



# St. Jerome Early Childhood Center



Issue 2

Monthly Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2023

*'St. Jerome Early Childhood Center, a Catholic Community, provides a loving and accepting environment that fosters respect for all people, by modeling Christian values as our children grow and learn.'*

Dear SJECC Families and Friends,

Congratulations! We are past our first round of illnesses and hurricanes!

The beginning of a new school year can be hectic and uncertain for students and families. I am happy to say that our St. Jerome school family is settling in! Each classroom I visit is a witness to the loving kindness and creative imaginations of our teachers. Students are actively engaged in a variety of hands-on activities to explore their learning environments and grow in faith and friendship. What a blessing to be surrounded by a group of educators who see teaching as a mission of the heart. Our young people need this type of dedication as they leave the comfort of home to start finding their independence. I am very grateful for the hard work of our amazing staff!

I look forward to seeing all of our parents at the upcoming Back to School night next week. Please don't miss this opportunity to learn more about our program policies, visit your child's classroom and speak with our teachers.

May God continue to bless all we do in His name.

Sincerely, Phyllis Steele

## YOUR 2022-23 ECC STAFF

Phyllis Steele, ECC Administrator  
Michelle Sherman, Office Manager  
Kayleigh Sloman, EC2 Teacher  
Melissa Bittenbender, EC2 Asst. Tchr  
Carmen Pollock, EC3 Teacher  
Christina Miller, EC3 Asst. Teacher  
Ashley Chappel, EC3 Teacher  
Milenka Jokanovic, EC3 Asst. Teacher  
Diana Demes, EC4 Teacher  
Samantha Harris, EC4 Asst. Teacher  
Danijela Aslanovic, Substitute Teacher  
Tarah Harrop, Substitute Teacher  
Abigail Martin, Substitute Teacher  
Traci Silverson, Substitute Teacher  
Amanda Taylor, Substitute Teacher



## Back-to-School Night

Parent Orientation  
7:00pm to 7:45pm

Teacher Presentations  
7:45 to 8:30pm

Both parents should attend. No children please.

St. Jerome Early Childhood Center

# GNOME RAFFLE

Drawing 9/16  
Winner need not be present to win!

Suggested Ticket Donation \$1 each or 6 for \$5!

**GRAND PRIZE**  
**2 TICKETS**  
**RAYS VS. ANGELS**  
**9/20 @ 6:40 PM**

**6 ADDITIONAL WINNERS WILL TAKE HOME A TAMPA BAY GNOME!**

License #C900209

**Join us for our Fall Family Picnic!**

**12 – 2pm Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup>  
on the ECC Playground**

**Bring your lawn chairs and a picnic lunch.**

**We will supply waters, snacks, face-painting and crafts!**

**Raffle winners will be drawn at the picnic!**



**FOR YOUR INFORMATION:**

- ◆ **Vision Screenings:** Screenings by Preserve Vision will be conducted Tuesday, September 19 and Wednesday, September 20, 2023. All students are eligible for this free service but must submit a permission slip no later than Friday, September 15. You will receive detailed information in your child's backpack next week. Thank you.
- ◆ **Parent-Teacher Conferences:** St. Jerome ECC hosts formal conferences twice each school year. The purpose of our first conference is to give our parents and teachers the opportunity to meet with one another and share how the children are adjusting to the new school environment. Our fall conferences will be held on Friday, October 13 (children will not attend school on this day). All parents are asked to sign up for their conference via Sign-Up Genius. You will receive an email to sign in mid-September. You will also receive an email confirming your conference time. If you do not receive the sign-up email, please contact the ECC office.
- ◆ **Enrichment Classes:** These are afternoon classes available to our EC3 and EC4/VPK students only. We are beginning enrichment classes this month! Stretch n Grow will offer Music, Sports and Dance. Coach Lexi will be present at our Back to School night to explain a little more about their wonderful program. Families may enroll at [www.SNG-STPETE.com](http://www.SNG-STPETE.com). Families must register and pay for Extended Care for that afternoon. Contact the office if you are interested in having your child join. Our SJECC staff will offer enrichment classes too! These are available at no extra cost – only the extended care fee will apply. Mondays will be Spanish with Mrs. Pollock and Fridays will be Kidding Around Yoga with Mrs. Kayleigh. Call the office for more details.
- ◆ **Classroom Family Directories:** Classroom Directories are available on our Brightwheel under Paperwork – Shared Files. Use this for contacting other families but never for solicitation.
- ◆ **Weekly Notes from Classroom Teachers:** Families receive Weekly Classroom Notes each Friday via the Brightwheel app. Each teacher includes a recap of all the wonderful things that happened in that week as well as details for the upcoming week or month, allowing families to have awareness of topics, skills, literature, themes, etc. that will be introduced in each particular classroom. Families may want to expand upon these lessons or use the notes to spark conversations with your child about their day. A more detailed lesson plan is posted outside each classroom door on Mondays outlining additional happenings for the week ahead.
- ◆ **Communication Folders:** Each classroom has set up a Communication Folder for each child that comes home to families every day for communication purposes. Please feel free to correspond with your child's teacher in this daily folder. On the last day of the week, the folder will contain important papers and information. Please review the items in the folder. Please take out the items each week and review them to stay current with all school happenings. Please return the folders to your child's teacher on the first day his/her school week.
- ◆ **PCLB Required Forms:** The Pinellas County Licensing Board has two required forms that will need your signatures this month. The distracted Driver and Flu brochures are posted in Brightwheel for you to read. Next week in carline, we will collect your signature on a separate form to acknowledge that you read the two brochures. Thank you in advance.
- ◆ **Four Year Olds:** Our four-year old classes receive an "On Track to Kindergarten" activity sheet and letter of the week page in their Communication folder each Friday (beginning this week). These "homework" pages will come home to extend skills introduced at school and offer families ways to work together on developmentally appropriate experiences. (It is not required that the page be returned but children are more than welcome to show their teacher their work!)



Thank you for supporting our  
**Fall Mum Fundraiser!**  
We were able to earn  
\$1,200.00 for our school!  
We are looking for volunteers  
to help hand out plants on  
September 28<sup>th</sup>. Call the office  
if you are available.  
Thank you very much!

## REMINDERS:

- ◆ **Car Line Safety:** For our carline to function safely and efficiently, please have your child's car seat on the side closest to our building, do not pass, do not park by the pond and walk through carline. Do pull to another part of campus to securely buckle your child. Do be patient with us and with one another. We appreciate it!
- ◆ **Illness:** Please do not send your child to school if he or she has any signs of illness. Please report all absences to the office. Do not return to school unless fever-free (without medication) for 48 HOURS. Thank you for helping us keep all our students healthy!
- ◆ **Children's Birthdays:** Individual children will be recognized by their teachers on their birthdays, but treats are not allowed to be sent to school for children's birthdays. Families are invited to come to their child's classroom on their birthday to read a book or play a game with the class. *If interested in doing this, please contact the ECC office or coordinate with your child's teacher.* When inviting St. Jerome ECC children to an individual child's birthday, invitations may be sent home through school, only if all children in that class are invited. Parents are asked to give those invitations to the classroom teacher who will distribute the invitations.
- ◆ **Extended Day Billings:** Invoices for "as needed" Extended Day will come home via email the first week of each month for the previous month's use. Additional details can be found in your Family Handbook. Routine and as needed fees are due on the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. A \$25 late fee will be accrued after the 20<sup>th</sup>.
- ◆ **St. Jerome ECC Website:** Families are reminded that school calendars, newsletters, and other current information can be accessed on our website at <https://www.stjeromeecc.org/>. (Paper copies are available on request.)
- ◆ **St. Jerome ECC T-Shirts:** St. Jerome ECC has T-shirts (\$10) available in the center office. We wear these on Mondays (Tuesdays for our T/TH students) and special event days. New this year – we have tote bags! They are \$10 and perfect for students or adults.
- ◆ **Facebook:** Like us on Facebook!
- ◆ **Monthly Calendars:** Monthly ECC Calendars will be sent home and posted on our website each new month. Please refer to the calendars for events and deadlines.
- ◆ **Inclement Weather:** St. Jerome ECC follows the Office of Catholic Schools and Centers (<https://www.dosp.org/>) with regards to school closures in severe weather. At times, we may reopen before the county system, as often public schools are used as shelters. In those cases, families will be contacted.
- ◆ **Parent Library:** St. Jerome ECC has a growing Parent Library that includes books and other parenting materials available for parent to checkout. Topics include: Faith development, parenting, school-readiness, nutrition, siblings, etc.
- ◆ **Extended Care:** Extended Care is available every morning beginning at 8:00 am and every afternoon until 3:00 pm.
- ◆ **Emergency Drills:** Fire Drills will be held each month as required. We had our first drill, and it was a success. The teachers prepared students with lessons about fire safety, and they did a wonderful job lining up and reporting to their stations in a quick and orderly manner. Other emergency drills such as tornado and lockdown will be practiced in the future. These are required safety measures but are always presented in a developmentally appropriate manner for our students with their emotional well-being in mind.
- ◆ **Nutritional Information:** Nutritional guidelines and specific guidelines for those staying for lunch can be found in your Welcome Packet and on the ECC Website. Please review these items and help us encourage good eating habits for our students. Please remember to pack your child's lunch separate from his/her snack. Snack should be in a labeled container and should contain two food groups (per PCLB). Please no gummies, candy, soda, fast-food or choking hazards.

## THANK YOU:

Father Blum for blessing our classrooms!

The Knights of Columbus for purchasing new classroom tablets!

Families who sent in school supplies!

Joanne Biamonte for helping in our office!

The Peacemakers for helping our EC4/VPK students learn about conflict resolution!



August Birthday:

Victor

September Birthdays

Miles, Grace, Kellin, Mrs. Sherman, Gavin



UPCOMING

- Sept. 1 Tuition & Pledges Due (Installment 2 – Thank you!)
- Sept. 4 NO SCHOOL – Happy Labor Day!
- Sept. 7 NO EXTENDED DAY  
**Back-to-School Night** for parents 7:00pm in the Education Building Auditorium
- Sept. 8 Blessed Mother Birthday Celebration – EC4 students sing in Gathering Space of Church at 10:00am
- Sept. 11 Spanish Class begins (during Extended Care)
- Sept. 12 Music Class begins (during Extended Care)
- Sept. 13 Sports Class begins (during Extended Care)
- Sept. 14 Dance Stars Class Begins (during Extended Care)
- Sept. 15 Kidding Around Yoga Class (during Extended Care)
- Sept. 10 Last day for on-time tuition
- Sept. 10 Extended Day Payment Due
- Sept. 16 Fall Family Picnic 12:00 – 2:00pm
- Sept. 19, 20 Vision Screenings (for all students returning a permission slip)
- Sept. 20 Last day for on-time Extended Care payments
- Sept. 24 International Festival at St. Jerome Church (following the 12:30 Mass)
- Sept. 25 Scholastic book orders due
- Sept. 28 Fall Mum Delivery and Distribution (in the ECC parking lot)
- Sept. 29 Feast of St. Jerome ECC Prayer Service in Chapel at 11:30am for our EC3 and EC4 students and families

Father Blum blessing classrooms



Peacemaker Presentation



Next month.....

FLUFF Animal Rescue Service Project

Family Fun Night – Stretch n Grow to provide a free Family Fitness Class!

Parent/Teacher Conferences