

Principal's Comments for the Month of October

Great Start

We have completed twenty - two school days thus far. The kids are off to a great start. They quickly settled into the new routines and are working hard. I would be remiss if I didn't thank the many parents who have helped our school year get off to such a great start. As usual, we had parents spruce up the grounds, step up to coach, clean the school, and fulfilled many small tasks that are nevertheless very important. Gracious thanks to all of you.

Hot Lunch

Our new hot lunch program seems to be going well. The children enjoy the meals and the salad bar. Rockford personnel are impressed by the number of ABVM students who eat the fruits and vegetables from the salad bar. The rolls are a big favorite as well. Our food service person, Julie O'Rourke-Lillis, fits right in and loves our students. We are seeing approximately 85-90 meals a day.

Odyssey of the Mind (OM)

It appears that Assumption will not be participating in OM this year. No one has expressed interest in coaching. It is understandable that parents and families are busy and committed to other family activities ranging from sports, dance, homework, etc. If we have a surge of interest at a later date, I will keep you informed.

Mary Beth Hicks

Ok, so having just said I understand how busy you all are, I want to extend an invitation to you. I am sure you've seen fliers and other information on Mary Beth Hicks' presentation at Assumption. I urge you to attend if you can. Our Athletic Director, Brian Wildman, has promised a no practice-no play date for that evening. I assure you the evening will be stimulating and thought-provoking.

New Assessment Program

I hope you read my letter explaining our new assessment program. As noted in the letter, the Diocese has moved to an on-line assessment called Measurement of Academic Progress (MAPS). The MAPS tests will be administered three times per year. We will begin by assessing students in Math, Reading, and English/Language Arts. We will have the option of adding Science and Social Studies in the future. The students will test for approximately three hours over a three week period. There will be more information provided as our results are returned.

Office of Catholic Schools Introduces New Vision

Grand Rapids, Mich. - The Office of Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Grand Rapids is pleased to announce its new Vision for Catholic Schools:

“An alliance of Catholic schools expanding outstanding Catholic educational ministry, through innovation and collaboration, that is affordable and accessible to families investing time, talent, and treasure”.

The purpose and promise of Catholic Schools has been newly articulated as,

“An alliance of Catholic schools where Christ illuminates learning and life”.

David Faber, superintendent of diocesan schools, enters the new school year with a vision that represents the thinking of the entire diocesan community. The vision document was a collaborative effort by over 1,700 participants representing more than 60 parishes over a year-long process of consideration, surveys, writing and rewriting.

“This new Vision for Catholic Schools provides direction for this generation of Catholics to build upon the strengths of the past and plan for a future of ‘return with increase’”. Faber continues, “This mission gives our students the timeless treasures of strong faith and quality education. These are true advantages for our students as we anticipate a future of great change and challenge.”

The new document presents several strategic elements where Catholic schools look to **“add value”** in planning for the future by expanding technology to include satellite schools and virtual learning. This new Vision for Catholic Schools will serve as a guiding document for all schools within the diocese as they engage in long-range strategic planning.

“I think we need to look as we reflect on this new school year at finding new and creative ways of thinking and of doing things,” Bishop Walter Hurley said to the teachers and administrators at this year’s Back to School Kick-off Mass. He went on to encourage the educators from the 31 schools within the diocese to “Embrace this vision looking to the future with confidence and trust.”

The new Vision for Catholic Schools can be found at:
www.dioceseofgrandrapids.org.

The Diocese of Grand Rapids serves 178,000 Catholics, 101 parishes and 31 schools in an 11-county area of West Michigan.

