fulghum*



READY TO R.O.L.L.

(READINESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR LIFELONG LEARNERS)

We are pleased and excited to offer a FREE kindergarten readiness program to you. Our program will kick off on Thursday, October 28 at 6:30 p.m. with an adult-only meeting. Ready to R.O.L.L. is open to all incoming kindergarten students, regardless of the school your child will be attending. Ready to R.O.L.L. will offer five FACE TO FACE sessions of kindergarten readiness activities focusing on literacy, math, motor development, and social-emotional development. Our preschool and kindergarten staff, along with the assistance of the St. Francis Xavier

School faculty have volunteered to teach parents and children some of the skills necessary to succeed in Kindergarten. In addition, take-home materials will be provided at each session in order to continue learning at home. We hope you will join us for as many of these evenings as you are able.

Ready to R.O.L.L.

All sessions will be from
6 p.m. - 7:15 p.m

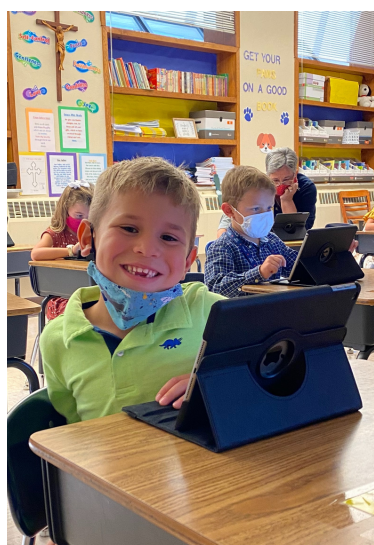
Nov. 18 - Phonological Awareness

Dec. 9 - Letter Recognition and Identification

Jan. 27 - Numbers

Feb. 24 - Social-Emotional Growth/ Mindset

Mar. 24 - Fine Motor/ Ready for School



COME SEE US!

WE WELCOME YOU TO VISIT OUR SCHOOL!

You may have taken a tour of our Little Sailors Preschool when you initially enrolled, but have you seen our day school? We are very proud of our Navigator community. We look forward to sharing the outstanding academic opportunities available in our day school for your future kindergartener.

WE ARE HERE FOR YOU!

NAVIGATOR MENTOR FAMILY PROGRAM

Our Navigator Mentor Family Program is a group sponsored by our Annual Fund Committee. As an incoming new kindergarten family, you will be paired with a current Navigator family to help ease your transition into our day school. Before the school year begins, your mentor family will connect with you and personally welcome you to our school community. This might be through phone calls and emails, or possibly small group get-togethers for ice cream or playdates. The goal of our mentor family program is for our new families to arrive at our school on the first day with relationships already built, to feel connected to their peers, and to help them get involved in groups as well as the St. Francis Xavier School community.

After the school year has begun, your mentor family will continue to be in touch with more helpful advice throughout the year.



While limited during COVID-19, tours are still available on Tuesdays from 10 - 11 a.m. during the school year. **Contact Jackie Brauser, Director of Admissions, at 330-725-3345 or jbrauser@sfxmedina.org for more information.**

MEET OUR AMAZING KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS

MRS. ELIZABETH KEANY



I graduated from Salve Regina University in Newport, RI with my Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education. I went on to earn my master's degree in Language Arts with a specialty in reading from St. Joseph's College in West Hartford, CT. I am a fourth-generation teacher. My great-grandmother and grandmother both taught in one-room schoolhouses. My mother taught in elementary school, K-3, for 30 years. I learned from an early age the importance of learning, school, and how to multitask! I began my teaching career in 1999 where I taught first grade for nine years and second grade for two years, both in Connecticut. After moving to Ohio with my family, I worked for a year in several kindergarten classrooms as a Title One teacher in Garfield Heights.

I am married to John who has been my best friend and rock for many years. We have two beautiful daughters, Emily and Sarah. Sarah attends St. Francis Xavier School. I enjoy cooking, reading, hiking with my family and dog, and spending as much time as I can with family and friends.

I love being a part of the St. Francis Xavier family! I feel so honored to be able to teach in such a wonderful faith-based community. Teaching kindergarten is very busy with wiggly bodies and giggling mouths, but it is such a joy to see and hear all the fun, learning, and wonder kindergarten brings each and every day. Kindergarten is a huge year for growth. This is the year the children begin "big kid" school. They learn to be independent, to read, write, add, and subtract! There is SO MUCH learning that happens every day, all year long. The saying "Everything you need to know you learned in kindergarten" is so true! Yes, we need higher thinking and more skills, but in life, we need to learn to share, how to be kind to one another, and how to work independently. Kindergarten teaches you that! My favorite time of the year is right when we come back from Christmas break. The children really blossom. Their learning explodes. I feel blessed to be able to share my faith and knowledge to help young minds grow!

MEET OUR AMAZING KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS

MRS. KAITLIN GESICKI



I have spent the last two years at St. Francis Xavier School teaching kindergarten and it has been filled with love, kindness, and learning!

I am excited to tell you a little about myself! I am a graduate of Cleveland State University. I graduated with my Bachelor's in Education in 2011 and then with my Masters in Reading in 2016. Before coming to St. Francis Xavier, I taught at a school in downtown Cleveland.

I enjoy reading all types of books, but romantic comedies are my favorite. My husband and I adopted a dog from the Cleveland APL, her name is Rainier (like the mountain). She is a handful and requires many walks and a lot of attention during the day and after school! My husband and I are also recent home buyers, so house projects are keeping us extremely busy lately!! My favorite color is yellow and I love everything and anything sour!

I love teaching kindergarten because every day is a new day with new adventures and accomplishments. My favorite time of the year to teach is around wintertime. During this time most students have grown so much and they shock themselves with everything they can achieve! They understand the routines, are moving faster during the day, and the very best feeling is when you see them become their own problem-solvers. The Christmas season is always a great time to teach because there are so many faith-filled activities that surround Christmas. We learn about Advent, the Advent calendar and wreath, the Nativity, and the birth of Jesus. Lastly, around this time is when we lead our first school Mass, so we learn about the readings, petitions, homilies, and the responses.

MEET OUR LOVING EDUCATIONAL AIDES

MRS. PATTY CATHCART

All four of my children attended St. Francis Xavier School and as a parent, I fell in love with the school community. Once my youngest started high school I began working here in 2004-2005 school year. For most of that time, I have been in kindergarten. I love my job! There is something very special about working with 5 and 6-year-olds. Their love of learning is a joy. There is nothing like a child's face when they look at you and say "I can READ!" I spend my day supporting the teacher, helping in small groups, working with children who need more help, and reading with kids who are above grade level. The unconditional love that the children share is a blessing.



MRS. JILL LAPS



This school year is my second year at St. Francis Xavier School working in Mrs. Gesicki's kindergarten. What do I love about it? Honestly, mostly the HUGS! But seriously, these kids inspire me every day, each with their own creativity, challenges, and learning. Working at St. Francis Xavier School has truly changed my life. After being mostly a stay-at-home mom for years, I feel a new purpose working here. My fellow staff members, the faculty, and Mrs. Beal are all so welcoming and kind. It's been a wonderful environment to be in each day. In Mrs. Gesicki's classroom, aside from being a professional hugger, I help with intervention, read with our high-level readers, share stories, work in centers with the kids, and mainly act as an extra pair of eyes and hands wherever needed.



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Learn about Kindergarten Specials

Meet our Special Teachers

KINDERGARTEN, HERE WE COME!

HELLO PRESCHOOL FAMILIES,

As we hit the midpoint of the school year, we know that many of you already are thinking ahead to your child's future. As you make decisions about where to continue your child's education, we want to provide you with helpful information about the transition to Kindergarten, what to expect, and how St. Francis Xavier prepares your student for success in the primary grades and beyond.

Just as we take time to prepare during Advent, we are also excited to continue to prepare your preschooler for the changes Kindergarten will bring. In this issue of Navigating Kindergarten, we will introduce you to the many special curriculum offerings we are

blessed to have here at St. Francis Xavier School. While these classes, including physical education, computer, spanish, art, and music, may not use typical textbooks, they are crucial in developing the brain, body, and person of each student. As we continue to utilize our X- STREAM Program through middle school, we will continue to focus on S - science, T - technology, R - religion, E - engineering, A - arts, and M - math. As always, all of our curriculum is aligned to both Diocesan and State of Ohio standards.

As I reflect on God's great gift of His son, our Savior, Christ Jesus, this Advent season, I am so grateful that we have the opportunity to share and pass on His gift to our students each and every day.

God Bless,

Mrs. Danene Beal



"Only surround yourself with people who will lift you higher."
-Oprah Winfrey