



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE

DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN DISTRICT COUNCIL MEETING

TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 2013
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Headquarters

PAROCHIAL SCHOOL EDUCATION REPORT

Our Mission

The *District Office of Education* serves the parochial day and afternoon schools of the *District*. The *Office* provides curriculum guides and in-service training to the teachers and administrators who serve in these schools, in order to enhance their professional knowledge and skills. This, in return, benefits the thousands of students who attend the parish schools and must be our priority.

The *Office* is also an avid advocate for the New York City parochial day schools and represents them to the education authorities. In doing so, the *Office* has secured services and materials for the schools, which are funded by federal money.

Day & Afternoon School Enrollment

The records of the *Office* indicate that, during the current school year (2012-2013), there are **53 schools** – **nine** day schools and **44** afternoon/Saturday Greek schools – operating within the *District*. These schools employ **223** Greek teachers and have an enrollment of **5,395** students.

In addition, **five** of the day schools maintain *Universal Pre-K* programs with an enrollment of **270 students**. (*The UPK programs are funded by the New York State and operate as separate public school entities within our school establishments..*) Such UPK programs exist in the following parochial day schools: **A. Fantis** and **DGK**, Brooklyn; **Jamaica Day School**; **Greek-American Institute**, Bronx and **St. Spyridon School**, Manhattan.

Furthermore, the *District* is the host of **five** pre-school centers with **186** students in attendance. Pre-school centers are maintained by the following parishes: St. Nicholas, **Flushing**; Holy Cross, **Whitestone**; Koimisis, **Brooklyn**; Archangel Michael, **Port Washington**, and Our Saviour Church, **Rye**.

And this brings the number of students who regularly attend our District's schools to a total of **5,851**.

Representing the Day Schools to the Authorities

The *District Office of Education* represents the New York City parochial day schools (or faith-based schools) to the education authorities at the federal, state and city level. The *Office* is also represented by its director at the *New York City Standing Committee of Religious & Independent Schools Officials*, which is comprised of representatives of the City's major religious institutions.

Under this capacity, the *Office* has been instrumental in securing federally funded materials and services for the schools. The funds are allocated per pupil, according to a **formula** used by the NY State Education Department, which takes into consideration the student's academic performance in state tests as well as his/her family's finances and the finances of the district (impoverished or not) where the student resides.

For the current school year (2012-2013), **\$45,247.00** was allocated to the NYC day schools for specific programs. Thus, in collaboration with the principals and the NYC Department of Education, the *Office* was able to offer the following programs and services to the schools:

1. Cover the tuition cost (fall and spring semesters) of **five teachers**, who are presently attending *St. John's University* studying for their Master degrees in Educational Leadership;
2. Cover the cost of an **on-site three-day teacher training on Literacy and Educational Technology**, which is scheduled to resume this month at **three** of our day schools that have students who need special education. These schools are: **Jamaica Day School, St. Spyridon School, and Greek American Institute, Bronx**;
3. Cover the cost of *the District's Annual Teachers Seminar*. This year, the Seminar was held on February 15th, at St. Demetrios High School in Astoria.

It is important to note that securing and handling federal funds for educational purposes requires tedious work on the part of the *Office* and many hours of communication with the central offices of the NYCDOE as well as its certified vendors, which eventually provide the teacher training.

In addition, the director of the *Office* is required to attend conferences and meetings that are periodically held by the U.S. Department of Education in Washington, DC, the State Education Department in Albany, and the New York City Department of Education.

The *Office* also holds regular meetings with the principals of the NYC parochial day schools, at which representatives of the NYCDOE are also invited to demonstrate the funded programs and discuss their application according to State mandates.

Note: Our next principals meeting is scheduled for this coming Thursday, March 28, and our guests will be Nancy Woods, Deputy Director for Fiscal Accountability and Strategic Planning, and her associate Laura Winter.

Organizing Events & Celebrations

The *District Office of Education* organizes events and celebrations that attract teachers, students, and parents in large numbers. Such events are the following:

1. The *Annual Staff Development Seminar* that was held on **February 15th**, at St. Demetrios School

in Astoria and was attended by **232** administrators and teachers. This year's Seminar focused on the national *Common Core Standards* and featured a **keynote** speaker. It included **six** workshops for the English program teachers and **five** presentations for the Greek teachers, which examined the

NY State standards on foreign language teaching and their application on the "**Modern Greek Studies Curriculum - Checkpoint A**," our *Office's* new publication.

2. The *Three Hierarchs Student Awards Event* at which students who excel in their Greek language studies are presented with the *Three Hierarchs Award of Excellence*. This year's event was held on **February 2nd**, at the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Manhattan. It featured a **keynote** speaker and was followed by a festive program of traditional songs and dances. More than **300** parents, students, teachers, and guests attended this event.
3. The *District's Spelling Bee Finals* (in English) among the parochial day school student finalists. This year's District Finals were held at the Archdiocese on **January 16th**. The students were congratulated by the Archbishop and the Chancellor and received a "*Certificate of Participation*" and a Barnes & Nobles gift card.

Publishing Curriculum Guides

The *District Office of Education* recently published *The Curriculum for Modern Greek Studies – Checkpoint A* (beginners' level) to be used as a guide by the teachers who prepare students for the *Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek for Regents credits*. The *Curriculum* is in adherence with the philosophy and standards for the teaching of foreign languages of the NY State Education Department. It is offered to the Greek teachers at no cost.

The Curriculum for Modern Greek Studies was created by the *Institute of Modern Greek Studies of the Aristotle University* of Thessaloniki, Greece, in collaboration and under the direction of the *Office*. The Institute's director, Prof. George Papanastasiou, has assured our *Office* that they are currently developing the *Checkpoint B level of the Curriculum*, which is the required level for the *Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek*.

Developing an Assessment Tool

The *District Office of Education* has secured the assurances of the State's Commissioner of Education Dr. John B. King, Jr. that it may continue developing the *Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek* under the condition that it adheres to the philosophy and standards of the State Education Department for the development of such examinations.

The Archdiocese's Greek Examination has always been considered by the authorities as a "*locally developed examination*" that affords students the opportunity to receive high school credits for foreign language studies and, thus, earn a Regents diploma with advanced designation upon graduation. This year's Examination, which is currently under development, is scheduled for **June 17, 2013**.

Maintaining a Web Page

The *District Office of Education* maintains its own web page (www.education.goarch.org) offering visitors an abundance of informative materials and resources.