

MATER DEI MISSION STATEMENT

Mater Dei, a Catholic diocesan regional high school nurtures the spiritual, moral, intellectual, emotional, and social growth of young men and women.

In a caring environment, respectful of individual differences, her comprehensive program educates, fosters faith, and develops gospel values.

THOUGHTS FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Let me begin by saying "Welcome!" to our new parents and "Welcome back!" to our veteran parents. Today, I am writing to you with great respect, as I recognize that the support you provide to the students, administration, faculty, and staff plays a key role in our continued success!

As we begin Mater Dei's 72nd academic year, let us be drawn to the Mission of our school. Just as the administration, faculty, and staff are guided by the Mission as they work with our students, we expect our students to develop and to demonstrate attitudes and habits that reflect the Mission. As a result, with your support, we can provide a unique environment in which our students will achieve their full potential.

Let us also be drawn to our continued focus on Mater Dei's future. With the approval of our school board and the Diocese of Belleville, we began our "Rooted in Faith, Building for our Future" capital campaign in May. To date, donors have pledged over \$2.5 million! We thank all members of our Mater Dei community who support this campaign by donating their time, talent, or treasure!

Finally, as we move forward, know that a commitment to open lines of communication is also key. Therefore, in addition to reading the monthly *Knight Life* parent newsletters, please check PlusPortals to track your child's progress and contact his/her teachers for assistance. Please also contact us should you need additional support for your child's mental, emotional, or social well-being.

In closing, allow me to say "Thank you!" in advance for your continued support throughout this school year. Be assured that we recognize the responsibility you have placed on us, and we are committed to making a difference in the life of each of our students!



... Join us ...

WEEKLY MASS
THURSDAYS
10:18 A.M.

We proudly announce that our all-school Masses will be held every Thursday (10:18 a.m.), which provides additional opportunities for our students both to share and to further develop their faith!

NOTE: Grandparents Mass on November 6 will be at 9:40 a.m.

welcome

Join us in welcoming our new students, faculty, and staff, as well as their families!

Students

Class of 2029

two sophomore transfer students

five new international students
(two seniors, one junior, two sophomores)

Faculty

Mrs. Katie Hankins, Theology Department
Mr. Doug Schaffer, Fine Arts Department
Ms. Katie Tebbe, Industrial Education Department

Staff

Mrs. Karen Boeckman, Office of Advancement

together everyone
TEAM
achieves more

Join our active parent organizations both to develop relationships and to share your time and talents for the benefit of our students!

Schedule of Monthly Meetings

Mothers & Friends

second Monday, 7:00 p.m., Lampe Commons
* September meeting at Knotty Pine, Breese

Band Parents

third Monday, 7:00 p.m., Lampe Commons

Fathers and Friends

last Monday, 7:00 p.m., Lampe Commons

SEPTEMBER KNIGHT LIFE

- 1 No School: Labor Day
- 2 School Board Meeting (7:00 p.m.)
- 5 Yearbook Sales Drive Concludes
School Picture Retakes
- 8 Mothers and Friends Meeting (7:00 p.m., Knotty Pine)
- 15 Band Parents Meeting (7:00 p.m.)
- 17 Freshman Mass (9:30 a.m., Cathedral of St. Peter)
- 22 Major-Gift Donors Mass (7:00 p.m.)
- 29 Fathers and Friends Meeting (7:00 p.m.)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

HOMEcoming 2025: HOLLYWOOD KNIGHT

The Mater Dei family will celebrate Homecoming 2025: Hollywood Knight September 29 through October 4! Currently, the schedule includes the following events:

- 1 Parade, Coronation, and Bonfire (6:00 p.m.)
- 2 Mass (10:18 a.m.)
- 3 Pep Rally
- 4 Dance (8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.)

NOTE: Additional themed dress days will be announced at a later date.

YEARBOOK SALES

Through September 5, students may order a 2025-2026 *Knight* yearbook for \$60. (Forms were distributed in homeroom.) After September 5, the price increases to \$65.

QUESTIONS: For questions regarding the yearbook, contact Mrs. Melissa Kunkle or Mrs. Pam Zurliene.

NOTE TO KNIGHT CLUB MEMBERS: Although Knight Club memberships include a yearbook, it is not assumed that all members choose to accept this benefit. Therefore, Knight Club members must still submit an order form.

KNIGHT CLUB

The benefits of a Knight Club membership have only just begun. Thus, it's not too late to join!

To review the six levels of memberships that are available to both individuals and businesses, please contact the office or visit our website ("Athletics" menu, "Knight Club" page).

As always, we thank our Knight Club members for their support!

JUNIOR KNIGHTS

We invite children (maximum age grade 4) to join Junior Knights! Registration — printable and online — is available via our website: www.materdeiknights.org/junior-knights.

While children may join at any time, registrations must be received by September 17 to guarantee a shirt by the homecoming parade (October 1).



WE CARE AND WE HELP

We care that our students may struggle with a variety of issues including, but not limited to, anxiety, depression, grief, spirituality, self-esteem and self-image, relationships and belonging, and mental well-being and coping strategies.

Therefore, we encourage students and parents to contact us for help! In addition to our counseling services, memorials made in the name of the late Bella Brefeld '24 support external services. We continue to extend our gratitude to the Brefeld family for supporting the mental health of our students in memory of Bella!

Mrs. Amy Wobbe, Counselor
(and Bravo, our therapy dog in training)
phone: extension 107
email: awobbe@materdeiknights.org

Ms. Colleen McDermott, Campus Minister
phone: extension 102
email: cmcdermott@materdeiknights.org



VERSES FOR A FAITH-FILLED SCHOOL YEAR

FOR CONFIDENCE: *Philippians 4:13*

FOR COURAGE: *Joshua 1:9*

FOR ENDURANCE: *Galatians 6:9*

TO FORGIVE OTHERS: *Colossians 3:12-14*

TO BE OBEDIENT: *Proverbs 19:20-21*

DID YOU KNOW ...



DIGITAL CALENDAR SYNCING

The “digital” calendar of all events that is provided on our website’s home page will continually sync to a variety of devices. For subscription options, visit www.materdeiknights.org/events, and select “Subscribe to calendar” (bottom right).

PRINTABLE EVENTS CALENDAR

A PDF file of the calendar of non-athletic events is available on PlusPortals (“School Links and Files” window) and our website (“Parents” menu).

ATHLETIC SCHEDULES

Athletic schedules are available on our website, www.materdeiknights.org/athletics-page, and our Snap! site (formerly 8to18), <https://schools.snap.app/MaterDei>

LUNCH MENU AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The lunch menu and daily announcements are available on PlusPortals (“School Announcements” window).

MATER DEI DIRECTORY

Directory information for staff, parents, and students is available on PlusPortals (“Directory” in the menu bar).

NEW PLUSPORTAL APP

The new PlusPortals mobile app for parents and students is available free from App Store and Google Play Store.

This app replaces the ParentPlus and StudentPlus apps, which will be retired October 1.

MATER DEI SOCIAL MEDIA

Enjoy and share the posts published on our social media sites.

- Facebook: Mater Dei Catholic High School
- Instagram: breesematerdei
- Twitter: breesematerdei

2025-2026 CLASS ADVISORS

Class advisors welcome the opportunity to assist your child with his/her academic progress.

Class of 2029	Mrs. Emily Timmermann etimmermann@materdeiknights.org
Class of 2028	Mrs. Christine Gramann cgramann@materdeiknights.org
Class of 2027	Mrs. Jodi Venhaus jvenhaus@materdeiknights.org
Class of 2026	Mrs. Donna Goetz dgoetz@materdeiknights.org



Knight Life Provided Digitally

printed newsletters available by request

Each month, we will provide a digital version the *Knight Life* parent newsletter. Since January 2008, this use of technology has benefited our parents, our school, and our environment!

Specifically, the *Knight Life* parent newsletter will be emailed and posted on PlusPortals and our website, but not mailed home, unless requested.

NOTE: To request receipt of the newsletters by mail, please contact Mrs. Shelly Ritzheimer in the office.

PLUSPORTALS: In the “School Links and Files” window, select the “Knight Life Parent Newsletters” folder in the drop-down menu.

WEBSITE: In the “Parents” menu, select “Knight Life Parent Newsletters.”

REQUIRED FORMS TO RETURN

If you have not yet returned the forms listed below, please do so as soon as possible.



- “Contact Information Form”
- “School Insurance Exemption” form
- “Student Handbook Acknowledgement and Agreement 2025-2026” form

Should you need new forms, please contact the office.

PlusPortals www.plusportals.com/materdeihhs

For the benefit of both students and parents, we utilize PlusPortals as our online link between school and home. Specifically, PlusPortals provides academic, attendance, and discipline information; general school information; and directories for staff, parents, and students. Should you need assistance utilizing PlusPortals, please contact Mr. Dennis Litteken.

ACTIVATION (new accounts only)

For all new accounts, activation information was emailed. If you did not receive this email, please contact Mr. Dennis Litteken. (For individual accounts, different email addresses are required.)

VIEWING GRADES

current quarter grades listed in the “Progress” window on the home page

individual grades in the “Progress” window on the home page, select the applicable class; on the class page, select “Performance” from the menu bar. (Additional courses may be selected from the “Class” drop-down menu.)



PLANNING FOR LIFE AFTER GRADUATION

MATER DEI COLLEGE NIGHT: OCTOBER 15

Mater Dei families are invited to our annual College Night on Wednesday, October 15, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

A variety of institutions (four-year, two-year, trades), as well as the military, will be represented.

In addition, families may attend a financial aid presentation at 6:30 p.m. or 7:15 p.m. in the band room.

PSAT TEST IN OCTOBER

All juniors and high-achieving sophomores are encouraged to register for the Preliminary SAT (PSAT) test that will be offered at Mater Dei (during the school day) **on multiple dates throughout October**. (Mrs. Goetz will inform students of their assigned test date.)

The PSAT assesses critical-thinking, math, and writing skills, and also prepares students for the SAT college entrance exam. Juniors who earn high scores on the PSAT are then eligible for prestigious National Merit Scholarship Program recognition.

Students must register in the College Placement Office. The test fee is \$18 and must be paid by check only (payable to Mater Dei).

COLLEGE PLACEMENT OFFICE ON PLUSPORTALS

Mrs. Goetz is pleased to announce that all parents are enrolled in the College Placement group on PlusPortals. (To access the group, on the homepage, above the main menu, select "Groups.")

This group will include information related to college fairs, college visits to Mater Dei, ACT test prep and test dates, and scholarship opportunities; as well as websites related to the college placement process, including preparing for the ACT and SAT, searching for colleges, applying to colleges, applying for financial aid, and NCAA eligibility. (View the "Links and Files" window and the "Announcements and Alerts" window.)

KEY STEPS FOR APPLYING TO COLLEGES

Application Deadlines Students must carefully review application deadlines, as meeting application deadlines may be a requirement for merit scholarships.

Transcripts Students must utilize Parchment (www.parchment.com) to order transcripts. Mrs. Goetz will then review the order prior to processing the request.

NOTE: If counselor information is requested, students must list Donna Goetz (dgoetz@materdeiknights.org)

Common App In the "Recommenders and FERPA" section for the colleges to which a student is applying ("My Colleges" tab), students must add Mrs. Goetz as the counselor. (Recommenders are also added in this section.)

Mrs. Goetz will electronically submit transcripts and the "Counselor's Report" through Parchment.

Students must verify that the colleges to which they applied successfully accessed their completed application and supporting materials.

FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) The 2026-2027 FAFSA will be available October 1, 2025.

ACT TEST DATES

For registration information, visit our College Placement Office or the ACT website: www.actstudent.org.

October 18, 2025
deadline September 12, 2025

December 13, 2025 (at Mater Dei)
deadline November 7, 2025

February 14, 2026
deadline January 9, 2026

April 11, 2026 (at Mater Dei)
deadline March 6, 2026

June 13, 2026
deadline May 8, 2026

July 11, 2026
deadline June 5, 2026

NOTES

In order for Mater Dei to receive ACT scores, the registration must include our CEEB code (where a student attends school). **The Mater Dei CEEB code is 140-395.**

Test accommodations must be requested at the time of registration. International and ELL students are eligible for extended time.

To avoid extra fees in the future, at the time of registration, students should list potential college choices to which they would like their ACT scores to be sent.

COLLEGE VISITS

Recognizing the importance of college visits for our seniors, we have established the following college visitation policy:

Seniors are provided two school days from August 15 through April 30 for visits. These two visits will not impact perfect attendance.

Seniors must request permission for a visit from the College Placement Office one week in advance. A note with a parent signature must be presented at the time of the request.

Seniors must obtain the signature of a college official on the visitation form provided by the College Placement Office. This form must be presented to the main office when students return to school.