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Dear St. Elizabeth Parents,

At a recent Los Angeles Archdiocesan principal meeting, there was an announcement of an innovative change to Catholic schools that will soon be implemented. The Department of Catholic Schools will publicly announce on Thursday, January 27th that Catholic schools in our archdiocese will be extending their instructional days from 180 days to 200 days over the next two years. I am attaching a letter from the Superintendent of Catholic Schools that further explains this change and the justification for this change. The Department of Catholic Schools is responding to a nationwide call to improve education in America.

The immediate impact on St. Elizabeth School is still to be determined. At this time, I have already had discussions with our faculty and staff, parish leaders, principals of neighboring Catholic schools and other leadership in the school community. In order to give a voice to the parents of the school as to the implementation process, I am adding a General PTO meeting to the February calendar to discuss this particular topic. I ask that all parents make every effort to attend this meeting on February 8th at 7:30 p.m. Childcare will be provided during this meeting. This will be an opportunity to make sure the transition at St. Elizabeth is smooth and positive and to the best benefit for our children.

Some of the positive impacts to consider are the additional instructional time to develop more in-depth and project based learning, the ability to add enrichment or include foreign language to our curriculum. This extended calendar also is supported by studies that demonstrate that there is a 10% academic loss during the months of summer. With fewer days off in the summer, less time will have to be devoted to re-teaching in fall. Studies have also demonstrated that countries that have additional school days perform higher on achievement tests. A few links that site the positive impacts of having an extended school calendar are available on our website. There will obviously be a financial impact from adding 20 instructional days, which also will be addressed at the PTO meeting.

I welcome your input and look forward to meeting with all of you Tuesday, February 8th at 7:30 p.m.

Prayerfully yours,

Jeanette Cardamone
Principal

Resources

- Source 1: http://abclocal.go.com/wabc/feature?section=news/national_world&id=7691793
- Source 2: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/graphic/2010/12/06/GR2010120607984.html?sid=ST2010120701251>
- Source 3: <http://www.lmu.edu/AssetFactory.aspx?did=26170>
- Source 4: <http://rer.sagepub.com/content/66/3/227.abstract>
- Source 5: <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2009/03/10/63663/obama-urges-longer-school-hours.html>