



# GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

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## DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN DISTRICT OFFICE OF EDUCATION

### ARCHDIOCESAN COUNCIL MEETING

October 30-31, 2009  
The Waldorf Astoria Hotel

### THE DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN OFFICE OF EDUCATION REPORT

Maria Makedon, Director  
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The *Direct Archdiocesan District Office of Education* serves the District's parochial day and afternoon Greek language schools by providing: **a)** in-service training for the teachers (of the Greek and English curricula); **b)** appropriate materials for teaching Greek as a second language; and **c)** *The Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek* for the evaluation of student learning.

As the liaison for the NYC parochial day schools with the federal, state, and city education authorities, the *Office* facilitates the day schools to gain access to various funded services and resources.

To learn more about the operations and works of the *Direct Archdiocesan District Office of Education*, please visit our website at <http://www.education.goarch.org>

### The District's Day & Afternoon Schools

The day and afternoon school students and teachers returned to classes in September 2009 with increased enthusiasm and zeal for teaching and learning.

For the school year 2009-2010, the parochial day schools reported an enrollment of 1,923 students. The number indicates a slight decline as compared to the previous school year (2008-2009). However, the official opening of the "*Efstathios & Stamatiki Valiotis Greek-American School*" of Holy Cross, Whitestone, past September was heralded as a positive sign and increased the number of day schools in New York City to **11**. In addition to the day schools, there are **46** Greek afternoon and Saturday schools and **three** day care/pre-school centers operating in the *District*.

While the student enrollment of the District's day schools has slightly declined, the number of non Orthodox or not of Greek descent students is on the rise. The change in the synthesis of student population, at least in some areas, appears to be more drastic and requires reviewing of the educational standards and the expectations on the part of the parish schools.

The following chart offers a perspective of the student faith affiliation.

### Orthodox vs. Non-Orthodox Students

Day Schools	Percent of Orthodox Students	Percent of Non-Orthodox Students
St. Demetrios Day School, Astoria	100%	0%
W. Spyropoulos Day School of St. Nicholas, Flushing	100%	0%
Three Hierarchs Parochial School, Brooklyn	89.7%	10.3%
D. and G. Kaloidis Parochial School of Holy Cross Church, Brooklyn	67.6%	32.4%
Greek American Institute, Bronx	52.6%	47.4%
The Cathedral School, Manhattan	50%	50%
Jamaica Day School of St Demetrios	45.2%	54.8%
A. Fantis Parochial School, Brooklyn	41.6%	58.4%
St. Spyridon Parochial School, Manhattan	0.8%	99.2%
School of the Transfiguration, Corona	n/a	n/a
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>25%</b>

## SERVICES, PROJECTS & EVENTS

### Advocating for the NYC Greek Orthodox Parochial Day Schools

The *Direct Archdiocesan District Office of Education* has intensified its efforts, during the past five years, to assist the principals of the NYC parochial day schools and, thus, benefit the teachers and students alike.

The *District Office of Education* is a member of the *Standing Committee of Religious & Independent Schools* headed by Rabbi David Zwiebel, Esq., director of the *Agudath Israel Organization*. The *Committee* meets regularly at the *New York City Department of Education*, Brooklyn, and, once a year, meets with the *Chancellor of Education* of NYC **Joel I. Klein** at his headquarters. A meeting with *Chancellor Klein* was held on **May 1, 2009**. The next meeting is scheduled for **December 15, 2009**.

Representing the Archdiocese and the Greek Orthodox parochial day schools of New York, the director of the *District Office of Education*, Ms. Maria Makedon, participates in meetings and attends conferences that are held at the **U.S. Department of Education**, Washington, DC, and the **New York State Education Department**, Albany, NY.

## The 5th Annual Private School Leadership Conference, Washington, DC

On September 23, 2009, Ms. Maria Makedon attended the *5th Annual Private School Leadership Conference* that is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education/Office of Non-Public Schools Education (ONPE), Washington, DC. U.S. Secretary of Education, **Arne Duncan**, addressed the *Conference* participants highlighting the reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA).

The Secretary noted that he had asked Assistant Deputy Secretary **Jim Shelton** to begin facilitating meetings with national nonpublic school leaders to discuss ways to enhance ESEA to ensure better outcomes and services to students and teachers in the nonpublic school community. He stated that he will host a *Listening and Learning Session* with nonpublic school stakeholders in order to hear their ideas for education reform.

## The Orthodox Christian Schools Association

On September 17-18, 2009, Ms. Maria Makedon attended a meeting on Strategic Planning of the *Orthodox Christian Schools Association* that took place in Wichita, Kansas.

The *Orthodox Christian Schools Association* is incorporated in the State of Texas, and its purpose is to promote Orthodox schools in America by providing information, accreditation, curricular resources, and conferences that are specific to the needs and interests of Orthodox schools. It has requested an “endorsed group” status from SCOBA.

## The Benefits for the NYC parochial day schools

As a result of the involvement of the *Archdiocesan District Office of Education* with the education authorities of the City and State of New York as well as the *Standing Committee of NYC Religious Schools*, the New York City Greek Orthodox parochial day schools have greatly benefited by receiving federally funded services and resources. Last year, the parochial schools received approximately **\$78,000** in federal funds that were spent on [professional development](#) and [teaching materials](#).

Almost half of \$78,000 allocated funds were spent on professional development. **Five** teachers, currently serving in our schools, are near completion of graduate work in school administration at **St. John’s University** and at **Adelphi**. Our teachers will graduate with a Masters Degree and ready to undertake the position of a principal if needed.

The amount of federal funds allocated to the nonpublic schools is calculated based on the number of eligible students. The funds are disseminated equitably to the nonpublic schools of the City of New York by the *Bureau of Reimbursable Services/NYC Department of Education* in the form of services and materials

## Principals Meetings

The *Direct Archdiocesan Office of Education* holds regular meetings with the principals of the NYC parochial day schools. At these meetings, the *District Office* invites guests to inform and enlighten the principals on various issues of concern to the schools. The principals have met **twice** since the start of the new school year that is on **September 30<sup>th</sup>** and **October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2009**.

## The Modern Greek Language Comprehensive Examination

On June 23, 2009, more than 500 students took the *Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek*, which is developed by the *Direct Archdiocesan District Office of Education*. These were students of community day and afternoon schools in the states of **New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Virginia, and Pennsylvania** as well as students of four NYC public high schools.

Our **statistics** indicate that of the students who took the *2009 Examination* 25.9 % had attended day schools, 57.1% afternoon schools, and 17% had private lessons. Furthermore, 92.8% of these students passed the *2009 Examination*, 7.2% failed, and 8.3 % or **35 students excelled** (received 100). The average passing grade was **89.3**.

*The Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek* is a foreign language test that assesses student proficiency in **listening, speaking, reading, and writing Modern Greek**. Students who pass the *Examination* may receive foreign language credit in high schools, colleges, and universities.

The *Direct Archdiocesan District Office of Education* considers the *Examination* as a major project because its creation and administration requires the involvement of a great number of educators as well as extensive and tedious work that begins in February and ends in September of each year. To carry out this project, the *Office* uses the services of a 7-member writer team, including the director of the *Office*, two university professors as evaluators, and trains 30-35 teachers to do the proctoring and grading of the student answer booklets.

It is worth noting that the *New York State Education Department/Office of School Operations and Management Services* placed the *Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek* under the State's Mandated Services last year. This decision will enable our day schools to seek reimbursement from the New York State for administering the *Examination* (*teacher preparation time, grading of student booklets, etc.*) as done with any other state mandated exam.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### November 3, 2009 - The District's Annual Staff-Development Seminar

The annual *Staff Development Seminar* for the District schools will be held under the auspices of **His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America** on **Tuesday, November 3, 2009** (*Election Day*), at St. Demetrios School, Astoria.

Organized by the *Direct Archdiocesan District Office of Education*, the *Seminar* will include workshops that cover the English and Greek curricula -- from pre-K to high school grades -- offering in-service training to the teachers serving in the community day and the afternoon schools of the Direct Archdiocesan District. (*A list of all workshops and presentations is attached.*)

Two distinguished university professors from Greece will address the Greek language and culture teachers. Prof. Georgios Papanastasiou, director of the *Institute of Modern Greek Studies* and professor of Linguistics at the *Aristotle University of Thessaloniki* will speak on

***“The relation of the Greek language and its script form throughout the centuries.”*** And Prof. Eleni Skourtou of the Department of Elementary Education/ University of the Aegean, Rhodes will speak on ***“The basic principles of language teaching from the aspect of bilingualism.”*** Nick Katsoris, author and publisher of the *Loukoumi Books and Materials* for young children will be the luncheon speaker.

### November 16-17, 2009 - The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference for Administrators of Independent & Religious Schools

The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese will be represented at the 25<sup>th</sup> *Annual Conference for Administrators of Independent and Religious Schools*, which will take place on **November 16 & 17, 2008**, in Albany, by Ms. Maria Makedon, director of the *Archdiocesan District Office of Education* and 12 administrators of the New York City parochial day schools. This year’s Conference theme is *“Managing Transition – Celebrating Traditions.”*

The *Conference for Administrators of Independent and Religious Schools* offers the opportunity to the administrators of faith-based schools in the State of New York to attend workshops and meet with representatives of the State Education Department. It is sponsored by the *New York State Coalition for Independent & Religious Schools* ([www.nyscirs.org](http://www.nyscirs.org)).

### December 17, 2009 - The 2009-2010 Spelling Bee Competition

The *Annual District Spelling Bee Competition* for the students of the NYC parochial day schools is scheduled to be held on **December 17, 2009**, at the Archdiocesan headquarters in Manhattan.

The schools have already enrolled in **The Scripps National Spelling Bee Program** ([www.spellingbee.com](http://www.spellingbee.com)) and students, grades 5–8, are currently studying for the in-school bee competitions. The winner from each school will participate in the *District’s Competition* to be held at the Archdiocese on **December 17, 2009**.

## RESOURCE MATERIALS

### Our Newly Updated Book Catalog

Our ***Book Catalog*** of recommended books and materials for the teaching/learning of the Greek language and culture has been updated recently. The new and updated ***Catalog*** includes new books, games, and CDs from Greek publishers, which teachers may use as resources for their daily teaching. They are also useful to parents for home schooling.

For a complete reference of all recommended books and materials, please visit the ***Orthodox Marketplace*** at [www.orthodoxmarketplace.com](http://www.orthodoxmarketplace.com) or at <http://www.education.goarch.org>.

### The Kindergarten Curriculum

**1,000** copies of the *Curriculum for the Kindergarten*, developed by the *Direct Archdiocesan District Office of Education*, have been distributed ***gratis*** to the community schools around the Country. It is currently out of print. However, the *K-Curriculum* can be downloaded in its entirety from the *District Office of Education* website: <http://www.education.goarch.org>.



Respectfully submitted by  
Maria Makedon

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