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**Published for Parents, Students & Friends of
Ari Guiragos Minassian Armenian School**

Principal's Message

Dear Students, Parents, and Orange County Armenian Community, the Minassian Armenian School has a number of noteworthy developments I would like to share with you.

First, I would like to welcome our new Pre-Kindergarten Teacher's Aide, Mrs. Seta Kouyoumjian. With an expected boom in our Pre-Kindergarten enrollment, Mrs. Kouyoumjian, will be a very valuable asset in our continued development. Dear current first grade students, I delightfully announce to you that beginning the academic year of 2009-10, you will have two new students in your cohort, with Mrs. Kouyoumjian enrolling her two precious daughters at A.G. Minassian.

Second, as Principal and PE instructor for our students, I am thrilled to share with you that this year we have, not one, but three teams, representing the Minassian School, at the 2009 Homenetmen Kaham Games. I am certain that one of our teams will bring home a trophy! Thank you to the Orange County Sartarabad Homenetmen Chapter for their co-sponsorship of our participation in the 2009 Kaham games. I would also like to thank the following individuals for volunteering to coach the Minassian School's soccer teams in preparation for the games: Mr. Dishoian, Mr. Geloyan and Mr. Tchpadarian.

[Continued in the next column]

Finally, based on popular demand, in 2009 the following after school programs will be offered by the Minassian School: art, sewing, cooking, and fitness.

Warm Regards,
Niary Gorjian, PhD

'California Weekly's Walk-Through Program'

The students were excited and looking forward to the second session of the "Walk-Through" program that took place on December 1st, 2008. The same professional facilitator returned to find enthusiastic fourth and fifth grade students ready to participate in the re-enactment of the American Revolution.

Once again, both teachers and parents were present to observe the students performance. The teachers had prepared the groundwork for the in-house field trip, and had assigned students their respective parts. The students had learned and memorized important events, famous passages from speeches, as well as brief biographies of the historical people that they were to represent.

Students were awarded extra points for wearing costumes and/or making an extra effort to act out their parts. Supporting their classmates' efforts, especially those not on their own teams, created a positive atmosphere and reinforced sportsmanship. The program was very well organized and executed beautifully, commanding all the students' attention. We look forward to inviting the California Weekly again next year! -TM

On Dec. 10, 2008, the Minassian School Board invited the Minassian School's parent community to a meeting. The objective was to inform them of the School Board's activities and goals, as well as answer questions. Included in the evening's agenda were two related reports prepared by Principal Gorjian Ph.D. comparing private versus public schools, and a flowchart outlining the role the Armenian School plays in the lives of Armenian parents and the community as a whole. Said information has been included in these pages for those parents who were unable to attend.

Private Schools vs. Public Schools

“Private Schools: A Brief Portrait” by U.S. Department of Education

Private School Students:

- Perform higher than public school students, on standardized achievement tests.
- More likely than public school students to complete a bachelor's degree or advanced degree by their mid-20s.

Percentage of Teachers who perceive the Following Issues as Serious Problems

	Public	Private
Student disrespect for teachers	17	4
Use of alcohol	7	3
Drug abuse	6	2
Student tardiness	10	3
Student absenteeism	14	3
Students unprepared to learn	30	5
Lack of parent involvement	24	3
Student apathy	21	4

Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) by National Association for Educational Statistics

Safety and Security in Schools

	Public	Private
Always feel safe in my school	36%	64%
Teachers and administrators have taken all necessary steps for my safety and security	41%	57%

State of our Nations Youth by Horatio Alger Association

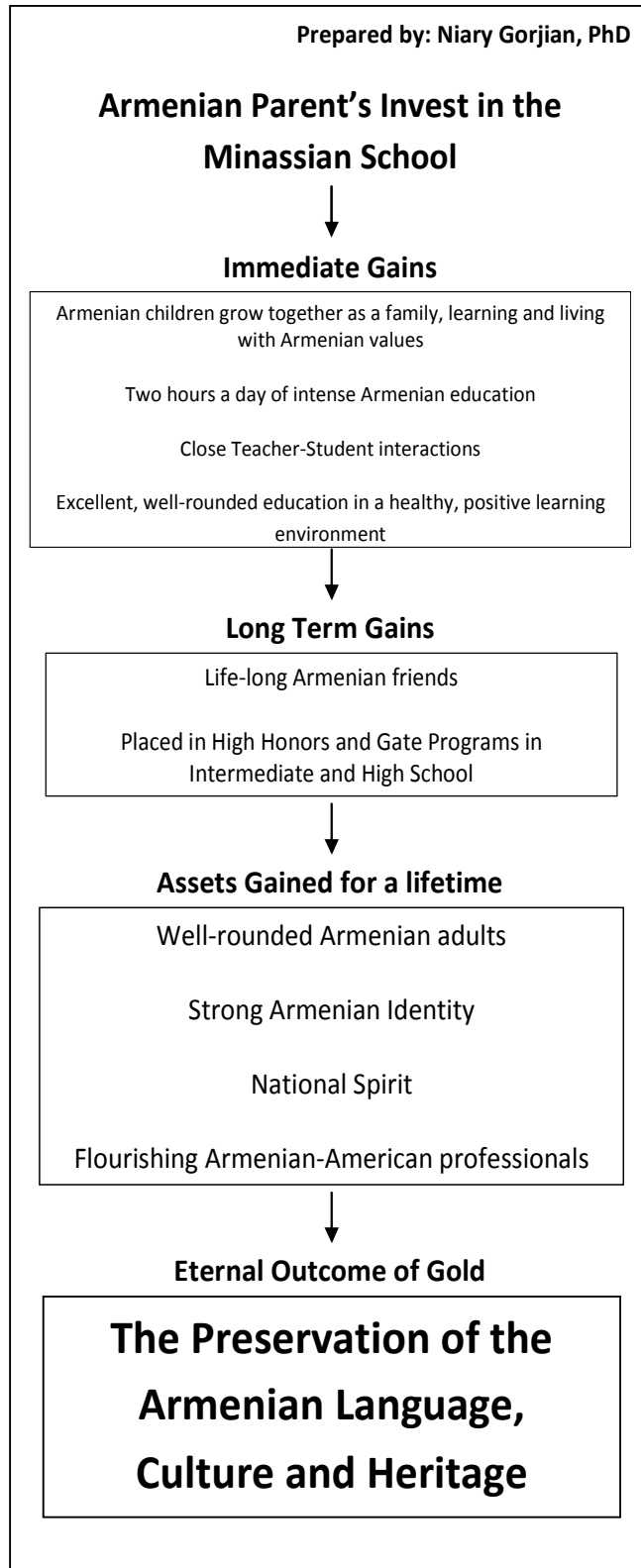
Principals Rank Each Goal on Their Level of Importance

Private School Principals' School Goals	Public School Principals' School Goals
Academic Excellence (66%)	Basic literacy (80%)
Religious/spiritual life (64%)	Academic excellence (70%)
Basic literacy (51%)	Work habits/self-discipline (60%)
Work habits/self-discipline (47%)	Personal growth (32%)
Personal growth (32%)	Social skills (25%)
Specific moral values (24%)	Occupational skills (13%)
Social skills (12%)	Specific moral values (9%)
Occupational skills (4%)	

Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) by National Association for Educational Statistics

*****AG Minassian combines all the benefits of private schooling – academic excellence, safety, religious and spiritual development – PLUS Armenian language and history education, deemed extremely vital for the youngsters' identity formation, as an Armenian-American.**

The flowchart below was presented by the principal at the School Board's meeting for the AGM Parents.



Minassian School Registration Begins March 2, 2009.

Take advantage of the **early discounted registration rate of \$250** if your child's registration process is completed by May 20, 2009. Regular registration rate of \$300 will be in effect until June 26, 2009, after which a late charge of \$50 will be applied.

Gifted And Talented Education [GATE] Update

For the 08-09 academic year, Mr. David Ghoogasian, certified GATE instructor, has been providing our teachers training in GATE content and tools. The training provides teachers with research based teaching and learning methods, to help them better meet the needs of each student.

Dr. Gorjian will also be working to obtain certification in regards to the GATE program and how to incorporate the program in Minassian School's daily curriculum. The Minassian School already provides a differentiated education within the classrooms, and the incorporation of methods used in GATE programs, will only further our efforts to provide the best instruction and education.

A session has been specifically prepared for the Minassian School's parent community, wherein Mr. Ghoogasian will present to you, the topic of "Learning and Your Child's Brain." This session will cover how the child's brain works and what parents can do to help with learning tasks, at home. Also, parents will be provided an update on the professional development being offered to Teachers.

Learning and Your Child's Brain

Wednesday, February 4th

6:30-8:30 PM

Gugassian Hall

We hope you will join us in this very informative and educational lecture!

If there is a large turn-out, we are open to extending the lecture into a series of lectures.

Հարցազրույց Տիկ. Անի Կելոյեանի Հետ



Հարցում- Ինչո՞ւ Ազգային Վարչութեան Խնամակալ Մարմինը, պետական վարժարաններուն նման, ազգային վարժարաններու **Տրդ** դասարաններուն համար, տարեվերջի քննութիւն մը կազմակերպած է:

Պատասխան- Ազգային Վարչութեան Խնամակալ Մարմինը ազգային վարժարաններու **Տրդ** եւ **Տրդ** դասարաններուն համար ծրագրած է կազմակերպել հայերէն լեզուի համադրուած քննութիւն մը դատելու աշակերտութեան մակարդակն ու հասկացողութիւնը ինենց մայրենի լեզուի եւ պատմութեան ծիրերէն ներս: Սոյն քննութիւնը պատրաստուած է խնամակալ մարմինին նշանակած յատուկ յանձնախումբի մը կողմէ որ լայն ժամանակ տրամադրելով բժախնդրօրէն պիտի սրբագրէ իրաքանչիւր աշակերտի քննութեան թուղթը:

Հարցում- Հայերէն լեզուն իր բոլոր ծալքերով եւ նրբութիւններով ուսուցանելու որոշ ուղղեցոյց մը ունի՞ք, կամ արդիօք որոշ ծրագրի մը կը հետեւի՞ք:

Պատասխան- Անշուշտ. ունինք ծրագիր մը որ կը համապատասխանէ Քալիֆորնիա Նահանգի հանրային վարժարաններու անգլերէն լեզուի ուսուցման չափանիշներուն եւ անշուշտ նաեւ ուսուցչի հայեցողութեան:

Հարցում- Գալով պատրաստուած քննութեան. հարցարանը քանի՞ մասերու բաժնուած է:

Պատասխան- Հարցարանը բաժնուած է հինգ մասերու. հասկացողութիւն, ուղղագրութիւն, քերականութիւն, շարադրութիւն եւ Հայոց Պատմութիւն:

Հարցում- Ինչ՞ էր մեր անցեալ տարուան քննութեանց արդիւնքը:

Պատասխան- Անցեալ տարուան արդիւնքը բացառիկ էր. մեր դպրոցը ստացած էր բարձրագոյն միջինը առաջին տարուան նման:

Հարցում- Ինչ՞ էին նախանցեալ տարիներու արդիւնքները:

Պատասխան- Հոս կ'ուզեմ նշել թէ այս քննութիւնները երկրորդ անգամն է որ կը տրուէին աշակերտութեան. մեծ ուրախութեամբ կը յայտարարեմ որ **2006** թուականին մեր առաջին քննութեան վարժարանիս աշակերտները ապահոված էին ամէնէն բարձր արդիւնքը: Իսկ **2007**ին որոշուած էր քննութեանց թուականը սակայն (իճծի անյայտ պատճառներով) յետաձգուեցաւ: Նկատի ունենալով, որ աշակերտներս մտովին ու հոգեպէս պատրաստ էին քննութեան տնօրէնութեան հետ խորհրդակցելով պատրաստեցի նմանօրինակ քննութիւն մը, որ ներկայիս կը գործածենք տարեսկիզբի եւ կիսամեայ քննութեանց համար:

Հարցում- Ուրեմն կը հասկնամ որ աշակերտները տարեսկիզբի եւ նաեւ կիսամեայ քննութեաններ կ'ունենան:

Պատասխան- Այո. առաջին դասարանէն մինչեւ ճ'որդ դասարան կ'ունենանք տարեսկիզբի, կիսամեայ եւ ամառվերջի քննութիւնները:

Ծնորհակալութիւն Ձեր ժամանակին եւ նուիրումին: Ձեզի եւ ձեր աշակերտութեան կը մաղթեմ նորանոր յաջողութիւններ:

-Թալին Մինասեան

***Congratulations AGM on the Board of Regents Exam!
Interview with Ani Geloyan***

Talin Minasian conducted an interview with our Armenian Teacher, Ani Geloyan, regarding the Minassian School's performance on the Western Prelacy's Board of Regents' Exam.



Q: What is the purpose of the Board of Regents' exam?

A: The exam prepared by the Board of Regents, is given to 5th and 8th grades, at the six Armenian Schools, under the auspices of the Western Prelacy. The exam is similar to the Standardized tests public schools administer to their students. It is meant to establish a level of proficiency that should be met by the school's, and helps Armenian teachers in their efforts to also gauge their effectiveness in attaining those proficiency levels.

Q: Do the Armenian Schools under the direction of the Western Prelacy's Board of Regents have an established set of standards?

A: Of course, we have a standard based curriculum comparable to that of the California State Standards for public schools.

Q: What subjects comprise the exam?

A: There are five sections: Reading and Comprehension, Spelling, Grammar, Writing, and Armenian History.

Q: How did our fifth grade class perform on the test last year?

A: The Minassian Students' performance was exceptional last year! We received the highest class average, just as we did the very first year the exam was administered.

Q: How did our students perform in the past?

A: I would like to point out that last year's 5th grade class was only the second class to take this exam, in the last three years. I am happy to announce that in 2006, when the exam was administered for the first time, our students had received the highest honors. In 2007, although the dates determined to administer the exam were set, the Board of Regents decided to postpone the exam. As my students had prepared to take the exam both academically and emotionally, I prepared a similar exam for them to take. This exam now serves as a benchmark exam for my fifth grade students.

Q: Am I correct in understanding that the Minassian Students take an additional exam in your class?

A: Yes, from the first grade up to the sixth grade the Minassian Students are given these exams at the beginning, middle and end of the year.

Thank you for your time and your dedication. We wish you and your students continued success!

The Minassian Armenian School Appreciates...

Mr. Agopian for his time, energy and generous donations towards acquiring and maintaining our school's computer needs!
&
Vartan Simonian for trouble-shooting, programming and updating our website!

Word of the Month...

'Teamwork'



The "word of the month" is a word, picked by the administration and faculty to highlight and reinforce the ideas and/or characteristics we wish to instill in our students. These words are important because the Minassian School has definite goals regarding its Expected Schoolwide Learning Results [ESLR's].

The word of the month for February will be teamwork, which is very timely, as the students have begun to prepare for the annual Armenian schools' intramural Kaham Games starting in February.

Although we did not conduct the toy drives that we had intended this year, the administration plans to work with the Student Council to create a new opportunity to help our

brothers and sisters in Armenia through the ARS and Paros Foundations.

The Minassian School's administration recognizes all the sacrifices made by our parents and wishes to give special thanks for their continued support.

Kaham Games Soccer Schedule 2009

February

Day & Date	Grades	Time	Field
Sun. 8 th	4 & 5	1:15pm	#4-1
	2 & 3	2:15pm	#4-2
	4 & 5	6:15pm	#4-1
Sun. 22 nd	1st	12:15pm	#4-2
	4 & 5	2:15pm	#4-1
	2 & 3	3:15pm	#4-2

March

Day & Date	Grades	Time	Field
Sun. 1 st	1st	11:15pm	#4-2
	1st	1:15pm	#4-2
Sun. 8 th	1st	4:15pm	#4-2
	4 & 5	5:15pm	#4-1

*Location: Glendale Sports Complex
2200 Fern Lane,
Glendale, Ca. 91208*

Christmas Program

The Minassian Armenian School Christmas Program took place Wednesday December 17, 2008, in Gugasian hall. The program opened with the singing of the Armenian and American national anthems and opening remarks by our faculty. Our pre-school students were the first to take the stage performing songs and poems celebrating the holiday season. All those present couldn't help but watch with big smiles as the little ones, each pre-school class in turn, sang and performed their movements. We especially enjoyed the songs that were accompanied with bells.

The Kindergarten class was quick to follow, performing Armenian songs, a Christmas story in Armenian between Santa Claus and the little children, followed by the song 'Rocking Around the Christmas Tree.' The first through fifth grade students joined them on stage to sing five more Christmas songs together.

All the students, dressed in their holiday best, remained on stage as each grade came forward to perform their respective Christmas songs and poems. The first grade told the story of the Christmas Tree in Armenian ("Կաղանի Ծառի պատմությունը"), then sang "Frosty the Snowman."

The second and third graders recited a prayer in Armenian "Փոքրիկն Աղօթքը," as well as the poem "Յօն Հայ Վարժարանի" then danced and sang to Bing Crosby's "A lot like Christmas." The fourth graders performed beautifully the Armenian poem "Ելէք Ելէք," then sang the song "Christmas Time is Here."

The fifth graders sang and danced to "Holly Jolly Christmas," followed by a play "Խաղաղության Իշխան" (translated "Prince of Peace"). The fifth graders performed a very meaningful play about a spoiled little girl Shoushan, who loses her

eyesight before Christmas, and regains it upon realizing how her selfishness affected others, with the help of a visiting angel. A wonderful job by all!

Principal, Dr. Niary Gorjian, took the stage afterwards to congratulate one and all for a terrific Christmas Program. She expressed her pride in the work and effort that the faculty and students put into preparing for the program, and she thanked the parents for their continued support and presence that evening.

Principal Gorjian addressed the students at one point to convey three important thoughts: First, to attend church over the Christmas break, celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ. Second, to remember to recite the Lord's Prayer at home, as they do at the Minassian School. Lastly, the students should either read by themselves or with their parents over the two week vacation.

Principal Gorjian invited our respected Hayr Yeretian to give his message before reciting the Lord's Prayer. Hayr Yeretian reinforced the message of the fifth grade's play by stressing that we are reborn every day. When the angel showed Shoushan how she had erred, the realization was mirrored with her regaining her eyesight. Every day we have the choice of making decisions that will affect not only ourselves but those around us. These decisions will either align us with the Lord's wish, acting with consideration regarding our neighbor's, or that we act to only satisfy our own desires. Ultimately, the Lord loves us and wants us to also remember to love each other.

Thank you to our wonderful faculty for organizing such a wonderful and meaningful Christmas Program. We applaud your efforts!

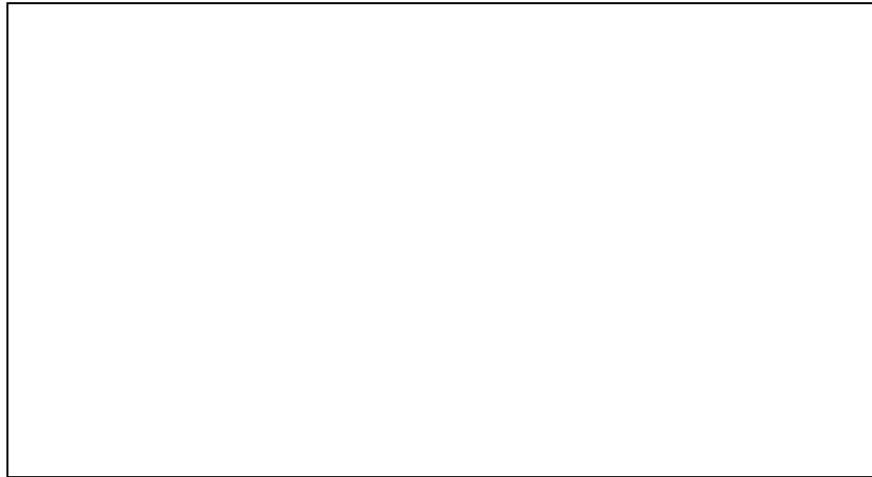
[Continued next column]

-Talin Minasian

FORTY MARTYRS
ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH

Ari Guiragos Minassian Armenian School
5315 W. McFadden Ave.
Santa Ana, CA. 92704

Postage



Christmas Boutique

Bravo PTO for a job well done! For the second year in a row, the Minassian School has seen a record-breaking turnout from vendors, parents, community members and students.

A big draw to the boutique was also the performance by the Yeraz Dance Group, to which we would like to thank Pearlene Varjabedian, the artistic director, and her terrific dancers, many of whom are Minassian School students.

The PTO was truly inspired when they added the baby-sitting option, in addition to providing 'Story-time.' The Minassian School Board and administration truly appreciate all that you have done and continue to do!

The Minassian School Board would like to take this opportunity to also thank our vendors for helping make the Christmas Boutique a success!

CALENDAR NOTES

2009

January

1/19/09 – No school - Martin Luther King.

1/25/09 – Hoy Lari Concert!

1/30/09 – PTO Breakfast

February

Kaham Games begin – See schedule of event on page 6.

March

3/1/09 – *Minassian School Banquet!*

Join the A.G. Minassian School Family

Ari Guiragos Minassian Armenian School's family environment is supportive and inviting for all our students. Each student's academic and personal development is encouraged by a dedicated faculty and staff.

For information regarding our school – please visit our website: www.agminassianschool.org. Or Call the school office for a brochure at (714) 839-7832.