



38th BIENNIAL CLERGY-LAITY CONFERENCE July 15-21, 2006

Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center
Nashville, TN

REPORT ON GREEK EDUCATION OF THE DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN DISTRICT

The *Direct Archdiocesan Office of Greek Education* has the privilege of being the host to 11 parochial day schools and 47 afternoon Greek language schools. These schools employ 400 teachers approximately.

The enrollment of the day schools for the school year that just ended (2005-06) was 2,066 students. It is estimated that 3,700 students attended afternoon Greek language classes during the same time.

Acting as the *coordinator/facilitator* between the 11 parochial day schools located in New York City and the New York State education authorities for matters relating to the implementation of state curricula and mandates, the *Direct Archdiocesan Office of Education*

- Holds bi-monthly meetings with the day school principals of the area;
- Attends meetings with state and other nonpublic school officials;
- Organizes workshops for the in-service training of teachers;
- Coordinates the annual *Spelling Bee Contest* (in English); and
- Develops and administers annually the Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek.

Conferences & Meetings

Principals Meetings

The *Direct Archdiocesan District Office of Greek Education* holds regular bi-monthly meetings with the principals of the parochial day schools of metropolitan New York to discuss matters of mutual concern and to collaborate on various projects.

On several occasions, the Office invites state officials and education specialists to these meetings to speak to the principals. At the meeting of April 26, 2006, **Ms. Rona Port**, a program manager of Student Support Services at the Nassau BOCES, gave a presentation on the *State's Repository of Student Data* and invited the schools to participate.

And on May 4, 2006, our guests were **Dr. Thomas Schoeck** of the *Office of Curriculum and Assessment* and **Mr. Jim Anderson**, *Office of Nonpublic School Education*, both of the New York State Education Department. They explained the State's curriculum and assessment mandates and entertained questions.

The Conference of Administrators of Religious and Independent Schools

The Conference of Administrators of Religious and Independent Schools is organized annually – in November – by the *Nonpublic School Services Team*, which consists of educators representing the nonpublic school sector and officials of the State Education Department, Albany. It offers seminars and workshops for administrators that range from curriculum and state assessment mandates to nonpublic school law and leadership.

The *Direct Archdiocesan District Office of Education* was one of the **sponsors** of the Conference last year, which was very informative and useful to the administrators who attended. Thus it strongly recommends the participation of all the parochial day school principals in the upcoming Conference this fall (November 2006).

The U.S. Department of Education's Private School Leadership Conference

1. At the invitation of the U.S. Department of Education, Ms. Maria Makedon, the *Director of the Direct Archdiocesan District Office of Education*, attended *The Conference of the Private School Leadership*, on **September 28, 2005**, in Washington, DC. The Conference focused on President Bush's national education policy, the "*No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*." It was attended by a select group of educators, who represented educational institutions – public, faith based, and independent – and organizations from various parts of the country.
2. Following the Conference and in response to an invitation of the *Direct Archdiocesan District Office of Education*, the Secretary's regional representative, **Ms. Valarie Smith**, visited the Archdiocese on **May 9, 2006** and had a meeting with Mrs. Maria Makedon and Mr. Anastasios Koularmanis, the principal of St. Demetrios High School, Astoria. They discussed the availability of federal assistance and services to nonpublic schools, which Mrs. Smith promised to assist us with. Plans were also made for a meeting of all the New York City principals and officials of the U.S. Department of Education.
3. The *Direct Archdiocesan District Office of Education* has called for a principals meeting that will take place on **June 26, 2006**. Our guest this time will be **Mr. Jack Klenk**, Director of the *Office of Nonpublic School Education (ONRE) of The U.S. Department of Education/Office of Innovation and Improvement, Washington, DC*. An expert on equitable services provided by the federal government, **Mr. Klenk** will explain the programs and services that are currently available" to private and faith-based schools through President Bush's "*No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*." Mrs. Smith will accompany him.

Prior to the meeting, Mr. Klenk and Ms. Smith will have an audience with **His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America**.

Projects and Activities

The *Direct Archdiocesan Office of Education* carries out a number of projects and activities on an annual basis. These are:

The Annual Staff Development Seminar

The annual *Staff Development Seminar* is held annually in November, under the auspices of the Archbishop. It aims at offering in-service training to teachers serving in both the day and the afternoon schools of the area schools. Since the last Clergy-Laity Conference, **two** Seminars were held:

1. At *Zoodohos Peghe*, Bronx, NY, on November 16, 2004
2. At *St. Demetrios Cathedral*, Astoria, NY, on November 8, 2005.

The Seminars included 20 workshops and were attended by 500 teachers.

The Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek A Greek Language Skills Assessment Tool

The *Direct Archdiocesan District Office of Greek Education* develops and administers annually the *Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek*, a foreign language achievement test that assesses student proficiency in *listening, speaking, reading, and writing* Modern Greek.

The *Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek* follows the specifications of the *New York State Syllabus: Modern Languages for Communication* and is administered to public school as well as to community school students in grades eighth and above in the State of New York. Students who pass the Examination receive foreign language Regents credits.

The Department of Linguistics of the University at Buffalo/The State University of New York does the evaluation and assessment of the Examination that is given in June of each year. Approximately 20,000 students have been benefited from this Examination during its 33 years of existence.

It is worth noting that the students who achieved a perfect score (100) on the *2005 Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek* were acknowledged at a special **Awards Ceremony** that took place, for the first time, in conjunction with the celebrations of Greek Letters. The Ceremony was held on February 4, 2006, at the *Archdiocesan Hellenic Cultural Center* in Astoria. **His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios** bestowed *The Three Hierarchs Award of Excellence* to the students. Guest speaker was renowned cardiologist, **Dr. William Tenet**.

The Spelling Bee Contest (English)

The *Annual Archdiocesan Spelling Bee Contest* in the English language takes place in January of each year. The *Direct Archdiocesan District Office of Greek Education* hosts and coordinates the event among the finalists (champions) of the parochial day schools of the metropolitan New York area. The District's champion competes in the New York City Finals as the representative of the Direct Archdiocesan Greek Orthodox Parochial Day Schools. Sponsor of the Contest for the City of New York public and nonpublic school students is the newspaper DAILY NEWS.

The Kindergarten Curriculum

The *Curriculum for the Kindergarten* was put on hold for a while. However, the writers have resumed work lately, and under the direct supervision of the Direct Archdiocesan District's Director, Ms. Maria Makedon, considerable changes were made, so that the Curriculum better addresses the needs of the day school students of the District. It has been redesigned, and preparations are underway for its publication next fall.

Visit Us On The Web: www.greekeducation.goarch.org

Following the recommendation of the Greek Education Committee expressed at the **37th Clergy-Laity Conference** (NYC), the *Direct Archdiocesan District Office of Greek Education* updated its web page to make it user-friendly and provide the resources to those interested in learning/teaching the Greek language and culture. The site also offers ample information on the projects and activities of the Department of Greek Education. In addition, plans are under way to join the Archdiocese's *Orthodox Marketplace*.

The Greek Education web page is the result of the collaboration of the Direct Archdiocesan District Director, Ms. Maria Makedon and **Dr. Andreas Karatsolis**, a specialist in web design who also is the Director of Writing at the Albany College of Pharmacy, New York. The project was funded by a grant from **"Leadership 100."**



Respectfully submitted by:
MARIA MAKEDON

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