



School Consolidation Update

Budget Numbers Achieving Academic Excellence Applications



Preliminary Estimates and Actual Figures

We began working on the budget for the Academy back in the fall. The final budget (\$3.6 million) has been approved by the Pastors' Board and signed by Bishop Jenky. The grade school portion of the budget was based on our prediction of 270 students in grades K-8. As of April 22nd, 276 students have applied.

Achieving Academic Excellence by Teaching Students according to their Ability

From the beginning of the consolidation process, we have been focused on how best to meet the educational needs of our students. Parents and educational leaders at every level have encouraged us in this endeavor. A key element in achieving academic excellence entails teaching students in each subject according to their ability – not necessarily according to their age or grade. A traditional classroom is well suited to the average student with the assumption that each student is working at his or her grade level. So, for example, a fourth grader who reads at the fourth grade level is well suited for a traditional classroom; but the traditional classroom is not especially well suited to accommodate the fourth grader who reads at the fifth grade level – or the third grade level. Beginning next year, Marquette Academy will utilize multi-age classrooms beginning in second grade so that students can be grouped in the various subjects according to their ability – not necessarily according to their age. We will assess students' abilities in kindergarten and first grade and then place them according to their demonstrated abilities in successive years. So students who are significantly above average in, say, math or English, will be grouped with other students of similar abilities. When carried through into high school, some freshmen will be ready for sophomore or junior level courses in the area(s) of their particular strengths. Naturally, we will offer accelerated courses for our juniors and seniors, enabling them to take college level and AP courses so that they will enter college academically ahead of the game. This is an integral element of making academic excellence a reality for our students.

Multi-Age classrooms offer a number of advantages for students:

- ✓ Learning is focused on the child instead of the curriculum
- ✓ Academic progress is continuous and is based on each child's need
- ✓ Respect for individual differences increases
- ✓ Self-esteem improves
- ✓ Reflects society and the world of work
- ✓ Students move forward building on prior knowledge
- ✓ Peer tutoring: students learn from each other

Presentation by Mrs. Patricia Kellogg, Associate Superintendent of Schools

Mrs. Kellogg, Associate Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Peoria, will make a presentation on the advantages of multi-age classrooms at 4pm at St. Columba School on Tuesday, 27 April 2010. All are invited.

Applications

Next week, the Academy will begin processing applications. If your application is accepted, you will be required to pay a non-refundable \$100 deposit per child to secure your place. This deposit will be deducted from your tuition bill.

25 April 2010