

St. Demetrios Pythagoras School Board News – March 2014

Greetings to all the families of PCA, PGS and PSGS! Welcome to our very first newsletter. We want to keep you informed of what's happening at School Board, and how we are working to continuously improve our three schools. We hope this is the first of a regular series of updates. We are all part of the same family. As always, we want you to know we are here for you. Please join us at a meeting, get to know us, and learn more about what's going on with our schools. [We are always seeking ways to better our schools, and your input and ideas are always welcome.](#)

What's included in this newsletter:

- **PYTHAGORAS SCHOOLS GENERAL INFO**
 - o Security Update
 - o Greek Independence Day events
 - o Potential Joint School event
 - o Gala a huge success!
- **Pythagoras Children's Academy**
 - o Changes in this school year
 - o TADS update
 - o Registration update
 - o Latest news
 - o Support PPO
- **Greek Schools**
 - o Registration 2014-2015 school year
 - o New fundraising fee for PTO
 - o Support PTO
 - o **Pythagoras Greek School**
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PYTHAGORAS SCHOOLS

Security

As you know, our security policy continues to evolve. The new doors were installed, and are working properly. We appreciate everyone signing in and out in the office and adhering to the policies, as they ensure the safety of our children.

Greek Independence Day Events

Congratulations to all of our students on their wonderful Greek Independence Day programs! We're very proud of you! Ζήτω τα Ελληνόπουλα! Thank you to the teachers for all their hard work to prepare the programs, and for a great job decorating the fellowship hall. It looked great!

Potential Joint Schools Event

We would like to at some point bring all three schools together for a joint event, however, due to accounting practices, it more than likely will not be a fundraiser, but more for bringing parents together to get to build unity between our schools---we're all part of the same family, after all! – to get know each other better, and just have fun. A good time to do this is at the start of the next school year. We welcome your ideas on this, and we will need your commitment and assistance to make it happen. Is this of interest? Let us know if you're interested in participating and volunteering to organize.

Pythagoras Children's Academy

There have been a lot of changes at PCA this year. Here's the short list:

- Adopted Common Core curriculum, including the University of Chicago's new Everyday Math program – for all students beginning in preschool - which places PCA's curriculum on par with state standards.
- Implemented IXL computer-based math program to strengthen math skills at school and at home
- Initiated MAP testing to ensure continuity in testing markers as students transition from PCA
- Utilize AIMS Web testing for reading/reading comprehension
- Created teacher websites and enhanced communication from staff to families
- Offer Speech therapy each week for students in need
- The 2014-2015 school year will include our first-ever 4th grade class!
and more...

TADS Online Registration and Payment System

- This year we implemented a new online system for payments, to assist with collections. We struggled a bit with the launch, and there was a bit of confusion, but we are confident that we've worked out the kinks. We apologize for the issues we experienced with the roll out and are on top of things to be sure we avoid them for the next school year. *Thanks for your understanding!*
- Thank you to all who completed the survey we sent home. Your comments are very helpful to us moving forward.
- [Did you know that moving to this system saved the church hundreds of dollars in credit card fees for processing tuition payments? The church covered this cost for years, but unfortunately, for financial reasons, they are no longer able to do so.](#)
- Did you know, TADS helped us considerably, in terms of collections and accounting? Tuition was collected quicker, easier and on time. Our "delinquent" payments are at an all-time low. We are on target to collecting nearly 100% of tuition for this school year! This is unprecedented.
- All pre-registered students for 2014-2015 will be entered into the system and parents will be able to activate their accounts before summer.
- We are working toward having everyone set up and activated in TADS **before** Registration Day.

Registration

- 90+ students have pre-registered for 2014-2015!
- Pre-registration numbers have surpassed the 2013-2014 enrollment numbers!
- Students pre-registered by March 26 for 2014-2015, to maintain 2013-2014 tuition rates. All registrations after that date include a 2% tuition increase.
- Registration is ongoing.
- **NEW!** Refer a new family to PCA for 2014-2015 school year and receive a \$200 tuition credit.

NEW! We've been working on even more changes to ensure that PCA thrives, and we continue to raise the standard of academic excellence:

- Search has been initiated for a full-time director to help the school grow, as well as enhance program.
- New teacher standards have been established by Parish Council, which require all PCA teachers (with the exception of Greek language, art, music & PE teachers) to be certified, in order to ensure highest-level performance and classroom success.
- New teacher evaluation system is being developed, to properly identify areas where teachers may need development, and to build on their current skills and strengths. Let's help our teachers be the best they can be!

Gala a huge success!

A big thank you to all the parents, staff, sponsors, alumni and supporters who made the 1st annual PCA Gala a rousing success! We raised more than \$27,000 for PCA! This money will be used to support future needs of the school. As many of you know, the cost of running a day school continues to rise every year, and we do our best to keep the tuition at a reasonable level. PCA typically runs at a deficit, and it was crucial that some large-scale fundraising activity was launched to help offset budget deficits, so we could keep the school open. This fund is essential to ensure PCA's future stability. [Mark your calendars for the 2nd annual gala, on January 31, 2015.](#)

Support PPO

This May 3, PPO will host its annual Family Dinner Dance, its biggest fundraiser of the year. This year's theme is "Princesses and Heroes." Don your tiara or cape, and join in on some good fun. The dance will take place right in our Community Center. Contact PPO for details. pythagoras.parents.organization@gmail.com

Greek School

As always, our two Greek schools are running pretty smoothly this year. We hired some new teachers and aides this year to accommodate the number of students enrolled. The Greek schools are financially stable, and therefore, did not require large-scale fundraising support from School Board this year.

Support PTO!

Please support PTO at their Easter lambades sale. It's their biggest fundraiser this year. When you purchase one of these handcrafted lambades, you take care of your Godchild and the proceeds go for a great cause! Look for their display after church, Greek school and PCA. For more info contact PTO. pgspto@yahoo.com

2014-2015 School Year

- Pre-registration for Greek School will begin sometime in April.
- Please register as soon as possible – do not wait until fall – so we may better plan for the year, including securing the best teachers, and the number needed to properly serve our students and keep the class sizes small.
- A \$25 fundraising fee has been approved for the coming year, to support PTO in its efforts to supplement programs and materials for the Greek schools.

Pythagoras Greek School

Our Monday/Wednesday evening Greek school is home to 85 students this year.

Pythagoras Saturday Greek School

We never imagined how popular Saturday Greek School would be! Every Saturday the halls of St. Demetrios are full of activity of the PSGS, and Greek dance. Enrollment this year is at 130.

Alumni

We encourage our alumni to stay involved with and support our schools! If you know any alumni, please let them know all the great things happening at our Pythagoras Schools!

Pythagoras Schools Calendar of Events:

- Through April 18: PTO Lambades sale
- March 28-April 6: PCA Spring Break
- March 28 & 30: PGS Spring Break
- March 30: Greek Independence Day Parade, Greektown 2:30 pm
- April 1: Greek School registration begins
- April 5: PSGS Spring Break
- April 7: PTO Meeting 4:45 pm
- April 9: PPO Meeting 9:00 am
- May 3: PPO Dinner Dance "Princesses and Heroes" 5:30 pm
- May 7: PTO Meeting 4:45 pm
- May 14: PPO Meeting 9:00 am
- May 19: PCA/PPO End of Year Picnic
- Date TBD: PTO Ice Cream Social
- Date TBD: Greek School/PTO End of Year Picnic

Community Calendar of Events:

- Register now for Fanari camp (June 15-21), Junior Olympics (May 23-25), VCS (June 23-27) and Scholarships! Visit the Youth Ministries table after church.
- April 13: Palm Sunday Luncheon
- April 18: JOY/WAY Holy and Good Friday Retreat 12:30 pm
- April 18: Sr. & Jr. GOYA Holy and Good Friday Retreat 9:00 am
- April 20: ΚΑΛΟ ΠΑΣΧΑ!
- April 22: School Board Meeting 6:00 pm
- April 25: AGAPE Family Celebration 5:00 pm
- April 26: Metropolis Oratorical & Arts Festival – St. John the Baptist, Des Plaines
- June 13-15: Taste of Greece Festival
- June 23-27: VCS “Wilderness Escape: Where God Guides and Provides”

Minutes

Minutes from the February 10, 2014 School Board meeting are attached for your review.

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Please contact us with any questions, comments or suggestions.

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