

Catch-Up with the Council

A publication of the Chester County Advisory Council for Elementary Education

November 2022 edition

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Congratulations to our 2021-2022 Schools of Distinction !

Each year the Archdiocese of Philadelphia Office of Catholic Education (OCE) recognizes elementary schools that have exceeded in one or both criteria on the standardized tests taken in May. The OCE first examines to see if the students show expected growth or growth that exceeds their Normal Curve Equivalent from the previous year to the current year. The schools in Chester County listed below exceeded 90% or above in all content areas.

The schools must also show that they are exceeding their potential on their standardized test scores. After careful examination, the OCE concluded that 90% of Chester County elementary school classes met or exceeded their potential in all content areas and at all grade levels.

We proudly announce that the following elementary schools were recognized as Archdiocesan Schools of Distinguished Instruction:

**Assumption BVM
Pope John Paul II
Saint Joseph**

**Saint Norbert
Saints Peter and Paul
Saint Maximilian Kolbe**

**Holy Family School
Saints Philip and James
Saints Simon and Jude**



**Holy Family
SCHOOL**

Christ Centered | Student Focused | Family Driven

Holy Family School (HFS) is celebrating 100 years of Catholic Education in Phoenixville! HFS began as a parish school for Saint Ann Church staffed by the IHM Sisters. In 1986, four parish schools merged to form the Phoenixville Area Catholic Elementary School, now known as *Holy Family School*.

Congratulations to **Mr. Jerry Parsons** who will receive The Commodore Barry Award from the American Catholic Historical Society on November 18, 2022. This is a well-deserved recognition of Jerry's outstanding philanthropic work, and in particular, his unwavering support of Catholic Education especially in Chester County.



The Council would like to send heartfelt appreciation to **Sister M. Carroll Isselmann IHM**, who has served as the founding Chair and co-chair of the Chester County Advisory Council for twelve years. Thank you, Sister Carroll, for many years of service to the families of the Catholic Elementary Schools of Chester County and for your leadership, vision, and guidance to make the Chester County Advisory Council an outstanding team.



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Learn how to redirect your state tax dollars to benefit students throughout the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and receive a 90% Tax Credit!



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The Council's mission is the promotion of Catholic Education in Chester County by recommending policies, procedures, and plans to foster a close collaboration between parishes and schools.

Council Member Spotlight

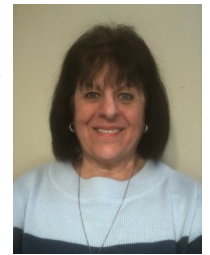
Lauren Ranalli embodies a commitment to community and education in her professional life and volunteer activities. She is President and Chief Financial Officer of First Resource Bank which she co-founded in 2005. Voted the Best Bank of Chester County and the Main Line, First Resource Bank community giving totals over \$2.5 million under Lauren's stewardship. Lauren leads the retail, lending, operations, information technology, finance, accounting, human resources and risk functions for the bank. She was recognized as a 2018 CFO of the Year by the *Philadelphia Business Journal*.



Lauren joined the Advisory Council in 2019 after chairing the Finance committee of the Saints Peter and Paul School Board of Limited Jurisdiction. She is currently a member of the West Chester Area Education Foundation Board and the Great Valley School District Education Foundation Board. A proud graduate of Villanova University where she received a Bachelor's degree in Accounting, she participates in the School of Business Mentor Program. She is also a graduate of the American Banker's Association Stonier Graduate School of Banking and has completed the Wharton Leadership Program at the University of Pennsylvania. She is a Certified Public Accountant and a member of the American Institute of CPAs as well as the Pennsylvania Institute of CPAs.

Lauren brings her wealth of talent and passionate commitment to our Advisory Council and we are honored and grateful to have her among our members.

Dr. Angela Rufo was appointed the Vice-Chair of the Chester County Advisory Council. After her studies at Saint Joseph University and Penn State University Graduate School, Angela obtained her Doctorate in Education from Immaculata University. She is recently retired from her last position as Associate Vice President with the Middle States Association, Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools. In this position, Angela helped many of our Catholic schools through the Middle States accreditation process.



Prior to her work with Middle States, Angela served as principal of Saint Basil the Great School in Kimberton and as Vice Principal of Saint Patrick School in Malvern. Angela has taught at St. Agnes School in West Chester, Bishop Shanahan High School in Downingtown, and St. Anastasia School in Newtown Square. Angela was an Adjunct Faculty member of Chestnut Hill College.

As a member of the Chester County Advisory Council, she has worked with the Strategic Planning Committee and is Chair of the Communications Taskforce. Angela was a founding member of the Board of Limited Jurisdiction for Saints Simon and Jude School and was the Chairperson for the East Goshen Historical Commission.

Dr. Angela Rufo brings her commitment to Catholic education and her many talents to the Chester County Advisory Council. It is our privilege and honor to work with her for the Catholic schools in our county.



All the Catholic elementary schools in Chester County are accredited by the Middle States Association, Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools. Accreditation is a self-evaluation process that schools use to demonstrate they are meeting a defined set of research-based performance standards. The standards examine schools in a holistic way, supplementing student-testing data to provide a more complete measure of a school's performance and chart a strategic and realistic course for continuous school improvement. The process requires input from school leaders, teachers, parents and students. A team of volunteer educators from Middle States-accredited schools conducts an on-site peer review to observe school operations and interview various stakeholders. The team then makes its recommendation to Middle States, where it undergoes a multi-level review by some of the best educators in the field before being approved. The Middle States Association's accreditation process respects the individual nature and character of each school. Schools in Chester County are in various stages of accreditation. We wish good luck to those schools hosting a visit this school year: **Holy Family, Saint Elizabeth, and Saint Joseph. Saints Philip and James and Saint Norbert** hosted their team visits in Spring 2022 and expect to receive their re-accreditation at the Middle States Fall Commission Meeting. Congratulations to all of the Chester County Schools!



Established in 1872 under the administration of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM's), Saint Agnes School remains committed to instilling Catholic values in a nurturing environment. The **150th Anniversary** Celebration kicked off with a special Mass in September in which they honored the IHM Sisters who founded the school in 1872. Several fun events are planned throughout the year culminating with an Anniversary Mass on June 4th in which Archbishop Perez will be the celebrant. Congratulations to Saint Agnes School on their 150 years!

The Council works to support the quality, vibrancy and sustainability of our Catholic schools throughout Chester County.