

# GRACE:NEWS



## GRACE Efforts in Full Swing

**Supporting Schools Through Key Initiatives** *Nicole Schneider, Ph.D., GRACE Research Officer*

*Nicole Schneider is the GRACE Research Officer and is a parent of students at Father Allouez Catholic School and Notre Dame Academy.*

Recently, I joined the GRACE team as a consultant, and it has opened my eyes to the efforts conducted by the system in support of individual schools and our students. As a parent, I had some idea, but now I'm learning more about the significant and strategic efforts that are making us stronger.

For example, GRACE relieves the administrative burden on our schools and parishes, allowing them to concentrate on the academic and faith formation of each student. GRACE offers a human resource team that supports our 310 employees by improving payroll processing and employee benefits. We have consolidated purchasing in schools, making them more cost-effective and efficient. GRACE also coordinates school lunch programming, dealing with the many government regulations related to providing this service.

GRACE staff, along with our principals and teachers, monitors, evaluates and directs our curriculum and assessment efforts. We coordinate individualized plans for the 19% of GRACE students who need different or extra help. These plans can include services provided by public schools, GRACE supportive consultants and our own classroom teachers. We plan and facilitate professional development days, providing teachers with best practices in instruction. Another area of

focus includes training and providing resources and support for our principals in the areas of marketing, school promotion and enrollment management. For example, our principals received training on how to conduct a better tour experience for prospective families.

GRACE has developed strategic partnerships on behalf of all of our schools, such as our participation in CatholicLink with St. Norbert College and Notre Dame Academy. This partnership has resulted in numerous joint initiatives fortifying bonds between all three institutions. Practically, this partnership allows GRACE employees discounted tuition at these institutions, resulting in our ability to attract and retain excellent faculty and staff.

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We have raised funds for major technology initiatives, first purchasing Chromebooks for grades 5-8 and this year purchasing computer tablets for the elementary students. This allows all students, in each of our schools, to have equal access

to necessary technology that facilitates robust learning.

At GRACE, we feel good about our accomplishments to date and hope you do, too. There is more planning on the horizon! This year we will consolidate the time-consuming accreditation process into



one process for the entire system. We are improving our World Language program by piloting Mandarin and online instruction at a campus this spring. We are looking for ways to monitor school climate and the need for more or different bullying prevention programming.

GRACE membership has many benefits. We are united in Christ, His love and the work we do on your behalf each and every day. Thank you all for being a part of the GRACE family.

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# President Welcome

January 2017



Dear Friends of GRACE,

Happy New Year!

As you read this newsletter update, we are embarking upon efforts to plan forward for the year ahead! Our GRACE enrollment season opens on Sunday, Jan. 29, 2017, the first day of Catholic Schools Week, and we formally invite all current GRACE families to re-enroll during Catholic Schools Week. This will be the second year of utilizing our TADS enrollment program, and by now we hope the system is fairly familiar to all. Please know that reduced enrollment fee incentives are offered for enrolling early!

Tucked away during Catholic Schools Week (Jan. 29-Feb. 4), we will find ourselves all able to celebrate the reasons why we are so committed to a Catholic education. GRACE, as one of the largest Catholic school systems in the state of Wisconsin, representing 23 parishes that support and invest in our schools, continues to excel in so many ways. Learning takes place in the GRACE classrooms in an environment infused with moral values and the practice of faith. Our test scores and achievements outperform our regional counterparts. Overall, as we all are aware, students are exposed to service opportunities and life skills that develop them into socially-minded individuals who care for the poor and for our planet. Our GRACE students are proud volunteers in our churches and in our communities. Our graduates grow to be leaders and scholars and have a keen sense of awareness regarding the world around them. Together, we make great things happen through ACTS of GRACE—specific efforts to make our world a better place.

As we embark upon this enrollment season, please know that an investment in a Catholic education is an investment in a bright and promising experience—both in the present and in the future. There are numerous areas of instruction, assessment, faith formation, finance, marketing, special programs and community that make GRACE strong. We thank you for the commitment to Catholic education and for your partnership as a family to work together to make our schools great!

We also ask you to help us grow GRACE by sharing your experience with others who may not yet realize the benefits and gains of a Catholic education. Help to inform others to embrace the wonderful opportunities before us as we develop the whole human person faithfully. Parents, teachers, clergy, parish members and community supporters are some of the best advocates and messengers for new enrollment growth within our schools. Take part in a Catholic Schools Week liturgy, or invite a friend to take advantage of a shadow day taking place in our schools this month. It is sure to be a memorable experience!

Thank you for your partnership in all that we do. Partnerships are the foundation of our important and vital work to educate children in the Catholic faith.

God bless you and those you love,

In His service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kimberly A. Desotell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kimberly A. Desotell  
President, GRACE Catholic Schools

*GRACE 2017-18  
enrollment opens  
Sunday, Jan. 29!*

# TADS Enrollment Information

GRACE 2017-18 enrollment opens Sunday, Jan. 29, during Catholic Schools Week.

**Enroll early!** The early registration fee is only \$50 per family, but only until Feb. 4. After that date, the enrollment fee increases to \$100 per family.

Returning GRACE families will receive an email from School Name support@tads.com on Jan. 27, (ex: HolyFamilySchool <support@tads.com>) with a link specific for your student which will take you to the TADS enrollment website. You must complete the enrollment for each child before you will be able to set up the Tuition Agreement. The Enrollment/Tuition Agreement must be completed to reserve your child's seat at the GRACE school.



# 2017-18 GRACE Budget

The GRACE Board of Directors approved the 2017-18 budget for the nine GRACE schools. The tuition rates for 2017-18 are \$2,700 for students in grades K-5 and \$2,800 for students in grades 6-8 who belong to GRACE-supporting parishes. Early Childhood rates will remain the same.

**Enrollment fees are as follows:**

\$50 per family, Jan. 29-Feb. 4 (Catholic Schools Week)

\$100 per family, Feb. 5-28

\$125 per family, beginning Mar. 1

Each school site determines its own activity fees. In addition, service hour requirements, third-source fundraising and SCRIP requirements are determined by the Site Advisory Council (SAC) for each school.

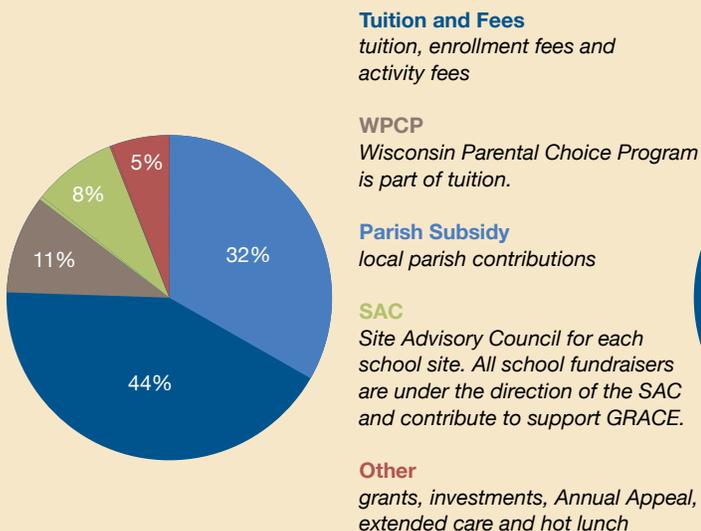
Families wishing to apply for financial assistance may do so online at the time of enrollment. Applications received by Apr. 15, 2017 will receive first consideration. Those who apply after that date will be reviewed as financial aid dollars are available.

For further information on enrollment, please contact the individual school office or GRACE at 499-7330, ext. 303, or email [graceoffice@gracesystem.org](mailto:graceoffice@gracesystem.org).

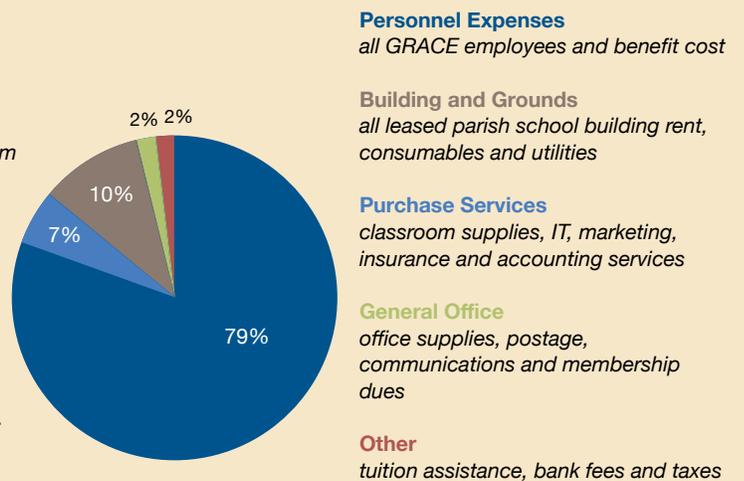
# GRACE Revenue and Expenses

A financially sound budget is important and vital to GRACE's success. Overall, we are proud of the fiscally responsible budgetary decisions under the direction of the GRACE Board of Trustee Finance Team and the GRACE Board of Directors. Decisions made by these leadership teams assist to govern expenditures through the fiscal year and ensure a healthy budget for GRACE overall. These graphics provide detail on the 2016-17 GRACE budget that will assist in better understanding revenue sources as well as expenditures to support GRACE Catholic education.

## REVENUE 2016-17



## EXPENSES 2016-17



# GRACE Spotlight

## Home “School”

Parents and teachers alike understand the importance of education in the classroom. Parents want their children to have excellent teachers, schools strive to be inviting and welcoming, and teachers provide ample learning opportunities for students each day. In addition to learning in the classroom, education at home is another crucial part of a child’s learning career. “The home is the child’s first school, the parent is the child’s first teacher, and reading is the child’s first subject” (Barbara Bush). It is important that this idea does not stop once school starts. Parents can help nurture and grow their child’s education at home through homework assistance, everyday learning opportunities and the use of educational online resources.

Sitting down and assisting your child with their homework, regardless of their grade level, is perhaps the number-one thing you can do to help your child at home. Instead of just checking your child’s homework, try to do the homework with your child. By changing this one step, parents are more likely to notice both strengths and weaknesses in a child’s understanding of a topic. Parents can also model problem

do something is the ultimate form of understanding. If your child can teach, explain and model a concept for you, they have mastered it!

There are more learning opportunities in your everyday home life than you may think! And these opportunities play an

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important role in your child’s education. They connect what happens in the classroom to what happens in real life, which is important for children to see and understand. The simplest thing you can do to help bridge this gap is to involve your child in age-appropriate activities at home and discuss with your child the skills they are using during that activity. Cooking (with parental supervision), driving navigation, thank you note writing and other at-home activities can all help reinforce key school skills. Letting children see how what they learn in the classroom applies to real life is what learning is all about!

Children of all ages love using technology, whether it be tablets, computers or smartphones. Utilizing these devices at home can make learning seem more like a game. However, while there are a lot of educational apps and games out there, some are definitely better than

others. Asking your child’s teacher for recommendations is a great place to start. Many teachers have apps, websites or other online resources they already use in the classroom and can pass along to you to use at home. In my classroom, for example, we use RAZ-Kids for online reading, which lets children earn points to build virtual robots and other fun things by reading virtual books. The more they read, the more points they earn. I also love apps by reputable companies such as Scholastic or Houghton-Mifflin, including Sushi Monster and Think Central. Online resources can not only help students with at-home learning, but also keep them motivated and engaged in the subject matter.

At-home learning plays a crucial role in the overall education of your child. By utilizing and making the most of homework assistance, everyday learning opportunities and online resources, you can continue to help your child excel at school. “At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to success is the positive involvement of parents” (Jane D. Hull).

*By Laura Blicharz, GRACE Teacher, First Grade, Holy Family School*



## Weather Alert: School Closing Guidelines

The GRACE schools follow the school closing or delay information from the public school districts. Each GRACE school follows the closing or delay schedule for the public district in which it is located.



solving and correction skills when a child makes a mistake. In addition, some school subjects may be taught very differently from when a parent was in school. This might seem like a disadvantage, but having your child teach you how to

# Catholic Schools Week Jan. 29 - Feb. 4, 2017



## Open Houses

### Father Allouez

**Saturday, Jan. 28**

Open House and tours following 4 p.m.

Mass at Resurrection Campus (grades 5-8)

Open House and tours following 4:30 p.m.

Mass at St. Matthew Campus

(EC-grade 4)

5 p.m. "Cabin Fever Cookout" at

Resurrection Campus

### St. John the Baptist

**Sunday, Jan. 29, after the 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. Masses**

The Children's Choir will sing at the

10 a.m. liturgy

Shadow Day: Tuesday, Jan. 31

### St. Bernard

**Sunday, Jan. 29, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.**

### Our Lady of Lourdes

**Sunday, Jan. 29, 11:15 a.m.-1 p.m.**

Open House/Tours: 11:15 a.m.-Noon

Interactive BINGO: Noon-1 p.m.

### Notre Dame of De Pere

**Sunday, Jan. 29, kickoff Mass at**

**St. Francis Xavier – De Pere**

Open Houses at the elementary and

middle schools from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. with

complimentary breakfast at the elementary

school from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

### St. Thomas More

**Monday, Jan. 30, 1-4 p.m.**

### Holy Family

**Monday, Jan. 30, 4-6 p.m.**

Spaghetti dinner and silent auction:

4-7 p.m. (eighth grade fundraiser)

Dodgeball game: 7-8 p.m. (eighth grade

against staff)

### Holy Cross

**Tuesday, Jan. 31, 5-7 p.m.**

### St. John Paul II

**Wednesday, Feb. 1, 9-10:30 a.m.**

Open House and tours

## GRACE School Auctions

### Saturday, Mar. 4

St. Bernard "A Night in New York"

Auction for Education

5 p.m.

Location: St. Bernard School

[www.sbsauction.com](http://www.sbsauction.com)

### Saturday, Mar. 4

St. John the Baptist Auction

5-10 p.m.

Location: Rock Garden,

1951 Bond Street, Green Bay

### Saturday, Apr. 1

Holy Cross Auction

5 p.m.

Location: Holy Cross School

### Saturday, Apr. 22

Holy Family School "Pig Squeal"

5 p.m.

Location: Holy Family School

## 2017 Golden Apple Award Nominees

Congratulations to the 2017 Golden Apple Award Nominees! We are pleased to have so many outstanding educators in the GRACE system. Thank you for your dedication to Catholic education!

### Father Allouez

Carrie Gossens

### Holy Cross

Michelle Anderson

Annette Barrett

David Gusloff

Jennifer Johnson

Patricia Nennig

Samantha Parker

Kari Peterson

Jo Sato

Deanna Schauer

Tara Wildenberg

Sr. Carolyn Zahringer

### Holy Family

Barb Anderson

Kathryn Bottcher

Lisa Krcma

Renee Zirbel

### Notre Dame of De Pere

Ashleigh Gilson

Jenna Jossart

Cynthia Kabat

Julie Kohl

Carrie Korinek

Kevin Schwarten

Katherine Summers

### Our Lady of Lourdes

Scott Farr

Jessica Johnson

Jean O'Donnell

Julie Stiles

Sally Thompson

### St. Bernard

Taylor Baltus

Leila Balza

Jennifer Etter

Beth Hencheck

Shannon Kramer

Terri Waack

### St. John the Baptist

Kathryn Berg

Patrick Calewarts

Gayle Fritsch

Amy Liebergen

Kay Moore

Tara Nelson

Michael Odberg

### St. Thomas More

Amber Meyers

# Wisconsin Parental Choice Program Eligibility Update

Application dates for the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP) are from Feb. 1 to Apr. 20, 2017. All current voucher students will need to re-apply to remain eligible.

*Only current GRACE students entering kindergarten and first grade are eligible to apply for a 2017-18 voucher.* Any public school student entering grades kindergarten through eighth grade and who meets the eligibility requirements may apply.

If you have any questions, please contact the GRACE office at 499-7330, ext. 311. More information on the WPCP may be found at <http://dpi.wi.gov/sms/choice-programs/student-applications>.

School Choice reminders:

- Families must apply or re-apply between Feb. 1 and Apr. 20, 2017.
- Current WPCP families must re-apply.
- School offices can help with any part of the application process.

## School Accountability Reports

GRACE participates in the WPCP. Schools that participate are required to post both the DPI Report Card and the Education Options Information on each school's website. You may find information on how to access the GRACE School Report on the home page of the GRACE system website as well as each school's website home page.

## Wisconsin Parental Choice Program Information Night

Learn more about the WPCP, open to current and new School Choice families.

Thursday, Mar. 30, 2017  
6:30-7:30 p.m.

St. Thomas More School  
650 South Irwin Avenue  
Green Bay, WI 54301



## Tuition Tax Credit

**Reminder:** The Governor signed tax legislation into law, giving Wisconsin taxpayers the opportunity to deduct private school tuition expenses from their taxable income beginning January 2014. A subtraction from income is allowed for tuition expenses that are paid for any of the GRACE schools. Parents/guardians are eligible for a maximum deduction of \$4,000/child in grades K-8 and \$10,000/child in grades 9-12. Per the WI Schedule PS, any amount spent on tuition and book fees is eligible for the deduction. Please visit [gracesystem.org](http://gracesystem.org) for more details. Select the "enrollment" tab and "tuition and fees."

Any parent who paid tuition from January 2016 to June 2016 through FACTS will receive a tuition tax statement sent in the mail. If you do not receive this statement from FACTS, please call customer service at 1-866-441-4637. Any parent who paid tuition from July 2016 to December 2016 through TADS will need to log into their TADS account. The TADS Household Tuition Paid Tax Report provides the breakdown of the payments you made for a tuition account during a specific tax year (for example, 2016). This document can be found by clicking on your Billing tab > Billing Account Number > Reports > Household Paid Tuition Tax Report > Enter year (such as 2016) > Submit. If you have any questions, please call TADS at 1-800-477-8237.

## Annual Diocesan Walk to Mary Pilgrimage

The annual Diocesan Walk to Mary Pilgrimage will be held on Saturday, May 6, 2017. You can visit the website or register online at [www.walktomary.com](http://www.walktomary.com).



### Supporting Catholic Education.

At the core of Catholic education is the realization that life itself is a pilgrimage, and we are called to prepare children for their journey in the world. We educate them not in defense against this world, but as a promise for this world. We form their hearts so that they, in turn, may transform the world.



## 8th Grade Policies

- Eighth grade students whose accounts are not up-to-date will not be eligible to participate in eighth grade trips, parties and graduation events. The only exception will be the eighth grade retreat as long as the retreat fee (if required) is paid. - GRACE Board of Trustees Policy
- The organization, fundraising, financial arrangements, chaperoning and liability for eighth grade class trips are the responsibility of the parents. The eighth grade class trips cannot be scheduled on days when school is in session and should take place after the eighth grade graduation. GRACE staff are not responsible for the planning, fundraising and chaperoning of these trips.
- It is the policy of the Diocese of Green Bay to have a non-alcohol environment during student activities and/or events.

## Notre Dame Academy

### Upcoming Events

#### "High School Musical"

Thursday-Saturday, Jan. 26-28, 7:30 p.m.  
and Sunday, Jan. 29 at 2 p.m.

#### Freshman Class of 2021 Registration Day

Saturday, Jan. 28, 9 a.m.-Noon

#### Tritonfest

Saturday, Feb. 18, 5-10 p.m.

#### Spanish Placement Test

Saturday, Mar. 4, 9 a.m.

#### Cabaret Night

Saturday, Mar. 25

All events take place at Notre Dame Academy. For more information: [notredameacademy.com](http://notredameacademy.com)



## Technology News

During the first trimester, GRACE focused on the goal of technology support for students and teachers as well as attention to curriculum and assessment.

- MAPS testing was a school-wide initiative to assess students. The data assisted teachers in developing lessons to meet individualized student needs as well as adjust instruction to align with curriculum standards in order to maximize student potential.
- PowerSchool and My Teacher pages, on the school website, continue to offer students and parents a source of information and resources to support learning.
- Chromebook 1:1 initiative:
  - Students in grades 6-8 utilize Chromebooks. This is our third year with 1:1 Chromebook computers. This has been an effective means to improving access to technology for our middle school students.
  - This fall, Chromebooks were added in grades 4 and 5 at all GRACE schools.
- The 3D printers have been implemented at each school. We look forward to the opportunities that will now improve

creativity in the classroom with this technological advancement.

What's new in the second trimester?

- Tablets for elementary
  - We continue to evaluate technology for the elementary grades. The process includes evaluating existing technology, hardware options, curriculum needs, GRACE Technology Plan, infrastructure and cost.
  - We selected a tablet model (ASUS) and accessories, determined a vendor and have been ordering/receiving items since Thanksgiving.
  - Tablets will be available to students (two students to one tablet) in grades 1-2 and kindergarten.
  - Tablets will be available to students (two students to one tablet) in third grade with a bluetooth keyboard. For schools with third and fourth grade multi-age classrooms, the students use Chromebooks. During the month of January, we started with two schools for the tablet rollout and implementation and will continue systematically through each GRACE school.

- Clover
  - We are piloting a credit card system, Clover, at one of our GRACE schools.
  - The system allows for schools to accept credit card payments for lunch/milk, fees and school fundraising events.
  - After a successful pilot, we anticipate a rollout to all GRACE schools by Easter.

If you are interested in learning more about the technology initiatives within our GRACE schools, please contact a GRACE school principal or a GRACE technology team member: Lynn Fink, Jody Laehn, Theresa Neuser, Mary Swanson, Bob Von Haden or Nate Walkner. As a team, we continue to be driven by our technology mission/vision and goals set forth in the GRACE 2016-19 Information and Technology Plan. The plan can be accessed at <https://gracesystem.org/about-grace/technology/>.

*By Lynn Fink, GRACE Technology Director*



1087 Kellogg Street  
Green Bay, WI 54303  
gracesystem.org

## Let us help you.

Call 920-499-7330

### Business Services

Heidi Janowski, ext. 307  
hjanowski@gracesystem.org

### Enrollment and Financial Aid

Lori Ashmann, ext. 303  
graceoffice@gracesystem.org

### Human Resources

Jami Hintz, ext. 309  
jhintz@gracesystem.org

### Student Services

James Cullen, ext. 308  
jcullen@gracesystem.org

### Annual Appeal Gifts

Lisa Niemuth, ext. 313  
lniemuth@gracesystem.org

## 2016-17 GRACE Schools Calendar

March  
13-17

**Spring Break**  
No classes

April  
14-17

**Good Friday -  
Easter Monday**  
No classes

May  
29

**Memorial Day**  
No classes

June  
6

**Last Day of School**  
Early release

## GRACE Catholic Schools

### Father Allouez Catholic School

Principal - Kay Franz  
St. Matthew Campus:  
432-5223  
Resurrection Campus:  
336-3230

### Holy Cross Catholic School

Principal -  
Sharon Gast  
468-0625

### Holy Family School

Principal -  
Pamela Otto  
494-1931

### Notre Dame of De Pere

Principal - Jim Clark  
Elementary School:  
337-1103  
Middle School:  
337-1115

### Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School

Principal - Jeff Young  
336-3091

### St. Bernard Catholic School

Principal - Crystal  
Blahnik  
468-5026

### St. John Paul II Classical School

Interim Administrator -  
Carol Ricken  
494-1931, ext. 9

### St. John the Baptist Catholic School

Principal - Andrew Mulloy  
434-3822

### St. Thomas More Catholic School

Principal -  
Olgamar Amor  
432-8242