

## Above and Beyond

### Options Program Turns 10 Years Old

The Office of Catholic Schools recognizes the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Options* modified inclusion program. First begun at [Paul VI High School](#) in Fairfax, this program allows students with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to enjoy a Catholic education. Individualized Catholic education plans help students achieve success in the classroom while integrating them into the life of the entire school environment.

The success of Paul VI's program allowed for two other diocesan schools to create their own programs: [St. Mark School](#) (Vienna) and [Pope John Paul the Great Catholic High School](#) (Dumfries). Additionally, the Paul VI model has been duplicated in other schools throughout the country.

In 2008, Paul VI's *Options* program was recognized by *Today's Catholic Teacher* at the National Catholic Education Association's annual conference.

Paul VI's *Options* programs has educated nearly 40 students. Of those, 23 have earned a certificate of completion while exploring vocational or transitional opportunities.



Above: Paul VI *Options* students play basketball during a P.E. class.



Above: A Pope John Paul the Great *Options* student in the school computer lab.

## From the Desk of the Interim Superintendent

Dear Friend:

This year's theme for Catholic Schools Week is **Celebrate Service**. All our schools strive to provide the best service to every student, helping them grow and develop into the intellectual leaders of tomorrow.

While I am proud of all the schools in the diocese, I am especially pleased with [Paul VI High School](#) in Fairfax. The 2008-09 academic year marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its *Options* Program (See the **Above and Beyond** section, left).

Additionally, Paul VI High School was re-accredited by SACS/CASI. Their application impressed the re-accreditation board so much that the board invited Paul VI's administration to a workshop to teach others



Sr. Bernadette McManigal, B.V.M. receives a gift from a St. Thomas More student.

how to properly complete the accreditation application. As I am sure you can see, Paul VI's service to the community goes well beyond the Diocese of Arlington.

In addition to the superb work being done at Paul VI, the service projects and other activities occurring during Catholic Schools Week are quite impressive.

Many of these projects focus on aiding less fortunate countries.

Just as Jesus exemplified what it means to be a servant, our service-oriented Catholic schools teach students how to live out the Gospel message and how to bring Christ's light into the world. For that, I am most grateful.

## In the News

### Former Teacher Goes to Congress

Anh "Joseph" Quang Cao, a former middle school math, religion, and literature teacher at St. Agnes School in Arlington, became the first Vietnamese-American in Congress. He was sworn into the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress on January 6, 2009 to represent Louisiana's 2<sup>nd</sup> District after unseating a nearly 20 year incumbent. More information about Rep. Cao can be found [here](#).

### Metro Schools Care

The Diocese of Arlington Metro Schools recently collected over 800 pieces of sports apparel to benefit wounded war veterans. Read more about this *Metro Schools Care* service project [here](#).

## Did you know...?

The average class size is **23** students per class while the student to teacher ratio is **12:1**.

Teachers with Masters degrees:

Elementary: **40.7%**

Secondary: **68.4%**

Teachers with Doctoral degrees:

Elementary: **2.8%**

Secondary: **7.4%**

**100%** of diocesan high school seniors graduated last year, and **99%** of them continued onto post-secondary schools.

## Behind the Chalkboard

### Survey Reveals Solid Support for Diocesan Schools

Feedback is crucial to the improvement of any organization. Feedback on educational systems, however, can often indicate positive satisfaction for different reasons, depending on the evaluator’s point of view.

This premise was evident in the results of surveys recently conducted by the Office of Catholic Schools. Diocesan school teachers, for example, were more enthusiastic about promoting their schools than school parents were. In another contrast, parents indicated that academic quality is the most important aspect of their child’s education while teachers ranked Catholic identity most important.

The surveys were conducted to gather data for marketing purposes. The results revealed to what degree schools have effectively communicated to the parents and their own faculty and staff: 1) the value of their academic programs, 2) their Catholic identity, 3) the social expectations of the schools, and 4) the importance of teachers personally guiding the education of each student.

These anonymous surveys consisted of six questions, two opportunities for open-ended comments, and a drop down menu to select the name of the school of the person being surveyed.

Each of the two surveys, individualized for their respective, targeted group, were electronically distributed in November to the parents of the 16,968 diocesan Catholic school students and to all faculty and staff of 41 elementary and secondary schools. Of the more than 5,300 parents who viewed the survey, over three-fifths completed it. If parents had children in more than one diocesan school, they had the opportunity to complete a survey for each school. Approximately 65% of educators who viewed the survey completed it.

The surveys had a Net Promoter Survey format. This model, developed by Fred Reichheld, author of *The Ultimate Question*, is popular among American businesses, although not without its critics.

Customers, according to Reichheld’s model, are categorized into one of three groups—*promoters*, *passives*, and *detractors*—based on their answers to the “ultimate question”: On a scale of 0 - 10, how likely are you to recommend this organization to family, friends, and colleagues?

*Promoters* are customers with an answer of either 9 or 10. They are an organization’s loyal enthusiasts, that is, coveted word-of-mouth zealots who consistently “promote” the organization to family and friends.

*Passives*, those answering 7 or 8, are satisfied customers but do

not necessarily have a compelling loyalty to the organization.

*Detractors*, those answering 0 - 6, are generally dissatisfied customers who may verbalize their discontent to others, and, subsequently, can draw others to the competition.

A “Net Promoter Score” (NPS) is derived by subtracting the percentage of detractors from the percentage of promoters (P - D = NPS); passives are not used in calculating an NPS.

An NPS over 50% is strong, but the norm for most organizations is closer to 5 - 10%, though many organizations such as eBay, Amazon.com, Costco, Harley Davidson, and USAA, have an NPS over 70%. Schools can likewise have an NPS over 70 or 80%.

Utilizing this model, the parent survey asked parents how likely they are to recommend their child’s school to family, friends and colleagues. Next they were asked to rank, in order of importance, four aspects of their child’s education: academic quality, Catholic identity, the safety and orderliness of the school’s environment, and their child’s relationship with his or her teacher. Parents were then asked to rank how well schools met their expectations of these four aspects.

In the teacher survey, faculty and staff were asked similar questions from a teacher’s point of view.

The parent survey produced an NPS of 46%, strong by some standards but well below the enthusiastic scores generated by organizations experiencing strong market growth. Approximately 60% of the parents were promoters, selecting 9 or 10 as to how likely they were to recommend their child’s school. About 13% were detractors, selecting 0 - 6.

The teacher survey produced an NPS of 61%, 15 percentage points higher than the parent survey. This indicates, arguably, high job satisfaction among the diocesan teachers. Approximately 72% of the teachers were promoters with only 9% detractors.

The greatest difference between the parent and teacher surveys, however, was in the ranking of the most important aspects of the education in the schools. Parents ranked academic quality over Catholic identity as the most important aspect of their child’s education, 53% to 26% – a measure of two-to-one. Interestingly, teachers also ranked these two aspects by a ratio of two-to-one, but this time, in reverse. Catholic identity outranked academic quality as the most important aspect, 50% to 25%.

Table 1 below shows how parents ranked each aspect in order of importance (e.g. 53.01% of parents who responded thought *Academic Quality* was the most important aspect of their child’s Catholic education, 26.11% thought it was the second most important aspect, etc.). Table 2 indicates teacher survey results.

Parents ranked academic quality as the most important aspect of their child’s education.

Teachers ranked Catholic identity as the most important aspect.

**Table 1: Parent Survey Results**

	Academic Quality	Safety/Orderliness	Catholic Identity	Relationship with Teacher
Importance Rank 1	53.01%	10.92%	25.91%	10.16%
Importance Rank 2	26.11%	29.01%	26.76%	18.12%
Importance Rank 3	10.01%	40.13%	20.76%	29.10%
Importance Rank 4	11.03%	19.89%	26.61%	42.48%

Likelihood of recommending your child’s school: NPS of 46.29%

**Table 2: Teacher Survey Results**

	Academic Quality	Safety/Orderliness	Catholic Identity	Relationship with Students
Importance Rank 1	24.49%	12.52%	50.07%	12.93%
Importance Rank 2	43.05%	14.85%	23.02%	19.07%
Importance Rank 3	21.66%	30.93%	13.62%	33.79%
Importance Rank 4	11.05%	14.61%	13.37%	33.97%

Likelihood of recommending your school: NPS of 61.10%