

Re: Thank You (GUARDIAN ANGEL COMMUNITY - REQUESTING A MEETING)

From: Priscilla Mera (pmera7279@aol.com)

To: super.intendent@archny.org

Cc: timothy.dolan@archny.org; michael.deegan@archny.org; michael.coppotelli@archny.org;
mary.stenson@archny.org; communications.inbox@archny.org; anthony.biscione@archny.com;
edmund.whalen@archny.org

Date: Monday, April 10, 2023 at 03:06 PM EDT

Dear Mr. Deegan,

We appreciate a response after several weeks.

I have shared with all the families concerned and there is still frustration on the lack of transparency.

- Financial Assistance is being limited to specific schools (ie Blessed Sacrament as you noted below) - is there opportunity to broaden support to other schools?
- Yes, parents can still apply to public schools - but are placed on waiting list til July. As you can imagine, this uncertain futures places stress on many families.
- We (the community, families, alumni) have not been looped into the financial deficit of the school to have been more proactive to help support our school to avoid getting to this point.

Thank you,

Priscilla Serrano

(Guardian Angel School, Class '93 / Parent of 1st Grader)

(646) 734-5505

On Wednesday, April 5, 2023 at 02:50:17 PM EDT, Office of the Superintendent <super.intendent@archny.org> wrote:

Dear Ms. Serrano,

I am in receipt of your email in which you shared the thoughtful proposal on behalf of the Guardian Angel School community. I am grateful for your passion and devotion to Guardian Angel School. Great time and effort have gone into the Save the Guardian Angel School website and this proposal. Please permit me to share the following for clarification.

Your suggestion that the school's governance be restructured from a regional school to a parish-based school suggests being a regional school is more costly. It is not. Becoming a parish school would require that the parish assumes **all financial liability** moving forward. This obligation includes projections of \$500,000 annually. The

parish does not have the funds to take on this responsibility. This would not be permitted.

The Office of the Superintendent of Schools has confirmed with the New York City Department of Education that public school admissions continue, and the process is not closed. This avenue remains a viable option for families considering a public elementary school.

For families seeking to continue a Catholic school education for their students, substantial financial assistance remains, particularly to the School of the Blessed Sacrament. Your regional director of enrollment, Ms. Jennifer Bachmann, can speak to the options available for all Guardian Angel School families.

I realize this was a difficult decision for the school community to hear, and I continue to keep you all in my prayers.

Sincerely,

Mr. Michael J. Deegan

Superintendent of Schools



1011 First Avenue, New York, NY 10022
CatholicSchoolsNY.org



From: Priscilla Mera <pmera7279@aol.com>

Sent: Monday, April 3, 2023 12:20 PM

To: Office of the Superintendent <super.intendent@archny.org>

Cc: Timothy Cardinal Dolan <timothy.dolan@archny.org>; Michael Deegan <michael.deegan@archny.org>; Michael Coppotelli <michael.coppotelli@archny.org>; Mary Stenson <mary.stenson@archny.org>; Communications Inbox <communications@archny.org>; anthony.biscione@archny.com; Bishop Edmund J. Whalen <edmund.whalen@archny.org>

Subject: Re: Thank You (GUARDIAN ANGEL COMMUNITY - REQUESTING A MEETING)

Hello Mr. Deegan,

As we are now in the most holy week of the year, I can't help but reflect on the Passion of Christ and how Jesus was praised on Palm Sunday and just 5 days later crucified. I think about my years in catholic education, how I felt a sense of community and support and practicing my religious faith through this day...and yet, when I reach out to connect with leadership and the impact of Guardian Angel School closing...I am ignored.

A feeling of betrayal is the most accurate was of communicating this, as we trusted your board/office to work in the best interest of students and families, yet decisions without any consideration to community are made.

We pray for strength and courage...to have our voice heard, to final meet with leadership and come together as a community.

We've spent these last 40 days...reflecting, praying, reaching out.

While we had hoped that we would be able to share our proposal in person, perhaps sharing ahead of any meeting might help encourage your decision to meet with us.

PLEASE READ/WATCH:

Download link

<https://we.tl/t-5QBw1C5yhq>

Sincerely,

Priscilla Serrano

(Guardian Angel School, Class '93 / Parent of 1st Grader)

(646) 734-5505

On Tuesday, March 28, 2023 at 03:35:29 PM EDT, Priscilla Mera <pmera7279@aol.com> wrote:

Hello Mr. Deegan,

Again, I am kindly following up on my several emails requesting the opportunity to connect with you and your office on the decision to close Guardian Angel School.

Your office has responded to the NY1 News, as well as, Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigel communication yet I have not received the same courtesy. Both NY1 News and the Senator office were eager to connect with us, yet your office has made no effort to respond to my messages. I was advise this email was being monitored.

I hope you can understand our position and frustration. We are parents, students, community members eager to have a transparent conversation on the decision made. We trusted our children in your hands - to guide, to teach, to embrace. We have spent several weeks respectfully requesting a meeting.

Your website states:

"The mission of the Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of New York is to ensure our schools are Christ-centered, academically excellent, and welcoming communities that teach students to be life-long learners and leaders energized by fidelity to Christ, the Church, and one another."

I hope that you stand by your mission and welcome us for a discussion on Guardian Angel School. During this season to Lent, it is our time to reconnect with Christ, the church and our faith. The lack of compassion, transparency and communication has had many of questioning those in power and if their words put out to the public are truly words they stand behind.

We have worked on a proposal and requesting the opportunity to connect with those making this decision.

Sincerely,

Priscilla Serrano

(Guardian Angel School, Class '93 / Parent of 1st Grader)

(646) 734-5505

On Monday, March 13, 2023 at 07:25:10 PM EDT, Priscilla Mera <pmera7279@aol.com> wrote:

Hello Mr. Deegan,

Following up on my request to schedule time between your office and the parents of Guardian Angel School. While I understand you and your team have a busy schedule, I can not imagine that the Archdiocese would simply just make an announcement of our school closure, without anticipating concerned parents reaching out.

Again, I am taking lead with the families of Guardian Angel School, in hopes that your phone lines/emails will not be bombarded with similar inquiries. I am updating the families regularly on communication and we are all extremely disappointed on the lack of response.

We have worked on a proposal and requesting the opportunity to connect with those making this decision.

Sincerely,

Priscilla Serrano

(Guardian Angel School, Class '93 / Parent of 1st Grader)

(646) 734-5505

On Monday, March 6, 2023 at 10:58:58 AM EST, Priscilla Mera <pmera7279@aol.com> wrote:

Hello Mr. Deegan,

For 2 1/2 weeks, I have been attempting to connect with you and your office. While I understand you and your team have a busy schedule, I can not imagine that the Archdiocese would simply just make an announcement of our school closure, without anticipating concerned parents reaching out.

Again, I am taking lead with the families of Guardian Angel School, in hopes that your phone lines/emails will not be bombarded with similar inquiries. I am updating the families regularly on communication and we are all extremely disappointed on the lack of response.

We have worked on a proposal and requesting the opportunity to connect with those making this decision.

Sincerely,

Priscilla Serrano

(Guardian Angel School, Class '93 / Parent of 1st Grader)

(646) 734-5505

On Wednesday, March 1, 2023 at 03:46:22 PM EST, Priscilla Mera <pmera7279@aol.com> wrote:

Hello Mr. Deegan,

Following up once more, I do hope you find the time to connect with us. Again, we are centralizing the discussion with a few parents representing now over 60+ families. As parents and community members, we have not been given the opportunity to address the concerns of the school to actively participate in the efforts to support the school.

We have a proposal to share and requesting the opportunity to connect with those making this decision.

Some of our efforts including the below,

- established website (<https://friendsofguardianangel.com/>)
- over 2K signatures in our petition (found on website)
- establish our Instagram Presence (found on website) - have connected the community as the one place we are hearing each other
- Ran AD in Monday's edition (2/27) AMNY
- Article published specifically focusing on Guardian Angel School
- We have some upcoming meetings with community leaders and politicians - where we will share our proposal.

Again, our hope was to connect with you directly. The decision and timing of this announcement have adversely impacts students, families and the community.

I hope you find it in your hearts to connect with our community. Again, I am reaching out to you as lead advocate for the families impacted.

Sincerely,

Priscilla Serrano

(Guardian Angel School, Class '93 / Parent of 1st Grader)

(646) 734-5505

On Monday, February 27, 2023 at 11:26:08 AM EST, Priscilla Mera <pmera7279@aol.com> wrote:

Hello Mr. Deegan,

Following up on our request to meet with you. I do hope you find the time to connect with us. Again, we are centralizing the discussion with a few parents representing now over 60+ families. As parents and community members, we have not been given the opportunity to address the concerns of the school to actively participate in the efforts to support the school.

We worked on a proposal and requesting the opportunity to connect with those making this decision.

Sincerely,

Priscilla Serrano

(Guardian Angel School, Class '93 / Parent of 1st Grader)

(646) 734-5505

On Wednesday, February 22, 2023 at 05:31:50 PM EST, Priscilla Mera <pmera7279@aol.com> wrote:

Dear Mr. Deegan,

Thank you for your email. Again, **I am reaching on behalf of the community of parents from Guardian Angel School.** My efforts are to centralize communication among parents and meet with the archdiocese on behalf of 50+ families (and growing).

Your points are duly noted. I spent 12 years in Catholic schools and one of the most important lessons I learned was to always have faith and go forth with kindness.

We are **STILL eager** to meet with you at your earliest convenience.

Thank you,

Priscilla Serrano

On Wednesday, February 22, 2023 at 05:15:01 PM EST, Office of the Superintendent
<super.intendent@archny.org> wrote:

Dear Devoted Guardian Angel School Community,

I write to you on behalf of Cardinal Dolan and myself in response to your passionate correspondence about the decision not to re-open Guardian Angel School next year.

Please know that I am sending this email to you as a group of engaged and concerned parents, current students, alums, extended families, and friends of Guardian Angel School who have recently reached out to Cardinal Dolan and me. I have read each of your emails and am grateful to **all** of you for your support of Catholic education and your advocacy for Guardian Angel School. I know how heartbroken you are, as are all of us.

To be clear, Guardian Angel School is a great school and has served the Chelsea community and the Church for decades with distinction.

I understand that the decision not to re-open your Guardian Angel School is difficult for you. I think we can all agree that in recent years the demographics of Chelsea have changed, and the school enrollment has declined 8.2% since 2019 and 27% over the last ten years. Let me assure you that the pastor, principal, faculty, parents, students, and supporters have already done everything to make Guardian Angel School an exceptional school. But the factors leading to the closure of Guardian Angel School are beyond anyone's control. We simply cannot fundraise out of this situation.

While the Catholic School system does not "fund" a school's deficit but "invests" in the school and its children, Guardian Angel's operating deficit has increased to a projected \$550,183 for this school year. This is not sustainable.

The Office of the Superintendent of Schools is committed to ensuring that your child receives a Catholic faith-based education at one of our Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of New York. Our dedicated regional director of

enrollment, Ms. Jennifer Bachmann, at 646-794-2885, is available and will contact you personally to accompany you during this process.

The Office of the Superintendent of Schools, serving Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of New York, will continue investing in strong academic programs, technology, professional development, and our principals, teachers, and staff.

Sincerely,

Mr. Michael J. Deegan

Superintendent of Schools



1011 First Avenue, New York, NY 10022
CatholicSchoolsNY.org

