



Direct Archdiocesan District Clergy-Laity Assembly

November 23, 2013

Holy Cross Church, Whitestone, NY

PAROCHIAL SCHOOL EDUCATION

The Education Office

The primary concern of the *Office of Education of the Direct Archdiocesan District* is the young students who attend the parochial day and afternoon schools of the District and the quality of education they receive. To assist the schools in offering a sound academic program – in both the English and Greek curricula – the *Office* provides the schools with curriculum guides, in-service teacher training, and materials.

The *Office of Education* achieves these goals by representing the ***faith-based*** parochial day schools to the education authorities at the federal, state and city levels. The *Office* is well-known to the U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC; the New York State Education Department, Albany, NY; and the NYC Department of Education by attending and participating in various conferences and meetings.

As the advocate for the day schools, the *Office* is making sure that the schools receive – and spend wisely each year – the allocated for them federal funds. For the current school year (2013-2014), **\$51,498.00** was allocated for the NYC day schools earmarked for professional development and materials. Thus, the cost of the 11 workshops geared toward the English program of the day schools, which were part of the District's ***Staff Development Seminar*** held on November 5th, was covered by this money.

The District's annual *Staff-Development Seminar* was organized under the auspices of His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios and was met with great success. Held on November 5th, at St. Demetrios School in Astoria, the Seminar was attended by 273 teachers and administrators. It featured a ***keynote*** speech and an array of **workshops** for both the English and Greek programs. Especially for the Greek teachers, the *Office* had invited well-known educators who teach in the U.S. and in Greece. The teachers evaluated their presentations as appropriate and useful to teaching the Greek language as a foreign/second one.

Furthermore, the *Office of Education* is actively pursuing the recognition by the authorities of the *Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek*, so that the students who are studying the Greek language receive foreign language **credits** upon passing the *Examination*.

(over)

To succeed in this effort, the *Office* developed the “**Modern Greek Language Curriculum - Checkpoint A,**” which follows the philosophy and guidelines of the New York State Syllabus: “*Modern Languages for Communication.*” The *Curriculum* was created by the *Institute of Modern Greek Studies / Aristotle University of Thessaloniki*, in collaboration with the *Office. Checkpoint B* of the *Curriculum* (Regents Level) is currently under development.

It is worth noting that the *Office of Bilingual Education & Foreign Languages* of the New York State Education Department has contacted the *Archdiocesan District Office of Education* seeking its representation on a panel of foreign language educators who would be consulting with representatives of **Pearson Evaluation Systems**, in order to create a framework upon which the NY State could certify teachers of foreign languages. **Greek** was among the **nine** foreign languages represented at a meeting held in Albany on **November 6 & 7, 2013**.

The *Office of Education* will be focusing henceforth on the following two projects:

1. The *Annual Spelling Bee Finals* among the champions of the NYC parochial day schools; to be held in January 2014.
2. The *Student Awards of Excellence Event* in conjunction with the Feast Day of the Three Hierarchs; to be held in January 2014.

The District Schools

For the current school year (2013-2014), there are **eight** parochial Greek American day schools operating in New York City with an enrollment of **2,193** students. This number includes **219** students enrolled in the NY State funded Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) programs.

It is unfortunate that one of the District’s parochial day schools – the **Jamaica Day School** – was forced to close its doors in September 2013. A steady decline in student enrollment for the past several years has had a great impact in the School’s closing.

Note that the *Office* is still collecting data on the number of students enrolled in the Afternoon /Saturday Greek language schools. It will report on the subject later in the year.



Respectfully submitted by
MARIA MAKEDON
Director

November 12, 2013