



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE ^{OF} AMERICA

DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN DISTRICT OFFICE OF EDUCATION

ARCHDIOCESAN COUNCIL MEETING

October 14, 2011
The New York Hilton Hotel, NYC

REPORT ON PAROCHIAL SCHOOL EDUCATION

By Maria Makedon, *Director*

The District Schools

The parochial day and afternoon Greek schools of the *Direct Archdiocesan District* officially opened their doors with Agiasmo on September 14th, Feast of the Exaltation of Holy Cross, to thousands of young students.

2,127 students are currently enrolled in the nine parochial day schools of the District. Five of these schools are also the host of **298 Universal Pre-K students**, (UPK is a state-funded program.) bringing the total number of students in the District's parochial day schools to **2,425**. The enrollment figures for the **46** afternoon Greek schools of the District are not yet available.

This year, the *District* witnessed the closing down of two day schools due to financial difficulties that could be attributed to a severe decline in student enrollment and problems arising from bad school administration. The schools, which no longer are in operation, are: *The Transfiguration School*, Corona and *The Three Hierarchs School*, Brooklyn.

The District Office of Education

The *Direct Archdiocesan District Office of Education* has been serving all the schools of the District – day and afternoon – with the same efficiency, professionalism, and respect.

The *Office* provides schools with a) in-service training to all teachers (Greek and English programs), b) curricula and materials for the teaching of Modern Greek, and c) the Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek to assess student learning.

In addition, the *Office* represents the New York City parochial day schools to the education authorities on the federal, state, and city levels, and its director is a member of the *NYC Standing Committee of Religious and Independent Schools*.

Projects and Activities

Since the start of the new school year (2011-2012), the projects and activities of the *Direct Archdiocesan District Office of Education* are as follows:

Teacher Training

The Annual Direct Archdiocesan District Professional Development Seminar

Under the aegis of His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, this year's Teachers Seminar will take place on November 8, 2011 (Election Day), at the high school of St. Demetrios Cathedral in Astoria. The Seminar will offer a vast array of workshops to the teachers serving in the English programs of the parochial day schools. (*Please refer to the attached schedule.*)

Dr. Christos Tsolakis, Professor Emeritus of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and renowned educator and writer of Greek grammar books, will speak on **“Language, Paideia, and Teaching.”** Prof. Tsolakis was invited by Archbishop Demetrios to address the Greek teachers.

Publications

Two Books: A Compilation of Past Comprehensive Examinations in Modern Greek (2003-2011)

Due to a generous grant from **FAITH: An Endowment for Orthodoxy & Hellenism**, two new books – one for the student and one for the teacher – are currently in publication and will be offered gratis to schools. They contain material suitable for student practice on *speaking, reading, and writing* Greek as well as an *Appendix* of the most commonly used Greek words, phrases, and verbs.

The new books are intended for the teaching of Greek to higher grade students (Gr. 6, 7, 8) who will be taking the *Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek*, upon graduation, for foreign language credits.

A Course of Study (Level A)

The development of a **Course of Study (Level A)** – a collaboration of the *District Office of Education* and the *Institute of Modern Greek Studies/Aristotle University of Thessaloniki* – is currently being edited by the professors of linguistics, Dr. George Papanastasiou and Panagiotis Andreou. Intended to offer guidance to the teachers teaching Greek as a second/foreign language, this publication will be officially presented to schools later in the year.

Student Involvement & Participation

The Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek

The *Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek* was given on June 22, 2011 to more than **500 students** in New York and other parts of the country. Developed annually by the *District Office of Education*, the *Examination* assesses student proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and

writing Modern Greek. Students who pass it receive foreign language credits in high school or college.

It is worth noting that the number of students taking the *Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek* has remained stable for the last 10 years, and that indicates a strong interest on the part of students and parents in Greek language studies.

The Annual Spelling Bee Competition

The *District Office of Education*, in a memo sent recently to the NYC day school principals, advises the schools to do online registration to **Scripps International** at www.spellingbee.com to get all the necessary materials for the preparation of students.

According to the “timeline” of the *Office*, which coordinates this endeavor, the schools should hold local (in-school) Spelling Bee competitions among their students, in grades 5-8, during the months of October and November. Each School Bee will participate in the *Spelling Bee Finals* of the *Direct Archdiocesan District* that will take place sometime in January 2012, at the Archdiocese.

The **Hellenic Times Scholarship Fund** (HTSF) sponsors the Finals and offers awards to all Spelling Bee winners.

Online Resource Books & Materials

The *District Office of Education* sustains a well-designed internet page that offers visitors an abundance of informative documents and educational materials such as curricula, Greek examinations, and a catalog of select books and other resource materials. Please visit www.education.goarch.org.

Contacts with American Education Authorities

Since the start of the new school year (2011-2012), the director of the *District Office of Education*, Maria Makedon, has attended the following conferences and meetings representing the Archdiocese and the New York City parochial day schools:

- On September 14, a consultation meeting of the *NYC Standing Committee of Religious & Independent Schools Officials* with the **NYC Education Chancellor Dennis Walcott**, the Deputy Chancellor **Cathleen Grimm** and **Karen Moncher**, director of the NYC Bureau of Nonpublic Schools Reimbursable Programs. The meeting took place at the NYC Education Department Headquarters (Tweed Courthouse) in Manhattan.
- On September 20, a consultation meeting of the *NYC Standing Committee of Religious Schools Officials*, presided by **David Zwiebel, Esq.**, that took place at the Agudath Israel of America Headquarters in Manhattan.

- On September 28, the **Seventh Annual Private School Leadership Conference** sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education / Office of Non-Public Education that took place at the Department's Headquarters in Washington, DC.

Representatives of major religious and private organizations had the opportunity to listen to a panel discussion with the **Secretary of Education Arne Duncan** and share with him their concerns. Participants were also informed on new and innovative programs such as the **Project LAMP** (Learning Apps Media Partnership) as well as on the **NASA** programs available to nonpublic school students and teachers.

Contacts with Greek Orthodox Parish and School Representatives

The *Direct Archdiocesan District Office of Education* held

- On September 23, a **Principals Meeting**, the first for the new school year, at St. Demetrios High School, Astoria. The principals were informed of the *Office* director's (Mrs. Makedon) latest undertakings and discussed the program and workshops of the upcoming annual Professional Development Seminar to be held on November 8th. All the NYC day school principals were in attendance.

Furthermore, while in Washington, DC for the U.S. Department of Education Conference, Mrs. Makedon visited with the priests and administrators of the two local parishes to discuss areas of concern regarding their Greek afternoon programs. Specifically, she met

- On September 28 (pm) with **Rev. Steven P. Zorzos**, dean of St. Sofia Cathedral and **Fotini Economides**, parish coordinator for the afternoon school.
- On September 29 (am), with **Rev. Nicholas G. Manousakis**, dean of SS. Constantine & Helen Church and Kalliope Tsikourika-Samara, principal of the afternoon Greek school.

Respectfully submitted by
MARIA MAKEDON



10/14/2011



**DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN DISTRICT
ANNUAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR
Tuesday, November 8, 2011 – St. Demetrios High School, Astoria, NY**

ENGLISH PROGRAM

SESSION I: 10:15 – 11:45 am

GRADES

SPEAKER

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| • ACTIVE LEARNING FOR MATH IN THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASSROOM | K-2 | JANA BALKE |
| • EARLY INTERVENTION: RECOGNIZING SIGNS OF LEARNING DISABILITIES | K-2 | ROGER ROONEY |
| • WORDS ALIVE! BUILDING ACADEMIC VOCABULARY IN THE CLASSROOM | K-8 | MARIA KARALEKAS |
| • DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION: ACCOMODATING THE NEEDS OF DIVERSE LEARNERS | 3-6 | ALISHA DORROW |
| • COMMON CORE STANDARDS FOR ELA | 3-8 | ROBERT BEDFORD |
| • WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM | 7-12 | KIM GEDDIE |
| • ANTI-BULLYING FOR PRINCIPALS | PRINCIPALS | CAROL GEDDIS |

SESSION II: 1:00 – 2:30 pm

GRADES

SPEAKER

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|---|------|-----------------|
| • ACTIVE LEARNING FOR ELA IN THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASSROOM | K-2 | JANA BALKE |
| • DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION: ACCOMODATING THE NEEDS OF DIVERSE LEARNERS | K-2 | ALISHA DORROW |
| • WORDS ALIVE! BUILDING ACADEMIC VOCABULARY IN THE CLASSROOM | K-8 | MARIA KARALEKAS |
| • STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING WRITING SKILLS | 3-6 | KIM GEDDIE |
| • STUDY SKILLS TOOL SET | 3-8 | ROGER ROONEY |
| • COMMON CORE STANDARDS FOR MATH | 3-8 | ROBERT BEDFORD |
| • CYBERBULLYING FOR TEACHERS | 7-12 | CAROL GEDDIS |

GREEK PROGRAM

SESSION I (10:15 – 11:45 am) & SESSION II (1:00 – 2:30 pm)

Dr. Christos Tsolakis, Professor Emeritus of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and renowned educator and writer of Greek grammar books, will address the Greek teachers on *“Language, Paidea, and Teaching.”*
