

Orthodox Christian School at St. Philip's

February 2, 2021

INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

In late 2019, Saint Philip's began exploring the idea of launching a small school, but timing wasn't right. Now, by God's grace, several key ingredients have recently developed:

- 1) frustration with education has increased during the pandemic
- 2) a donation has been made for up to \$15k in matching contributions
- 3) a potential teacher has returned to the area (Mindi Popovich)
- 4) a potential administrator will soon be available for additional responsibilities (Denise Yurchak)
- 5) the St Nicholas House is now ready & able to be utilized for a small group

We also have an opportunity to learn from the efforts of the Saint Constantine School in the Lehigh Valley (preparing for Fall 2021 enrollment) and similar ventures in other parts of the country. Also, the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America has declared 2021 as the Year of the Youth, with an emphasis on augmenting ministry to Orthodox children, teens & young adults which fortuitously aligns with our mission.

Furthermore, we are blessed to have the support of Bishop THOMAS, who has a long history in education as a former teacher, and many years of assisting Metropolitan Joseph with overseeing Antiochian Village, the Christian Education Department, the Youth Department, the Antiochian House of Studies, the Department of Homeschooling, and serving as the episcopal liaison for the Assembly to the Orthodox Christian Education Commission (OCEC).

At the present time, we are in the early planning stages of making this dream a reality by starting small and humbly seeing where God takes us.

Please join us in taking these next steps:

- ▶ Review Draft Outline (below) – This is not a full plan but a “rough draft” of our current vision as “food for thought.” It may change! Either way, we'd like your input!
- ▶ Notify Denise or Frank if you're interested in being among the “Founding Families” (a strong but not absolute commitment)
- ▶ Notify Denise or Frank if you're interested in contributing talents (teaching, admin, other – we have surveys from last year, but if something has changed, please let us know)
- ▶ Consider a donation to our matching funds campaign – to be launched later this year once tax options are fully vetted and proper structure in place to receive them

Also, stay tuned for these upcoming milestones to be shared with the parish:

- ▶ March 14 (Forgiveness Sunday) – Draft Implementation Plan
- ▶ May 3 (Bright Monday) – Final Implementation Plan

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DRAFT OUTLINE / "FOOD FOR THOUGHT"

Patron Saint	▶ St. Justin the Philosopher (a.k.a "Justin Martyr"), for help in studies
Steering Team	<p>▶ Fr. Noah</p> <p>▶ Frank Chilbert (Assistant Principal & Humanities Teacher for a private classical school which began with 4 students)</p> <p>▶ Denise Yurchak (Parish Council member, HR professional & entrepreneur with education background)</p> <p>CONSULTANTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Bryan Smith (Orthodox Christian School Association)● Madeleine Hewitt (Dean & Teacher, homeschool hybrid school)● Levi Jekel (Finance/Accounting)● Marcia Ibrahim (Legal)● Jonathan Black (Facilities)● Steve Kulp (Security)
Location	▶ Saint Nicholas House
Start Date	▶ Fall 2021
Organization	<p>▶ Separate entity from the church, with s</p> <p>▶ Micro-school (i.e. homeschool co-op, "one-room schoolhouse")</p>
Grades	▶ Most likely starting with Middle School (Grades 5-8). This is due to our desire to start small and a concentration of children in this age range among the families who are currently interested.
Founding Families	<p>▶ Bushelli, Kyriakos & Sidorochev</p> <p>▶ Others are welcome! Please contact Frank or Denise if interested (at this stage, we are looking for serious but not final commitments)</p>
Class Schedule	▶ TBD (considering college-style block model)
Education Style	▶ Classical / Trivium / "Great Books"
Teacher	▶ Mindi Popovich (middle school teacher, librarian, and personally educated via a homeschool classical education)
Administration	<p>▶ Frank Chilbert – education / pedagogy / curriculum</p> <p>▶ Denise Yurchak – organization / business / marketing</p>
Funding	<p>▶ Initial \$15k gift + matching funds from donations</p> <p>▶ Pennsylvania tax credit for private school (EITC)</p> <p>▶ Student Tuition + Materials Fees</p>
Tuition	▶ TBD
Scholarships	▶ TBD (from tax credits / donations)