



CATHOLIC SCHOOL CHRONICLE

MARCH 2014

FROM THE DESK OF THE SUPERINTENDENT . . .

The past two months have posed many weather-related challenges to all of us and not just in the state of Alabama. The month of March is upon us and so is spring. I know that we are eagerly awaiting all that spring brings to us- flowers blooming, birds singing, warmer weather, new spring clothes. March is a time of preparation for the district-wide examinations that will be taken in April and final examinations in May. There is another season that will arrive on Ash Wednesday, March 5th. We will enter the liturgical season of Lent. Lent is a time of reflection on our relationship with Christ. I came upon a short meditation by Amy Welborn, a writer and presenter who focuses on spirituality. She was recently engaged in a house renovation project. Amy talked about all of the stages that must be taken before the house can be painted- plastering, replacing decayed wood, putting in new plumbing and wiring. Anyone who has taken on the task of renovation knows what the house looks like as the project goes through the necessary stages of preparation- a mess. The prize is a home that looks terrific. Our task of renovation requires us to look at the areas of our spiritual life to see what needs to be addressed so that we will be ready for Easter. Our schools will focus on activities that will help our students prepare for Easter. May God bless each and everyone one of you in this time of preparation for Easter.

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DID YOU KNOW?

Some characteristics of Catholic Identity in schools
by Karen Ristau:

- ~All aspects of Catholic school programs, life, and activities should foster a relationship with Jesus Christ because the foundation of Catholic education is faith in God as revealed by Christ.
- ~Catholic schools participate directly in the church's evangelizing mission as they encourage students to join actively in their faith community and engage in the world.
- ~Catholic schools have an obligation to be excellent in all of their programs as outlined by Canon Law
- ~Schools need to provide education for the intellectual, physical, psychological, social, moral, aesthetic and religious needs of the student.

www.thecatholicspirit.com

DIOCESAN SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT

St. Aloysius Catholic School has joyfully provided the children of Bessemer and Western Jefferson County a Christ-centered education for more than 100 years. St. Aloysius traces its roots to downtown Bessemer when dedicated parishioners decided to open a brick school building on 17th Street in 1912. The church itself dates to 1888 when Irish and Italian immigrants came to Bessemer and founded the church. When a fire destroyed the church in 1989, it set into motion a move of both the church and the school to Academy Drive in 1992. Today, St. Aloysius is fully accredited and provides a challenging and innovative curriculum that includes EnVision Math (K-8) and Core Knowledge Curriculum. Students have the opportunity to participate in basketball, soccer and other athletics, as well as choir, art, music, computer and physical education. One aspect many parents appreciate is the teacher to student ratio -- one teacher for every 15 students -- providing a setting that enables teachers to provide a great deal of individualized attention and assistance. This helps St. Aloysius reach its goal of preparing the students for high school while instilling in them a respect for life and a reverence for Christian life centered on Christ. Special events each year like its Fall Festival, Lenten dinners, pancake breakfasts and this year's BBQ Cook-off help bring the church and school communities together as well as reach out to the greater Bessemer area. St. Aloysius Catholic School's mission statement is, "To provide young people the opportunity to develop their God-given talents, virtues, and faith through the acquisition of knowledge, the practice of prayer and the imitation of Christ in self giving." The faculty, staff and students, animated by the grace of God, play important roles in bringing that mission statement to life daily.

A NOTE FROM THE ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT. . .

“From parochial schools to public schools, the word teamwork is becoming more and more significant. All types of schools and organizations accomplish more when people work together. Ultimately, a team is simply a collection of individuals. The challenge for each individual or each team member is to become the kind of person who can maximize his or her contribution and push the team forward to fulfill its mission. As we proceed with our diocese’s re-accreditation, it will require a team effort with reaching the goals for our schools. Let’s reflect on John *Maxwell’s 17 Essential Qualities of a Team* which could help us meet the challenge of developing into a true team player:

- | | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Adaptable | 7. Disciplined | 13. Relational |
| 2. Collaborative | 8. Enlarging | 14. Self-Improving |
| 3. Committed | 9. Enthusiastic | 15. Selfless |
| 4. Communicative | 10. Intentional | 16. Solution Oriented |
| 5. Competent | 11. Mission Conscious | 17. Tenacious |
| 6. Dependable | 12. Relational | |

Teamwork is an important part of an educational environment, business, family, and church. Having these essential qualities can have a positive impact on every part of our lives. T.E.A.M. Together Everyone Achieves More!

SACS ACCREDITATION

The Diocese of Birmingham Catholic School System is gradually moving throughout the accreditation process. Our schools will complete their Self Assessments and successfully complete the AdvancED and diocesan Assurances. Next, we have the opportunity to share stories about our schools through Executive Summaries. The Executive Summary (ES) provides our schools opportunities to describe in narrative form its vision as well as strengths and challenges within the context of continuous improvement. There are four areas that need to be discussed in the ES: (1) Description of the School, (2) School’s Purpose, (3) Notable Achievements, and (4) Areas of Improvements. Our schools should describe their school’s size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced in the last three years. Include demographic information about the students, staff, and community at large. In your school’s purpose, provide the school’s purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs. Describe how the school embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students. Be sure to describe the school’s notable achievements and areas of improvement over the last three years. Additionally, describe areas for improvement that the school is striving to achieve in the next three years. Last, provide any additional information you would like to share with the public and community (www.advanc-ed.org).



Inspirational

Quote:

It Takes a Team

Coming Together Is The Beginning.

Keeping Together Is Progress.

Working Together Is Success.

~John C. Maxwell

MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Office of Religious Education is very happy to announce that we now have an easy and accessible method by which to share information with our school leaders regarding participation in the Catechetical Institute. Online reports will be arriving by email in early March. These reports will show you who has been engaged in the CI program so far and who has yet to get involved. As the person in your school who is responsible for guiding teachers toward diocesan catechist certification, you may use these reports to keep track of your teachers’ progress and to help you in your communication with them.

We look forward to working together as we follow Bishop Baker's initiative in providing accessible catechist certification for our all those help to pass on the Faith in our diocese!



RESOURCES

The National Association for Elementary School Principals Resource Center (NPRC) provides a variety of resources. It's committed to providing you with the best resources you need to be successful with your teachers, students, and parents. The NPRC stays on top of the latest trends by offering an array of books, webinars, and top notch research articles. The resource center has the following at your fingertips: publications from the *Principal Magazine*, principals' blogs, *Principal 2 Principal* where you could connect with principals across the United States, and provides many more resources. Go to www.naesp.org for more details.



We are
your servants,
so make us
brave enough to
speak your
message.

Acts 4:29

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

NCEA webinars cover trending and need-to-know topics relevant to your career in Catholic education.

Each webinar is scheduled for one hour. All participants will receive the recorded webinar for reference and inclusion among other professional learning resources. Read through the upcoming schedule of webinars for the remainder of 2013. Go to www.ncea.org to register for webinars.

[What Really Works? Tools to Help Teachers Who Teach International Students](#)

Tuesday, March 4, 2014 - 2 p.m. ET

Hosted in partnership with 3W International

[Implementing Research-Based Instructional Strategies](#)

Tuesday, March 4, 2014 - 4 p.m. and 7p.m. ET

Presented by Kathy Mears, NCEA Elementary Schools Department

[Catechetical & Educational Planning: Setting Goals and Action Steps](#)

Tuesday, March 11, 2014 - 2 p.m. ET

Presented by Dr. Lori Dahlhoff and Dr. Regina Haney, NCEA Religious Education and Boards and Councils Departments

[The Role of the Board in Marketing and Development and How to Be a Success With, or Without, a Development Director](#)

Thursday, March 13, 2014 - 1 p.m. ET

Hosted in partnership with the Institute of School & Parish Development (ISPD).

[Understanding the National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools: An Overview](#)

Wednesday, March 19, 2014 - 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. ET

Presented by Kathy Mears, NCEA Elementary Schools Department, and Dr. Lorraine Ozar, Loyola University Chicago

[Is Your Catholic School Ready for a Capital Campaign?](#)

Thursday, March 20, 2014 - 1 p.m. ET

Hosted in partnership with the Institute of School & Parish Development (ISPD).

[National Council of Mathematics \(NCTM\) Annual Meeting and Exposition](#)

April 9th-12th 2014 - New Orleans

[National Catholic Education Association \(NCEA\) Convention and Expo](#)

April 22nd- April 24th, 2014 - Pittsburg, PA

[National Council of Science Conference](#)

May 5th-7th - Washington D.C. at Gaylord National Resort

[International Reading Association \(IRA\) Conference](#)

May 10th-12th 2014 - New Orleans

UPCOMING EVENTS/DEADLINES

March 4th 2014-Principals' meeting at Sacred Heart School in Cullman, AL

March 5th, 2014-Ash Wednesday

March 10th-28th-Spring Break (depending on school)

March 21, 2014-Schools complete Self Assessments

March 21st 2014-Schools complete AdvancED Assurances

March 21st 2014-Schools complete Diocesan Assurances



We are
your servants,
So make us
brave enough to
speak your
message.

Acts 4:29

OUR VISION AND MISSION

OUR VISION:

Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Birmingham provide an excellent educational experience in the Catholic tradition enabling all students to develop their God-given talents.

OUR MISSION:

The mission of the Diocese of Birmingham Catholic School System is to educate our students to seek God in Truth and for loving service by teaching the message of the Gospel, forming a community of faith, providing the whole child with a Catholic and Christ-centered environment, and inspiring all to reach their full academic and spiritual potential.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE

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