Philadelphia Advisory Council

Fall 2026 Newsletter

Who we are *The Philadelphia Advisory Council's Mission is to work with the local leadership to assist and support our Catholic Elementary Schools, develop local strategies, and help sustain and expand Catholic Education in Philadelphia. Our goal is to better understand your individual challenges. We also want to help increase EITC and OSTC participation in Philadelphia.*

Why Catholic Education *Catholic Elementary Schools offer a welcoming environment that empowers students to become productive members of society while providing an academic and spiritual foundation rooted in Christ.*

IN THE NEWS

A Century of Excellence: Happy 100th Anniversary, Saint Cecilia School!

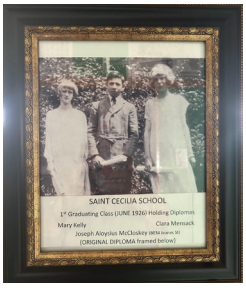
We have spent the last year celebrating a monumental milestone—**100 years of SCS**! For a century, our school community has been a place of learning, faith, growth, and lifelong friendships. Students marked the historic event throughout the year with timeline projects that took them back through the decades to learn what SCS students were experiencing during their time in school.

School Alumni celebrated together on March 28, 2026. An All Class Reunion was held at the school. Alumni enjoyed drinks, dinner and dancing. The highlight of the evening was tours of the school. Former students took selfies in 100 year old classrooms, newer classrooms and the cafeteria.

To mark this incredible moment in our history, take a look at the photos below:

- **The Pioneer Class**:
  Our very first graduating class from **1926**.
- **The Century Class**:
  Our 100th graduating class from **2026**.

A huge thank you to every student, teacher, parent, parishioner, and alumnus who has contributed to our rich legacy over the past 100 years. Here's to honoring our history and looking forward to a bright future! We are poised to head into the next 100 years!





Growing STREAM Education

The Foundation for Catholic Education was very busy this summer working to grow their programming. First, they welcomed a new team member, Ben Fox. Ben comes from Penn State with a degree in Aerospace Engineering and has been integral in the evolution of the robotics program into programming with written code. The Coding & Robotics Program welcomed 10 new schools to the program this August, bringing the total number of participants to 88 across the Archdiocese. In addition, a Bootcamp and Advanced Camp were held to help enhance teachers' lessons and resources. The Foundation is excited about plans to expand the program into the 3D and AI space. Look for information on these new program additions in the fall. If your school is interested in joining this STREAM initiative, please contact Anne Marie Fisher at annemarie.fisher@foundationfce.org.

Congratulations to PAC Concil Member Michael Giangiordano

Michael Giangiordano, PAC Council member, was selected to receive the RowHome Magazine's Blue Sapphire "Torch" Award this fall at a Gala Dinner at VIE on N Broad St.

Thursday November 5, 2026 at 6:00 PM

More details to follow. Please save the date!

I would love for my family and friends to join me in celebrating this honor!

Michael A. Giangiordano II
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TEACHER'S CORNER

Welcome Ms. Strain!



Christ the King would like to extend a warm welcome to our new principal, Ms. Amanda Strain! Ms. Strain is ready to lead our school, parish and community at large! "I cannot wait to see the halls filled with students and staff come September."

Why Catholic Education

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With Gratitude from St. Mary's School

It is with a mixture of profound gratitude and bittersweet emotion that Saint Mary Interparochial School honors two beloved members of our faculty as they prepare for their next chapter. This June, we will bid a fond farewell to Mrs. Judy Crossan-Sanicky and Mrs. Paula Zuzulock, whose combined decades of service have been instrumental in fulfilling our mission of preparing Christ-centered leaders.

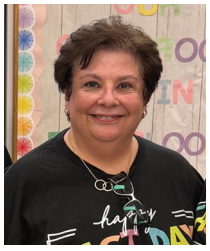
Judy Crossan-Sanicky: A Lifetime at Saint Mary



Mrs. Crossan-Sanicky's connection to Saint Mary is truly unique and spans a lifetime. A proud alumna of Saint Mary Interparochial School, Mrs. Crossan-Sanicky returned to her roots to shape the lives of generations of students. Mary has dedicated 42 years to Catholic education, 40 of which were spent at St. Mary's teaching, mentoring, and inspiring over 1,000 students.

As our Grade 8 teacher, Mrs. Crossan-Sanicky has been the final steady hand guiding our graduates before they enter the world. She has spent over four decades ensuring our students leave these halls not just as scholars, but as the Christ-centered leaders our mission envisions. Her deep history within these walls makes her a true pillar of our institution.

Paula Zuzulock "Mrs. Z": A Heart for Our Youngest Learners



Mrs. Z has spent nearly two decades fostering a love of learning and faith in the hearts of children. Her warmth and dedication in the classroom have made her a cherished figure among students and parents alike. Paula has dedicated 19 years to Catholic education, 16 of which were spent at St. Mary's teaching, mentoring, and inspiring over 450 students.

As our Grade 2 teacher, Mrs. Z has played a pivotal role in the formative years of our students' spiritual journeys. By modeling compassion daily and preparing her students for their Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion, she has laid the essential foundation for them to grow into Christ-centered leaders.

Welcome New Principals for the 26-27 Year!

Christ the King: **Miss Amanda Strain**

Mother of Consolation: **Miss Desiree Disney**

St. George: **Mr. David Waskiewicz**

Resurrection: **Mrs. Stefanie Wetzel**

St. Dominic: **Mrs. Tysheshia Carmichael**

St. Francis Xavier: **Mr. Joseph Mock**

St. Peter the Apostle: **Ms. Francesca Formica**

Each principal comes with the required credentials, enthusiasm, a love for Catholic Education and most of all strong Catholic Identity

On Thursday, August 6, all the new principals came to the new Archdiocesan Office relocated to 1601 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA. The secretary for Catholic Education and assistant superintendents shared policies and procedures while establishing camaraderie among the new principal cohort. All enjoyed mass, breakfast, lunch, and learning.



UPCOMING EVENTS

PAC Pastor & Principal Forum

October 28, 2026

Union League Torresdale

Hall of Fame Dinner

April 15, 2027

Philadelphia Ballroom

EITC Tax Credit Program

Redirect your PA Tax Dollars to Support Catholic Education! Individuals or Businesses can join our Special Purpose Entity. Your tax dollars can help support families across the Archdiocese.

Learn how to redirect your state tax dollars to benefit students and receive a 90% Tax Credit! Scan the QR code to enroll. Questions? Contact Vic D'Ascenzo at 610-793-8597.

August 24 at 12:00 PM
September 8 at 8:00 AM
September 23 at 7:00 PM
October 8 at 8:00 AM
October 19 at 12:00 PM
November 4 at 7:00 PM
November 17 at 12:00 PM

SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS



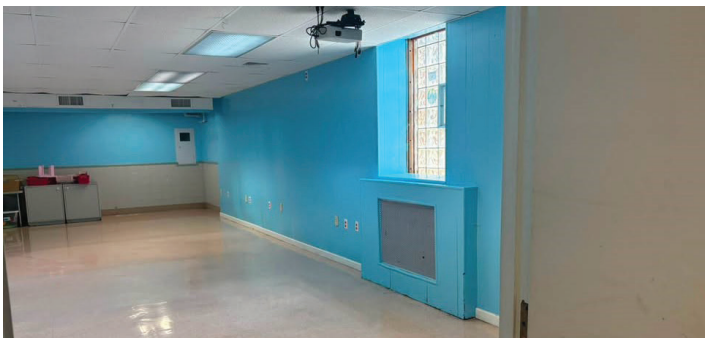

IHM's 2026 Race for Education raised over $31,000 for the school!







Resurrection School conducted their own World Diversity Day Gallery Walk in May as 4th grade students showcased their own countries and presented information with tri folds, artifacts, cultural clothing, and dishes. As a school, Resurrection is diverse in demographics and maintains students from all different cultures and counties from Prek3-8th grade.

Mr. Gene and his summer team have been extremely busy working to spruce up IHM School! Classroom and hallway floors have been stripped and shined, classrooms are being painted, the girls' bathrooms are being repaired, and Father Sullivan Hall stage is getting a long overdue makeover! All of these repairs and upgrades are being made courtesy of the amazing outpouring of donations to the IHM Race for Education!



Students and teachers from Maternity BVM School were featured on The ClassH-Room



Ms. Laura and Ms. Salamone hosted Our Mother of Consolation's first Broadway Camp Mini-Camp! Campers spent the week building their vocal skills, learning dance routines, and participating in fun team-building activities. They wrapped up the week with a performance for family and friends. Bravo!



What an exciting night for Mother of Divine Grace 8th grader Joseph L. to be part of the All-Star Game on July 15th!



St. Christopher School is incredibly grateful to the Daniel Boyle Fund for providing seventeen students with partial tuition scholarships for the 2026-2027 school year. Mr. Pat Boyle presented these scholarships in honor of his son, Daniel Boyle, who died in the line of duty in 1991. The Daniel Boyle Fund continues to do amazing work in Danny's name. Thank you for helping keep St. Chris Strong!



Saint George Summer Camp welcomed both new and familiar faces as campers spent the week making new friends, reconnecting with old ones, and creating memories that will last all summer long. From creative crafts and exciting games to outdoor adventures and cooling off in the sprinklers, there was never a dull moment! The week wrapped up with the annual Fourth of July BBQ & Water Slide Day! It was the perfect way to celebrate an amazing first week together.





In March 2023, Our Mother of Consolation School suffered a major fire that devastated the community. Last September, students and faculty were welcomed back into a brand new building with so much to be thankful for, however, there was one piece that was missing: a playground. After many months of fundraising, students, families, and parishioners raised enough money to turn this dream into a reality alongside a dedicated team who saw this project come to light. Although school has not yet begun, young parishioners and excited students have been able to enjoy the play area after weekend masses. Their excitement and love for the new playground brings joy to the community and reminds us of the possibilities we can achieve together.

PAC Council Members

Chair: Deacon Joe Bernauer **Vice Chair**: Fr. Tom Higgins

Anne Carolan • Sister Joseph Marie Carter, IHM • Kristie Dugan
Michael Giangiordano • Mike Gillespie • Linda Marchese
Michael Petro • Christina Ruskey Haciski • Sister Danielle Truex, IHM

Ex Officio Liaisons: Sister Margaret Rose Adams, IHM, OCE, Vic D'Ascenzo, Anne Marie Fisher, Foundation for Catholic Education

ALUMNI IN ACTION



St. Dominic School is happy to welcome alumni Paul Coates as the new DRE!



St. Martha School is extremely grateful to Parish Families and Alumni who return every year to generously grant scholarships to deserving students! Thank you Mrs. Butler & Family! Your generosity is truly appreciated!





A heartfelt thank you to the St. Jerome Classes of 1981 an 1976 for their generous donations to the school following their recent class reunions! Your kindness and continued support are a wonderful reminder that the St. Jerome spirit lasts a lifetime. We are grateful that you continue to invest in the next generation. Your legacy of faith, service, and compassion lives on. Once a Lion, always a Lion!

Want your school's photos featured?
Send them, along with a short description, to Linda Marchese at lmarchese@holyinnocentsrc.org.