



ST. KATHARINE DREXEL ELEMENTARY

...to form a community of faith and learning by promoting a Catholic way of life through Gospel values and academic excellence.

2026-2027

St. Katharine Drexel Elementary-General Back-to-School Information

Parental Covenant

Since as parents you are the primary educator of your children, you will participate in the education of your children by:

- ...recognizing that all that we are and have is a gift from God*
- ...promoting positive attitudes toward school at home and in the community*
- ...bringing concerns about your child directly to the teacher*
- ...showing respect for the teacher as a professional person working for the well-being of your child*
- ...following the policies of the school*
- ...attending Mass on weekends and holy days with your children (Catholics)*
- ...promoting family prayer at home and faith traditions at home*

First Day of School: Kindergarten-6th Grade

Kindergarten-6th Grade classes will start the school year on Tuesday, August 18th at 7:45am. Students may begin gathering on the playground at 7:30am. The first bell rings at 7:40am. At that time, students are instructed to line up and they will be walked into the building by their teacher.

First Day of School: Preschool and Preschool Plus

Tuesday/Thursday morning preschool class (PS3) begins on Tuesday, August 18th at 7:45am with a 10:45am dismissal for students not enrolled in Preschool Plus. Each day, please enter through the FRONT DOORS by the flagpole and walk your child to the CLASSROOM door (no earlier than 7:30am). At dismissal time, Mrs. Duran-Garcia will walk the students out to the circle drive-up and meet parents.

Monday/Wednesday/Friday morning preschool class (PS4) begins on Wednesday, August 19th at 7:45am with a 10:45am dismissal for students not enrolled in Preschool Plus. Each day, please enter through the FRONT DOORS by the flagpole and walk your child to the CLASSROOM door (no earlier than 7:30am). At dismissal time, Mrs. Duran-Garcia will walk the students outside to the circle drive-up and meet parents.

Monday-Friday afternoon preschool class (PS5) begins on Tuesday, August 18th at 11:45am with dismissal at 2:45pm. Each day, please enter through the FRONT DOORS by the flag pole (no earlier than 11:45am). At the 2:45pm dismissal time, parents are required to pick up their child at the FRONT DOORS by the flagpole. Students with older siblings at the school, may be picked up by them at the FRONT DOORS by the flagpole and join the car pick-up line.

AM & PM Preschool Plus class begins on Tuesday, August 18th. Each day, please enter through the FRONT DOORS by the flagpole and walk your child to the CLASSROOM door (no earlier than 7:30am). At the 2:45pm dismissal time, parents are required to pick up their child at the FRONT DOORS by the flagpole. Students with

older siblings at the school, may be picked up by them at the FRONT DOORS by the flagpole and join the car pick-up line.

Before and After School Program

Our Before & After School Program will begin on Tuesday, August 18th. Students enrolled in the Before School Program will check in with Mrs. Green or Mrs. Huete at the north breezeway doors. Students enrolled in the After School Program will report to their assigned area at 2:45pm. Students in ASC are required by the state to be signed out by a parent or designated adult using the attendance binder located inside the gym doors. If you know your child will not be attending or have different plans for the pick up person, please email Mrs. Earll (jearll@ogknights.org) or contact the school office (605-275-6994 or handerson@ogknights.org) as soon as possible. **If you need to contact the After School staff between 3:00pm-6:00pm, please call 605-940-4986.**

Student Supervision

Supervision for Kindergarten-6th Grade students on school grounds is from **7:30am-7:45am** each morning. After school supervision is from **2:45pm-3:00pm**. We thank you in advance for your patience and cooperation in keeping our children safe! If not picked up by 3:05 or an alternate plan/unexpected delay has not been communicated, students will be sent to the After School Care Program resulting in a \$15 drop-in fee.

PS-3rd Grade students are NOT allowed to walk to or from the parking lot to the sidewalk unless accompanied by an adult. After school, students will be instructed to stay on the sidewalk until their ride picks them up in the circle drive. It is important that everyone follows these procedures to avoid accidents and injuries. We also ask the parents to keep traffic moving by **NOT PARKING** in the drop off/pick up area (circle drive).

Students biking to and from school **must WALK their bike** once on school grounds (the statue of Mary has been a good landmark). Riding bikes through the parking lot and/or playground areas is **NOT ALLOWED**. Bikes are to be parked in the designated area outside of the north breezeway doors.

School Lunch

School lunch begins on Tuesday, August 18th. School lunch, including an all-you-can-eat fruit and vegetable bar, will be served every school day by our school lunch partner, Lunchtime Solutions. The monthly lunch menu can be found on the Bishop O’Gorman Catholic Schools website.

All Elementary Schools - \$4.00 Paid Lunch Price (Includes: 2 daily entrée choices, milk, and an unlimited fruit and veggie bar)

Milk Only - \$0.55

Adult Meal - \$5.15

Our 4th-6th graders have the opportunity to get ‘seconds’ on the entree at an additional cost: \$3.00.

PAYMENT-Checks/cash can be turned into the office or payment can be online with MySchoolBucks. Log in or create your free account visiting [MySchoolBucks.com](https://www.myschoolbucks.com).

If your child has an allergy, a medical form must be on file at the school. This allergy form should be updated each year **ONLY IF CHANGES** are needed. Please let the office know if you need this form.

Free and reduced price meals are available. Please read the information about this program in your Open House packet when you receive it. This form is **REQUIRED** to be updated each year.

Uniforms

Students are required to wear uniforms on all days except their birthday or those specified by the administration as “dress up/dress down days”.

General uniforms consist of navy blue pants and white shirts of any style and sleeve length with a collar. No decorations, logos, contrasting colors, t-shirts, undershirts or tank tops. Navy blue walking shorts may be worn from the start of school to October 31st and then again in April-May. Navy blue skorts must be no shorter in

length than the tip of the finger when arms are at the side. Any of these items can be purchased at local vendors (JCP, Walmart, Target, Old Navy, Kohls, etc.).

Optional uniform plaid skirts or jumpers for individual schools can be purchased only through Donald's Uniform Company. Black, white and navy blue leggings and/or stretch pants may be worn with the skirt or jumper.

Tennis shoes are required.

Socks with no color restrictions must be worn with all types of shoes.

Elementary navy blue fleece jackets, royal blue sweatshirts, and navy ¼ zip are available to order online. The store link is provided in the Weekly Updates. Please note the August 23rd deadline. Apparel will be delivered to the school in early September and we will distribute it to the students.

On specified occasions, students will have the opportunity to 'dress down' from the regular dress code. These days will be announced in advance and attire must be appropriate. Please keep the following regulations in mind:

- Shirts/blouses must fully cover the midriff
- No tank tops
- No frayed, tattered, or torn clothing
- In determining acceptable length of shorts/skirts, a student may hold their arms at their sides. The length of the garment must be at least to the bottom of the student's longest finger.

Administrator discretion will be applied to identify appropriate dress.

Student Absence

Please try to call the office by 7:30am if your child is going to be late or absent. You can leave a message on the answering machine. If you send an email to your child's teacher that your child is going to be late or absent, please copy the email to Mrs. Holly in the school office at handerson@ogknights.org. **If your child arrives later than 8:00am**, please walk them into the foyer and sign them in. **When leaving during the school day**, a parent or designated adult MUST sign the student out as well as sign them back in if they return to school.

Attendance MATTERS!!!

Attendance is an essential component to a student's academic success. Bishop O'Gorman Catholic Schools expect an attendance rate of at least 95% for all students, or absenteeism of no more than nine (9) days per school year.

Why is attendance important?

Unexpected events or illnesses are likely to occur during the course of a school year. Even if your child misses just a few days here and there, their school performance will be impacted. Also, elementary students are still learning social and emotional skills that will help them throughout their lives. At school, they learn to interact with others, make friends, and build relationships with adults outside their family.

What can parents do?

***Make sure your child arrives at school on time daily. School begins promptly at 7:45am. Arriving at school tardy is a disruption to the entire class, as well as to your child's school routine.

***Try to schedule appointments and family trips outside of school hours/days.

School Mass

Weekly School Mass will be held every Wednesday at 8:00am, with our first Mass held on Wednesday, August 19th. Classes leading the Mass will rotate each week, with Kindergarten and 1st Grade added to the rotation following Christmas break. All parents are welcome and encouraged to attend this special part of our week.

**Preschool students will begin attending our Weekly School Mass later in September.*

Weekend Mass

We go to Mass not simply because it's an obligation. Rather, we go to Mass because it's our loving response to the God who has loved us first. Although our school children pray daily and attend Mass each Wednesday, that's not good enough. **In the months ahead, we encourage our parents to make a commitment to regularly attend weekend Mass as a family.**

Going to Mass becomes increasingly important as kids grow older and face rejection, temptation, and hurt. Being close to God can give them the confidence to stand firm in who they are and what they believe. Now, this does not mean they will not stray. However, we pray that the moral compass (Holy Spirit), will lovingly bring them back.

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

"If God is presented to the child through tangible and meaningful activities, it will do more for the child than just arouse interest; it will create in the child a sense of joy, admiration, and wonder." ~Maria Montessori

This year, we are thrilled to be continuing the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd journey through 2nd grade. Thank you to our dedicated staff who have gone through hours upon hours of training to make this possible.

Building our Atrium each year is a big task and MUCH help is needed to meet the needs of the program. **Any monetary donations you may be able to provide are greatly appreciated.** Checks can be mailed to: SKD Elementary, Attn. CGS Atrium, 1800 S. Katie Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57106. Thank you in advance for helping us offer this experience at SKD, as we guide our students in building their relationship with Jesus.

School Communications from the Office

We will be communicating with our St. Katharine Drexel Elementary families in a variety of ways this year. Please check your email regularly, as **Weekly Updates from the office are sent out each Friday** outlining upcoming events or other important school announcements. If you are not receiving these updates, please let the office know as soon as possible.

Stay Connected

Now is your time to download the Bishop O'Gorman Catholic Schools **mobile app**—designed to keep you connected, informed, and inspired. With the app, you'll have instant access to:

- School and system-wide event calendars
- Messages from administrators
- Knight community stories and spotlights
- **Rooms - platform for elementary classroom communication.**
- And so much more—all in one place!

[Download the App now!](#) and never miss a moment in your child's school journey. Please make sure to go to your app settings, click on notifications, and then click on St. Katharine Drexel Elementary to make sure you are getting notifications from our school! Here is an easy how-to video to get you set up:

<https://vimeo.com/1101595797>

Stay connected. Stay informed. Stay KNIGHT STRONG.

Classroom Communications in Rooms

ALL parent/classroom communication will be sent via ROOMS. If you haven't logged in yet, please do so soon, as we don't want you to miss any information.

1. Download and open the Bishop O'Gorman app on your phone. [Download the App now!](#)
2. Click on Rooms on the bottom of the screen.
3. Click Continue to sign in.
4. Enter your phone number. The phone number will be the same phone number that you enrolled your child(ren) with. Click continue.

5. A list of classrooms your child(ren) is enrolled in will automatically populate. If you are having trouble getting logged in, please reach out to Rachael Kapperman at rkapperman@ogknights.org.

School-Family Organization (SFO)

By enrolling in the Bishop O’Gorman Catholic Schools, ALL elementary families are automatically part of the School-Family Organization (SFO). **The functions of the SFO Parent Advisory meetings will include, but not be limited to, advisory to administration, planning and executing guest speakers/topics for parent education nights, planning and executing community building functions for students and their families, networking for parents, and helping with our annual fundraising. There will be three SFO Parent Advisory meetings and they will be one hour in length.** All school parents are invited to attend, with the goal of at least one parent from each grade level present at each meeting.

For additional information and details regarding the SFO, please read the official charter approved by the School Board located on the Bishop O’Gorman website.

Immunizations

South Dakota requires that any student entering school or an early childhood program is required to present to school authorities certification from a licensed physician that he or she has received adequate immunization for childhood diseases. **Preschool, Kindergarten, and new students must have this information in the school office before attending classes.**

All incoming 6th grade students will be required to be vaccinated with one dose of Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis vaccine, also known as Tdap and one dose of meningococcal vaccine, also known as MCV4. Both of these vaccines should be received on or after the 11th birthday. This requirement will be deferred for students that have not yet reached their 11th birthday. On the 11th birthday the requirement would apply. Please visit with your physician or your local community health nurse to see if your child needs these and other recommended vaccines.

Cell Phones & Wearable Devices

Cell phones and wearable devices (Fitbit, Smart Watch, Gizmo Gadget, etc.) may not be used in any area of the school and/or on the playground, including the Before/After School Care Program. These devices can be distracting, can cause academic integrity issues, and have the potential to be dangerous in cases dealing with school emergencies. Cell phones and wearable devices may be stored OFF in backpacks or checked into the office during the school day. Violations will result in the device being confiscated and held by administration.

Birthdays

If you are planning a birthday party for your child, invitations should not be passed out during school time unless they are for the entire class (or all girls/boys). **To help celebrate your child’s birthday, students may dress up/down on their birthday.** If they have a **summer birthday** they may dress up/down on their half birthday. Because of the potential health risk for students with allergies, latex balloons are not allowed. Any outside deliveries will be held in the school office and distributed at the principal’s discretion to avoid classroom disruption.

Treats need to be ready to pass out and easy to eat so classroom teaching time is not lost.

IMPORTANT POLICY...All treats must be store bought and individually packaged. Examples of acceptable treats: fruit snacks, candy bars, suckers, popsicles, ice cream bars, granola bars, chip bags, Hostess or Little Debbie snacks, etc. Please do not send store bought treats that need to be ‘served’ to students (for example: cookie cake, cupcakes, cake, etc.), unless they are in individual packaging.

Students in Kindergarten-6th Grade will celebrate their birthday with the principal during a pizza lunch. Check the school calendar for each month's date. Students with May, June, & July birthdays will celebrate half-birthdays in November, December, & January.

Infinite Campus

To help your student stay on track, please check their progress in Infinite Campus. If you do not have access to the Infinite Campus Parent Portal app, please contact Mrs. Earll at jearl@ogknights.org and she will provide you with your login information. This is accessible for parents with students in 3rd-12th grade.

Keeping Our Students Safe

Each year, the safety of students and staff remains our top priority. One way we continue to ensure that effective safety measures are in place is by practicing the three main emergency drills: fire, tornado, and intruder. Our practicing consists of the following steps:

1. During pre-service, the staff reviews all emergency drills together, emergency maps/forms/buckets are updated, CPR training is held, and we watch training videos as provided by SFPD.
2. In the first days of school, teachers make time to talk/walk through the three different drills with students and answer any questions they may have.
3. In the first three weeks of school, we have scheduled times to practice live drills. School Resource Officers (SRO) from the SFPD assist during our intruder drill by observing, assessing, and providing feedback.
4. The year-long reinforcement of the importance of "if you see something, say something" applies to EVERYONE: staff, students, parents, parishioners, etc. Being aware of our surroundings is a critical step in maintaining school safety.

SKD Family Tree

All families are asked to bring a **current family photo** for our SKD Family Tree display in the main school hallway. If possible, the photo size needs to be 3x5 or 4x6 and please label with your names on the back. Your family photo can be dropped off in the office on Open House night or your child may bring it in the first week of school.

Follow Us!

Follow school and classroom happenings on Twitter, Facebook, and/or Instagram: @SKDKnights.