

## Our Preschool is Awesome!

What do you get when you combine a creative and nurturing teacher with a keen knowledge of expectations for kindergarten and a group of enthusiastic little ones in a Christ-centered setting? Magic! Of course it's not actual magic, but St. John the Baptist preschool has been providing a warm and positive early learning experience for three to five-year olds since 2012. This parent-led initiative has quickly blossomed into a state licensed, high quality program.

The preschool is included in the primary wing of our school, with the kindergarten through second grade classrooms, but has its own, security monitored entrance and telephone. Near the entrance are the cubbies for the children's jackets and back packs, as well as the calendar of events and learning topics for each month. A parent or guardian is required to bring each child to the classroom and help ensure they have used the restroom before beginning their day. Parents also take turns in providing a healthy snack for their child's class each day. Students are required to be toilet-trained as well as meet the age requirements for the three or four-year-old classes. Preschool students should wear comfortable play clothes, rather than school uniforms. Students must either be three by September 30<sup>th</sup> for the three-year-old class or be four by September 30<sup>th</sup> for the four-year-old class. Morning classes run from 9:00 until 11:30 a.m. and afternoon classes are from 12:45 p.m. until 3:15 p.m. Parent Communication takes place on a regular basis and parent/teacher conferences are scheduled for January and May.

**Three Year Old Class** The threes' class has an aide as well as a licensed teacher and is designed to introduce children to learning activities, outside the home. Children in the three-year-old class become accustomed to the structure of classroom activity transitions, have lots of opportunities to play and interact with other young children, and are gently introduced into early literacy and math skills and simple prayers and bible stories through circle time and educational games, throughout the preschool room. The classes for three-year-old students meet on Mondays and Fridays between Labor Day and Memorial Day.

**Four Year Old Class** While the four-year-old program continues to be based upon educational play experiences and includes many opportunities for center work, social development, and choices about activities, care is given to ensure students are progressing in their academic readiness skills and independence in preparation for kindergarten. Carla Childers, our preschool teacher, is also a licensed kindergarten teacher and regularly communicates with the other staff in our primary grades. Parents who participate in two years of preschool quickly note how classroom activities and expectations are modified as the boys and girls grow cognitively as well as physically. Skills are assessed frequently and built upon in a warm and caring classroom setting. The classes for four-year-old students meet on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays between Labor Day and Memorial Day.