



January 17, 2007

Dear Principal,

Happy New Year and all the best blessings for you, your family and your school for this new year, 2007.

Some time ago Sister Sharon Park, OP, Executive Director of the Washington State Catholic Conference, spoke to the Think Tank Committee composed of a group of principals representing deaneries of the Archdiocese. The topic was *Parent Advocacy*. The history of this flows from conversation I had with Marie Powell, Assistant Secretary for Parental Advocacy, Department of Education, USCCB.

I am enclosing a copy of the materials Sister Sharon provided to the Think Tank members. I ask that you utilize these materials with your School Commission and/or Parent Association with the possibility of an Archdiocesan-wide Parent Advocacy Program. The following are suggested process steps:

- Appoint two representatives from your School Commission or Parent Association to serve as liaison with the Catholic Schools Department and Washington State Catholic Conference (WSCC).
- Create links on your website for legislative advocacy and information helpful to Catholic school parents and educators. The Washington State Catholic Conference website has an advocacy tool through which legislative alerts are sent out to those who have signed up (www.thewsc.org; Click on "Join the Network") and which would provide school personnel and parents direct action in contacting their legislators and congresspersons on issues of interest to the Catholic community. Other links could provide information on Catholic values, e.g., regarding the use of the internet and TV for children.
- Establish an email infrastructure connecting all advocacy volunteers to each other and the larger association, i.e. to the Catholic Schools Department and the Washington State Catholic Conference.
- Increase enthusiasm and active participation in the promotion of *Faithful Citizenship: A Catholic Call to Political Responsibility* (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops), by communicating with parents the Catholic social teachings underlying issues at the federal, state and local levels of government.

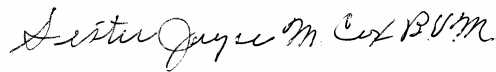
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As you read the material provided by Sister Sharon Park, I am confident you will see the value inherent in the formation of Parental Advocacy membership and not a place where personal agendas and opinions can hold sway or control.

As a follow-up I ask that those principals who support this *Parental Advocacy Project* please email me the names of those School Commission or Parent Association members who would volunteer for this project. Hopefully, we can begin this project by March 1, 2007.

Thank you for your participation in the project as it evolves and for any concerns or questions you may have.

Joy, Peace and Prayer,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sister Joyce M Cox BVM".

Sister Joyce M. Cox, BVM
Superintendent of Catholic Schools
Archdiocese of Seattle