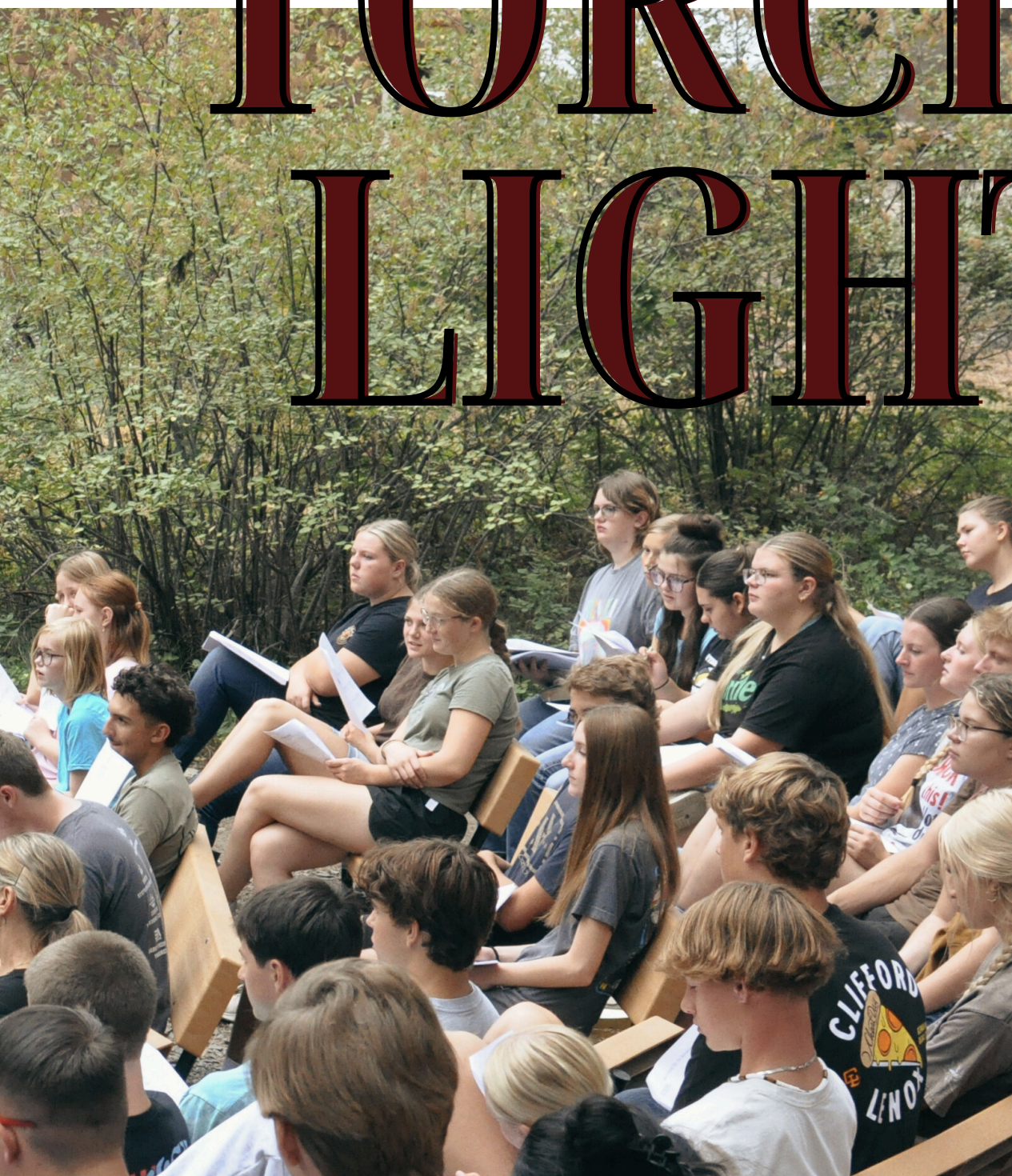


# TORCH LIGHT



WWW.SUNNYSIDECHRISTIANSCHOOL.ORG

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SUNNYSIDE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

SEPT 2025

## FROM OUR ADMINISTRATOR:

Dear Sunnyside Christian School Families and Friends,

Welcome to a brand new school year at Sunnyside Christian! As we begin the 2025-2026 school year together, I want to take a moment to thank you for walking alongside us in the mission of Christ-centered education. Whether you're a longtime supporter or new to our school community, we're so glad you're here.

Each new year brings fresh opportunities—and this year, we are especially focused on two things: Faith and the Future.

Our commitment to nurturing deep-rooted faith in every student remains at the heart of everything we do. From the classroom to the athletic field, from chapel messages to lunchtime conversations, we aim to point students toward a lasting relationship with Jesus Christ. We believe faith is the foundation from which everything else grows.

As we look toward the future of SCS, we do so with hope and purpose. We are raising up the next generation of leaders, thinkers, and servants—equipped not only with knowledge, but also with character, compassion, and conviction. It is our prayer that every student who walks these halls will be prepared to shine brightly in whatever calling God places on their lives.

This Torchlight gives you a glimpse into the people, moments, and milestones that are shaping this journey. We hope it reminds you of the incredible impact of Christian education—and of the community of which you are a vital part.

Thank you for investing in what matters most.

In Christ,



Del Dykstra  
Administrator  
Sunnyside Christian School





# SUNNYSIDE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL TORCHLIGHT



## DEAR FRIENDS OF SUNNYSIDE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL,

The Torchlight is Back!

A lot has happened since our last edition in Spring 2020, and we look forward to sharing updates with you throughout the school year.

The Torchlight will be published periodically and shared in several ways:

- A printed copy will be sent home with the youngest child in each school family.
- Copies can be mailed or emailed to anyone who signs up.
- It will also be available on the school website.

We'd love to send printed copies to area churches! If your church would like to receive them, or if you'd like to be added to our mailing list, please email your name and mailing address (or email address) to:

[torchlight@sunnysidechristianschool.org](mailto:torchlight@sunnysidechristianschool.org)

We're excited to share all that God is doing at SCS!

PTF hosted April the Reptile Lady for a special hands-on show. Elementary and junior high students had a blast!

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### OUR MISSION:

Providing students with a Christ-centered, Bible-based education in which the quality of teaching reflects a commitment to Christ.

## NEW FACES AT SCS



### **MRS. MICHELLE ELENBAAS - 3<sup>rd</sup> GRADE**

Michelle Elenbaas joins us as one of our third-grade teachers at Sunnyside Christian School. She is originally from Maple Ridge, British Columbia and now lives in Sunnyside with her husband, Jason, and their four children — all students at SCS! Michelle has her BA in elementary education and enjoys reading, scrapbooking, playing games, listening to Adventures in Odyssey, exploring, and watching her kids' sports games.

Her first connection to SCS was through her husband, who teaches at the high school, and her second connection came when their children became students here. Now, she is thrilled to be at SCS with her entire family!

Michelle is excited to be in one classroom this year (as opposed to traveling between multiple classrooms like last year) and is especially looking forward to teaching Bible and Art. One of her favorite passages is in Deuteronomy 6, which reminds us to love God and our neighbors and to live by His words as we sit, walk, lie down, and rise. Michelle hopes SCS students are comforted by the truth that God is always with us and that they learn to interact with Him in every part of their day.



### **MS. LISA LEYENDEKKER - 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**

Lisa Leyendekker joins us as our 5th grade teacher here at Sunnyside Christian School. Lisa is an alumna of SCS and holds a Master of Arts in Teaching from George Fox University. Over the past three years, she has gained valuable classroom experience as a substitute teacher and is excited to step into a full-time teaching role this year.

Lisa comes from a family of dairy farmers and loves being outdoors and spending time with animals. She has a passion for reading and always has a growing stack of books waiting to be read! Her love for reading has also deepened her interest in history and learning about people through that lens. She finds historic art fascinating and enjoys painting and drawing whenever inspiration strikes.

Lisa is grateful for the freedom SCS offers to incorporate Christ into academics and is excited to continue growing in the school community she knows so well as an alumna. She looks forward to learning and growing alongside her students this year and is passionate about helping them develop empathy, compassion, and Christlike character as they learn to reflect His love to others.



### **MRS. LEXI KUIKEN - 6<sup>th</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE MATH, 7<sup>th</sup> GRADE BIBLE, 7<sup>th</sup> GRADE HOME ROOM**

Lexi Kuiken joins us as our 6th-8th Math, 7th Bible, and 7th grade home room teacher at SCS. Lexi earned her Bachelor's degree in Education from Washington State University and her Master's in Curriculum and Instruction from Western Governors University. This is her third year of teaching and her first year at SCS after spending the past two years at Liberty Christian.

Lexi and her husband, Dusty, were recently married and moved to Prosser in April. Dusty works as a farm equipment mechanic, and his family farms in Sunnyside. In her free time she enjoys camping, four-wheeling, hunting, fishing, and spending time with family. She is looking forward to a closer commute to school and the change of scenery in this area. Lexi is excited to begin a new chapter at Sunnyside Christian, where she can teach students about Jesus and help them grow into lifelong learners. She is passionate about sharing her own experiences and encouraging students to follow Christ wholeheartedly while also equipping them to share His love with others.



### **MRS. TAYLOR WUTZKE - ASSISTING WITH HIGH SCHOOL VO-AG COURSES**

Taylor Wutzke joins us in assisting with our Vo-Ag courses and as the FFA Advisor at Sunnyside Christian High School. Taylor is an alumna of SCHS (Wolfe) and is currently completing her Washington State CTE certification in Agriculture. She brings a wide range of experience, including livestock care, dairy operations, agricultural mechanics, and an internship as an agriculture teacher. She also completed the Firefighting/EMR/Wildland Program at the Yakima Valley Fire Academy and served as a resident/volunteer firefighter with West Benton Fire Rescue.

Taylor grew up on a small family farm in Prosser, where her family raised beef cattle and show swine. Her early involvement in FFA, 4-H, the Washington High School Equestrian Team, and athletics shaped her passion for agriculture, youth leadership, and teamwork. She is excited to use her skills and experiences to connect students with real-world agricultural opportunities and career pathways.

Taylor and her husband, Jack, live in Sunnyside with their daughter, Hazel, who they welcomed in December. In her free time, she enjoys riding horses and going on walks and hikes with her family. She is grateful for the opportunity to return to SCHS as a teacher, where she was once influenced and encouraged by her own teachers, coaches, and advisors.

Taylor is most passionate about helping students see how agriculture reflects God's creation and how their skills can be used to glorify Him. She looks forward to building relationships with her students, guiding them through hands-on projects and leadership opportunities, and encouraging them to develop a Christ-centered work ethic and servant leadership.



## TEACHER SPOTLIGHTS & SCHOOL YEAR THEME



Please join Sunnyside Christian School in celebrating **Mrs. Stephanie Dalrymple** on her recent graduation from Dordt University with a **Master's Degree in Education!**

We are so proud of your hard work and dedication, Stephanie, and we rejoice with you in this accomplishment! Your commitment to growing as an educator is a blessing to our students and school community.

Congratulations, Mrs. Dalrymple—well done!



Please join Sunnyside Christian School in celebrating **Ms. Megan Slager**, the recipient of this year's **Spirit of Sunnyside Educator Award**.

Ms. Slager was honored at the recent community banquet for her unwavering commitment to excellence in education. We are grateful for her service and proud to have her as part of our school community.

Way to go, Ms. Slager!

### THIS YEAR'S THEME EXPERIENCING THE HEART OF JESUS

For the 2025/2026 school year we are continuing our journey of "Experiencing the Heart of Jesus" as we grow in faith together. Building on last year's foundation, this year we are focusing on experiencing the love, power, forgiveness, prayer, hope and calling of Jesus.

From August through October, we are reflecting on Experiencing the Love of Jesus by looking at **Ephesians 3:19: "May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all fullness of life and power that comes from God."**

In November and December, our focus will shift to Experiencing the Power of Jesus through **2 Corinthians 12:9: "But He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me."**

We are excited to walk alongside our students as we explore these truths and encourage them to see, experience, and share the heart of Jesus in their daily lives.

# SCHOOL BOARD UPDATE

## 2025-26 School Board Members

Dave Andringa, President  
Rob Faber, Vice President  
Laura Eisenga, Secretary  
Teci Greydanus, Treasurer  
Members at Large:  
Jason Prins, Jason Smeenk, Ryan Van Beek,  
Corinne George, Stacy Alseth



**SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:**  
Back Row: Dave Andringa, Jason Smeenk, Ryan Van Beek, Laura Eisenga  
Front Row: Teci Greydanus, Stacy Alseth, Corinne George  
Not Pictured: Jason Prins and Rob Faber

**Letter From the Board:** The SCS School Board is excited to start another school year! We have had a busy summer of strategizing, planning, and fundraising for our school's capital campaign. As final design plans come together and support continues to come in, we get excited about our future having our entire student body on a consolidated Preschool-12 campus soon!

The individuals on our school board represent nine families, and their children include 15 graduates, and 15 current students. Five of the board members are SCS graduates. The group represents a long-standing commitment to Christian education in the Lower Yakima Valley and considers it a privilege to support SCS as board members.

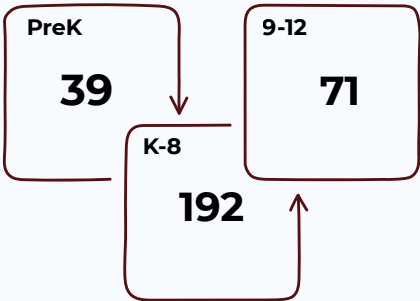
The SCS School Board meets once a month, and each board member serves on at least two committees that usually meet monthly. At board meetings, the administrative staff present reports, and the committee reports are presented and recommendations are reviewed. We are thankful for the many committees that are staffed by knowledgeable and hard-working society members to keep our school and entities functioning and running efficiently.

We are proud of the shining light Sunnyside Christian School is in the Lower Yakima Valley. The past 78 years has been a testimony of God's faithfulness and provision for our school. We step forward in faith that He will continue to bless our hallways with families who desire a distinctively Christian education for years to come.

## ENROLLMENT HISTORY:

|                     |                 |                 |                 |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>2020-21: 248</b> | <b>PreK: 29</b> | <b>K-8: 163</b> | <b>9-12: 56</b> |
| <b>2021-22: 265</b> | <b>PreK: 35</b> | <b>K-8: 166</b> | <b>9-12: 64</b> |
| <b>2022-23: 273</b> | <b>PreK: 37</b> | <b>K-8: 175</b> | <b>9-12: 61</b> |
| <b>2023-24: 304</b> | <b>PreK: 40</b> | <b>K-8: 197</b> | <b>9-12: 67</b> |
| <b>2024-25: 319</b> | <b>PreK: 49</b> | <b>K-8: 197</b> | <b>9-12: 73</b> |

## 2025-2026 ENROLLMENT: 302





# FOUNDATION & TUITION AID

The **Sunnyside Christian School Foundation** provided SCS with a generous annual gift of \$200,000 for the 2024-25 school year! This gift provides for operations, curriculum, and directly helps families through the Tuition Aid program.

Did you know that one of the most lasting ways you can help Christian education endure at SCS for generations to come is to include the SCS Foundation in your estate plans? Your lawyer or financial planner can help you with those plans, or the Barnabas Foundation offers free estate planning services to SCS supporters. For more information, email: [scs.foundation@sunnysidechristianschool.org](mailto:scs.foundation@sunnysidechristianschool.org)

## FOUNDATION GALA

This year's 2025 Spring Gala was a truly special evening of celebration and community. We are grateful to everyone who joined us to support Sunnyside Christian School.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the many individuals who helped make the event a success:

- Candace Bosma for leading the planning efforts
- Dan De Boer and Adrian Smasne, along with the SCHS Junior Class and their families, for serving the meal
- Ron & Sue Newhouse and Dean & Sharla Broersma for catering a delicious dinner
- The SCHS Honors Choir for their wonderful performance
- Mark Buteyn for providing updates on our Campaign
- The Jimenez family for hosting us at their beautiful venue

We are also incredibly thankful for the many volunteers who helped set up, clean up, prepare desserts and appetizers, manage sound and lighting, and serve throughout the evening.

This year's entertainment featured a comedian who brought plenty of laughs—we hope everyone had a joyful and memorable night.

Traditionally, the Annual Foundation Dinner supports long-term investments in tuition aid, school projects, and general funding needs. However, the Foundation Board has designated the proceeds from the 2025 Gala will go directly toward the Campus Capital Campaign. All funds raised will be set aside for this important project as we move toward breaking ground on our new consolidated campus.

Thank you for being a part of this exciting journey with us!



## CHURCH SUPPORT

We are so thankful for the support that churches provide our students through their offerings. As of August 31, we received \$6,412 in gifts from two participating churches. If your church would like to support SCS with offerings, SCS will gladly welcome you!

A special thank you to all who belong to these churches and all you do to train God's kids for life!

## SPONSOR A STUDENT

Your generous gifts to the SCS Tuition Aid Fund are a vital blessing to our school community. We are sincerely grateful for your continued support and investment in Christian education.

Each year, this fund makes it possible for numerous families to provide their children with a Christ-centered education they might not otherwise afford.

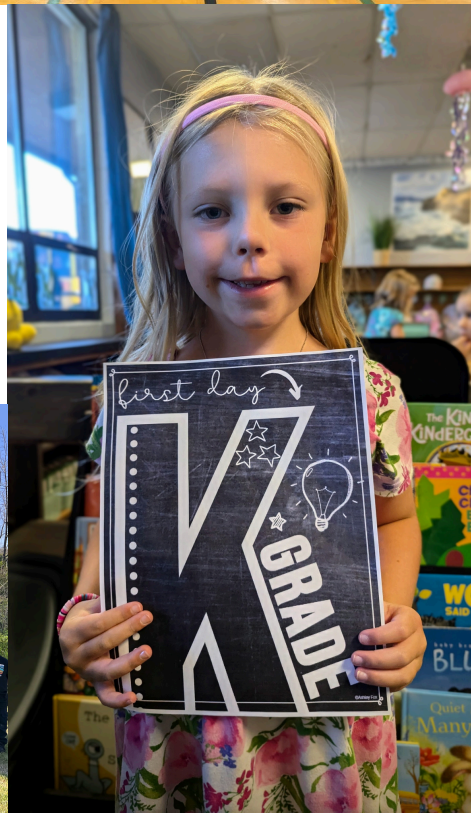
We invite you to prayerfully consider becoming a Sponsor for this school year. Your partnership not only lightens a financial burden—it strengthens families and helps raise the next generation to walk in faith.

For more information, contact Suzanne at 509-837-8995.





# » MOMENTS



These snapshots of our school year reflect more than events; they represent relationships built, prayers answered, hearts shaped, and truths planted. It's in these everyday moments that we see God working, guiding, and building up a generation to walk boldly with Him.







**THAT «  
MATTER**





## CELEBRATING GRADUATES



On Friday, June 6, 2025, thirteen seniors marked the culmination of their faith and learning at Sunnyside Christian School with a graduation ceremony at Grandview Nazarene Church. Congratulations, Seniors!



**Class of 2025:** Back Row: Hailey Van Wieringen, Katelyn Driesen, Sydney Peters, Emanuel Garibay, Blake Riel, Emmett Roskamp, Cody Van Beek. Front Row: Adalee Smeenck, Ashley Redick, Ava Newhouse, Natalie De Boer, Annemiek Prins, Gabbi Raines.

**Graduates, we thank God for each of you and pray you continue to serve Christ and impact the world for Him.**



On Thursday, May 21, 2025, twenty 8th graders celebrated their journey of faith and learning at SCS with a special chapel. Congratulations, 8th graders, as you enter into the next chapter of your education!

Back Row: Ms. Slager, Micah Elenbaas, Santiago Sandoval, Will VanSlageren, Wyatt Simpson, Weston Smeenck, Ramiro Garibay, Ethan Cantú, Easton Stokes, Areessa Navarrete, Khloe Alvord. Front Row: Noah DeVries, Myles VanBelle, Glori Vargas, Ilaya Elizondo, Ava Curfman, Heni VanSlageren, Claire Haak, Jessie Fultz, Ellie Smith, Alina Newhouse



# CAPITAL CAMPAIGN, PTF & DATES OF INTEREST

## CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE:

After the SCS Society meeting in March, the "Forward Together" campaign was launched to consolidate the SCS learning community onto one campus at our current high school location. This campaign includes the construction of a classroom building and a gymnasium. Beyond the buildings, this campaign includes providing a safer learning environment for our children, flexible spaces for differentiated learning, community areas for multi-grade interactions, and opportunities for additional programming. This campaign also greatly increases the number of families we can serve.

Together, we are building not just for today, but for generations to come—developing leaders who will impact the world for Christ. Like the generations before us who had the vision to start and grow SCS over the last 75 years, we believe God is leading us to continue this vision for the next 75 years. “Providing a Christ-centered, Bible-based quality education for distinctively Christian living” is our school's mission.

As of today, the building designs have been finalized. While we wait for blueprints and final cost estimates, we continue to meet with those who are interested in donating time, money, and services. Our goal is to begin construction in Spring 2026, but we need to secure 70% of the cost to break ground. If you haven't already, please prayerfully consider how you, your family, and your friends can be involved in this project.

We are thankful that several committees working within the campaign have led efforts in prayer, fundraising, and design. The Sunnyside Christian community is resilient, resourceful, and ready for our new campus!

For more information and/or questions, contact Del Dykstra at [del.dykstra@sunnysidechristianschool.org](mailto:del.dykstra@sunnysidechristianschool.org)



The Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF) is a volunteer group of parents, grandparents, alumni, and community members working together to support and strengthen the Sunnyside Christian School family. The Parent Teacher Fellowship builds relationships within the school community by supporting teachers, administrators, and students through encouragement, prayer, practical help, events and service hour opportunities.

Upcoming events for this school year include a movie night, prayer walk, donuts with dad, muffins with mom, candy grams, family fun night, elementary school assembly, book fair, and hosting a teacher appreciation lunch. For more information and to get involved contact us via:

email: [ptf@sunnysidechristianschool.org](mailto:ptf@sunnysidechristianschool.org)  
call/text: 509-643-8825

PTF news and updates can be found on the app.

Committee members:  
Michelle Haak & Tiffany Haak  
PTF is under the direction of the Promotion Committee

## DATES OF INTEREST:

SEPT 24 - PRE-K-12 SEE YOU AT THE POLE

OCT 1 - HALF DAY-PARENT TEACHER CONF.

OCT 2 - NO SCHOOL-PARENT TEACHER CONF.

OCT 3 - NO SCHOOL

OCT 24 - LAST DAY OF 1<sup>ST</sup> QUARTER

NOV 11 - NO SCHOOL-VETERAN'S DAY

NOV 26 - K-12 THANKSGIVING CHAPEL

NOV 26 (HALF DAY) THANKSGIVING BREAK

## LOOKING AHEAD:

DEC 11 - 5<sup>TH</sup>-12<sup>TH</sup> CHRISTMAS CONCERT

DEC 18 - K-4<sup>TH</sup> CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

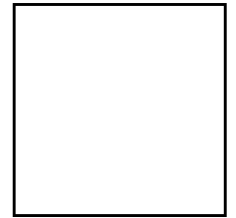
DEC 19 - PRE-K-4<sup>TH</sup> CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

DEC 19 - HALF DAY-CHRISTMAS BREAK

JAN 5 - CLASSES RESUME



**Sunnyside Christian School**  
**1820 Sheller Road**  
**Sunnyside, WA 98944**



## **KEEP UP WITH SCS**

If you want to keep up with SCS news, dates, events, themes, lunch menus, etc. you can find all our information through the following resources:

**Website:** [www.sunnysidechristianschool.org](http://www.sunnysidechristianschool.org)

**Download Our App:** In the app store - **Sunnyside Christian School**

**Weekly Newsletter:** email [sheryl.duim@sunnysidechristianschool.org](mailto:sheryl.duim@sunnysidechristianschool.org)

**Torchlight:** email [torchlight@sunnysidechristianschool.org](mailto:torchlight@sunnysidechristianschool.org)

**Facebook:** **Sunnyside Christian School, SCS Foundation, SCS Auction, SCS Thrift Store.** Current parents can follow **Parents of SCS.**

**Instagram:** [sunnysidechristianschool](#), [knights\\_athletics\\_](#), [sch.student.council](#), [sunnysidechristian.ffa](#)