

Notre Dame School
New Family FAQ
Revised 09/07/08

This list is meant to be a “one-stop shop” for frequently asked questions. As you will find, many of these questions are answered in other places such as the Student Handbook, Notre Dame Website, Parent Packet (mailed prior to school starting), and Teacher Web. However, we hope that this will serve to quickly and easily answer many questions that are common to new parents.

We welcome you to the Notre Dame family! Feel free to contact either of us or your mentor family at any time if you have any questions, comments or suggestions. Thank You!

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Does the school have a website?

Yes, the address is www.ndschico.org . We encourage the use of the website on a regular basis and hope that you use it as a resource.

Do our teacher's have a website?

Yes, most of our teachers utilize Teacher Web and have an individual website there. The address is www.teacherweb.com Search by school name, and then select the appropriate teacher. There are also links to these websites on the Notre Dame website under faculty; simply click on the desired teacher's name. These are a great resource, so use them!

What school supplies do I need to purchase?

Each teacher provides a list of school supplies that your child will need. These were mailed out with the Parent Packet and are also available in the office and on Teacher Web.

Who are the main contact people in the school office?

Connie Freitas is our secretary and she can answer just about any question you may have. Karen Neadley is our bookkeeper and can answer any questions you may have about tuition bills and extension bills (along with Miss Ruth).

What are the basic requirements for uniforms?

Elementary boys wear a white shirt and navy shorts or pants. Elementary girls wear a white shirt and navy shorts or pants or the plaid jumper or skirt. Junior High (6th-8th grades) boys and girls wear a hunter green shirt and khaki bottoms. Specifics on what is required regarding outerwear, shoes, socks and overall uniform can be found in the Parent Packet that was mailed to your house or in the Student Handbook.

Where are uniforms purchased?

Uniforms, Tuxedos & More (187 E. 9th Avenue) and Hutter-Brock Company (hutbroco@comcast.net) carry the full line of NDS Uniforms. Mervyn's and JC Penney's carry the shirts, shorts and pants. We also have a Uniform Exchange where you can select from gently used uniforms for a small donation. Again, more information is in the Parent Packet.

Do students have a PE Uniform?

Junior High students have a required uniform. Refer to the Parent Packet or Student Handbook for more information.

Do students get "Free Dress" days?

Yes, the first Wednesday of every month is free dress. This is typically not announced so mark it on your calendar. Additionally, there is free dress on other special occasions. These are announced in the morning assembly and/or in the Husky Hotline. Refer to your Student Handbook for guidelines for acceptable dress.

What is the normal school day schedule for Kindergarten, Primary Grades, Jr. High?

The morning bell rings at 8:12 and all students meet in the gym for morning prayer and flag salute. Each grade lines up by boys and girls, starting with K on the east end of the gym. Mr. Seibert (affectionately called Mr. Cy) will dismiss the students and the teachers will walk them to class. Class is dismissed for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grades at 2:50. Afternoon Kindergarten, 4th-8th grades are dismissed at 3:00. If you have children with both dismissal times, they will be supervised at the loading zone.

What time do I need to pick up my child?

It is preferred that all students are picked up at the loading zone by 3:15, unless they are scheduled for Extension. If you are running late and have not arrived by 3:15, your child will automatically be taken to Extension until you arrive.

Can parents come to Morning Assembly?

Absolutely, all parents are welcome. It is a nice way to see how your child's day starts as well as to visit with fellow parents and to hear information on what is happening around school.

What days are half-days?

The first Wednesday of every month is a half day. Additionally, there are other half days throughout the year. Consult the school calendar for specifics. School is dismissed at 12:00 for all students on a half day. Both am & pm Kindergarten classes meet together at 8:12 and are dismissed at 11:15.

What is required of families for fundraising?

Each family is required to contribute a minimum of 10 hours to one of our major fundraisers. These fundraisers are: Fall Festival, Scrip, Spring Gala Auction.

How do I submit my volunteer hours?

There is a form that will come out periodically in the Husky Hotline and is also available on the NDS website and in the office that must be filled out. Please submit your hours on a monthly basis to the office.

Can I send information with my child that needs to get to the office?

Yes, please put it in an envelope marked "Office" and your child's teacher will get it there.

What is Scrip?

Scrip is gift certificates from a variety of national and local merchants that you purchase from the school at face value and use at the store at face value. The merchant gives the school a discount on the purchase of the gift certificates, which is how we benefit. Each family is required to “earn” the school \$250 via Scrip and eScrip.

How do I purchase Scrip?

Each family is given a Scrip envelope that indicates your family number and includes an order form. Fill out the form and send it with your check in the envelope with your child on Thursday. You will receive your order back that afternoon in most cases. Be sure to keep a copy of your order for your records. If you have specific questions, please call Terry Andrew, Cassandra Crossen or Julie Koehnen (The Scrip Chicks).

What is eScrip? How do I enroll?

eScrip is an electronic fundraising program that is quite simple. Go to www.escrip.com to register for the program. You should register your Safeway club card, and credit and debit cards that you normally use. When you shop at participating merchants, they will donate a percentage of your purchase back to the school. You do *nothing* different at the time of your purchase. Also, you can have Grandparents or other family and friends register with eScrip so that our school benefits from their purchases.

How can I make Scrip a part of my regular routine?

Most of us have merchants that we buy from on a regular basis. Take a look at the merchant list for both Scrip and eScrip so that you are familiar with who is on the list. On a regular basis, purchase Scrip for the merchants you patronize. Keep the Scrip gift cards in your car so that they are always with you! As for eScrip, whenever you shop at a participating merchant with your registered debit or credit card, you will earn money for our school. You may also decide to shop at a different store or restaurant because you will earn money for our school. Remember to support the businesses that support our school!

What is Fall Festival?

This event, held in conjunction with St. John’s Catholic Church is the first weekend in October. Typically the event kicks off with a family dinner/dance on Saturday night, followed by a festival on Sunday featuring game and food booths. This is a wonderful family event and we encourage you to attend both events! This is also an opportunity to get in your fundraiser hours.

Is it challenging to complete your required hours?

No, it may sound daunting at first but there are many, many ways you can earn hours. These range from at home activities to helping in the classroom, to helping in the library or office, working on a fundraiser, helping with hot lunch, yard duty, and maintenance just to name a few.

How does Hot Lunch work?

At this time, it is uncertain whether we will have a program for 2008-2009 school year as we do not have a Committee Chair. Typically the program is offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays, is served by parent volunteers and features wonderful meals from local restaurants such as Franky’s, Round Table Pizza, Happy Garden, and Kinders. Meals cost \$3.50; tokens are purchased either at the office or in the gym on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. More information will be in the Husky Hotline as it becomes available.

What is the Husky Hotline?

This is our weekly parent newsletter that comes out on Friday. You will receive it via the preferred method of email, or by way of your youngest child bringing it home. It is also available on the NDS website for easy reference. This is a very important communication tool utilized by the principal, office, teachers and PTO to share information with the parent body. Make it a priority to read it in its entirety each week!

What is the Spring Gala Auction?

The Auction is our major annual fundraiser. It is a semi formal event held at a local venue with silent auction, dinner, and live auction. It is an exciting night and a great way to socialize with other parents and staff members outside of school. You will hear more about the event as it draws near via the Husky Hotline and at PTO Meetings. While it is not mandatory to attend, we encourage all parents to come if they are able. There are many opportunities to earn parent hours through this event.

What is the Annual Fund?

This is a diocese-wide campaign to raise funds for Catholic education. All monies raised by Notre Dame stay local to support our school. You will receive a letter asking for your support, whether that be monetary or through prayer. It is very important that you respond even if you are unable to support the campaign financially. We can be awarded grants based on the full participation of our parent body.

What is Fine Arts Night?

Fine Arts Night is an incredible evening of music, art, and theatre held in the Spring! The entire student body participates and it is a night you will not want to miss. Feel free to invite Grandparents too!

When is Grandparent's Day?

Grandparent's Day is held on the Friday of Catholic Schools Week (typically the last week in January). Grandparents or a substitute are invited to attend mass, visit their grandchildren's classrooms and socialize with other NDS Grandparents.

When is Catholic Schools Week?

Catholic Schools Week is typically the last week in January. The week is kicked off with an all school Sunday mass and book fair to support our library. The balance of the week is filled with fun events for the kids such as pajama day or Sports day and is finished out with a half day on Grandparent's Day.

Does the school do anything special for Holy Week?

The events of Holy Week are reenacted throughout the week by the various grades. Everyone participates in this special celebration. Watch for announcements from your child's teacher as well as the Husky Hotline. As always, you are invited to participate.

Does the school have other any fundraisers other than Fall Festival, Scrip and Auction?

The Kindergarten-3rd grades participate in the St. Jude's Hospital Math-A-Thon each Spring. Your child will bring home information about this. The PTO may sell Cookie Dough, Bulbs or Wrapping Paper also. There is a raffle held in conjunction with Fall Festival that children will sell tickets for.

Does the school participate in the "Box Tops for Education" program?

Yes, we collect "Box Tops for Education" that are found on many items you purchase at the grocery store. Please cut them off and collect them as each one represent 10 cents; this can really add up if we all participate. Please send them to the office.

Does the school have a Christmas Program?

Our Christmas Program is held the last Thursday night before Christmas vacation. It is held in the church and is an incredible display of musical talent! All children participate and dress in their Christmas finest! It is an event you won't want to miss! Feel free to invite your family and friends.

How can I help my child's classroom?

If you desire to contribute to your child's classroom, each teacher has a Wish List that is on the Teacher Website. Additionally, the younger grades have opportunities to work in the classroom with the teacher and students. Please see your child's teacher for more details.

Does the school have a Yearbook?

Yes! We have a beautiful, full color, all school yearbooks that is produced annually. The Editor asks for photos to be submitted to be included from all parents. Make it a point to take lots of photos of your kids and their friends to submit to the Yearbook. Watch the Husky Hotline for an order form.

How do I get fingerprinted so I can work with children at the school?

Pick up a form at the school office and go to a law enforcement office to be fingerprinted. Chico State Police office is very handy in its proximity to NDS. The fees are around \$50. You can also go to the Sheriff's Office in Oroville on a walk in basis, free of charge. A report will be sent to the school and kept on file for the duration of your time at NDS. This is required by the Diocese of Sacramento.

How can I purchase NDS apparel or materials for my child?

We typically sell NDS t-shirts in conjunction with the Fall Festival each year. Additionally, the Student Council has a small student store where you can purchase a small selection of NDS materials.

When do students attend Mass?

An all school mass is held every Friday from 8:30-9:30 in the church. Each class sits together with their teacher; parents are always welcome to attend. Each week one grade hosts the Mass and participates in all aspects of the Mass. These masses are a very touching example of children expressing the Faith. You will be notified by your child's teacher of the dates of their masses.

What is a Mass Partner?

Kindergarteners are assigned an 8th grade Mass Partner. They will share a variety of experiences throughout the school year. These are very endearing relationships where both kids benefit. First and second grade students have a Best Buddy in 7th and 6th grade respectively.

What kinds of things do Kindergartners do with their Mass Partners?

They will have a Halloween party, Christmas party complete with Santa, Easter egg hunt, and 8th Grade graduation mass among other things. If your child wants to exchange a small gift (under \$10) with their Mass Partner for any of these events as well as their birthday or graduation, that is optional.

What is the procedure for drop off and pick up in the parking lot?

We strive to be safe & courteous to fellow parents and to our neighbors first and foremost. When entering the parking lot, ONLY right turns are allowed. Please approach the parking lot from the 4th Street side. Enter the lot and follow around the horseshoe; your child/ren will be handed off to you at the top of the horseshoe. Follow around and out the parking lot, again making a RIGHT turn only. This flows very nicely and does not cause any traffic back up. Children should only enter and exit the car from the right side for safety reasons. If you need to talk to a teacher or another parent, please park your car so as to not interrupt the flow of traffic.

What is Extension?

Extension is our before and after school care, available everyday school is in session. This can be used every day or on a drop in basis. It is available from 7:00-8:00 before school, and immediately following school (either half day or full day) until 6:00 pm. If you are interested in using this service, please see Miss Ruth Heskett at the Extension room or Connie in the office. You are billed on a monthly basis for hours used and are responsible for paying this in a timely manner. During Extension, children are able to participate in a variety of activities such as outdoor play, crafts, art, games and Miss Ruth's famous finger knitting.

What is PTO?

PTO is our Parent/Teacher Organization and is the backbone of many of our school activities and events. A meeting is held each month (except December) during the school year, on the second Wednesday of the month (exception is our first meeting in September which will be on September 11) in the Upper Meeting Room, located upstairs in the Junior High building. You are required to attend 4 meetings per year, however you are encouraged to come to all meetings. Child care is always provided.

What does PTO do?

PTO is the sponsor of our major fundraisers including Fall Festival (in conjunction with St. John's Church), Spring Gala Auction, Cookie Dough/Fall Bulbs (if held), and Scrip. Our Hot Lunch program is also a service of PTO. PTO participates in our Grandparent's Day, coordinates our New Family Mentoring Program and leads our Maintenance/Facility Upgrade Program. These are just examples of the many things our organization does.

Who are our PTO Officers?

President, Jennifer Ross; Vice President, Dori Terrell; Secretary, Mary Johnson; and Treasurer, Pam Gersch. There are a variety of committee chairs under the PTO lead as well. Your Roster will have those names and contact info. Feel free to contact the PTO officers at any time if you have a question, comment or suggestion.

What is the Advisory Commission?

This is essentially our School Board. The members are chosen/elected and serve a three year term.

What is the Roster?

Each family will receive a Roster of all Notre Dame families once you have paid your annual PTO dues. Information includes Family Name, parents and children's names & grades, address, phone and email. This is an incredibly useful resource! Additionally, in the back of the Roster is a business directory of merchants and individuals who support NDS. Please consult with this directory before making purchase decisions. Again, support those who support us!

What do I do if my child is sick?

Please call the office and let Connie know that your child will be out and if you desire to pick up any school work from the day. When your child returns to school, please send a note to the teacher indicating the reason your child missed school along with the dates missed.

What do I do if need to pick up my child during the school day?

Come to the office and get a form from Connie; sign your child out in the binder located on the table next to the principal's door.

What is the best way to get to know people at the school?

This is one of the greatest things about Notre Dame! We have all kinds of opportunities to meet and work with other parents, teachers and staff. Simply introducing yourself to people, coming to the office to ask questions, attending PTO meetings, volunteering on a committee are all fabulous ways to meet people. Your entire experience at Notre Dame will be enriched by the other families you meet. Guaranteed, some of your best friends will be other NDS parents!

What if we are not Catholic?

Being Catholic is not a requirement of our school. We encourage you to get to know the Catholic faith and provide resources for that. We will hold a “Getting to Know the Church” meeting during the first part of school and invite you to attend. In addition, the book “Catholicism for Dummies” is a great resource for those unfamiliar with the church.