



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN DISTRICT OFFICE OF EDUCATION

43rd BIENNIAL CLERGY LAITY CONGRESS
July 3-8, 2016
Gaylord Opryland Convention Center, Nashville, TN

REPORT ON PAROCHIAL SCHOOL EDUCATION

The Education Office

The major responsibilities of the *Office of Education of the Direct Archdiocesan District* are as follows:

- 1) To represent the NYC Greek-American day schools (or *faith-based*) to the education authorities at the Federal, State, and City levels. The *Office* is represented by its director **a)** in the ***Standing Committee of New York City Religious & Independent Schools***, a coalition of faith based school officials and private educational agencies and **b)** in the ***NYS Commissioner's Advisory Council for Nonpublic Schools***. The participation of the *Office* director in various conferences and committee meetings ensures that our NYC day schools receive their allocation of funds, services, and materials from the federal government.
- 2) Furthermore, the *Office* provides assistance to the day and afternoon/Saturday schools by offering curriculum guides, in-service teacher training, and educational materials.

The District Schools

During the current school year (2015-2016), there are **49 schools** – **eight** parochial day and **41** afternoon/Saturday Greek schools – operating in the District. These schools have an enrollment of **5,131** students and employ **246** Greek teachers.

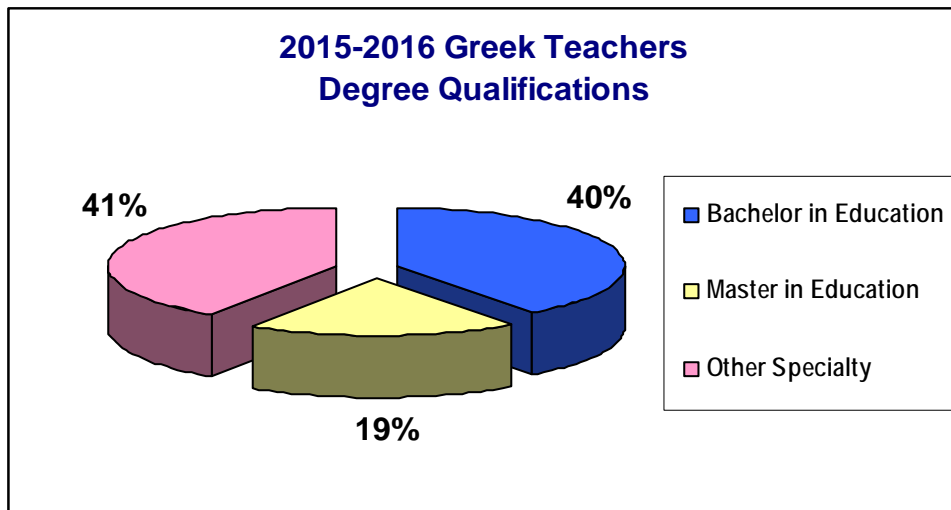
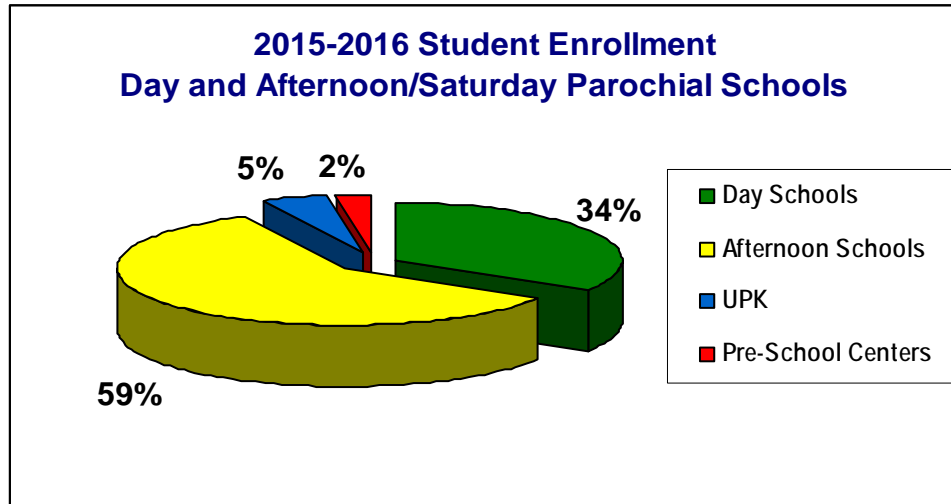
In addition, the following **three** parishes: *St. Nicholas*, Flushing; *Kimisis Tis Theotokou*, Brooklyn; and *Archangel Michael*, Port Washington, maintain pre-school centers, which have a total enrollment of **133** students.

Five parochial day schools maintain *Universal Pre-K programs*, which are funded by the New York State and operate as separate public school entities. UPKs exist in the following schools: St. Demetrios of Astoria; A. Fantis of Sts. Constantine & Helen, Brooklyn, DGK of Holy Cross, Brooklyn; the Greek-American Institute, Bronx and St. Spyridon School, Manhattan.

The five UPKs have an enrollment of **253 students**, which brings the total enrollment of our District's day and afternoon schools to **5,517** students.

Note:

Pertinent data regarding the District's schools and the qualifications of the Greek teachers are depicted in the following statistical graphs. More detailed graphs are included in the Appendices at the end of this Report.



Representing the Parochial Day Schools to the Authorities

As the advocate for the day schools, the *District Office of Education* has been instrumental in securing federally funded services and materials for the schools. During the past two school years, the NYC day schools received a total of **\$144,665.00** (\$89,644.00 in **2015-2016** and \$55,021.00 in **2014-2015**). As the overseer of the funds, the *Office* made sure that the allocated funds were used for *teacher training* and *teaching materials*.

Conferences and Meetings

Since the 42nd CLC (July 6-10, 2014), the director of the *District Office of Education* has participated in the following conferences and meetings representing the Archdiocese and the parochial day schools of the District:

At the U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC

September 22, 2014 – The 10th National Private School Leadership Conference
 September 17, 2015 – The 11th National Private School Leadership Conference

Note: At the conferences sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, participants listen to various panel discussions and receive information on innovative programs that are available to nonpublic schools. They also hear directly from the U.S. Secretary of Education.

At the New York State Department of Education

November 17-18, 2014 – The 30th Annual Conference for Administrators of Religious & Independent Schools
 November 9-10, 2015 – The 31st Annual Conference for Administrators of Religious & Independent Schools

At the New York City Department of Education

School Year 2014-2015: September 9; December 16 (2014); February 10; March 11; April 14; May 6; June 9* (2015)
School Year 2015-2016: October 14; November 23; December 15 (2015); January 12; February 9; April 12; May 10; June 16* (2016)

Note: The asterisk (*) denotes a meeting with the NYC Chancellor of Education.

Principals Meetings



The *District Office of Education* holds regular meetings with the principals of the NYC parochial day schools. At these meetings, principals exchange information, discuss, and plan various projects.

On certain occasions, the *District Office* invites representatives from the NYC Department of Education as well as various vendors to inform the principals on certain programs.

EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS & CULTURAL EVENTS

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Each year, in November, the *District Office of Education* organizes a District - wide **Staff Development Day** offering an array of workshops pertaining to the English and Greek curricula and covering grades from pre-K to high school. Since the **42nd CLC (July 6-10, 2014)**, the following teacher seminars have taken place:

2014: The **Staff Development Seminar** was held on November 4th, at St. Demetrios High School, Astoria. The Seminar included **11 workshops** and presentations for the English and Greek programs and was met with great success.

The *Office* had invited Dr. Marios Koukounaras – Liagkis, Professor at the School of Theology of the University of Athens, who presented current methodologies and techniques to the Greek teachers by means of using Art and Applied Theater.



2015: The **Staff Development Seminar** was held on November 3rd, at St. Demetrios High School, Astoria. The Seminar included **10 workshops** and presentations with the general theme “Writing Across the Curriculum.” It was also very productive and successful.

The Greek teachers had the opportunity to hear Dr. Marios Koukounaras – Liagkis, who put an emphasis on the educational value of having a pleasant classroom environment in order to achieve success of the learning process.

The Seminars are held under the auspices of **His Eminence Archbishop Geron Demetrios of America**. The Archbishop praised the teachers and administrators for their untiring work and devotion to the noble vocation of teaching.

HONORING STUDENT EXCELLENCE

The Three Hierarchs Student Awards



Each year, in January, the *District Office of Education* organizes a festive event commemorating the **Feast of the Holy Three Hierarchs** and celebrating **Greek Letters and Arts**.

Since the **42nd CLC (July 6-10, 2014)**, the following events were held with great success:

2014: On Saturday, **January 31st**, more than 300 persons attended the *Three Hierarchs Student Awards Ceremony*, which took place at the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Manhattan.

The event featured a *keynote* speech by the **Hon. Madeline Singas**, District Attorney of Nassau County, Long Island, that was followed by a program of traditional Greek songs and dances. **64 students** who had excelled in the Greek language were presented with the *Three Hierarchs Award of Excellence* by His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios Geron of America. The Archbishop congratulated the honorees and expressed gratitude to the parents and teachers.

2015: On Saturday, **January 30th**, approximately 280 people attended the *Three Hierarchs Student Awards Ceremony*, including His Excellency **Ambassador George Iliopoulos**, Consul General of Greece and His Excellency **Ambassador Vasilios Filippou**, Consul General of Cyprus. Also in attendance were priests, principals, teachers, and family members of the honorees.

Rev. Fr. Stefanos Alexopoulos, Ph.D., Professor of Liturgical Studies and Sacramental Theology at the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., was the *keynote* speaker of the event. Fr. Alexopoulos emphasized the contribution of the Three Hierarchs to Greek Letters and the Hellenic-Christian civilization.

52 students who had excelled in the Greek language were presented with the *Three Hierarchs Award of Excellence* by His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios Geron of America. The *Awards Ceremony* was followed by a festive musical program featuring the students of St. Demetrios Greek –American Day School of Astoria, who sang and recited poems of renowned Greek poets.

Spelling Bee Awards Finals

The *District Office of Education* coordinates the annual *Spelling Bee Competition* among the finalists of the District's day school students, in order to honor excellence in the English Language Spelling.

Since the **42nd CLC (July 6-10, 2014)**, *Spelling Bee Competition Finals* were held on **January 8, 2014** and on **January 15, 2016**.

The *Spelling Bee Competition* is held at the Archdiocesan headquarters, with the blessings of His Eminence Archbishop Geron Demetrios, who presents the spelling bee champions with a *Certificate of Award* and gifts.



The president of the *Hellenic Times Scholarship Fund* (HTSF), Mr. Nick Katsoris, Esq., has been sponsoring the event for a number of years offering also monetary prizes to the students.

Note: The Spelling Bee competitions are sponsored nationally by The E.W. Scripps Company. In NYC, the competitions are sponsored by DAILY NEWS. The *Direct Archdiocesan District Office of Education* coordinates the competition among the NYC parochial day schools.

The Teaching of Modern Greek in compliance with the NY State Standards in Teaching a Language Other Than English (LOTE)

The Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek

Foreign language “*credits*” are offered to the students who pass the *Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek*, an **assessment tool** that measures student proficiency in *listening, speaking, reading, and writing* the Modern Greek language. The Examination is aligned to the New York State learning standards for Languages Other Than English (LOTE).

The *District Office of Education* has been developing the *Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek* since 1973 and, as a result, thousands of students have benefitted ever since.



The Archdiocese's *Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek* has always been considered as a “*locally developed examination*” by the education authorities. High school students in New York State (and elsewhere) may be eligible to receive up to “*three credits*” in foreign language studies by passing it. Additionally, they may qualify for a **Regents diploma** with advanced designation upon graduation.

The *2016 Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek* will be administered on **June 20th**, at **17** sites. **437** students of 44 parish schools, 5 public schools, and one charter school will sit for the Examination. These students come from the following six states: NY, CT, NJ, PA, VA and MO.

Two Modern Greek Language Curricula – Checkpoint A & Checkpoint B



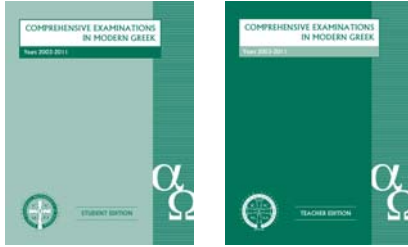
To support the validity of the *Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek* and exhibit compliance with the NY State standards on the teaching of languages other than English (LOTE), the *District Office of Education* has published **two** books:

1) *The Curriculum for Modern Greek Language (Checkpoint A- Beginners Level)* and

2) *The Curriculum for Modern Greek Language (Checkpoint B - Intermediate/Regents Level)*.

Both *Curricula* were developed by the *Institute of Modern Greek Studies of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki*, Greece, in collaboration and under the direction of the *District Office of Education*. They may be used as a **guide** by the teachers who prepare students for the *Comprehensive Examination in Modern Greek* as well as by those who teach Greek to non-Greek speaking students.

A Compilation of past Comprehensive Examinations in Modern Greek (2003-2011)



In addition to the *Curricula*, the *District Office of Education* has published a *Compilation* of the past nine *Greek Examinations (2003-2011)* in **two** books – one for the **student** and one for the **teacher**, in order to assist the teachers who prepare students for the *Examination in Modern Greek*.

The books include an abundance of authentic Greek texts, communication tasks for *speaking drills*, and a variety of topics for *writing* compositions.

An *Appendix* of the most commonly used words, verbs, phrases, and basic grammar accompanies the *Student Edition*. The books are offered “*gratis*” to teachers and schools.

Website and Facebook Page

The *District Office of Education* maintains a **Website**, which offers useful information about the activities of the *Office*. To get acquainted, please visit www.education.goarch.org.

We also recommend visiting our **Facebook** page, which offers information on the current events of the *Office*. To join our Facebook page, please visit www.facebook.com/greekamericanschools.

Potential/Future Projects

The *District Office of Education*, in collaboration with the Institute of Modern Greek Studies, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, would like to create **web applications** for teaching Greek as a foreign language to young learners. The **web apps** would be developed according to the *Curricula A & B* that follow the **standards** of foreign language teaching of the New York State Education Department.

Language learning apps are the ideal tool to engage learners who are very tech-minded and naturally enjoy using gadgets. The apps will include focused activities that will allow students to concentrate on specific language skills, such as listening, reading, writing, or speaking as well as pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar.

We believe that this project is worth the attention of the **Leadership100** and **Faith: An Endowment for Orthodoxy & Hellenism**. And we would greatly appreciate their consideration in the future.



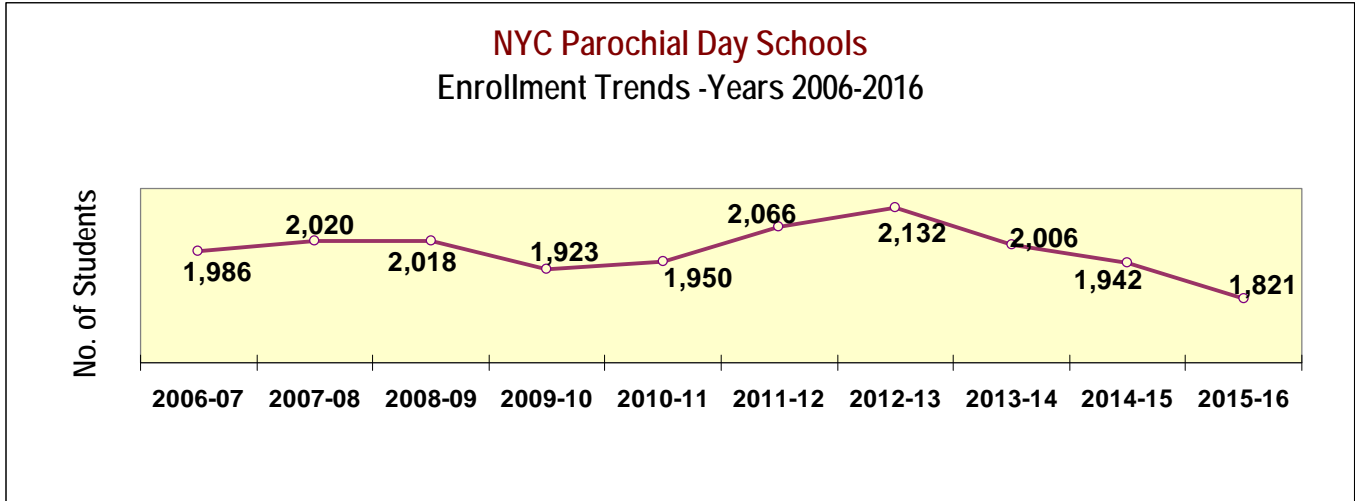
Submitted by
MARIA MAKEDON
Director

May 20, 2016

APPENDIX A

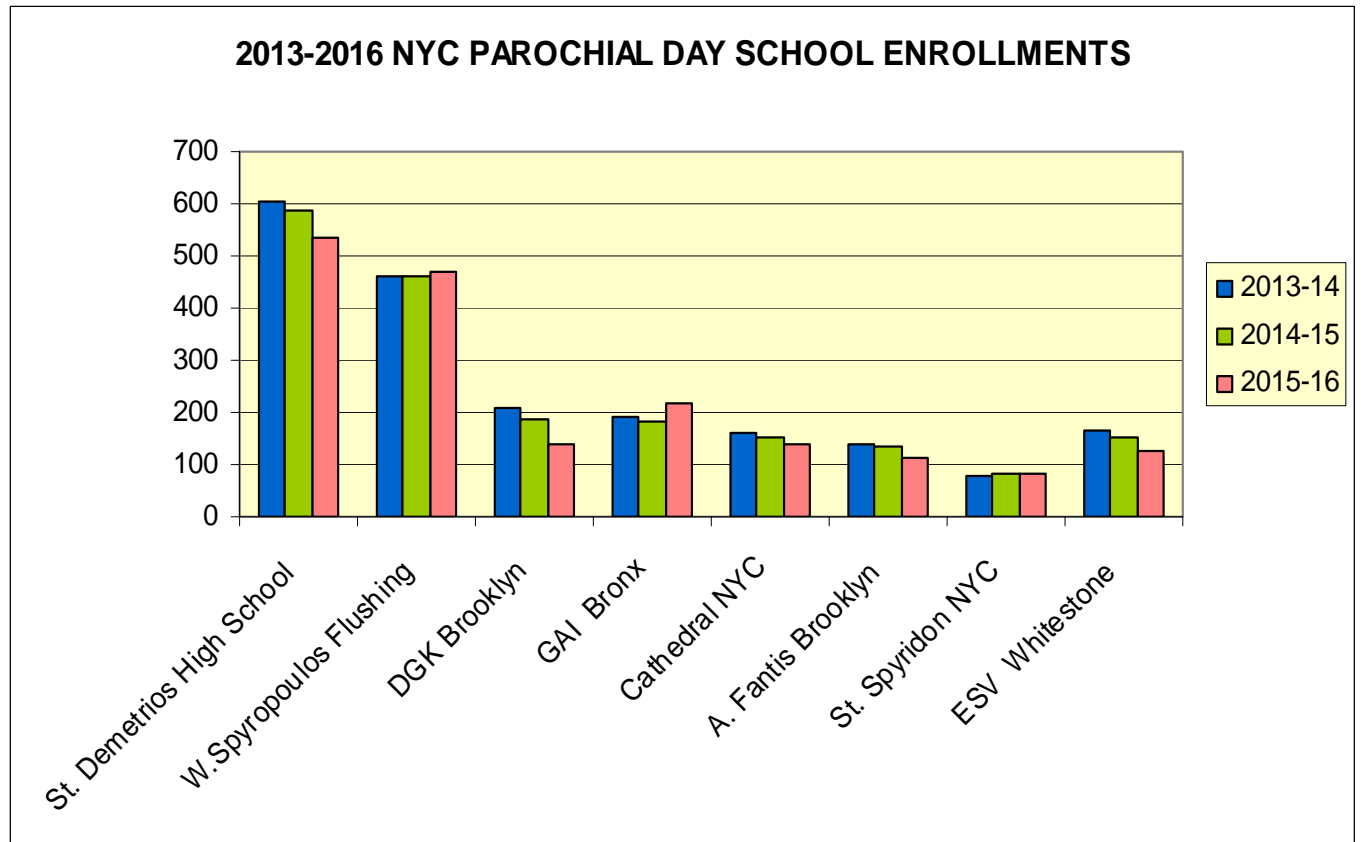
**STATISTICAL DATA GRAPHS
NYC PAROCHIAL DAY SCHOOLS – 2015-2016**

Schools: 8
Enrollment: 1,821



Note:

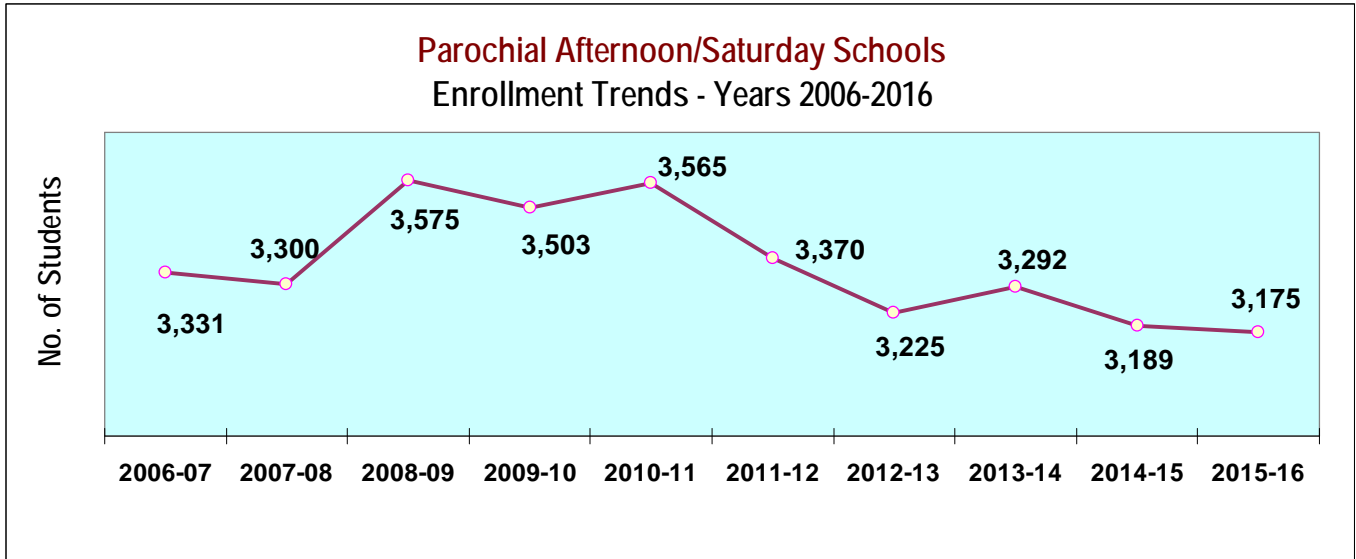
The number of students registered in the NYC Parochial Day Schools has steadily *decreased* by **8.5 %** in the past ten years.



APPENDIX B

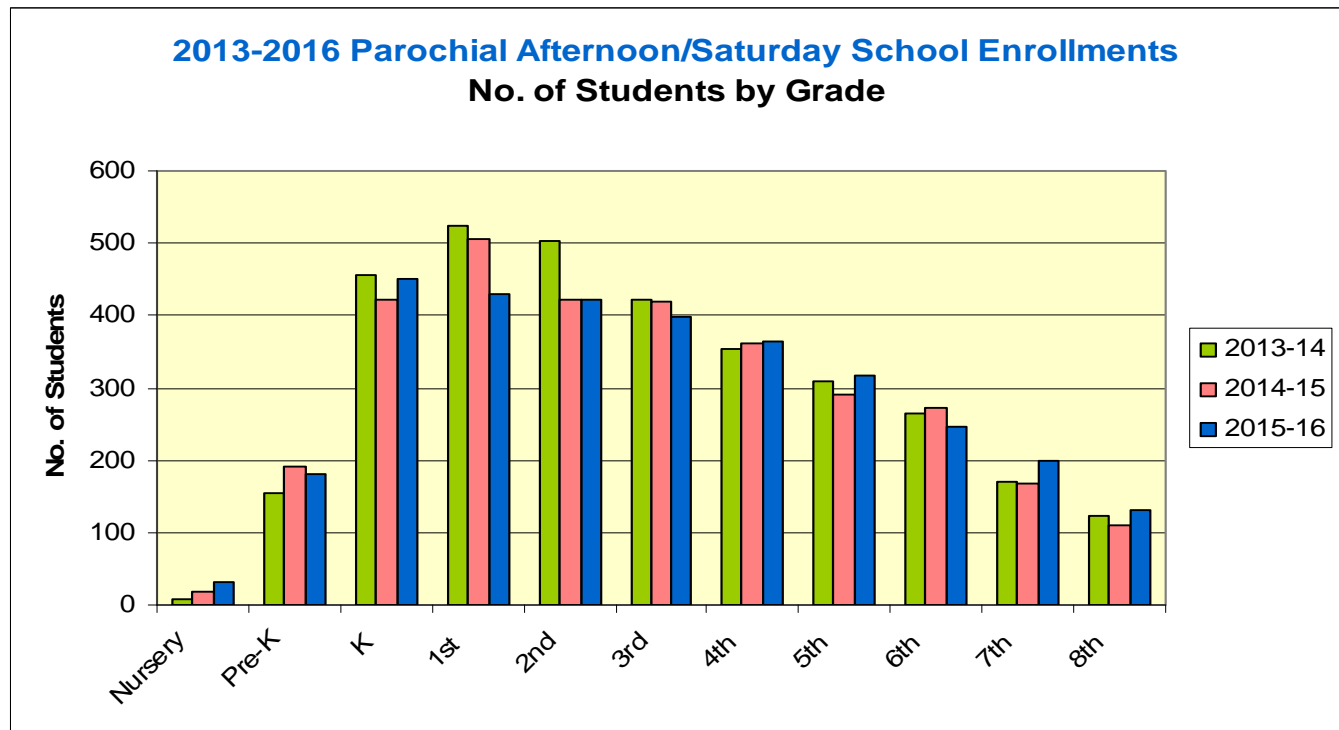
**STATISTICAL DATA GRAPHS
AFTERNOON / SATURDAY GREEK SCHOOLS 2015-16**

Schools: 41
Enrollment: 3,175



Note 1:

The total number of students registered in the District’s Greek Afternoon/Saturday Schools has *decreased* by 5% within the past ten years.



Note 2:

The number of students registered in the District’s Greek Afternoon/Saturday Schools during the past three years (2013-16) shows a *steady decline* in the upper elementary school grades, starting in the **2nd grade**.