



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
DIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM



CATHOLIC SCHOOL CHRONICLE

August 2015

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT	1
DIOCESAN SPOTLIGHT-SACS	1
MESSAGE FROM-DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM	2
SAINT JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE	2
RESOURCES AND PROFESSIONAL	3
UPCOMING EVENTS/IMPORTANT DATES	4

FROM THE DESK OF THE SUPERINTENDENT .



Welcome back teachers, students, administrators and parents. We are off to a great start as the 2015-2016 school year begins. By the time you read this, almost all of our schools will have opened. I love the start of the school year. Floors have been waxed and sparkle with the light. New backpacks and lunch boxes can be seen. Classrooms are decorated and ready to receive our students. Teachers and students have enjoyed summer breaks and are ready to begin a year of exciting educational experiences.

August 15th is a special day as we celebrate the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Christians began to believe that Mary was taken up to heaven body and soul for many centuries. Officially, Pope Pius XII, in 1950, made a doctrinal declaration, "Finally, the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things, so that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords and conqueror of sin and death." (Lumen Gentium 59) May this new school year be a time of academic and spiritual study for us all.

Back to School



Are you speaking the language of encouragement?

Encouragement

- * Notices effort
- * Uses descriptive words
- * Can be given regardless of performance

Encouragement prompts action.

DIOCESAN SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT-SACS

The Catholic Schools Office is proud to share that the Catholic Schools of the Diocese in Birmingham have been re-accredited through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. This accomplishment would not have been possible without the dedication and hard work of many. New certificates are being delivered to schools and we encourage everyone to share this news within your school, parish, and local community. The distinction of SACS accreditation is a testament to the great work happening in our schools. BRAVO!



A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM. . .

Not the we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. 2 Corinthians 3:5

It is so comforting to know that as we being this journey together, we are all, first and foremost, rooted in our shared faith. Working with people is hard but there is a certain assurance in working with people that comes with a common purpose and shared vision. I am looking forward to getting to know each of you as individuals and hope to bring you comfort and support as we set out to change lives this year through learning. We often talk about how exciting it is to work with students and the importance of our role in their lives. It is exciting and frankly a bit daunting to have the opportunity to work with young people. I think we often gloss over the stress of the obligation that we have to meet everyone's needs all the time but that stress is very real in our profession. It is very easy to get caught up in what's happening in your classroom or with your group of students and carry the stress all alone. This year I ask that you not over look or underestimate the power of a quick hello or shared prayer with your colleague next door or down the hall. We are in this together and my hope this year is that we can share the weight of our obligations through encouragement and support. Servant leadership is hard but we are really good at it as our competence comes from God.

I hope this year I will have the opportunity to support and show you how truly valued you are and that together we can enjoy growing and refining our practice.

SAINT JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE: FATHER OF MODERN EDUCATION

Saint John Baptist de La Salle studied for the priesthood in Paris, France, but quit to care for his brothers and sisters upon the death of his parents. When his siblings were grown, John returned to seminary. He was ordained in 1678 and became a Doctor of Theology in 1680.

He was the spiritual director of the *Sisters of the Holy Infant* who were devoted to teaching poor girls. He founded the *Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools (Christian Brothers)* in 1681, which established and supported academic education for all boys. He liquidated his personal fortune, and his *Brothers* expected him to use it to further his education goals, but he surprised them by saying they would have to depend on Providence. The money (about \$400,000) was given away to the poor in the form of bread during the great famine of 1683–1684. Saint John kept enough to endow a salary for himself similar to that which the *Brothers* received so he wouldn't be a burden on them.

He instituted the process of dividing students into grades; established the first teacher's school, started high schools and trade schools, and was proclaimed the patron of all teachers of all youth by Pope Pius XII in 1950.

ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL...

PLCs are not all the same nor should they be. As we begin looking more closely at professional learning communities, ask yourself what type of PLC would meet your needs. Below are a few PLC formats that have proven successful.

Book or Topic Studies

Generally consist of a heterogeneous group with a common interest in a certain book or topic.

Concept or Strategy Studies

This often takes the form of action research. The group is comprised of people with a common interest in a topic or strategy who come together to share findings and encouragement to enhance their practice.

Grade/Subject Specific

A homogenous group all with the same focus on improving their subject or grade level expertise.

RESOURCES

As you kick off the new school year check out some of these great online resources...

planbook.com for lesson planning 2.0. Try this site on for size. Planbook.com is an online lesson planning tool that allows you to upload your curriculum and plan digitally for a yearly service fee of \$12. Many like the customization features and variety of templates offered.

www.classdojo.com This company's mission is to reinvent classrooms by bringing teachers, students and parents closer together. Classdojo has been praised as a wonderful resource that makes classrooms more positive and classroom management a cinch!

www.instaGrok.com This top rated education search engine produces results in interactive concept maps!

www.teachingchannel.org Have you ever checked out any of the videos on the teachingchannel.org? Education Week calls many of the videos found here inspired. If you are feeling a little uninspired when planning a lesson on a certain concept, pop over to the "Teaching Channel" and gain a new perspective.



It is
God who arms
me with
strength and
keeps my way
secure.

2 Samuel 22:33

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- **Fall In-Service: September 18, 2015 John Carroll Catholic High School, Birmingham**

Forms will be sent to your schools in the next few weeks with session options for this in-service. The morning will feature Father John McDonald as the keynote speaker and the afternoon will be comprised of different interest based sessions.

- **ACTM (Alabama Council of Teachers of Mathematics): October 22 & 23 McWane Science Center, Birmingham**

This is a wonderful conference normally held in Montgomery with many opportunities to attend interest based content/grade specific sessions.

- **Alabama Reading Association 47th Annual Fall Conference: November 12-13, Birmingham Marriott at Grandview, Birmingham**

This local conference attracts Nationally acclaimed speakers that this year include Jeff Anderson author of *Mechanically Inclined*, Ann Marie Corgill Alabama Teacher of the Year 2014 and author of *Of Primary Importance*, and Kwame Alexander 2015 Newbery Medal winner for his book *Crossover*.

If you or your team have a specific interest or would like to be a part of a book study on a certain topic please contact Julie Emory-Johnson at: **jejohnson@bhmdiocese.org**.

Julie will be offering sessions in various parts of the diocese on "hot" topics in education so look for those to be announced here in future issues of the Chronicle.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ⇒August 18th Local board and PTO rosters due to CSO
- ⇒August 28th Faculty and Student Handbook due to CSO
- ⇒September 7th Labor Day
- ⇒September 9th PAC Meeting at Prince of Peace
- ⇒September 18th Fall In-Service at John Carroll Catholic HS
- ⇒September 30th Principals' Meeting at St Bernard Retreat Center
- ⇒September 30th–October 2nd Principals' Retreat



May he
 give you the
 desire of your
 heart and make
 all your plans
 succeed.

Psalm 20:4

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

SUPERINTENDENT:	FRAN LAWLOR	flawlor@bhmdiocese.org
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION:	REV. JOHN MCDONALD	directorofeducation@bhmdiocese.org
DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM:	JULIE EMORY-JOHNSON	jejohanson@bhmdiocese.org
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT:	CHRISTINE SALBERG	csalberg@bhmdiocese.org

P.O. Box 12047, 35202
2121 3rd Avenue North, 35203
Birmingham, Alabama
205.838.8303—Fax 205.838.8330
www.bhmcatholicsschools.com

.....