



**MORNING
STAR SCHOOL**
Where Futures Begin

LOOKING AHEAD

August 8th

First Day of School

October 31th

Trunk or Treat

Jan. 29th – Feb. 4th

Catholic Schools Week

May 23th

High School Graduation

May 25th

8th Grade Graduation

May 26th

Last Day of School

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Morning Star School

Pinellas Park

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Principal's Perspective

Dear Morning Star Family,

When I reflect upon the 2021-2022 school year, one word comes to mind-perseverance. Perseverance is defined as the effort required to do something and continue doing it, even if it's difficult. 2021-2022 presented challenges and obstacles, but we moved forward as a school community. Our students overcome obstacles every day, from working on a new math skill, learning to tie their shoes or making a new friend, they continue to push forward. If I could pick a book to encompass our school, it would be *The Little Engine That Could*.

We welcomed our faculty, staff, and students back on campus with less restrictions but still in the shadow of COVID. Our school community grew to 89 students. We welcomed new teachers, Mrs. Erin Galley, Ms. Cassandra Crawford, and Ms. Paula Malinowski and Teacher Assistant, Allison Carvalho. Each teacher comes to us with a wealth of knowledge and the joy of teaching. Mrs. Alanna Reynolds Comerford joined the staff as our Office Manager.

In Fall 2021, our parent community donated countless hours to raise over \$67,000 for our Funding Our Future Campaign to support the building of the Achievement Center. For the Annual Auction Fundraiser in March, our parents took that same spirit and generated over \$70,000 with \$21,000 from Raise the Paddle going directly to the Capital Campaign.

In the spring, eight Morning Star Catholic School students completed their sacramental preparation classes. We were thrilled to have these students receive First Communion and/or Confirmation at Sacred Heart Catholic Church during a school mass officiated by Bishop Lynch. Both Morning Star and Sacred Heart Catholic School's student body were able to celebrate this wonderful event in our students' faith journey. As we found ourselves in the middle of construction and lacking space, Sacred Heart Catholic Church generously offered their Parish Center for our 8th Grade Graduation and High School Prom. The Morning Star community is blessed to have Father Kevin Yarnell supporting our mission and students in countless ways.

This past school year, I witnessed the outpouring of support from so many. From the Cathedral of St Jude the Apostle who gives their space for our auction, the Best Buddies programs of Espiritu Santo Catholic School, St. Petersburg Catholic High School student volunteers and the Amigos at Clearwater Central Catholic High School, the Advisory Board who gives of their time, talent and treasures, and every donor big and small. Each of these entities in their own way helps create a place where our students can soar.

It was Mother Teresa who said, "I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples." We are fortunate to have so many supporters cast their stones for Morning Star's benefit, and we eagerly look forward to the great waves of success to come.

Many Blessings,

Susan M. Conza, Principal

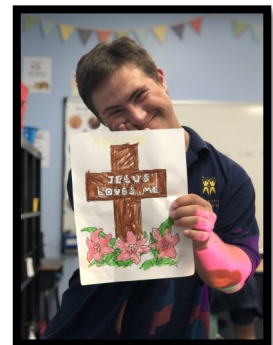
Morning Star Achievement Center

As the 2021-2022 school year began, we were happy to finally begin construction on the Morning Star Achievement Center! Fundraising during a global pandemic was not ideal but we kept focused on our goal. We held a variety of fundraisers online and in person and miraculously raised enough money to begin construction. The uncertainties of 2020 could not stop the determination of all our supporters to raise the funds necessary to make this dream a reality.

On November 2, 2021, we held a groundbreaking ceremony that was attended by many dignitaries from the Diocese, the Mayor of Pinellas Park, as well as our community supporters, board members, families, and students. This gathering brought together those who helped bring the dream to fruition. On November 15, the construction fencing went up and the project began. Throughout the process students were fascinated with all the large pieces of construction equipment and were excited to watch the building slowly come together. It was officially completed on August 23rd and we were thrilled to move in to the new building. Students and teachers say it feels like a “real” high school.

Although construction is almost complete, the task of raising the money is far from over. Price increases for supplies, change orders, and supply chain issues all added to the increase in cost. The Diocese generously granted Morning Star a \$500,000 Bridge Loan so we could complete the project. Now that the building is done, we must begin paying on the loan.

There are no words that can express how thankful I am to everyone who helped make this happen. A dedication and blessing of the Morning Star Achievement Center will be planned for early fall. Invitations will be sent out as soon as the date is determined. We can't wait to share this amazing learning space with all of you.





Creating Our Future Capital Campaign Commitment Form

Yes, I/we want to help ensure Morning Star School's ability to prepare and empower young people for years to come. I/we hereby commit and agree to contribute a total of \$_____ in support of the Morning Star Achievement Center Creating Our Future Capital Campaign.

This commitment will be funded as follows:

- Enclosed is my/our one-time gift of \$_____
 - Check payable to Morning Star School Campaign
 - Credit/Debit
 Card # _____ Exp ____/____ Sec Code# _____
- Gift payable over ____ years (5-year maximum) beginning ____/____/____ to be paid in installments
 - Quarterly Semi-annually Annually
 Initial payment of \$_____ enclosed.
- Please contact me/us about a gift of stock/securities.
- My company will match my donation and I will submit the matching gift form with my payment(s).

Name(s): _____ Contact Name for Business/Organization: _____

Address, City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____ Email: _____

Please also credit this gift to the following additional individuals _____

I/We would like our gift to be recognized with the following Naming Opportunity:
(minimum gift of \$25,000. Refer to Naming Opportunities chart for availability.)

You may publish my/our names in your donor lists as a motivation for others to give.

Please do not publish my/our names in your donor lists.

Signature(s)

Date

Morning Star School of Pinellas Park
4661 80th Ave N, Pinellas Park, FL 33781

Sue Conza, Principal
(727) 544-6036 • sue.conza@morningstarschool.org

*Your contribution may be tax-deductible.
Morning Star School is a 501(c)3 charitable organization, #59-1274421*

Students Receive their Sacraments



Throughout the 2021-2022 School year, Mrs. Erin Galley and Ms. Maureen Cristal prepared 8 students to receive various sacraments. This past May, we were blessed to celebrate them with a Sacrament Mass. Thank you to Most Rev. Robert N. Lynch, Bishop Emeritus for celebrating with us. Thank you to Father Kevin, Father Vijay, and Father Brad for celebrating with us, as well. We are so blessed to have a community of parents, family, friends, teachers and staff that place importance on the sacraments for each of our students.



Support Morning Star school while you shop!

You can support Morning Star everyday by keeping us in mind while you shop!

Amazon Smile

Visit smile.amazon.com and choose Morning Star Catholic School Pinellas Park Inc. as your charity. Then 5% of your purchases will be donated to Morning Star School!



Box Tops for Education

Box Tops are now Digital! Download the free Box Tops for Education app, shop for eligible products, scan your receipt and earn money for Morning Star!



Coca-Cola Gives

Download the Coca-Cola app and you can give back to Morning Star with every beverage you purchase. Just scan the code on the inside of the bottle cap or box of cans and you'll help us continue to do what we do best!



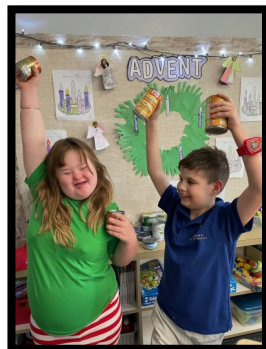
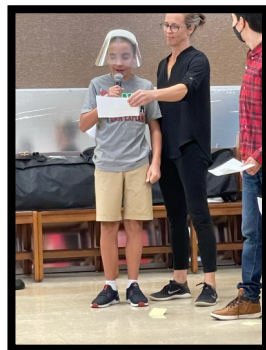
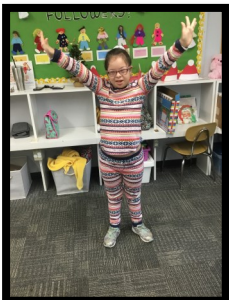
Notre Dame Alumni Club

On May 9, 2022, The Notre Dame Club of Greater Tampa Bay held a “Conversation with Dick Corbett Head Football Coach Marcus Freeman” that benefited Morning Star School. Mr. Freeman is the 30th head coach in Notre Dame’s history. The event was an intimate gathering at The University Club in Tampa where ND Alumni Association Executive Director Dolly Duffy spoke with Coach Freeman and facilitated an exclusive Q&A. Coach Freeman generously donated an autographed football that was raffled off that evening with the proceeds supporting Morning Star School. The ND Club invited representatives of Morning Star School to attend the event: Mr. Chris Pastura, Superintendent, Dr. Ann Davis, Associate Superintendent, Mr. & Mrs. Keith Galley, Advisory Board member Mrs. Denise Reilly and Principal Sue Conza. We thank Advisory Board member, Mrs. Julie Reyes, for her hard work and dedication in connecting Morning Star with the Notre Dame Club and securing Morning Star as the beneficiary of this lovely evening. Mrs. Reyes, on behalf of the Notre Dame Club of Greater Tampa Bay, presented Mrs. Conza with a check for \$4,685. We are so grateful for this generous donation.



Halloween

Halloween at Morning Star is always a FRIGHTFULLY good time! Our teachers and staff surprised the students and dressed up as their favorite Disney Characters with Mrs. Conza as the Fairy Godmother. The students also had the opportunity to dress in their costumes while parents and families gathered for our Annual Trunk or Treat! With over 20 families participating, our students received an abundance of treats to start off their Halloween night.



Christmas

The Christmas Spirit was alive and well at Morning Star this year! Our Annual Christmas Program was complete with a beautiful nativity scene with readings and songs from our students.

Through the month of December, staff and students enjoyed Christmas-theme dress-up days, such as "Dress Like a Christmas Tree" and "Christmas PJ Day". Hot cocoa was enjoyed by all, and many Christmas carols were sung in the halls. We even collected over 800 non-perishable food items to donate to His Heart Society, a homeless mission of Sacred Heart Catholic Church.

Catholic Schools Week

Every year, Catholic Schools across the country participate in a week of faith, spirited activities, and dress up days. The theme for Catholic Schools Week 2022 was "Catholic Schools: Faith. Excellence. Service."

Each day acknowledged an integral part of our community including; our students, community helpers, our nation, vocations, and our faculty, staff and volunteers.

This year, our students and staff celebrated by dressing up in our best superhero gear, team spirit, patriotic pride, and school spirit! Students and staff also participated in a very fun color coded Field Day, Drum Circle, and enjoyed a delicious pancake breakfast.



Congrats, 8th Grade Grads!

Seven students graduated from the eighth grade at Morning Star Catholic School on Thursday, May 26th in a wonderful ceremony in the Sacred Heart Parish Center. Students performed a song for their families and the MSS staff and told us their favorite memories of their time at our school. Their teachers, Mrs. Jennifer Ochoa– Rowland and Mrs. Erin Galley, thanked them and shared kind words from their classmates. Those in attendance also enjoyed a slideshow of images of each of the students throughout their time at Morning Star, some of whom have been with us since they were very little! It was a joyous, touching way to commemorate their time with us and to mark the beginning of their next chapter. Some of these students will transfer to other high schools to start a new adventure while others will continue at Morning Star Catholic School for their High School journey. Wherever their plans take them for next year, we are so proud!



David



Garrett



Jacob



Alok



Alonzo



Cayden



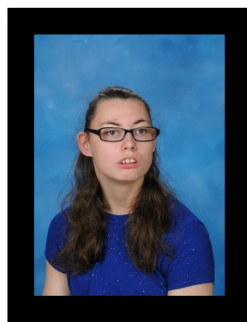
Giana

Congrats, High School Grads!

The 2022 Graduating Class from Morning Star Catholic School included five students who worked incredibly hard during their tenure here. Keith, Vanessa, Ryan, Matthew, and Benton were celebrated in a special service at Sacred Heart Catholic Church on May 23, 2022. We were blessed to be surrounded by family, friends, staff, Fr. Kevin and Associate Superintendent Dr. Ann Davis to celebrate the achievements of our graduates. Each student received a Certificate of Completion for their time at Morning Star School. All five of the graduates will be returning to Morning Star to further their education in the Transition Program, and we couldn't be more excited to welcome them back on campus! Wherever God leads our graduates in the coming years, we pray for their continued growth and success in all of their endeavors!



Keith



Vanessa



Ryan



Matthew



Benton

Tuition Assistance

Morning Star Catholic School is embarking on creating a needs-based tuition assistance program. The majority of our students are eligible for tuition assistance through the Florida Empowerment Scholarship for Unique Abilities (FES-UA), a state funded scholarship for students with varying exceptionalities. Unfortunately, this does not cover the entire tuition amount and many of our families are left owing up to \$6,000. Due to financial constraints, paying this amount is near impossible for some of our families.

Parents choose Morning Star because traditional school has failed to meet the needs of their child. They come here for the small class sizes, catholic education and an environment that supports their individual growth. All of our students enjoy a low teacher to student ratio, occupational therapy, speech therapy, social skills development, music therapy, art, and PE. In order to provide all of these services to our students, tuition rates are comparatively higher than a traditional catholic school.

When new families walk through our doors, it is our mission as Catholics to serve them regardless of economic ability to pay. It is my hope that with the generous contributions from our supporters we can establish a fund that assists families for years to come.





Annual Auction Fundraiser 2022

The 2022 Annual Auction Fundraiser was a lively event that we are so glad can return each year. Our Auction returned to the St. Jude Cathedral Parish Center this year. Our guests enjoyed a wonderful dinner from Da Sesto Italiano Ristorante and a live and silent auction. Our Annual Auction Fundraiser is a time when all supporters of Morning Star School come together to enjoy an evening of fun and giving! The funds raised at this event go directly into the school's operating budget to help us continue to provide a quality, individualized education for each of our students. Save the date and plan to join us for this amazing evening of giving!



With Gratitude

This school year, Morning Star felt more blessed than ever! Between donations for our Transition Program and donations toward our operating budget, we have been overwhelmed with love and support from our family, friends and community supporters. We wholeheartedly thank God for the grace and faithfulness He has shown us through you:

- Morning Star Families
- OTHERS members and all individual donors
- All sponsors of and donors to our *Annual Auction Fundraiser*
- All who donated to our *#iGiveCatholic* and *FundingOurFuture* Campaign
- Bishop Gregory Parkes
- Mr. Chris Pastura, Superintendent
- Dr. Ann Davis, Associate Superintendent
- Krauss/Baschab Family Foundation, Seminole Lanes and Sunrise Lanes
- The Knights of Columbus Council 10157, Council 14456, Council 3580, Council 5737
- Advantage Mental Health
- Blessed Sacrament Catholic church Ave Maria Guild
- Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court of St. John Vianney #1944
- Canon and Lisa Coleman
- Dairy-Mix, Inc.
- Insoft & Hurst Orthodontics
- Guardian Trust
- The Jack Moore Group, LLC
- The Murphy Family
- The Notre Dame Club of Greater Tampa Bay
- Clearwater Central Catholic High School
- Father Kevin Yarnell and Sacred Heart Catholic Church
- Pinellas Park Rotary Club
- Social Club of St. Petersburg
- St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church
- St. John Vianney Catholic Church and School
- St. Paul Catholic Church Columbiette Auxiliary 13657
- St. Raphael Catholic Church
- Traffic Control Products of Florida, Inc.
- United Way Suncoast
- Verizon Foundation
- Morning Star Advisory Board Members: Jennifer Brooks, Linda Champion, Beth Lani, Jack and Kerry Moore, Marianne Pasha, Denise Reilly, Julie Reyes, Mary Ann Smith and Karen Vogel

In Memoriam

We remember the following friends and family of Morning Star who passed away this year:

Lorraine Davis
Paul King
Eric Mickunas
Joe Nuzzo
Irene Ochoa
Antoinette Perry

Morning Star School

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LIKE us on Facebook and Instagram
@MSSPP

O.T.H.E.R.S. Membership

The annual membership dues of
O.T.H.E.R.S. is \$25 per year.
Annual membership is from
January 1 to December 31.

Please use enclosed envelope for
new memberships and renewals.

Thank you!

Morning Star Catholic School, a mission of the Catholic Diocese of St. Petersburg, recognizes the unique educational needs of students. The administration, faculty, staff, and parents work together to provide an ungraded academic curriculum in which students can achieve their potential academically, socially, and spiritually.