



St. Angela School

today's learners, tomorrow's leaders

Let the peace of Christ
rule in your hearts,
since as members of one body
you were called to peace.
And be thankful.

Colossians 3:15

January 2025

St. Angela School introduces *The Sr. Maryellen Callahan Fund for Student Services*

As part of Catholic Schools Week activities, St. Angela has announced an initiative to raise the funds necessary to address the mental health needs of our scholars. A fund named for President Emeritus Sr. Maryellen Callahan, RSM has been launched to provide counseling services; gifts to this fund will be restricted to that need. Until her retirement in 2023, Sr. Maryellen was the counselor for St. Angela, supporting teachers and students alike. Principal Brian Lacey has identified the expansion of these services as a top priority for the near future.

"We have an outstanding academic coach," Mr. Lacey says, "whose work with the children is primarily to help them with study skills, but because she works with the children so closely, we rely on her to identify other forms of help that the child needs. We also have a wonderful counselor who is at St. Angela three days a week who helps children with problem solving and impulse control, both of which are part of social / emotional learning. We've determined that at least 30% of our students need more help than we can currently provide."

Mr. Lacey continues, "We can still see evidence of the disruption in learning that Covid caused and that disruption doesn't always disappear as a child ages—it just manifests differently. In addition

to the pandemic itself, cultural and economic changes that occurred during the Covid years have resulted in widespread anxiety, depression, stress, and anger. These all have a negative impact on a child's ability to learn."

Some funds that were available through Federal Covid support (EANS, Emergency Aid to Non-Public Schools) provided additional academic support, including aides in classrooms but that funding ended in September 2024. Since then, many schools, St. Angela among them, have found that while the resource for coping with Covid has disappeared, the need for that resource has not. The Callahan Fund would help us replace that resource.

The opportunity to contribute to the Callahan Fund is open now, both as a giving option on the enclosed envelope and on our online giving platform, Give Central. Interim Advancement Director Lynn Fredrick promises to share details about goals for the fund soon. "We hope you will be generous in your support of this endeavor in honor of Sr. Maryellen, whose love for our scholars has not decreased in retirement. On her behalf, please help us provide what our children need to succeed in school."

Questions? Please contact lfredrick@saintangela.org for more information.



A note from Sr. Maryellen

"I am thrilled to know that St. Angela's strong commitment to the mental health of our scholars has not diminished, and deeply honored that school leaders have chosen to use my name for the fund that will help sustain their commitment. The ability of a child to learn is dependent on their ability to overcome adversity, whether it is trauma, worry about conflict at home, difficulty controlling emotions or troubling interactions with peers. It is vital that the school, in order to teach the child, helps the child feel empowered to cope with what that life throws at them. Given that faith in their own abilities, they can learn.

I hope you will consider a generous investment in this fund, and that you will pray for our success.

God bless,

Sr. Maryellen Callahan, RSM

American Writers Museum entertains and inspires junior high

Board member Rich Murphy, a long time supporter of the American Writers Museum (and St. Angela) encouraged us to investigate this resource for readers and writers. Mr. Courtney Mott, English / Language Arts junior high teacher, took his students to the museum and gives us this report.

In mid-December the junior high visited the American Writers Museum in downtown Chicago, a fascinating place dedicated to the lives and works of celebrated American authors. The exhibits showcase personal items, manuscripts, and first editions of their works, offering a glimpse into the creative minds behind some of our favorite stories.

A scavenger hunt took the scholars into all corners of the museum, wakening their competitive natures, and a storytelling workshop taught them new techniques to apply to their own writing. The costume room gave them the opportunity to dress as characters from literature. The highlight for many students was seeing the rare book collection. They were amazed to see first editions and handwritten notes from renowned authors. My students loved the interactive nature of the museum and all had positive comments in the 8th grade post-trip discussion. Daryl said it was fun to learn about our culture; Zachary adds it was interesting to learn why these writers wrote; and Khamia thought it was wonderful to see people of our color doing such amazing work.



As a teacher, I found the trip incredibly rewarding. It is great to watch students incorporating what they learned into their assignments, and I can see a noticeable improvement in their writing. The trip experience sparked a new level of enthusiasm and curiosity about literature and the creative process in all of us. It reminded me of the importance of experiential learning and how it can inspire and motivate students.

Mr. Courtney Mott
English / Language Arts



Each week at St. Angela begins with art class with Ms. Julia Pious. Kindergarten, first and second grades have been learning to use materials correctly in class and working on group projects - in January, a circle collaboration. Third and fourth graders have focused on listening and following instructions while learning the proportions of a figure. In fifth through 8th grade, scholars practice still life observation and color theory, creating secondary and tertiary colors.

In February, all art students will research melanated artists (artists of color) and will choose one work of art to duplicate. The goal will be a class presentation of student work at the end of the month.

Its so exciting to see young artists at work. We look forward to what Ms. Pious has planned for the final quarter of the school year when she hopes to add STEM elements to her classes.