

# I'd Like to Know...

## Questions Parents Ask About Blessed Sacrament School

### What is the school's philosophy?

We believe each child is a gift from God.

Christian values, which take their meaning from Jesus' message in the Gospels, are the center of Blessed Sacrament School and serve as an introduction to a larger and global community.

Blessed Sacrament School strives within a Christian environment to provide a program of academic excellence. A variety of teaching techniques enable children to work toward their potential, experience success and see learning as a life-long process. Strong, positive relationships between home and school are essential to this outcome.

Blessed Sacrament School is a ministry of the parish. Children are given opportunities to experience an extended Christian family while at worship, work, study and play. Through membership in this community children learn self-discipline and self-respect, which lead to a strong, positive self-image. The children are taught to respect others by example and by being held accountable for their actions.

### What is a multi-aged classroom?

Blessed Sacrament School is organized into units. In the Primary Unit, grades one through three are multi-aged. In the Intermediate Unit, grades four through six combine multi-age and graded groupings. The Junior High, grades seven and eight, is multi-aged with a rotating curriculum. The kindergarten is self-contained. Within the units where multi-aging is used, children are assigned to multi-aged homerooms. During the school day they move to various classrooms, where the teachers in the units provide instruction.

There are many advantages to multi-aged education. The natural living environment for adults and children in the home, school and workplace is multi-aged. Socially, a multi-aged classroom allows children to know classmates from several different grades. By the time children are in the third grade, they know children in the first, second, fourth and fifth grades. Knowing so many children of different ages makes a child comfortable in the school and on the playground.

As children "move up" in each unit, they become the older children for the lowest grade in the unit. They have a chance to exhibit Christian values of sharing, concern and patience with the younger children. They can help the younger children become independent, mature students themselves. Younger children will readily ask another child just slightly older than themselves for help in finding educational materials or in understanding work the older child has already had. Having older children in the classroom who have mastered difficult concepts gives the younger children confidence that they, too, will be able to learn.

Multi-aged classrooms have built-in flexibility and mobility. Grade levels are minimized and the child can be placed at an appropriate instructional level regardless of the diagnostic grade level. This enables each child to be comfortable with his or her own placement and progress.

In a multi-aged classroom, individual differences are more acceptable than in a graded classroom because the children themselves cover a wider range of age, size and ability. Both the child who is slower and the child who is faster are more comfortable with his or her own placement and progress.

Having grade levels within multi-aged classrooms allows the children to do many things as a grade and many things as a unit. A first grade child, for example, is part of the first grade, part of the Primary Unit, and part of the whole school. Being an important part of several groups allows the child to develop a positive self-image and learn that he or she can contribute to the school community on many different levels.

**Blessed Sacrament School – 2112 Hollister Avenue – Madison, WI 53726**

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## **Does my child have to be Catholic?**

A significant number of children who are not Catholic are enrolled at Blessed Sacrament School. Although each family's reason for choosing the school is different, the following considerations are among those offered by parents of other faiths whose children are presently enrolled.

Blessed Sacrament School offers more than abstract education in Christian values. At every age level, children are taught responsibility for carrying out God's work in the world, particularly in their own neighborhood and community. They are also taught that even the youngest child has the ability to help those in need. There is great emphasis on outreach to others, in addition to the religion curriculum and worship experiences.

Other reasons given by parents for enrolling their children include a desire for a unified school experience from kindergarten through eighth grade, accessibility of the staff, and high standards of discipline. Several parents mentioned the dedication of the teachers in providing "hands on" training in Christian service.

A lower teacher-student ratio enables teachers to encourage the uniqueness of each child and avoid both under- and over-achievement problems. Some parents also mentioned that the school gets to know the whole family over the years and can appreciate how each child fits into the family setting.

Parents who attend other churches say that they have felt encouraged to participate in the daily life of the school by volunteering for classroom work and for school committees. They also have noted that they understand the reason for higher tuition payments for those who do not belong to Blessed Sacrament Parish. They say they feel they are getting a good return on their investment.

## **How much is the tuition?**

The following rates are in effect for the 2006-2007 school year. The Blessed Sacrament Parish Council, made up of parish staff and parishioners, reviews and approves the school budget submitted by the Education Committee. It includes the tuition scale.

Parishioner – Grades 1-8		Non-parishioner – Grades 1-8
1 <sup>st</sup> child	\$2,116	\$4,482
2 <sup>nd</sup> child	\$2,116	\$4,482
Each additional child	\$1,381	\$4,515
Parishioner – Kindergarten		Non-parishioner – Kindergarten
\$1,915		\$4,132
Book/technology Fee 1-8	\$250	
Materials Fee K	\$219	

The parish as a whole pays more than half the operating cost of the school. Parishioners are expected to be regular contributors to the parish. Tuition can be paid yearly, quarterly, or monthly. The parish also has a scholarship program for parishioners. Anyone interested in this program should speak to the school principal or the pastor.

## **What extracurricular activities are offered?**

An extensive sports program is available for boys and girls in the 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades. Girls may play volleyball, basketball and softball, depending on the season. Boys are offered football, basketball and softball. Any interested student may play – there are no tryouts or cuts. Sports encourage self-discipline and team work and offers opportunities to meet students from other schools.

Blessed Sacrament School offers other programs, including Destination Imagination, forensics, Brownies and Cub Scouts as well as Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops. After school child care is provided until 5:30 p.m. each full school day. Students in grades 5-8 may participate in band through an organization called Overture Band Programs, Inc. Small and large group band lessons are offered during the school day. Students perform in a Christmas and spring program. Students also have the opportunity to try out for Honor Band. Fees are charged for each activity.

