



THE TORCH



December 2023

Aquinas Families,

- (Update) Strategic Plan** – Thank you so much for participating in the Parent Survey last month. The feedback was helpful as we begin to build a Strategic Plan for 2025-2030. The Strategic Plan process is being assisted by Eva Fujan. Eva has done numerous strategic plans for our Catholic schools including Bishop Neumann (where he own children graduated from), St. Cecilia's and she has helped us in our last two plans of 2015-2020 and 2020-2025. Following the Parent Survey, Eva presented the survey results to our teachers during our Professional Development Day on November 6th. This feedback was very positive most especially in the areas of spiritual development, challenging academic standards, happiness with the school, recommending the school to others and student preparedness for college and the future. That said constructive feedback was also given and will be taken into consideration in future planning, most especially communication and more communication to new families. Eva then did a SWOT analysis with our teachers breaking them into groups by department receiving feedback of strengths, weaknesses, external and internal challenges and opportunities. Eva and the Board of Advisors meet on November 20th to present these materials to our board and begin the process of updating our 5 Pillars and the definitions. In December, the application process will be opened to have parents, alumni, community members to serve on the five pillar sub-committees and the strategic planning team. Please get involved in this process.
- (Update) Security** – November 3rd and 6th the exterior band room doors and the chapel doors were replaced. This is part of the ongoing project to update our building and provide better security for our students. The front doors are next on the list to be replaced beginning in the Spring. This process was delayed as we will need to remove and replace the concrete in the front entrance to put more solid and deeper footings to properly secure the new front doors. These doors will have a separate exterior door just for parents and an interior door for students to have access to Mrs. Shonka in the office. As an extra security measure, we will be tinting our exterior doors. Again, thank you for your generosity towards this project.
- Parish Service Projects** – A big thank you to our students for their work here at both schools and at our parishes during our morning of Service Projects. Each house was assigned to a local parish during work needed around the rectory or parish grounds. This projects and photos have been running on or Aquinas Facebook page. A reminder how important this is for our community. Not only is it a way for our students to give back but it acknowledges the support our parishes give to Aquinas Catholic Schools. Our budget is roughly \$4 million dollars and over \$2 million comes from our thirteen local parishes. A perfect example of this is tuition. High School tuition is \$4055. The actual cost per student is over \$10,000. These low tuition rates would not be possible without the support of our parishes. Please be generous to your parishes as they sacrifice much for our schools.

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- **OneAct** – Good luck to our OneAct cast and crew as they perform this week at Districts in Centennial. Take State!
- **Winter Sports** – Winter sports has already begun. Good luck to our wrestling and basketball teams!
- **Advent** – This weekend we begin the great season of Advent. A perfect time to renew and recommit ourselves to the Lord as we prepare for Christmas. Please get involved in any parish activities during these next few weeks. As always, a great way of preparation is the healing power of Confession. The Deanery wide day for confession is Sunday December 17th. All parishes will have times for confession. Please go to confession as a family this Advent Season.
- **(Update) Holy Family ELC Openings** - We continue to need both full-time and part-time workers at Holy Family. Again, even if your availability is only a couple of days a week, please consider putting in an application. Online applications can be submitted on the Aquinas website: <https://aquinas-catholic.com/careers/>

Please know of my gratitude for each of you, the students you have entrusted to us, and the sacrifices you make

daily for our school. Blessed Advent to you and your loved ones!

F. Michael Venter



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Middle/High School Principal update- December 2023

Current news

- **Bus driver needed-** Aquinas Catholic Schools needs a route driver for the Shelby/Rising City daily route. If you are interested in a more-rewarding-than-you-might-realize position please contact me! Aquinas covers all expenses for you to get your license and training to become a bus driver.
- **HS semester finals-** Finals will take place on Thursday, December 21st and Friday, December 22nd and will have a different format than in previous years. A detailed schedule is found on a separate page of this Torch. Here's a reminder that semester finals count for 20% of HS grades, so I can't emphasize enough how important it is to be prepared for finals.
- **School improvement/accreditation visit-** Aquinas Catholic Schools will host an external review team for accreditation purposes in late February next semester. Part of this visit will consist of stakeholder interviews, including parents, so we will be asking some parents to sit down with the external review team for an interview. Stay tuned for more information as the visit gets closer.
- **Community service hours-** As the year has progressed, we have had a few different community members reach out with opportunities for students to complete community service hours. If your student(s) needs some ideas for opportunities for community service hours, they can either stop by the office or ask their House teacher. Hopefully your student has already completed some community service hours or has a plan for how and when to complete them as the year continues. House teachers can be an excellent resource in this area.

Upcoming events

- **MS/HS Christmas program-** Wednesday, December 13th
- **Elementary Christmas program-** Wednesday, December 20th
- **HS semester finals-** Thursday, December 21st & Friday, December 22nd (no lunch or transportation either day)
- **Christmas Break-** Saturday, December 23rd through Wednesday, January 3rd
- **NSAA December moratorium-** Saturday, December 23rd through Wednesday, December 27th

Schedule changes/reminders

No school- Friday, December 8th (Immaculate Conception)

1pm dismissal, SAT Day- Tuesday, February 13th

Regular day of school- Wednesday, February 14th (Ash Wednesday)

God Bless!

Spencer Zysset

Spencer Zysset, Principal



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AQUINAS CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Dear Parents and Students,

This is the December 2023 Semester Test Schedule for grades 9 - 12. We are using a different format for finals than in previous years, so please read the schedule below closely. Finals will be taken during the regular class period, but classes will be longer than normal and periods 1-9 will be split over 2 days.

Semester exams count for 20 percent of the total semester grade, so I can't stress enough the importance of being prepared. Please encourage your sons and daughters to prepare for these exams. Some students tend to procrastinate, so a reminder from time to time may help to keep them focused. This is an opportunity for students to raise their grades. Take advantage of it.

Spencer Zysset

**December 2023 Semester Finals Schedule
Grades 9 - 12**

All classes having projects as finals (Art, Computers, Speech, Art and Accounting) should have them scheduled early enough to allow students to have them done by Tuesday, December 19.

Monday, December 18 & Tuesday, December 19: Regular school days. All final projects due today.

Wednesday, December 20: Regular school day. Some teachers may choose to start their final this day if the 50 minute periods on Thursday/Friday won't be sufficient for most students to finish their final.

****Wednesday December 20 is the last day of the semester for PK-8****

NO TRANSPORTATION, NO LUNCH PROVIDED EITHER THURSDAY OR FRIDAY

Thursday, December 21

Students will report directly to their first class

8:00-8:50	1 st period
8:55-9:45	2 nd period
9:50-10:40	3 rd period
10:45-11:35	4 th period
11:40-12:30	5 th period

Friday, December 22

Students will report directly to their first class

8:00-8:50	6 th period
8:55-9:45	7 th period
9:50-10:40	8 th period
10:45-11:35	9 th period

Grades PK-8

Buses will run like usual on Monday, December 18th, Tuesday, December 19th, and Wednesday, December 20th. PK-8 students will not have school on Thursday, December 21st and Friday, December 22nd.



.....from everyone at

Aquinas Catholic Schools!

Thank you to those who donated coats to the Coat Drive! Many people benefit from this!

The David City Optimist Club expresses appreciation to Aquinas Elementary School for its support in hosting the Scholarship Opportunities for Students Fair Sunday October 22nd. The club is donating \$50 to be used as needed at the discretion of administra-

Thank you to Coach Mimick, Gabi Comte, & Mrs. Naiberk for sharing their love of books at the Aquinas Elementary Book Fair!

And to all the volunteers who made it a complete success!



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.....from everyone at

Aquinas Catholic Schools!

Thank You's from the Elementary!

All Saints Party Helpers:

Cortney & RJ Hein, Cris & Rod Heolscher, McKenzie Jakub
Florensia Ramon, Melissa Davis, Natasha Collins, Beth Moulton
Joelle Wacker, Christina Podolak, JJ Miller, Colleen Storm
Angie Krivanek, Miranda Fontenot, Danielle Bohaty, Jennifer Zysset
Melissa Hotovy, Jennifer Hein

*and to all the middle & high school helpers and families who donated prizes & goodies for the games!

Tony & Lisa Meister for donating choking prevention kits for the lunchroom.

Muffins for Mom Helpers:

Amy Didier & Molly Klosterman

Sarah Romshek, Miranda Fontenot, Bridget Reed, April Sypal
Kim Rerucha, Julie Sabata, Amanda Helgoth, Connie Samek, Sarah Zook

*and anyone else we may have missed!

TEENS

ENCOUNTER
CHRIST RETREAT

2023-2024

TEC Dates and

Locations

December 2-4, Nebraska City

December 2-4, McCook

February 17-19, Wahoo

March 16-18, David City

April 12-14, Camp Kateri

Use the QR code to register
today!



NATIONAL MARCH
FOR LIFE

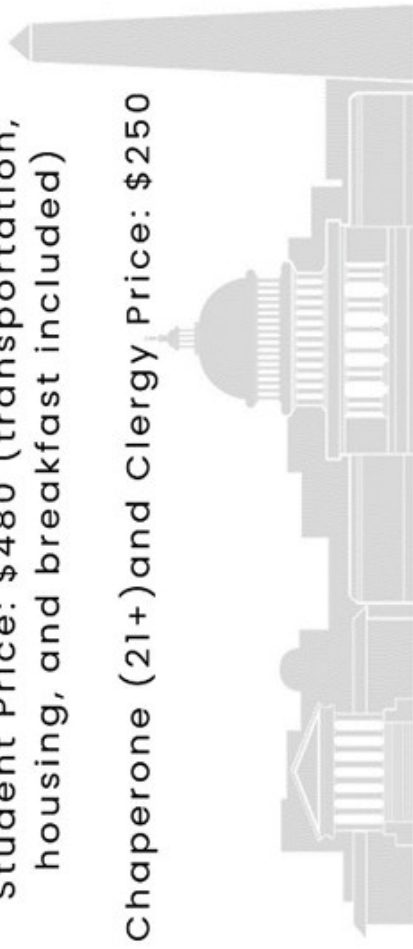
in Washington DC!

January 16-22, 2024

Open to all students in grades 9-12.

Student Price: \$480 (transportation,
housing, and breakfast included)

Chaperone (21+) and Clergy Price: \$250



Scan the QR Code for more information and
to register, or visit
<https://www.lincolndiocese.org/pilgrimages/march-for-life>



Weather Late Starts and Closings Notified through SchoolMessenger



If weather conditions warrant consideration, the administrations of Aquinas Catholic Schools and David City Public Schools will confer and decide on what action will be taken. The administration will attempt to make this decision by 6:30 a.m. If the decision is made to delay or cancel school, SchoolMessenger calls and/or texts will be made to our patrons and we will notify these radio stations: KFOR1240 AM, KZKX96.9 FM, KFRX106.3 FM, KIBZ104.1FM, KTGL92.9FM, KLMS1480 AM, WJAG 780 AM, KEXL106.7FM, We will also notify channel 10/11, channel 8 and channel 7 television stations.

10:00AM LATE START: means no morning preschool



important information to you via SMS text messaging

Have you been receiving text messages from the school?

If not and you would like to get them, please do the following:

1. Log into your PowerSchool Parent Portal account and make sure the correct telephone number is listed OR call the school to double check
2. **OPT IN** by **texting YES to 67587**



**Aquinas Catholic Black Illusion Dance Team
Invites you to our annual dance camp!**

For girls in grades K-5

Saturday, January 20, 2024

Learn the routine 9:00am to 11:30am at Aquinas High School
Perform at halftime of the boys basketball game that evening
at Aquinas High School at approximately 3:30pm

Cost: \$20, includes t-shirt

Camp Date: Saturday, January 20, 2024

Location: Aquinas High School North Gym (use Activity Entrance)

Time: 9:00am to 11:30am

Registration Due: Thursday, January 4

Student Name: _____ Grade Level: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Phone: _____ Parent Email: _____

T-Shirt Size (specify youth or adult): _____

I, _____ give permission for my daughter, _____
to participate in the Aquinas Catholic Black Illusion Dance Camp.

I acknowledge that she is physically able to participate in physical activities. I further acknowledge that, as with any physical activity, there is risk of injury. I will not hold Parent/Coaches, Coaching Staff, Board of Directors, or Aquinas Catholic Schools liable in the case of accident or injury.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Please return this form and payment by Thursday, January 4, 2024 to

Aquinas Catholic Elementary

Checks should be payable to Aquinas Catholic Dance Team. Please contact Black Illusion Dance Coach, Jodi Prochaska, with any questions at prochaskajodi@gmail.com

MONARCH WRESTLING CLUB SIGN UP FORM

WHEN: THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30

**TIME: 6:30PM BEFORE THE H.S
WRESTLING DUAL**

LOCATION: HALL BY SOUTH GYM

NAME _____ GRADE _____

DOB _____

CHOOSE ONE:

BEGINNER: (PRE-K OR FIRST YEAR WRESTLER) \$40 _____

ADVANCED: (K-6TH) \$65 (first child) _____ EXTRA SIBBLING \$50 _____

7TH/8TH GRADE \$20 _____

SHIRT SIZE: YXS YS YM YL YXL

AS AM AL AXL 2XL

ADDRESS: _____

CELL PHONE PARENT 1: _____

CELL PHONE PARENT 2: _____

EMAIL PARENT 1: _____

EMAIL PARENT 2: _____

I give permission for my child to participate in the Monarch Wrestling Club. I release the Monarch Wrestling Club, Aquinas Catholic Schools, and any of their agents from responsibility and/or liability in case of accident or injury. I give permission for the Monarch Wrestling Club to purchase a USA card on behalf of my wrestler.

Parent Signature: _____ Date _____

**Starting Tues
December 5th**

PRACTICE DAYS:

Tuesday and Thursday

PreK-2nd grade 6pm-7pm

3rd-8th grade 7pm-8:15pm

2nd group may go until 8:30 some evenings

Membership includes shirt, USA card, and paid tournament entries which include Aquinas, Schuyler, and East Butler.

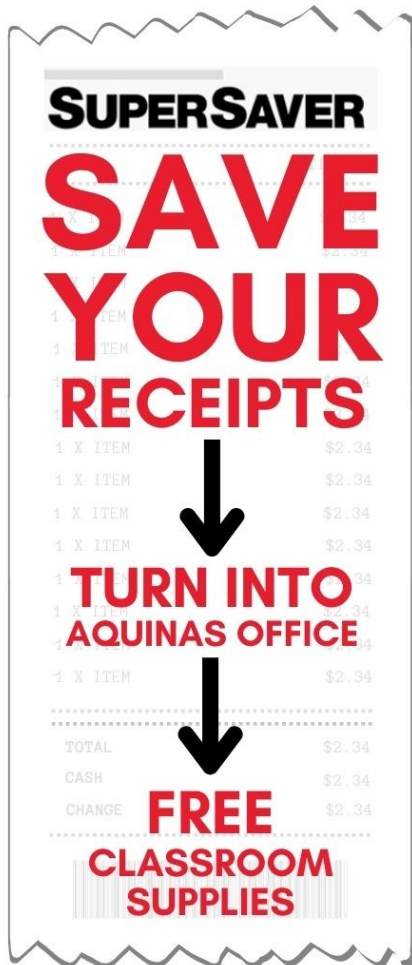
PLEASE TAKE NOTE:

Every family in the club is required to work at our tournament on January 5th. This is part of the requirement this year to get your singlet deposit back.

We will hand out singlets on Dec 7th to a parent who bring a deposit check.

IF YOU SIGN UP YOUR CHILD AFTER MONDAY DECEMBER 12TH, YOU WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR PURCHASING THE USA CARD ON YOUR OWN.

HELP OUR SCHOOL WITHOUT BUYING ANYTHING EXTRA!



Apples
for the
Students

- ✓ Shop at Super Saver from September 1 – March 31
- ✓ Save your receipts and bring them to either school office
- ✓ Your receipts will earn points for FREE classroom equipment, donated by the store

Before you go to Super Saver...

PLAN AHEAD & PURCHASE SCRIP

Physical SCRIP (gift cards) can be purchased

- Aquinas MS/HS Office
- St. Mary's Rectory



Holiday Gifting Checklist

AND BRANDS THEY'LL LOVE

Parents: _____

Co-workers & Employees: _____

Young Children: _____

Babysitter: _____

Teens: _____

Teachers & Administrators: _____

Grandparents: _____

School Bus Driver: _____

Aunts & Uncles: _____

Service Professionals: _____

Neighbors: _____

Public Workers: _____

Friends: _____

Stocking Stuffers: _____

Earn a rebate between 2% and 16% that immediately goes toward funding for Aquinas Catholic Schools.

For example, everyday purchases could add up to over \$1,000 each year.

OVER 550 BUSINESSES
online and through the



1. Create an account on the **RaiseRight app** or on [ShopWithScrip.com](https://www.shopwithscrip.com).

2. Enter our organization's enrollment code: **ADL85AC943322**

3. Link your bank account to enroll in online payments and place your first order.

Purchase physical scrip after Mass, at the Aquinas Office, or St. Mary's Rectory. Contact Nancy Vrbka at 402-367-8835 with questions or for special orders



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S.O.U.L. CLUB...Mrs. Anna Nolan, Moderator



Annual coat drive! All Donations are passed on to Blue Valley Community Action in David City.



Donations toward Angel tree will be passed along by mid December in care of Genesis House. Gift cards for gas or Chamber Dollars Certificates are especially welcome.

at the Aquinas Elementary Book Fair.

Have you ordered your 2023-24 yearbook?

October 1 – November 30 à \$70

December 1 – January 31 à \$80

February 1 – March 31 --\$85

Please list each student & grade separately, and return to the school. If you have questions please contact Ms. Brown at (402) 367-3175 or jean-brown@cdolinc.net

Student _____ Grade _____

Student _____ Grade _____

Student _____ Grade _____



*This is my body
which has been given up for you.*

Luke 22:19

TRULY PRESENT

Aquinas Catholic Schools December 2023

USDA is an Equal Opportunity Provider

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Menu is Subject to Change and will be posted for students knowledge	Milk & water offered Daily Fruit/Veggie/ Salad Bar Offered Daily			1 Mini Pancakes Syrup Hash Brown Cheese Omelet Yogurt
4 Bacon Cheeseburger on WG Bun Tater Tots Condiments Pineapple	5 Turkey Sub WG Chips Condiments Baby Carrots Ranch Peaches	6 Macaroni & Cheese w/ Ham Green Peas Strawberries	7 Chicken Strips Tri Tater WG Roll Corn Applesauce	8 No School Immaculate Conception
11 Ham, Egg & Cheese on WG Croissant Potato Rounds Yogurt Applesauce Cup	12 Popcorn Chicken Bowl Mashed Potatoes/ Gravy Corn WG Roll	13 Chili WG Cinnamon Roll Crackers Baby Carrots Apple Crisp	14 Chicken Bacon Ranch Wrap Sun Chips Broccoli Ranch Peaches	15 Mozzarella Sticks Marinara Green Beans Cookie Oranges
18 Frito Pie Taco Meat, Cheese Sauce, Fritos Seasoned Rice Tropical Fruit	19 Turkey Roast Mashed Potatoes & Gravy Corn WG Roll	20 Fiestada Tri Tater Side Salad Mandarin Oranges	High School Finals NO HOT LUNCH	High School Finals NO HOT LUNCH

December 2023

Aquinas Catholic Schools

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3 1st Sunday of Advent	4 6:00PM Res. G/BBB vs Bishop Neumann 6:30PM MS WR @ Lakeview Tri	5 4:30PM MS GBB @ Lakeview 5:45PM B/GBB	6 Activity Pictures	7 TBA State One-Acts @ Norfolk	8 IMMACULATE CONCEPTION NO SCHOOL 10:00AM WR	9 ACT Testing 8:00AM MS GBB @ Scotus 9:00AM MS WR @ Utica Centennial Invite
10 2nd Sunday of Advent 6-8PM HS FIRE Night	11 4:30PM MS GBB Twin River @ Monroe 6:00PM Res. B/GBB	12 5:45PM B/GBB vs Bishop Neumann	13 6:00PM AMS/HS Music Concert	14	15 ELEM Spirit Day 5:45PM B/GBB vs Osceola	16 9:00AM MS GBB vs S/RC 9:00AM MS WR @ Seward 9:00AM WR @ Wahoo Inv 1:30PM B/GBB
17 3rd Sunday of Advent	18	19	20 Last Day of School PreK-8 1:30PM ELEM Grandparents Matinee	21 High School Finals End of Quarter 2 4:30PM B/GBB @ GACC	22 High School Finals End of Quarter 2 6:00PM WR Tri @ Scotus	23 Christmas Vacation Moratorium
24 4th Sunday of Advent Moratorium	25 CHRISTMAS Moratorium	26 Christmas Vacation Moratorium	27 Christmas Vacation Moratorium	28 Christmas Vacation	29 Christmas Vacation 12:00PM B/GBB @ DCHS Inv	30 10:00AM WR @ Wood River Duals Invite 12:00PM B/GBB @ DCHS Inv
31						



“For today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

Luke 2:11

**AQUINAS CATHOLIC
ELEMENTARY**

1026 5TH ST
DAVID CITY, NE 68632
402-367-3669

**AQUINAS CATHOLIC
MS/HS**

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402-367-3175

www.aquinas-catholic.com

HOLY FAMILY EARLY LEARNING CENTER

622 J STREET
DAVID CITY, NE 68632
402-367-3062