

History

St. Agatha Catholic School is a parish school in the historic Sellwood neighborhood of Portland, Oregon. Currently, the parish is made up of approximately 450 families. The school has been serving kindergarten through eighth grade students for more than 100 years, since its founding as a Benedictine parish in 1911. On January 1, 1920, the cornerstone of a new parish church was laid, and Archbishop Christie dedicated the completed edifice on October 3rd of the same year. It was the only church ever built of Mt. Angel Abby Tufa stone. The crucifix was hand carved from native wood by Oregon artist, Esther Hult.

After continuous use for 84 years, the original building became a safety concern. Inspections showed the building to be out of compliance with modern fire and earthquake codes. The city of Portland gave St. Agatha Parish the ultimatum: bring the existing building up to code with retrofit upgrades, build an entirely new facility, or close the school.

The parish community met and decided to begin a Capital Campaign to raise the funds needed for a new building in 1997. Many said that this could not be accomplished by a parish of only 400 families of modest income. However, a small group of dedicated volunteers with the help of a part-time, contracted development director were able to raise \$3.5 million in four years.

Phase 1 of the construction, which included the classrooms, office area, and library, was completed in January 2003. Students and teachers moved from the old facility to the new school shortly after the holiday break. The school and parish community worked together to move the entire school in three days. Nearly 200 volunteers worked diligently to help school staff settle into the new building. Moving into a new school provided us with many new resources. Upgrades in the new building include more classroom space, classrooms dedicated to teaching music, science, and the Learning Support Center. A dedicated library space is now available to students. A warming kitchen and cafeteria allow us to serve a full-time hot lunch program. We now have an elevator for handicapped access and individual classrooms have an overhead P.A. system, telephones, access to the Internet and cable television.

After moving into the new school, Phase II of construction began on the gymnasium, cafeteria, and playground. The original two-story brick building was torn down in order to make room for this phase of construction. The playground and gymnasium continued to be under construction during the school year; however both were completed by January 2004.

In an effort to prepare our students for the scientific and technological demands of the twenty-first century, St. Agatha has made Science and Technology a focus within our Kindergarten through Eighth grade curriculum. This initiative became a reality in 2011 with the newly opened Fr. Slider Steuernol Science and Technology Wing located on our second floor. The wing includes two classrooms designated and equipped to enhance our students' learning in science and technology.

Philosophy

St. Agatha Catholic School is an academic and faith -filled community rooted in the traditions and teachings of the Catholic Church.

We recognize parents as the primary educators of their children.

In partnership with the parish, we acknowledge the role of the whole community, family, and school, in ensuring that each student reaches his or her full potential as a child of God.

We value the continued professional development of our educators to remain current on best practices to develop the mind, body, and spirit of each and every child.

Our program is directed toward the mastery of academic skills, while allowing students the opportunity to develop a range of individual talents and abilities contributing to the greater community.

We encourage and expect our students to work toward their academic potential, to serve others, and to grow in their faith and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Schoolwide Learning Expectations

As a St. Agatha Catholic School student, I...

Seek and Share Knowledge

- *I ask questions and communicate my ideas effectively*
- *I will produce quality work*

Think critically

- *I will put effort into solving problems in school work and with classmates*
- *I will challenge myself to reach my potential*

Organize myself

- *I am prepared for class and turn work in on time*
- *I show evidence of planning and thinking in my work*

Respect and Serve God's creation

- *I am a responsible person who is accountable for my actions*
- *I show concern for my community, diverse cultures, and the environment through my service*

Model the Catholic Faith

- *Participate in liturgy*
- *Reverently pray*
- *Include others*
- *Demonstrate knowledge of faith*
- *Empathize with others*