



C.A.R.E. News

Newsletter – June 4, 2008

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Our Lady of Grace Catholic School
this week's Q&A's

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.

Our Lady of Grace Faculty – 2008-2009

Grade K	Beth Collins	Grade 5 LA	Nancy Woestman
Grade K	Mary Jo Fischer	Grade 5/6 SS	Kate Bauman
<u>Grade K</u>	<u>Stormy Flynn</u>	Grade 5/6 Religion	JoAnn Rush
Grade 1	Annette Braun	Grade 5/6 Science	Bernice Thompson
Grade 1	Deborah Fischesser	Grade 5/6 Math	Diane Vidourek
Grade 1	Carol Jordan	Grade 6 LA	Jack Simcoe
<u>Grade 1</u>	<u>Amanda Minor</u>		
Grade 2	Mallory Kist	Grade 7 LA	Amanda Mays
Grade 2	Kelley Kluener	Grade 7/8 Math	Patricia Schulkers
<u>Grade 2</u>	<u>Debby Nagel</u>	Grade 7/8 Religion	Michelle Carle-Bosch
Grade 3	Heather Adams	Grade 7/8 Science	Jenny Frey
Grade 3	Marilyn Ruzick	Grade 7/8 SS	Patty Fischerp
Grade 3	Joanne Bedinghaus	Grade 8 LA	Jane Muro
<u>Grade 3</u>	<u>Terry Ogg</u>		
Grade 4	Sue Hotze	Art	Beth Renick
Grade 4	Claire Hite	Librarian	Pam Ceddia
Grade 4	Rick Ries	PE	Cindy Grundy
Grade 4	Nancy Robers	Technology	Nancy Duryea

Q: Will you be releasing information about the teachers that have been hired and their credentials for teaching the classes they are assigned? This would be especially important for the junior high grades Math, Science and English. How many teachers were hired from outside the three schools?

A: Thanks for giving me the opportunity to brag about our faculty! OLG was in the fortunate position of having the faculty of three schools to select from in creating our team. There were interviews done with me and then, where needed, interviews done with a committee. All of our teachers are highly qualified and bring to our classrooms a wealth of experiential insight that is informed by their studies in education. Amazingly 30% of our teachers have at least one Master's Degree. In grades 5-8 42% of our teachers have Master's Degrees. All of the teachers hired to date were employed by a covenant school. OLG's website is in the works and we do intend to post a bio for each teacher.

Q: When will the students find out what class they are in for the upcoming school year?

A: This information will be available during the first week of August. We will get the information out to you after Masses for parishioners and through the school office for non-parishioners. A later mailing and web posting will give the specifics on this.

Q: Looking ahead at the calendar, I had a question the days that state PM conferences. Is school in session those days or are those early dismissal days?

A: The conference days marked on our calendar are full school days. There are no scheduled 1/2 days of school.

Q: For bad weather, will OLG be following Northwest school district? Is there a plan in place for OLG for early dismissal for bad weather? There was one last year and I personally thought it was chaotic.

A: We will be following the decisions made by Northwest regarding hazardous weather. We do have procedures in place to facilitate an emergency early dismissal. My experience is that early dismissals for weather always feel a bit chaotic. The key is to have well thought out and organized chaos!

Q: If we did not receive busing this school year, but will need it for OLG who do we contact?

Q: Have there been any more specific bussing decisions made? Such as where pick up spots will be, etc.

A: We are submitting the names of OLG students to the various districts providing us busing. They will determine who is eligible for service and route their various buses. We will hear from them later in the summer regarding the assignment of pick-up and drop-off locations.

Q: We live within the 2 miles of OLG and were wondering if we will qualify for transportation through Northwest.

A: You can go to <http://www.nwlsd.org/docs/stann1mile.pdf> and view a list of the streets that Northwest identifies as too close to OLG for transportation eligibility (within a 1 mile radius).

Q: In the past, I have experienced situations where some teachers have yelled at students when the student misbehaves or doesn't understand something. I know you have to be strict and enforce the rules, especially for grades 5-8, but it is inappropriate to yell at students when they don't understand something.

A: I can assure you that we will be upholding the dignity of each and every student, parent, faculty and staff member at OLG. Our behavior program will be one that takes advantage of the teachable moments within the context of our school day. The goal is to help students come to understand their behavior so that they can grow in personal responsibility and accountability in relationship to the world around them.

Q: My son is a student who hates to do homework. Will there be a homework club at OLG? ... and if so, will it be mandatory work/reading time?

A: We will continue to work with our students on developing healthy work and study habits. Homework assistance provided during or after school will be designed to facilitate learning and to provide the structure necessary for our students to attack their work.

Q: My son has always had issues with homework. Some teachers are AWESOME and send emails or post homework assignments by day or even by week online so that I can double check that all assignments are completed. But other teachers have told me that it is my son's responsibility to know what the assignments are and get them done. Will there be a school-wide expectation for teachers to communicate assignments to parents or is it going to be at teacher discretion?

A: We will be using an excellent online tool for parents. You will be able to see your child's homework as well as the grades he/she has received on scored work.

Q: When will we find out more about the latch-key program?

A: Kathy Smock, our Latch-Key Director, is putting together a registration packet that will be sent home to prospective families through the mail. There will be a self addressed stamped envelope inside for you to return the registration packet. If you have not identified yourself as being interested in the program, please call the school so that we can forward your name to Kathy.

Q: I was wondering if the AR program could be looked at and utilized in a more beneficial way. The students are given a goal of AR points to reach each quarter and the tests they take are part of their Reading grade. I think the idea of taking tests to check comprehension is a great tool, but not necessarily for every book read by a student. I like that the points the children earn can be turned in for prizes. This is a nice motivation. The

problem with AR being a part of the Reading grade is that reading becomes a chore. I love to read myself and I just don't think everything has to be about a grade given on a report card.

A: AR is a great tool and I appreciate your feedback. We will be discussing this issue. Thanks.

Q: There still appears to be a lot of work to be done in preparation for the coming school year at OLG. How can I be assured that sending my children to OLG will be better than sending them to another catholic school in the area that is settled and able to start instructing my children on day one?

A: I am amazed at the number of people working towards OLG opening and hitting the ground running.

- One of the initial priorities was working with the districts to create the processes by which we transfer funds (where necessary) and materials to OLG. This process has ensured us access to a wide range of quality instructional aides.
- Teachers have met and reviewed texts and curricular resources to collaboratively create their preferred lists of texts and materials. They have been looking at the curriculum for each grade level as well as across the grade levels.
- There is a group of teachers working together to consider best practices for our Intervention Assistance Team.
- There is another group of teachers working to assist us in creating our Behavioral Program.
- Our daily schedule will allow us to include many of the great enrichment programs active in our covenant schools while also offering us the opportunity to have speakers, Masses, prayer services, etc. without cutting into our instructional time.
- I have been conversing with professionals from area high schools (public, independent as well as Archdiocesan) to ensure that we are poised to get our first graduating class into the high schools that best meet their needs. We have considered both the admissions process as well as curricular preparedness.
- We have been considering student management systems which include very important communication tools for parents - homework and grades being listed on-line.

I can go on, and maybe I should, but I do want to acknowledge that without a doubt we will experience growing pains throughout this first year. Will we be prepared for the first day of school? Absolutely, there is an incredibly talented group of teachers and staff preparing for the success of OLG. The academic excellence each of our faculty and staff are preparing for will be equaled by our excellence in the Spiritual, artistic, social and athletic development of our youth. This will distinguish OLG. We are a community school in the truest sense of the word and we look forward to walking with you on this journey.

and from OLG admin ...

Q: What are the financial arrangements between Our Lady of Grace and St. Ann's Parish? Does OLG rent the buildings from St. Ann? Who pays for upkeep, remodeling & expansion of the buildings? Who is going to absorb the cost for converting the cafeteria and meeting rooms into classrooms?

Q: It sounds like we are starting to identify the start-up costs for Our Lady of Grace School - renovations, software re-licensing, etc. Do you know the budget for the total start-up costs or what each parishes share will be?

A: There have been several questions concerning the arrangements between St. Ann Parish and Our Lady of Grace Catholic School. There are several areas that are affected with this new arrangement.

First of all, there will be a lease agreement that will spell out the conditions of usage and responsibilities of each of the parties. There is no rent associated with this lease, just conditions of usage. There will be addendums that will spell out the times that OLG has use of the facilities for the school day and access to the church for masses. There will be agreements made on the responsibility of covering normal and emergency repair cost on a graduated basis. An example would be that in the first year, if something has to be repaired on the boiler, St. Ann would cover the cost of that repair. If that same repair occurs 5 years from now, that repair would be split by OLG and St. Ann at predetermined percentage. (Example: St. Ann 60%, OLG 40%). These percentages are not finalized yet, but will soon be completed.

Another area that will be shared is the utilities. The entire campus is heated with 2 boilers. Since it is improbable to change that set up at this time, there has been an agreement based on a usage and square footage calculation. During the school year, the cost of using the boilers will be split 70% OLG and 30% St. Ann. We are working on installing an additional meter to allow both OLG and St. Ann to take advantage of some attractive discount gas rates in the gym that were discovered by conducting an energy audit. The electric can be handled with meters and usage tracked more effectively by usage of areas of the campus. The split for the water bill is still being worked on.

When the process of becoming a regional school began, there were several ad hoc committees formed to examine everything from governance to facilities. The facilities group did a very detailed audit of each facility. Each campus was asked to complete an extensive fact and data sheet for the committee. The committee then conducted walk through to check the data. St. Ann had offered 30 rooms for classes plus other specialty rooms. When the choice of the principal was made and the formation of the style of education he was to bring forward required more than the 30 rooms designated some changes to the plan had to take place. The result is that St. Ann is responsible for converting their existing meeting space (Trinity Rooms) into class rooms as a part of that original offering. They are responsible for that cost. The converting of the current cafeteria area into classrooms will be the responsibility of OLG since those rooms were not designated as classrooms in the original offering. The moving of the library to the Friary will also be on OLG. The expansion of the kitchen will be a shared cost. These costs have been built into the budget for OLG and the permits are being worked on at this time.

As further details are finalized, they will be reported back to all the parishes and through OLG publications. We will be making several appeals to all four parishes for manual and professional assistance in several of the areas mentioned above, this summer, in order to get the students school ready.

Q: In using the tables from Little Flower, and taking them up and down every day, what is being done to fulfill the requirements with Jarod's Law?

A: The tables that we will be using have been inspected and they are equipped with the outriggers that are required. There is no issue with this type of table. When they are not in use, they will be secured to assure the safety of everyone. We are communicating and working with the General Health inspector as we prepare OLG for the coming school year to assure our compliance with the many facets of Jarrod's Law.

Q: What is the status of the training for all adult volunteers with respect to the child protection decree? Our Lady of Grace did not exist when we went through the training and background check; therefore we could not list it as a location where we would be working with children.

A: If you have already gone through the training on the "Decree on Child Protection" and been fingerprinted for one of the 4 OLG parishes, you are covered. That exception was approved by the Chancellor. If you are coming from another parish or are a new volunteer and wish to be involved with the students then you must get fingerprinted and if you have never gone through the "Decree on Child Protection" you will need to.

Q: Will there be a new sign to indicate where Our Lady of Grace is located?

A: Yes, Our Lady of Grace will have its own sign located accordingly.

Q: Can we have the names of the Education Commission members?

A: Yes! Lynn Schultz (Assumption), Melissa Connelly (Little Flower), Ann Gruenwald (Assumption), Gail Kelly (Little Flower), Bill Johansing (St. Margaret Mary), Katie Lienhart (St. Ann), Susan Zapf (St. Margaret Mary), Nancy Gamm (St. Ann), Mike Johnson, Fr. Kennedy, Fr. Goebel, Fr. Dennemann, Fr. Gardner

Q: Are the members of the Education Commission serving in an advisory role or is this a policy making board?

A: The OLG Education Commission is an advisory one. It is similar to the models that operated at each of the four covenant parishes.

Q: Are there any established lines of communication from the school to each parish? Is the Ed Commission represented on Parish Council?

A: Since each parish has two representatives plus the pastor, the communications to the parishes will be a given. Parish Council membership is different in each parish.

Dress Code & Uniform Fittings – an update ...

NOTE: After the fittings at St. Margaret Mary, we learned some pieces of important information that we would like you to know.

1. Jumpers and skirts must be ordered by July 4 to ensure delivery prior to the first day of school.
2. The Blue Ash store will only have samples of the OLG plaid jumpers and skirts - you will not be able to pick up and take home jumpers or skirts from this location. They will, however, ship the plaid items to your home at no charge.
3. The Crookshank store (in the Biggs Center) will stock the OLG plaid items beginning June 19. According to Schoolbelles this system improves customer satisfaction since it is more likely that people will find the items they are seeking if they are stocked at only one location.

We are currently in communication with the owner of Schoolbelles (not our sales representative) in an effort to rectify a couple of issues regarding shipping fees and their rebate program.

Q: I just wanted to clarify the dress code. It first stated that the boys could wear a 3 button polo shirt or an oxford style shirt and then I received another email stating that the dress code was revised and it stated that the boys could wear an oxford style shirt only. Did I misunderstand the dress code?

A: *Extracted from the Dress Code posted on the CARE news website ...*

SHIRTS

Solid white or light blue collared shirts must be worn by boys. Solid white collared shirts must be worn by girls. Shirts must be either:

- 1) a two or three button polo style shirt or
- 2) a button up oxford shirt (girls may choose a blouse with a rounded collar in place of the oxford).

Shirts must be purchased from one of the uniform companies or a department store which carries a school uniform line of clothing. Shirts may be long or short sleeved (no capped sleeves are allowed). No stripes, logos or markings are allowed on the shirts. Only the top button of the shirt is allowed to be unbuttoned.

All shirts must be tucked in (not bloused over) and be in good repair. Undershirts must be plain white. Plain white turtlenecks may be worn as an additional layer but must be under the uniform shirt.

Q: Has there been any decision yet on what the uniforms will be for gym class?

A: GYM APPAREL

1. All students must wear non-marring gym shoes during PE class.
2. Students in grades K-3 will wear their uniform for gym class (girls will remove their jumper and wear their uniform shirt and the shorts they have on under the jumper).
3. Grades 4-8 must change clothes for gym for personal hygiene reasons.
4. Plain SOLID color or OLG spirit wear T-shirts and shorts must be worn. Athletic shorts must be no shorter than 3 from the knee and may be no longer than just below the knee. No sleeveless or tank top shirts.
5. Sweatshirts or jogging sweats according to the weather may be worn OVER the gym uniform.

You can access all the updated dress code & fitting information at www.carenews.org

Mr. Johnson will continue to keep parents & parishioners updated throughout the summer 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.

NOTE: *If you missed any of the C.A.R.E. News weekly Q&A emails, you can always access them at <http://www.carenews.org/QandA.htm>*