

School – Proposed Use for Convent Spaces

We would like to thank the Parish Council for giving us the opportunity to present our new ideas concerning the future of Holy Redeemer School. This is the first time in the history of the school (built in 1931) that we are able to envision a bigger and better utilization of space. We are very excited about the new space, which will enrich and enhance the students' learning experience.

Expansion and modernization are key aspects to attracting a more diverse student population. Our current students are mainly from the surrounding municipalities but some students commute from different counties. Our proposal, to use more rooms for classes and innovative programs, is the best marketing tool we could hope for.

We have separated our ideas and reasons for expansion into the following categories listed below:

Middle School Program

- The existing parish offices were originally used as classrooms and are already equipped with chalkboards, book storage, and proper classroom configurations. We propose using the existing *resource room* (room 3), the *crafts room* (room 2), and the *religious education room* as middle school homerooms for grades 6, 7 and 8.
- There has been steady growth in the middle school grades. The 6th, 7th, and 8th grades have been continually at capacity for the past 3 years (34-35 per grade) and we often have a waiting list for the middle school grades.
- Parents with children in public schools have expressed interest in Holy Redeemer because they do not want to send their children to a Prince George's County middle school.
- In the future, we foresee having more than one homeroom per middle school grade. It is very conceivable and the need is already showing itself, to have two 7th grade and two 8th grade homerooms. Ideally these additional homerooms would consist of approximately 25 students instead of the current 35 per homeroom. If this occurs, we propose utilizing the parish administrative office.
- Having additional classrooms affords us the ability to hold multiple, small group classes held at the same time to meet the needs of children. We can break down the 35 students in one homeroom into smaller class sizes for the core curriculum subjects. At this time we have three groups of math and two groups of literature, per grade, in the middle school. We also break down our foreign language, library and computer skills classes into two small groups.

- A SMALLER CLASS SIZE BEST MEETS THE LEARNING NEEDS OF OUR STUDENTS AND IS ONE OF HOLY REDEEMER SCHOOL'S BEST MARKETING INITIATIVES.
- Teachers, who at this time do not have a classroom, would be assigned to one of the new classrooms. They would no longer have to move from room to room transporting all of their teaching tools, manipulatives and lessons. They would be able to better manage their learning space, and would have materials on hand when needed.
- Less transition time for teachers, moving from classroom to classroom, and more efficient organization and storage of learning tools would mean more learning time for students.
- Having a separate middle school and utilizing the new room layout, will better prepare students for the routines and expectations of high school. However, the middle school students would still be a part of the whole school, abiding by Holy Redeemer's expectations and teachings, which most students are familiar with since kindergarten. This familiarity combined with the new routines and added responsibilities of middle school gives the middle school child at HRS a strong sense of security, structure and self-discipline.
- Separating the middle school from the elementary school will allow for a separate bell schedule, thus ensuring less congestion and noise in the hallways during lower school class time.
- Space for the much-needed lockers can also be provided in the new middle school wing by utilizing the soda machine room and the storage closets on either side of the religious education room.

Multi-Purpose Use of New Space

- By moving the middle school homerooms into the new middle school wing, we will have three extra rooms (6th/7th/8th grade homerooms) for multi-use. One classroom would be equipped as a science lab and the other would become the foreign language classroom. These rooms would also be used as a resource classroom for those students who are in need of more intensive, small-group instruction and skill building.
- The AER would continue to be used as a classroom for the splitting of core subjects (i.e. math, language arts, foreign language) into smaller class sizes.

Pre Kindergarten Program

- By moving the middle school classrooms into the new wing (old parish offices) we would free up three classrooms as stated above. Two would be used for multi-use purposes. The other classroom space would be used for a pre kindergarten

program. By moving the existing kindergarten class up to the second grade room and the 2nd grade, 4th grade, and 6th grade classrooms up one classroom, we could use the existing kindergarten classroom for a pre k program.

- The kindergarten room has already been certified for a pre k program with the state of Maryland.
- There is a shortage of full day pre k programs in the vicinity.
- Our parents have made us aware that they would prefer to keep siblings together at the same school.
- Pre k students will naturally feed into our K – 8 classes. This will create a foundation for consistent enrollment numbers.
- A pre k program will serve as a new marketing initiative. We can reach out to a wider and more varied target audience.

Storage for Educational Materials

- We propose that the convent basement be used as a place for storing textbooks, desks, computers, and other classroom materials. This place of storage would be easily accessible for retrieving these materials on an as needed basis.
- We foresee sharing this space with other parish groups.

We respectfully submit our proposal to Father George and the Parish Council. Holy Redeemer School already has an excellent reputation and impact on our community and we hope to continue our mission in providing an excellent education through the power of faith.

Maria Bovich
Principal
Holy Redeemer School