



C.A.R.E. News

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Our Lady of Grace Catholic School *More questions ... More answers*

Mr. Mike Johnson, principal of Our Lady of Grace Catholic School, continues his efforts to prepare Our Lady of Grace to open this coming fall. Once again, Mr. Johnson also takes time to answer questions you have posted on the C.A.R.E. News web site.

Q: I realize the starting of a new school is a tremendous endeavor and I would like to volunteer my time if possible. Who can I contact about this?

A: Thank you so much! We will be seeking assistance as we continue to move forward. The Education Commission will be addressing this issue within the next couple of weeks and we will let you know how to get involved.

COMMENT - I am so excited to hear about the possibility of a foreign language being part of the K-8 curriculum. I have two children in high school and they would have benefitted tremendously from such a program.

A: This is an exciting opportunity and one that I think is going to really set OLG apart.

Q: Will OLG have a school psychologist? Will there be any special ed services and if so what are they?

A: Yes, we will have a school psychologist as well as a variety of other professional services available. We will make sure we at least offer what was collectively offered in the participating schools. This is something that will be decided within the next couple of weeks.

Q: When will we find out about busing?

A: I am told that the final school district is going to get back to me this Friday regarding busing. I have asked them to do some rerouting so that we have some freedom in making decisions for OLG.

Q: My question is in regards to the backpacks. My daughter has a back problem arising due to the weight of books. Will there be a place for the children to store their books in school?

A: This is a great question and we will look into it. Know that at the very least we will do our best to provide anyone with a medical concern a second set of texts to be kept at home and we will find them a cubby or a space at school.

Q: Do we have a list of the different committees? Are there still openings? Are there currently, or when will there be openings on committees for parental participation - aside from those already in place? If so, how do we volunteer to help?

A: While I am not able to give you specifics regarding what parent committee opportunities are/will be available, a school such as ours will have plenty of opportunities for you to be engaged. I firmly believe in parental involvement and look forward to it. The Education Commission will be addressing this.

Q: Is there any way we can go to the various committee meetings to give our input and hear what decisions are being made? Who determined who would be on these committees and who wouldn't?

A: I will have to defer to one of the members of the steering committee for most of this question as I do not know the history on the committees. I can say that my only concern about open meetings is maintaining productivity given the numbers of people who may show up. What I would like to do is make sure that those committees and their membership are made available to everyone so that if you have ideas or input you can tap one of the members and give them feedback to bring to the meeting. Your voice needs to be heard and committees usually are created to serve this dual purpose (manageable meeting sizes and broad representation of perspectives). Again, the Education Commission will be addressing this issue in the near future.

Q: We were told that our tuition for next year would not go up from the price we paid for this year; however, I saw on the registration form that there is an added \$40 for cafeteria fees. Essentially this means that our tuition for next year HAS gone up. I now fear there will be more "nickels" and "dimes" tacked on here and there.

A: Thanks for raising the concern. It is absolutely the case that schools often times misrepresent their true costs by having tuition that does not cover the full cost of educating the children. We will be looking hard at this and while I can't make any guarantees at this point I can tell you that your concern about understanding costs and incidentals up front is my expectation and we will be working towards that.

Q: What process is being used to evaluate and hire our teachers?

A: I have completed the first round of interviews and am excited about the quality of the teachers. About one half of the teachers interviewed are going to be offered contracts based on their interview, references and job performance. The remaining teachers will participate in second interviews with a committee made up of educational professionals. Since about one fifth of the teachers currently employed by participating schools will not be offered contracts we felt that a thorough yet decisive process was important. Within the next week to two weeks teachers should know whether or not they will be extended invitations to work with us at OLG.

Mr. Johnson will continue to keep parents & parishioners updated using the C.A.R.E. News web site (www.carenews.org) and the C.A.R.E. News email.

To have the C.A.R.E. newsletter emailed to you automatically as they are issued, go to www.CareNews.org. While you are there, you can also ask questions or leave comments and feedback for Mr. Johnson and the Steering Committee.