ARCHDIOCESAN COUNCIL MEETING

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REPORT ON THE PAROCHIAL SCHOOL EDUCATION

By Maria Makedon, Director

Our Focus

The *Office of Education* of the Direct Archdiocesan District has focused its attention, in late years, to the needs of the parochial day schools located in New York.

In response to a long-standing request expressed by the principals, the *District Office of Education* undertook the responsibility to work collectively with them and lead their efforts at improving the existing curricula and empowering the teachers.

Today, the *District Office of Education* represents the NYC Greek Orthodox parochial day schools at the education authorities on the *federal*, *state*, and *city* levels. Acting in unison with the schools and under the auspices of the Archdiocese, the *Office* has succeeded in benefitting thousands of students and teachers.

The District Schools

Following are the most current statistical data on the schools of the *Direct Archdiocesan District*:

The Schools		Student Enrollment
11	**Parochial Day** Schools	**2,245**
47	**Afternoon** Greek Schools	**3,565**
5	**Early Childhood Centers**	**232**
		6,042 **Total No. of Students**

Note:
5 of the day schools operate state-funded **Universal Pre-K** classes

244 **Greek Teachers** serve in the schools

(Please refer to the charts attached to this Report for more information on the District schools.)

ALLOCATION OF FEDERAL FUNDS FOR THE NYC DAY SCHOOLS

The *District Office of Education* is a member of the ***New York City Standing Committee of Religious & Independent Schools*** - an alliance representing major religious institutions and their affiliated faith-based schools to the education authorities of the ***State*** and ***City of New York.***

The members of this *Committee* hold regular meetings at the ***Bureau of Nonpublic School Reimbursable Services*** of the **NYC Department of Education** to discuss with its director and other staff members issues pertaining to nonpublic schools education such as: the availability of funds, state and city requirements, special education issues, health and immunization regulations, etc. In addition, the *Committee* meets, once a year, with the **NYC Chancellor of Education.**

The Archdiocese and the parochial day schools of New York are represented at the ***New York City Standing Committee of Religious & Independent Schools*** by Mrs. Maria Makedon, director of the *District Office of Education*. Mrs. Makedon also represents the Archdiocese and the NYC parochial day schools at the New York State Education Department and the U.S. Department of Education**.**

As a result of direct communication with the authorities and participation in numerous meetings and conferences, the *Direct Office of Education* was able to secure approx. **$160,000.00** in federal funds for the day schools during the current school year (2010-2011). These funds were spent – as required – on **teacher training** and for the **purchase of materials and equipment**, such as textbooks, smart boards, and overhead projectors. In addition, **two** of the day schools, which are located in low income populated areas (Corona & Bronx), received laptops for the students and storage cabinets for books worth well over **$100,000.00.**

MAJOR PROJECTS & EVENTS

The Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek

A major project of the *District Office of Education* is the development and the administration of the ***Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek***. The *Examination* awards high school foreign language credits to students of public and nonpublic schools in New York and other regions.

The ***2011 Greek Examination*** will be administered on **June 22nd**, and the writers work feverishly to finish in time. The *Office* has informed the education authorities accordingly and has mailed all pertinent information and documents to the *District* schools that have potential candidates for the *Examination.*

A Course of Study (Level A)

The *District Office of Education* is presently working – in collaboration with the *Institute of Modern Greek Studies / Aristotle University of Thessaloniki* – on the development of a **Course of Study (Level A).** This publication will offer guidance to the Greek teachers who prepare students for the *Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek.*

The Annual Student Awards Event

In conjunction with the *Three Hierarchs Feast Day* and in celebration of *Greek Letters*, the *District Office of Education* organizes a special **Student Awards Event** in January of each year to honor the students whose mastery of the Modern Greek language is exemplary. Honorees are selected based on their achieving excellence on the *Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek.*

The Annual Staff Development Seminar

The *District Office of Education* organizes annually an all-day ***Teacher Seminar*** for the professional development of all teachers. The *Seminar* takes place on *Election Day* of each year and consists of **two** components: 1) a series of workshops to train the parochial day school teachers and 2) special presentations to address the needs of the Greek teachers. **360** teachers and administrators attended the *Teacher Seminar* in November 2010.

The Annual Spelling Bee Competition

The *District Office of Education* organizes annually a ***Spelling Bee Contest*** *(in English)* among students of the NYC parochial day schools. Local school competitions start in October and end with the *District Finals* held at the Archdiocese in December of each year. All competing students at the *District Finals* receive prizes from the ***Hellenic Times Scholarship Fund***.

NEW ONLINE Catalog of Resource Books and Audio-Visual Materials

The *District Office of Education* has created its own **web page** www.education.goarch.org where visitors can find information on the *Office's* projects, events, and numerous other useful links as well as the ***Catalog of Books and Resource Material.*** All book orders, however, are handled by the ***Orthodox Marketplace*** at www.orthodoxmarketplace.com.

Submitted by
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