

### St. Denis Families' Questions from the Cardinal Foley Email Address

Q - How are the parents for the different committees being chosen? Is it open to the school community to participate?

A - The committees chosen thus far have been the Implementation Committee/Advisory Board and the uniform committee. The Implementation Committee was chosen by the pastors of each parish. The uniform committee was set up by the Implementation team. 4 parents from each parish were asked to simply gather information regarding uniform options for next year. The group will meet with Flynn and O'Hara representatives on Monday 1/30/12. The school community will be able to participate in the selection of the uniform at a parent meeting scheduled for February 21, 2012. More information will follow.

Q - My questions are as follows: How was the new school advisory board chosen? How was the uniform committee chosen? Why are boards and committees being selected in secret, without any input from school parents? Please advise. Thanks.

A - The committees chosen thus far have been the Implementation Committee and the uniform committee. The Implementation Committee was chosen by the pastors of each parish. The uniform committee was set up by the Implementation team. 4 parents from each parish were asked to simply gather information regarding uniform options for next year. The group met with Flynn and O'Hara representative . The school community will be able to participate since a parent meeting has been scheduled for February 21, 2012.

Q - I just finishing reading the FAQ sheet emailed to the parents re. our new school. I noticed it was mentioned that there will be a meeting of a "focus group" of school parents with "our sales rep" from Flynn and O'Hara on Monday 1/30. I am very serious when I ask whether Flynn and O'Hara plans to give a significant discount to the parents in the schools affected by these mergers. Please ask the sales rep this for all of us school parents on Monday night if you are not permitting all of us to attend the meeting. Flynn and O'Hara is our only source for uniforms in the archdiocese and they stand to make a large profit in the next few months from the fact that over half of all the elementary schools in the archdiocese are affected by these mergers. While Flynn and O'Hara sells a quality product, their prices are very expensive. With just one child I will expect to pay a couple hundred dollars to fully outfit my daughter through Flynn and O'Hara. That does not include the costs for a brand new gym uniform-most likely through C&M. Many of us have relied on the used uniform sales at our school over the years to cut down on having to buy brand new uniforms at full price every year. I have also been lucky to find tights at places such as Target for \$1.99 a pair as opposed to spending \$9 per pair every time my child rips a hole in her tights. I urge you to consider that the costs of all new uniforms is not a trivial

matter for many families. For larger families the costs will add up to several hundred dollars. If Flynn and O'Hara stands to benefit from these mergers, I believe Flynn and O'Hara should either donate some of their profits back into the new regional schools and/or offer a special discount to the families of these new schools for the 2012-2013 school year. If not, I am afraid this added expense may be the tipping point for some of our families to choose not to apply for admission to the new school. Thank you for all you are doing as members of the implementation team.

A – Thank you so much for your thoughts. I will pass this message along to the parent focus group.

Q - I was wondering if the uniforms for next year must be from Flynn and O'Hara. Since the girls jumpers and kilts would be what would mostly need to be purchased through Flynn and O'Hara. Could the jumpers and kilts just be solid as opposed to plaid. If we went with say a solid blue jumper/kilt you can purchase them at a variety of stores and may be at a lower cost. I have seen the solids in Kohl's, Target, Burlington, etc. Shirts/sweater would probably still need to be purchased through Flynn and O'Hara but any lowered cost would be of help. Just a suggestion. I hope you have a great day.

Thank you for providing this email. And many thanks to each member of the Implementation Team for all your time and effort. We are very grateful to have such wonderful people working to lay the foundation for our children's education at Cardinal Foley School.

Q - I hope the uniform remains the same. This will benefit both schools because parents can take advantage of purchasing used uniforms which is a HUGE saving plus the school benefits from the money made from the sale.

A – Thank you for your suggestion about the uniform. I will pass this along to the “uniform committee”. We will also be hosting a parent meeting where your thoughts can be shared.

Q - I noticed in one of the emails that was sent to our school parents today a statement regarding the curriculum for Cardinal Foley Catholic School. The email stated that the two current principals and Mrs. Rita Block are developing the curriculum for our new school. Could you please clarify this in a future email? As someone who has taught in a few of the schools in the archdiocese, it has always been my understanding that OCE sets the curriculum guidelines for the entire archdiocese. Were you referring to curriculum guidelines or the textbooks/workbooks that will be selected for the upcoming school year? Most likely there are some differences in textbooks being currently used at each of the schools. While I understand a need for the principals and Mrs. Block to select which book series will be used I am confused by the use of

the word curriculum. Thank you in advance for your clarification of this and thank you for all your hard work.

A – Yes thank you for the clarification. Sister Gerald, Mrs. DeAngelo (the current two principals) and Mrs. Block and Mrs. Cathleen Lamberto (assistant principal at Annunciation) did go over which textbooks/workbooks will be used for the upcoming year and the curriculum will be directed from the OCE.

Q - Thank you for the email. First, let me assure the members of the implementation committee that I have no intention of sending any "personal attacks, slanderous comments, or personal criticism" however I do have several questions pertaining to the operation of the implementation committee as Annunciation BVM and St Denis proceed through the partnering process. Since we have apparently already deviated from the recommended procedures announced by the Blue Ribbon Commission with regards to naming the school what is the exact role of the members of the committee? Secondly, since there are many families committed to Catholic education who feel their voices are in the dark when it comes to the partnering process. Will the members of the committee serve as a conduit for concerned families that politely ask detailed questions on process or procedures? Will meeting minutes be published or otherwise be made available in a timely manner? The last time we received a meeting summary late in the evening after receiving the "letter of intent" that was sent home from school two days after the meeting. Can someone explain how the school's new name was selected? Why are we naming the school after someone with a degree in Journalism? I could understand if Cardinal Foley was an educator.

A – 1. The exact role of the Implementation Committee/Advisory Board is to advise the pastors in the progress for getting the new school up and running for September 2012.

2. The Implementation Committee is not a conduit for the parents. We are in an advisory position to offer advice about the formation of the new school. Parents may simply talk to their pastors if they have input.

3. The Implementation Committee meets every Wednesday night. Minutes are published for all families as soon as they are prepared. Our hope is that it is no later than the Friday after the meeting.

4. The School's new name was selected by the pastors of both schools. The name has been selected to honor Cardinal Foley a native of Delaware County who was an evangelist for the gospel throughout his life. He taught those he came in contact about Jesus through his life, in the classroom, as a newspaper editor and as head of the Pontifical Council for Social Communication.

Q - May I ask who the members of the Implementation Committee are?

A – The members are Msgr Graham, Father Haynes, Sister Gerald, Mrs. Mary Ann DeAngelo Cathie Lamberto, Tim Rice, Mike Finnegan, Bill McKenna (representatives from Annunciation) and Rita Block, Walt Kokol, Tom Howard and Sally McGovern.

Q - How much will be the tuition?

A - Tuition has not been finalized. The budget is still currently being worked on.

Q -Thanks for the updates- I have a specific question about tuition: I understand tuition has not and cannot be set until all letters of intent are in, but are you planning on setting one tuition for all students, or will those coming from Annunciation have a different rate as their tuition is currently lower than ours for one child attending?

A – There will be one scale of tuition rates and families from both Annunciation and St. Denis will use that scale.

Q - Will the rate paid in CARES go up or down? Let me start by saying I love the CARES program and the teachers are great. In my opinion the rate should go down. For a family who needs it in the morning and in the afternoon until 6pm (\$5 in morning and \$8 in afternoon) that totals \$29 dollars a day, \$145 a week and a total \$580 a month. This is more than what the actual tuition is. In many parents mind it is hard to understand how can 4 hours of CARES cost more than school tuition when the CARES teachers are only being paid \$10 an hour.

Q - For Cares when you have a second child enrolled you pay \$10 per hour will this apply if you have one in Cardinal Foley and another one in Annunciation in Pre-K?

A – Cares is a program that we still have to work out. We are hoping to get that taken care of within the next few meetings. As soon as we have information, we will pass it along.

Thanks for taking the time to read me e-mail and for putting all this effort in trying to establish the best school we can have. We love the school and the community and we know the school will be better than it already was.

A – Thank you ☺

Q - I hate rumors but I have to ask about one I heard-- is it true that another regional school has chosen Cardinal Foley as a name? At a time when we are trying to establish and embrace a new identity does that make sense? I have no issue at all with our new name but I do think in this new regional school world allowing another school with the same name hurts both schools.

A – Anything that you would have heard thus far is a rumor.

Q - Dear Committee Members,

I just wanted to express my heartfelt appreciation for all of your hard work on this committee. I know that it is a huge undertaking and requires quite a bit of your personal time. I have faith in all of you and your ability to make this work. I also have faith in all of the parents of students in both schools. I can definitely say that the students in my class have expressed genuine excitement and truly look forward to seeing new faces next year. It is critical that we, as adults, remember that they observe our every move and model our words and actions. We must remain positive and join together as Christian people.

Thanks again for all of your hard work and dedication.

A - Thank you so much.

Q - The name has not been officially authorized to be used by the OCE or the Archdiocese. It was never open for debate so therefore how can it be closed for debate. The Blue Ribbon Committee said it was to be open for debate with both parishes. To say it was because 5 parishes are affected is wrong since those other schools were already affected before. When Presentation closed and was offered to come to St. Denis, there was no need to change the name. The only traditions truly being affected are those of Annunciation and St. Denis. The parents of those schools are the ones being most affected with this change and should have the largest voice. Just because the two priests in charge of these parishes had a personal relationship with Cardinal Foley, does not mean that we as parents should just accept the naming of our school in his honor. Why not take a vote to unify the two parish families? I would much rather name it after a saint than someone with personal ties to those involved with the decision making process.

A – The difference between Presentation coming to St. Denis was that Presentation's school closed and St. Denis did not. Unfortunately in this situation, both schools will be closing in June. St. Denis and Annunciation will be closing their doors and in September a new school is opening. That is why a new name has been selected.

Another public relations opportunity missed!!! Thanks !!! Too bad this new school has to start like this. I have lost respect.

I am truly sorry you feel this way. We are trying our best to provide as much information as we can. This is an ongoing process with much unknown. It is our hope however to keep you updated on any new information. I am sorry that you do not feel that.

Q - I noticed on the pre-school application that there will be a 3 day and 5 day option for both the 3yo and 4yo pre-school students. Are the 3 days set (i.e. MWF) or will families be able to pick the 3 days they prefer?

A – This is still in the works and we will hopefully have an answer for you next week.

Q - Hello Committee members! I know that you are incredibly busy and have much to implement, but I would like to suggest that the 3 year old program be expanded, if at all possible. My daughter is in the full-day 4 year-old class, and I see such a difference in her from her daycare days. If a similar program existed for 3 year-olds (all day, with CARES), I would prefer my son to be in the loving religious atmosphere that you already offer my daughter. With the expanded facilities, maybe that would be a viable (and possible profitable) option. Also, PLEASE keep CARES as a before and after school option to help the working parents. Thank you so much for your time and effort!

A – Thank you so much for your question and suggestions. Yes we will be offering a program for 3 year-olds for 5 days all day. Registration is currently open for the Pre-School (3yr) and Pre-K (4yr) programs. You can certainly contact the office for the registration form if you are in need of one! We are still in the process of working on Cares so we will have the information hopefully soon.

Q - For uniforms, the current 7<sup>th</sup> graders will not be required to buy the new uniform for their final 8<sup>th</sup> grade year. A blessing for those that cannot afford the additional expense. However, if for girls, a kilt is selected to be worn beginning in 5<sup>th</sup> grade and a jumper from K to 4<sup>th</sup>, those girls entering 4<sup>th</sup> grade will have to buy a jumper for 1 year and then have to buy a kilt the following year. You may want to think of a transition period. I am not affected by this 4<sup>th</sup> grade example but thought you might want to think about it. For the new Board, how long is the term? Going forward, will the process still be a hand-picked selection or will there be a democratic voting selection process?

A – Thank you for your suggestion about the uniforms. I will pass along to the “uniform committee”. Regarding your second question, the new board, meaning the Implementation Committee, is currently on board for this beginning process. It has not been addressed yet about how the new boards for the new school will be selected. I will get this information to you as soon as it is discussed.

Regarding Number 1, please explain how exactly was the Implementation Committee vote "in alignment with the recommendations by the Office of Catholic Education in the Blue Ribbon Report"?

Please refer to <http://www.faithinthefuture.com/faq/#21>

My child attends a school that is “partnering.” How will the partnering process work?

Partnering school communities will come together to form a new school at one of the partner’s school locations. This transition process has been designed to help these two or three schools come together. A council will be created consisting of stakeholders from each school to help develop the school’s new identity, including name, colors, mascot, etc. Additionally, [www.faithinthefuture.com](http://www.faithinthefuture.com) will be continually updated with the latest information as decisions about your school are made. Please check there often for updates on key dates, staff and other general school information.

The facts regarding the new school's identity are as follows, the Pastors at Annunciation BVM and St Denis selected the new name which was communicated to St Denis families thirty minutes before the press conference on January 6th. Based upon my understanding a unanimous vote supporting a mandate from the Pastor and cutting off all debate is not "in alignment with the recommendations by the Office of Catholic Education in the Blue Ribbon Report"

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Regarding number 10 below. The Arch Diocese has gone on the record stating that CYO Sports are a parish activity, see <http://www.faithinthefuture.com/faq/#33>

How will CYO activities and specific programs like sports teams be affected?

CYO is a parish activity and therefore it will not be directly affected by the partnering and regionalization of schools.

Additionally Parishes with no school like St Mathias in Bala Cynwyd and many others have a CYO Sports program.

Why are we wasting valuable time focusing on the "formation of the sports program within the Cardinal Foley School", after both YAA boards voted to remain separate?

A - All questions that have been received relating to CYO will be addressed by the CYO/YAA committees at each parish meeting that will be held on Wednesday, February 15th. These meetings will be held at both Annunciation and at St. Denis. No decisions have yet been made regarding CYO sports programs. The St. Denis CYO Meeting will be held in the Grimes Center at 6:30 pm on Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>. The Annunciation CYO Meeting will be held in the Church Basement at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, February 15th.

Q - Why do we need a separate parent meeting for the YAA decisions when both parishes have established YAA Committees. You are asking us to trust your recommendations. Why would we not trust theirs. Respectfully, there is a hand-picked committee to pick colors, uniforms and a mascot but we are going to open up discussion about the YAA when we have established parish YAA committees. Please help me understand this????? I don't see how a meeting with over 500 people with their own agendas is going to go well. We are truly trying to be behind this. Thanks so much.

A- Thank you for your question. All questions that have been received relating to CYO will be addressed by the CYO/YAA committees at each parish meeting that will be held on Wednesday, February 15th. These meetings will be held at both Annunciation and at St. Denis. No decisions have yet been made regarding CYO sports programs. The St. Denis CYO Meeting will be held in the Grimes Center at 6:30 pm on Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>. The Annunciation CYO Meeting will be held in the Church Basement at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, February 15th.

Q – Hi - I have been thinking about all the changes that will be occurring next year with the children and have been trying to think about solutions to some of the inevitable consequences that might occur.

As we discuss the potential merging of the sports programs and having a Foley sports programs, one of the biggest issues I see will be the exclusion of children from some of these teams as a result of the numbers of kids involved and the limited resources such as gym time. One of the reasons we have so many children who play sports such as basketball where athletics are not their passion is because we really have no other formal organized social extracurricular activities for them. This has been a reason for many children who are not athletes to leave St. Denis in the middle school years.

Could we take this time of new organization to begin a formal program of non athletic activities such as a choral group that performs more than just at Mass or even in competition, band ensemble, dance team, maybe a formal drama program that guarantees us a play every year (where practices would occur during the winter sports seasons), maybe a service/social club that has an activity every Sat afternoon during the winter that would give the kids a social outlet and promote inclusion. These are all programs that our middle school offers and is why kids leave our school to find their niche.

It is just a thought, like everything else it would require commitment and money, but in the long run may make the school stronger and more attractive to the older students and help take away the pressure of sports as our only extracurricular outlet. Thanks for your consideration

A – Thank you for your email. Although nothing has been decided with regards to the sports programs for next year, it is a wonderful idea to see if we could form other activities that may interest the children. My suggestion would be that once the principal is hired, this suggestion of looking into other activities would be beneficial. Let's keep this as an ongoing thought. Thank you for your suggestion.