



Newsletter from the Secretary of Elementary Education

Monthly Messenger – September 2022



Dear Catholic School Educators,

Welcome Back

I hope that you had a restful summer and are ready to embrace the new year. A special welcome to all of our first year teachers in Archdiocesan Schools. You are part of a much larger mission to teach and to bring Jesus Christ to many young people. I thank you for accepting the call to serve the mission of Catholic Education.

As we start this year, with the availability of new tools, we are poised to embrace a new strategy in dealing with COVID-19 in our schools. We are pleased to share that we are now able to operate our schools without many of the previously enacted restrictions designed to prevent the spread of COVID-19. I am confident that this will make the classroom experience more enjoyable.

I would like to congratulate all of our staff on the tremendous job working with our students over the last two years. In spite of the challenges, their performance on the Spring Standardized tests were impressive.

- At every level, more than 30% of students performed in the top national quartile.
- Students' mean achievement scores were above the national mean in every content area and at every grade level tested.
- At every grade level and in every content area, there was at least a full year's growth.

I hope that teaching this year brings you much joy. Again, I thank you for your commitment to our families, schools and students. I will keep you in my prayers, God bless you.

May God bless you!

Dr. Andrew McLaughlin
Secretary of Elementary Education

Upcoming Events

- Sept 6 - Faculty Organizational Day
- Sept 7 - First Trimester Begins
- Sept 9 - Honors Math Registration Due
- Sept 12 - Start of Elementary Administrator Development Program (EADP)
- Sept 14 - Start Compiling NCEA Report - Update SIS
- Sept 19 - Universal Principal Meeting
- Sept 20 - Middle States Meeting
- Sept 25 - Neumann Scholarship Test - Tentative
- Sept 30 - All Beginning of Year Documents Due

DIRECTOR OF ENROLLMENT

Welcome Bonnie Delciotto!

With over twenty-five years in Catholic Education, Mrs. Bonnie Delciotto, joined the Office of Catholic Education in August 2022 as the Director of Enrolment and School Culture for Elementary Schools. Bonnie is



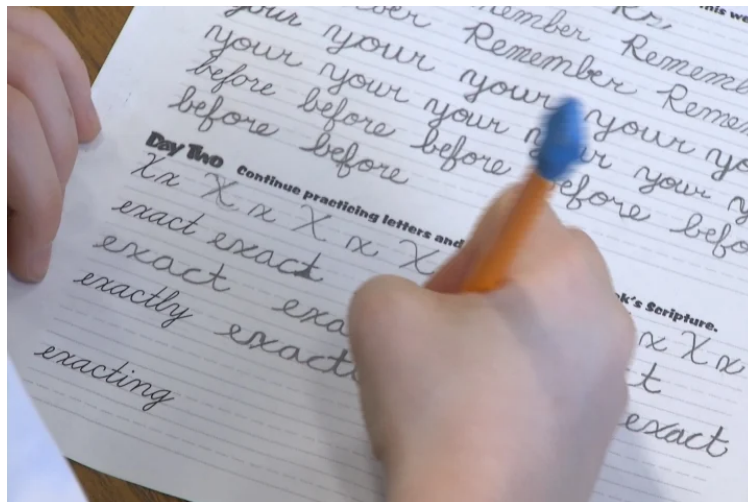
excited to help provide a vision and leadership to grow enrollment in the diocesan elementary schools.

Prior to joining OCE, Bonnie spent 17 years in the classroom and 9 years in administration. Most recently, Bonnie was the principal at Saint Aloysius Parish School in Pottstown where the school had great gains in their enrollment and school culture.

Bonnie has her undergraduate degree from West Chester University and her master's degree in Educational Leadership from Cabrini University. In her free time, Bonnie enjoys crafting, the outdoors and reading.

CREDIT: Sr. Edward Quinn, IHM

Handwriting is Essential



Handwriting instruction is still essential at **every** level from pre-K through grade 8. It has never been eliminated from the Archdiocesan curriculum. Formal instruction using manuscript letters should begin at the PK level. Instruction in cursive writing should begin mid-year in the second grade with continued instruction and practice throughout the grades. The following points should be considered:

- The use of larger pencils and crayons at the primary levels is not recommended by handwriting experts. Students at this level should be using pencils more appropriate to the size of their hands.

- At all levels it is important to instruct students how to correctly hold a pencil.
- Teachers should model good handwriting.
- Students admitted from schools where cursive writing was not taught should be given extra attention in this area until they develop the skill.
- Every class in grades 5-8 should have at least 10 minutes a day to practice handwriting skills.
- Manuscript writing should not be permitted beyond Grade 3. Research indicates that using it slows the learning process.

Additional Content: [12 Reasons Why Handwriting is Important](#)

Middle States Meeting – September 20

The annual meeting for those working on Middle States Accreditation is scheduled for **September 20**. There will be two sessions—one for those beginning the process and another for those preparing for a team visit. Keeping in mind the cost of gas and travelling distances, these meetings will be virtual. Links and registration forms will be made available the week prior to the meetings.

Opportunity from the Shrine of Miraculous Medal

The Beyond Sunday team is excited to announce our traveling [Back-to-School Backpack Blessing](#) program held the third Thursday of every month during the school year beginning September 15, 2022.



The Beyond Sunday team is excited to announce our traveling [Back-to-School Backpack Blessing](#) program held the third Thursday of every month during the school year beginning September 15, 2022.

Upon visiting your class, we will tell the story of **St. Catherine** and the **Miraculous Medal**, share in activities related to the Blessed Mother, distribute Miraculous Medals, and bless the children for a safe and grace-filled year.

Visit our [Backpack Blessing Scheduler](#) to find a time and date that is convenient for your school or classroom.

Take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to bring the joy and blessing of **the Miraculous Medal** to your classroom

[LEARN MORE](#)

Algebra Testing

Scantron is no longer producing the Algebra testing that the secondary schools used and which we used for Honors Math programs. Please do not contact Scantron about this testing as we no longer have an affiliation with them.

We are now awaiting for final arrangements to be made with the new provider, Renaissance Stars, and will provide information and training on this program as soon as it is finalized.

[Registration](#) for the testing is open on Acceptiva. However, before you register, you must submit your completed Honors Math forms and have the students approved for entrance into the program. Acceptiva registrations that are submitted without this step completed will not be forwarded to Renaissance.

Approved Honors Math programs are the only recognized programs that use grouping for mathematics instruction. Based on research, all other students should be heterogeneously grouped.

Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Office of Catholic Elementary Education
222 North 17th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

cjennings@archphila.org

Subscribers are automatically added upon your employment hire at the Archdiocese of Philadelphia or Archdiocese school.

[Unsubscribe](#)

