

# OCTOBER 2023

# CAMPUS *Connections*

 SAINT JOHN PAUL II  
CATHOLIC ACADEMY

## A Message From The Regional Director

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy and a very special welcome to our new parents and families! We are very excited for a great year! Students and teachers are excited to be back and there is a tangible joy and life in our buildings! God's spirit is alive in the eyes and hearts of our children.

This year, the Academy will finish our self-study process for re-accreditation from NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges) with a visit Oct. 15-18th. The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) is an independent, voluntary, nonprofit membership organization which partners with over 1500 public, independent, and international schools in the US and worldwide to assess, support, and promote high quality education for all students through accreditation, professional assistance, and pursuit of best practices. NEASC aspires to provide a process for meaningful, ongoing whole school improvement while honoring the unique culture and context of each institution we support. All members of our school community finished reviewing and looking at all parts of our school. We finished writing our report this summer and it has been submitted for review. Thank you to all families and students who filled out surveys and gave us tremendous input. Once our visit is over, we will share with you their findings and our report. From their findings and our report, we will begin work on a new strategic plan for SJP2CA. We are excited to plan for the next 10 years.

Summer is very busy at SJP2CA. We have painted our buildings, added new furniture, improved playground areas, landscaped new areas, fixed fencing, windows, screens and much more. We have welcomed over 100 new students to our Academy. Please continue to recommend the Academy to your friends and family. We have room and would love to welcome new families to our community. We had new staff and programs added to our school such as MooZoom, a guidance program for all students, a STREAM coach to support our teachers, a new Early education coach to help our early education program and support teachers and new administrators with a wealth of experience and commitment to Catholic Education.

Our spring standardized testing showed that we had successfully met the MAP National Goal of 5% growth in Math and Reading for the school year. COVID has certainly caused learning loss and created gaps but with the work of our teachers, coaches, and leadership, we will continue to bridge these gaps and continue to give our students the best. We are finishing our fall MAP testing and looking forward to using that data to guide our plans for the school year.



Columbia Rd. Campus  
Middle School LEADERS

# A Message From The Regional Director

It is our prayer and expectations that this will be a growth filled, God filled and exciting school year. Please continue to encourage your children to be the best person and student they can be. We will remind them of this daily and encourage them to use their gifts and talents to become the persons God has planned them to be. We will continue to nurture, challenge, and affirm your child. We will keep you in our prayers and please keep the Academy in yours.

May God continue to bless you and our Academy.

God Bless,

**Kate Brandley**  
Regional Director

*Where students are known, loved and called to excellence.*

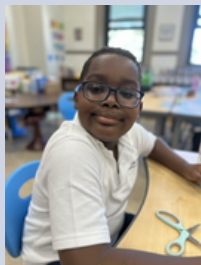
*Where students become leaders with faith and values.*

*Where students succeed with outstanding academics*

*Where students thrive in a safe and diverse community.*



Meet the Teacher Back to School Night



Students are prepared and ready to learn seated at their brand new desks and chairs.

## Columbia News



Family partnerships are essential for student success. At the Columbia Campus, we had a few opportunities to welcome our families to the campus to learn more about how we can work together to support the education of our children this year.

On September 8th, parents, guardians, and our youngest learners attended our Early Childhood Orientation. This was an opportunity for parents and students to meet their teachers and see their classrooms before the first day of school.

**BACK  
TO  
SCHOOL**



On September 14th, parents and guardians of all grade levels were invited to Meet-the-Teacher Night. The evening began with a presentation by Mrs. Durazo reviewing key routines for the school year and discussing our school-wide goals for the year -- strong attendance, high engagement, and great achievement. Parents and guardians then visited classrooms and teachers to learn more about what the school year will look like for their child.



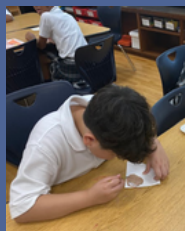
The Columbia Campus is excited to be launching a Parent Corps this year, which will focus on community and engagement events throughout the school year.

The Columbia Campus is grateful for the opportunity to partner with the Boston Police Department and Boston Fire Department to connect our students with those in public service. On Monday, September 11th, BPD officers came to the Columbia Rd. campus to greet our youngest students and give them high fives for their first day of school. On Friday, September 15th, we had a special visit from Engine 17. Students in the Toddlers Program through 2nd grade were able to explore a fire truck, try on different firefighter gear, and ask questions about fighting fires. Many of our students hope to be police officers or firefighters when they grow up, so it was special for them to have an opportunity to connect. A special thank you to the parents in our community who helped arrange this opportunity for our students!



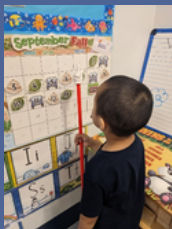
## Columbia News

During the first two weeks of art class, Columbia LEADERS in K2 through 8th grade read the story "The Colors of Us" by Karen Katz, which is about a young girl who sets out to paint all of the beautiful shades of tan and brown that she notices in the skin tones of people throughout her community. Students were then tasked with creating a self-portrait, the first step of which was to mix their own unique skin tone using four paint colors – yellow, red, black, and white. We discovered that all of our skin tones can be made by mixing these four colors! After colors mixing and matching, students then used oil pastels to add the details of their features. All our students' portraits will be put together on display to show how all are a part of the SJPIICA Columbia student community. We are excited to share the final product soon!

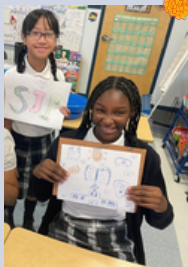


## Lower Mills News

K1C Lower Mills LEADERS have enjoyed an exciting first week of school, including starting the Building Blocks math curriculum, which fosters solid mathematical foundations and reasoning skills in young children. Daily activities involve counting using concrete objects, gestures, or large body movements, in order to provide ample practice with numerals, one-to-one correspondence, and number sequences. Currently we are counting as high as students are able and watching for common misunderstandings such as skipping over items or counting an item twice. This week, the class played "number jump," which entails jumping the number of times shown by a target numeral. It is always rewarding to witness the students' progress with Building Blocks, so we eagerly anticipate the remainder of the school year.



Our 5B Lower Mills LEADERS have been working hard and created some amazing Pinwheels for Peace in honor of International Peace Day! During our STREAM lesson, (Science, Technology, Religion, Art, and Math) we are learning about muralist Diego Rivera for Hispanic Heritage Month. Learning about the life he lived, our students used that as inspiration to create their very own SJP murals. Before beginning the Pinwheels for Peace Project, we spent time discussing how peace can take on a different meaning within all of us. When I asked the class what peace means to them, they came up with some bright and unique ideas for their pinwheels. They also took the time to reflect on how they can use their voice and actions to be a peacemaker in our community and in our greater world. As we prepare to plant our pinwheels this Thursday, we commit to honoring our community by using our words and actions to continue our mission of bringing peace and unity to all.



# Lower Mills News

Hi All! We here at the Lower Mills Campus have jumped into September with both feet. Middle School ELA es muy bueno at the start of Hispanic Heritage Month. Grade 6 LEADERS are creating original art inspired by Pablo Picasso for which they will construct free verse poetry featuring descriptive language.

Grade 7 LEADERS completed their assessment and analysis based on our summer novel study for *The Last Cuentista* by Donna Barba Higuera; this is a Newbery Medal Award winning novel which drew great enthusiasm from our class of 2025! Grade 8 LEADERS are performing a close reading of "Eleven" which is a short story by Sandra Cisneros, the author of *The House on Mango Street*; our grade 8 LEADERS read this novel later in the year. From celebrating peace and unity, to creating class Padlets, to persuasive writing, Middle School Lower Mills LEADERS are kicking off 2023-2024 with a touchdown! Adios until next time!



# Neponset News

Why not start the new school year by remembering how blessed we are each morning! The Neponset campus has designated our morning assemblies this year as our "Grateful Gatherings." As we have come together this month with our students, teachers, and parents in prayer, to recite our SJP2CA mission, the Pledge of Allegiance, and discuss the happenings of our learning community, we have also been reflecting on the three theological virtues: faith, hope, and love. What better tangible example of these gifts than with our all-school Mass at St. Martin de Porres Parish, prepared with the help of our 6th grade LEADERS! On another note, we have completed the first two weeks of Math and Reading MAP testing for our K2 through 8th graders. Coming up in the last week of the month is the final week of MAP testing for ELA, and our STREAM projects begin this week, when students integrate the disciplines of Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Art, and Math. Students will have a "TAG" free dress day on 9/29 to help raise money for Catholic Charities by using the colors for National Hispanic Heritage Month. Parents and faculty will be able to meet up in the classrooms on the evening of September 28th during our Back to School Night. What a fantastic month to kick off our school year at Neponset!



LEADERS at the Neponset campus begin their year in computer class learning about their responsibilities as citizens, especially as it applies to the digital world. While we spend a good amount of time discussing and even acting out scenarios that they could run into when being active on the internet we also explore so much more! We take time to learn about older technology that was once used and to see the progression of this technology throughout time. The students then get to move on to some of our more recent and advanced technology that we offer. Students learn the different elements of a computer and how they work, how to set up and plug in a computer and its parts, how to take care of the technology in the room, how to code, learn and practice their typing skills, become proficient in creating Google slides and forms, design digital displays using photo and video editing. Neponset LEADERS explore all different types of technology like Smart TVs, Alexa, Chromebooks, and of course Virtual Reality Goggles. In February, 3rd - 5th Grade will begin their Technology Projects for our annual Technology Fair. Please make sure to keep an eye out for more information about the Neponset Technology Fair coming May 9th, 2024. We truly welcome our entire community to join us in this digitally immersive experience, as we help our students to grow, innovate, and lead.

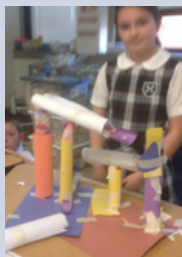


# Neponset News

Neponset LEADERS have been enthusiastically immersed in a wide range of STREAM activities that have become an integral part of our school's ongoing learning initiative. Building upon the foundation laid last year, we have continued to nurture the development of Science, Technology, Religion, Art, and Math skills within our students. These activities have proven to be instrumental in fostering a holistic approach to education that goes beyond conventional classroom learning.



In one notable 5th Grade project, our students have had the opportunity to engage in a comprehensive learning journey. They began by collaborating with their peers, investigating real-world problems, and then channeling their creativity to design and plan innovative solutions. The highlight of this endeavor is the creation of water filters, a project that challenges them to apply their knowledge and skills in a practical setting. Following the initial creation phase, students conscientiously reevaluate their work, scrutinize data, and make necessary revisions, instilling in them a deep sense of critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. Moreover, this journey extends beyond the realm of academics, as students engage with scripture that reveals God's desire for us to be stewards of His creation, imparting valuable lessons in ethics and responsibility.



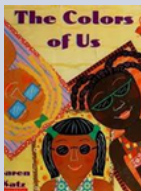
The outcomes of these STREAM activities have been nothing short of remarkable. Our students not only gain varied and sophisticated knowledge in multiple disciplines but also report that the entire process has been an absolute blast. As a school, we take pride in nurturing well-rounded individuals who not only excel academically but also possess the ability to engage with real-world challenges and make meaningful contributions to society. Our commitment to STREAM education ensures that our students are prepared to tackle the complexities of the modern world with confidence and enthusiasm.



# SJP Fine Arts Program

## "The Colors of Us" by Karen Katz

SJP LEADERS have been learning the art of color mixing in art class at all three campuses. Our art project is inspired by the children's book "The Colors of Us" by Karen Katz. Students have been learning to mix their own skin color using only red, yellow, black, and white paint. They will use their mixed skin color paint, pencil, and oil pastels to help them create their very own self portrait. All our student portraits will be used to create an art piece that will be a visual representation of our academy in the weeks to come.



Upper Left: A look inside "The Color of Us"

Upper Right: Self portrait of Maxwell Ezeh, Lower Mills Campus

Lower Left: SJP Leaders color mixing

Lower Right: Lower Mills 8th Grade Class



# Advancement Announcement

## SJPIICA Alumni for #15in15

Please meet Taylor Nickerson, a 2012 graduate of our Neponset campus!

*#knownlovedandcalledtoexcellence*

### TAYLOR NICKERSON

Meet Neponset alumna Taylor Nickerson, class of 2012. Taylor most recently worked as a one-to-one special education teacher. She graduated in June from Cambridge College with a Master's Degree in Special Education.

#15in15

 SAINT JOHN PAUL II  
CATHOLIC ACADEMY



*#knownlovedandcalledtoexcellence*

#### **Best memory from the school?**

My best memory from the school is the 8th grade activities especially, the Spirit of Boston cruise. I love to see that they still do that today!

#### **What advice would you give to SJP students today?**

Follow your dreams, work hard and never give up!

#### **Tell us about your journey.**

After SJPIICA I graduated from Elizabeth Seton Academy. I attended Curry College and later transferred to UMass Boston, where I majored in Early Childhood Education. After UMass I went to Cambridge College for my master's in special education and recently graduated.

My first job was at SJPIICA's Neponset campus. While I was in high school and college I worked there as an after-school program teacher and then as a substitute teacher. Later, I began working at Neponset full time as an Interventionist.



SAINT JOHN PAUL II  
CATHOLIC ACADEMY



# Advancement Announcement

*#knownlovedandcalledtoexcellence*

## Why did your family/you choose SJPIICA?

My family chose SJPIICA because my mom attended the school when it was St. Ann's. We liked that it's a neighborhood school.

## What brought you to the school?

The teachers brought me to the school!



## Tell us about your time at SJPIICA.

My time at SJPIICA was amazing and I always felt that the school community was a family.

## Favorite subject at school?

My favorite subject at school was ELA because I enjoyed reading and writing. My ELA teacher always made our lessons fun and I really enjoyed being in her class.

## Best memory from the school?

My best memory from the school is the 8th grade activities especially, the Spirit of Boston cruise. I love to see that they still do that today!



*#knownlovedandcalledtoexcellence*

## How did SJP help you get to where you are today?

The Academy helped me get where I am today by offering their support and guidance.



## Advancement Announcement

Thanks to #TeamSJP2CA!

Congratulations to the 5 amazing members of our Falmouth Road Race team who finished the August race strong! We're grateful for their representation of the Academy and thank them for fundraising for tuition assistance.



# Notes from the Business Office



Happy Fall and we hope this new school year is off to a wonderful start! Please remember to contact the Regional Business Office with any questions or concerns regarding your tuition or payment plan.

## **FACTS Payment Plan:**

All families in the Academy must be enrolled in the FACTS payment plan. More information about the FACTS Payment Plan application can be found on the home page at [www.sjp2ca.org](http://www.sjp2ca.org). You may also access FACTS through your ParentsWeb account. If you need to change the bank information, make telephone payments, or need access to the payment plan account, please contact FACTS directly at 800-624-7092.

## **Tuition payments:**

If you are behind in tuition payments, you must contact the Regional Business Office immediately. At this time 20% of your total tuition is due not including any scholarships and financial aid received. Violin fees for Grade 5 & Grade 6 and Graduation fees for Grade 8 will be added to your child's tuition payment plan for the 2023-2024 school year. Please note, tuition payments begin in August. If you have missed any payments at this time, you must make those payments online or by calling FACTS Management at 800-624-7092. Your child's continued enrollment in the Academy is dependent on prompt tuition payments. Please refer to the tuition policy on our website at [www.sjp2ca.org](http://www.sjp2ca.org), also available in the Student/Parent handbook (agenda book).

## **Vouchers:**

If your voucher is updated or renewed by your ABCD facility, you must fax, hand deliver, or email a copy of your voucher to the Regional Business Office at [tuition@sjp2ca.org](mailto:tuition@sjp2ca.org).

If you would like to make an appointment with the Regional Business Office, please call or email [tuition@sjp2ca.org](mailto:tuition@sjp2ca.org) to make your appointments.

**To make an appointment with the Business Office, please call or email.**

### **CONTACT US:**

Regional Business Office  
1 Eliot Street, 3rd fl.  
Milton, MA 02186

Judith Walker, Business Coordinator  
Phone: 617-265-0019, x 7202  
Email: [tuition@sjp2ca.org](mailto:tuition@sjp2ca.org)