



# ROUNDTABLE

NEWS AND VIEWS FOR AND FROM KNIGHTS

## Parents: Meaningful Questions You Should Ask Your Child's Teacher

by Terry Heick for edutopia



Back-to-school content is usually focused on teachers and students, and as these two groups will have the largest workload ahead of them, that makes sense.

But for students, the ultimate support system is not an expert teacher, but an informed and supportive family. One of the most significant challenges facing formal education in the United States is the chasm separating schools and communities. The more informed a family is, the more seamlessly they'll connect to so many other edu-constructs, from extracurricular activities and tutoring to reading programs and school-related events.

While schools (hopefully) work to update themselves and the way students learn within them, many parents have to work with what's available to them. With the exception of in-depth content like Edutopia's guides, much of the "parent stuff" you'll find through Googling is decent enough, but it can be surface level or otherwise completely unrelated to process of learning. Some common examples:

- "Ask them what they did today."
- "Help them with homework."
- "Help them with separation anxiety."
- "Talk to them about their struggles."
- "Get them a tutor."

But these kind of topical interactions aren't always enough, nor do they do anything at all to create transparency between schools and communities.

*Continued on back*

Mount Carmel School

## Student Council Ready for New School Year



*From right to left: Mount Carmel School's 2016-2017 school year Student Council Officers: Moderator You Jin Jun, President Zeno Deleon Guerrero, Secretary Brianna Hunter, Treasurer Eligiab Camacho, and Vice President Jaqueline Doctor (in spirit).*

Mount Carmel School's Student Council officers for school year 2016-2017 are ready for the new year with ambitious goals and a commitment to serving their school and the broader community. This officers are all seniors: President Zeno Deleon Guerrero, Vice President Jaqueline Doctor, Secretary Brianna Hunter, Treasurer Eligiab Camacho, and Moderator You Jin Jun.

This year, the officers had an advantage in that their election was held at the end of the last school year, which gave them the opportunity to plan and prepare over the past summer.

What also distinguishes this year's officers is that four of them have been at Mount Carmel School since they were in the 1st grade, while the remaining officer, Jun, has been at the school ever since he moved to Saipan when he was in the 4th grade. As a result, they have been friends for about a decade and have grown to work very well together.

As President Deleon Guerrero put it, "This team is really close because we've known each other for so long." He added, "Plus, with our commitment to our school, we share a proactive mindset and look forward to changing things for the better."

Being that close, however, has also made it difficult to start the new year without Vice President Doctor, who is off-island for medical treatment. "We really miss her and pledge to honor her by working hard for our school and our community," said President Deleon Guerrero.

When asked about what they want to accomplish, they were all focused on very specific initiatives.

For his part, President Deleon Guerrero wants to "help all our new students feel that this is and will always be their home."

*Continued on back*

Home of the Knights

## Announcements

### Uniform Update

- NEW UNIFORMS ARE IN!!!
- The official school uniform is the white or navy blue MCS polo shirt and khaki pants, shorts, cargo shorts, skirts (for girls), and skorts (for girls). All khaki wear must be knee-length or below.
- **The uniform code will be strictly enforced beginning Monday, August 15.**

### Traffic & Parking

**REMINDER: DRIVERS MAY NOT PARK IN THE DRIVEWAYS AND LEAVE THEIR VEHICLES AT ANY TIME.**

### Knights Herald

As you may know, the school publishes a daily bulletin, "The Knights Herald". Printed in hard copy, posted online, and sent out via email, the Knights Herald keeps everyone informed of daily schedules, important announcements, and upcoming events, and also provides tips on teaching, daily Gospel readings, and daily quotes. If you would like to sign up for the Knights Herald email distribution list, feel free to email [galvin.deleonguerrero@gmail.com](mailto:galvin.deleonguerrero@gmail.com). We would love to include you on the list so that you can stay updated on what's going at the school.

## In the Future

### Student Activities Fair

Wednesday, August 17  
Activity Period

### Student Leadership Retreat

Saturday, August 27

### Faculty/Staff Retreat

Friday, September 2 (no classes)

## ESLR of the Week

#2: Consistently exhibit Catholic attitudes, values and behaviors.

## Questions You Should Ask

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So, in pursuit of that transparency, below are some questions to better clarify what's happening in the classroom, and then help you decide on the kind of non-superficial actions you can perform at home to truly support the learning of your child. Many of the questions may seem a bit direct, but I don't know any teachers who would take offense to them. In fact, most of my colleagues would welcome the kind of added capacity that questions like these could lead to. Many of these questions are rarely the subject of parent-teacher interactions, but -- well, that's kind of the point.

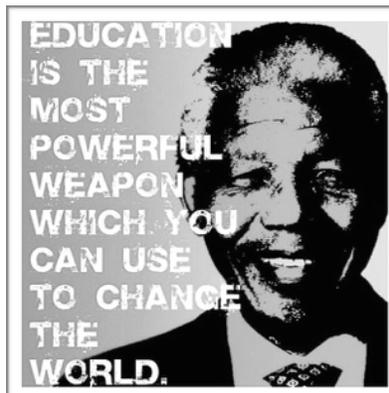
Just don't ask them all at once. In fact, maybe pick two and hope for the best.

### 19 Questions Your Child's Teacher Would (Probably) Love to Answer

1. What academic standards do you use, and what do I need to know about them?
2. How will you respond if or when my child struggles in class?
3. What are the most important and complex (content-related) ideas my child needs to understand by the end of the year?
4. Do you focus on strengths or weaknesses?
5. How are creativity and innovative thinking used on a daily basis in your classroom?
6. How is critical thinking used on a daily basis in your classroom?
7. How are assessments designed to promote learning rather than simple measurement?
8. What can I do to support literacy in my home?
9. What kinds of questions do you suggest that I ask my children on a daily basis about your class?

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10. How exactly is learning personalized in your classroom? In the school?
11. How do you measure academic progress?
12. What are the most common instructional or literacy strategies you will use this year?
13. What learning models do you use (e.g., project-based learning, mobile learning, game-based learning, etc.), and what do you see as the primary benefits of that approach?
14. What are the best school or district resources that we should consider using as a family to support our child in the classroom?
15. Is there technology you'd recommend that can help support my child in self-directed learning?
16. What are the most common barriers you see to academic progress in your classroom?
17. How is education changing?
18. How do you see the role of the teacher in the learning process?
19. What am I not asking but should be?



## Student Council

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Secretary Hunter said, "I want to make sure that the whole school is informed about events and everything that's going on and that everyone has a voice"

Treasurer Camacho wants to improve the school's merit system while Moderator Jun intends to launch the school's very first Student Court.

Collectively, though, the STUCO officers hope to continue cultivating the strong school spirit that has been growing at the school for the past few years. As they put it, this will be the "Year of School Spirit".