



Springtime News

March 2011

Highlights of our 2010-11 school year

Our new headmaster, **Deacon Matthew Harrington**, hired in June 2010, has successfully taken on the challenge of teaching and overseeing the school program, other staff and volunteers. He has brought a strong sense of leadership, energy and a positive rapport with the students. We are grateful!

Some curriculum highlights are:

■ **Literature** devoured by students includes: *The Black Ships before Troy*, *The Wanderings of Odysseus*, *The Bronze Bow*, *Helen Keller*, *The Adventures of Odysseus*, *The Tale of Troy* and *Willy Pogamy*.

■ **History:** delving into the historical reality of ancient Egypt and life in Mesopotamia.

■ **Science:** Projects challenge the student's curiosity as they study velocity, mass marble experiments, the life of honey-bee hives, cross pollinating flowers, making DNA models; growing seeds and bulbs, and more.

■ **Latin:** students apply their Latin knowledge to decipher the meanings

of English words, memorize Latin sayings and prayers.

■ **Music:** Choir & bell ringing

■ **Art:** perspective, art from nature, 3-D maps and more

■ **New Community Service Program:** Children visit local Humane Society to work with animals and on the grounds; work on school grounds; litter pick-up at county parks, current arrangements to establish relationships & visitations with retirement home.

Our students consistently score at **the ??? percentile** in standardized national testing.

Driveway entrance to school was graveled and enlarged to include parking and turn-around, a major enhancement to the grounds

About 20 new deciduous trees were planted on the property (donated by Rotary Club).

It's been a Fall and Winter of learning, fun, personal and collective growth, occasional bruises and bloody noses, and lots of smiles and laughs!



ST BASIL ACADEMY
OF CLASSICAL STUDIES

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Our Grade School Program

Classical Curriculum: We believe the benefits of classical education provide rigorous training in preparation for life-long learning. Teachers are committed to the coverage of core concepts and possess firm dedication to the student development of critical thinking and communication skills. This time-tested educational framework embraces several stages of development through which a child's mind passes.



to move students up and down grade levels in various subjects to provide maximum benefit for each child. Our individualized approach combined with small learning groups allows us to successfully incorporate children with learning disabilities or behavioral challenges into the school program.

Parent Involvement: We encourage and benefit from parent involvement. We are very fortunate to have a number of talented

parents involved in our exploratory program. This program allows us to provide needed outlets for our students' creativity and community service.

Safety: We provide an environment that is physically safe and emotionally safe. Learning does not occur when students don't feel safe. Our school welcomes new students and new families, provides a nurturing environment for learning and has zero tolerance for bullying and harassment. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, color, national or ethnic origin.

Strong Academic

Program: The success of our program is reflected in our high scores on nationally recognized assessments for an objective measure of learning other than the WASL. Our program is designed to highlight the Orthodox Christian ethical principles of personal responsibility, accountability and discipline.

Small School Experience: A small school experience allows students to be known and feel a true sense of community and belonging. We offer a small staff to student ratio and are flexible in student placements allowing us

Observations from our Administrator

Reflections on multi-age classrooms

Recently I stood at the fence-line of the school playground to watch the children play. The respect, care and good-natured competition was obvious. My classroom observation was similar with the older students using their skill of nurture to share their knowledge with the younger ones. This is a community of students playing and studying together in harmony.

We are sometimes asked if multi-age students are as well adjusted as those grouped in classrooms according to

age or grade level. After watching the interactions of the students both in the classroom and on the playground it seemed to me there is no doubt. They are well adjusted.

Yet I found myself checking research, delighted to learn what I observed fit the general picture which emerged from studies. In single grade classes there is a tendency toward increased competition and aggression, while in multiage groups the result is increased harmony and nurturance. It appears

Finances & Donations

2010-2011 budget
\$85,000

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Staff payroll expenses
\$58,000

•
Tuition income
\$62,500

•
Budget shortfall
\$23,000

Successful fundraisers:

Rummage sale:	\$1900
Bake sales/coffee hour	
fundraisers for scholarships:	\$1500
St Basil Benefit dinner:	\$5200
Private donations thus far:	\$5000
Apple packing:	To occur in March

The Saint Basil Academy of Classical Studies is funded by a combination of student tuition, school fundraising activities, and private donations To keep student tuition reasonable yet offer tuition grants to those in financial need, we depend on the generosity and prayers of our supporters. Our goal for the 2011 is to grow our list of donors. Please consider making a financial gift, and also encourage any interested potential donor to do the same.

Ways you can help!

- ✓ Give to the scholarship fund
- ✓ Give to the operating fund

All donations are tax deductible

younger children make more progress in self concept, and sociability, while for older children there is a reduction in social isolation and increased altruism than their counterparts.



A school for Peter

Our son, Peter, didn't start life as most babies do. He spent his first month in Seattle Children's Hospital recovering from a brain injury sustained at birth. While Peter recovered from the immediate trauma, doctors were unsure of what lasting effects he might experience down the road. In public school, Peter did OK in kindergarten, but in a class of 26, we started to get the feeling that Peter might be getting overlooked because he wasn't talkative, nor was he a troublemaker. First grade came and with it an open classroom situation where he was one of 87 students with 3 teachers! With so many children in a large, often noisy space, there was a lot to distract Peter from getting his work done.

The following year, we decided to move all three of our children to St. Basil Academy. Around this same time, some standardized developmental testing indicated that Peter was delayed in several areas including speech, and this qualified him for special education services through the public school district. So during 2nd grade, Peter went to St. Basil's in the morning and public school in the afternoon for speech therapy and instruction in their resource room. While we were happy with his progress at St. Basil's and with his speech teacher at the public school, we were disappointed with the rest of the resource room experience. It seemed to us that he was not being challenged as he was at St. Basil's and in his speech sessions. When we compared his progress at St. Basil's with the situation at the public school, we had no problem moving him to full time at St. Basil's and only maintaining speech instruction through the public school.

From the start of third grade Peter has been at St Basil's full time and is doing very well! Now in fifth grade, Peter participates in school instead of sitting back and watching. He is challenged, held accountable, nurtured, and loved. The small student-to-teacher ratio is perfect for Peter who sometimes needs a bit more attention and encouragement. We appreciate the flexibility of St. Basil's faculty in addressing Peter's individual educational needs, moving him up and challenging him in his stronger subjects and providing extra attention in his weaker subjects. The small school environment is also good for Peter in that he has developed relationships with all the students, and this has helped in his social development. Our families back east are surprised when they learn that Peter is studying Latin and participating in a city-wide spelling bee.

Where all three of our children are concerned, we especially appreciate St. Basil's Christian mission and atmosphere. As Peter's older sister starts high school, we appreciate the educational/social/spiritual foundation she received at St. Basil's during her middle school years. And as we write this, Peter's recent testing by the public school district showed so much improvement that he no longer qualifies for speech or other special services. We can't imagine the same test results if he had stayed in public school.

The teachers and staff at St Basil Academy and their dedication to teaching the whole student, mind, body and soul, has been just what Peter needed. No one knows what the future will bring for Peter but we do know that the foundation he is getting at St Basil's will serve him well.

~ Christine and Steve Janis