

October 3, 2011

While there are plenty of fall activities to fill calendars, one constant for Middle school students is High School Night. Immaculate Conception School held their annual High School Night on September 29. Representatives and current students from over 30 private, public, and Catholic High Schools attended to meet hundreds of area students and parents who visited ICS for the widely advertised event.

The invitation for sixth graders provided an opportunity for students and their parents to begin looking broadly at the possibilities. Seventh graders attended to specifically consider their strengths in relation to admission requirements and their openness to the coming changes. The opportunity to attend private or public schools, single sex or co-educational, faith based or secular, are some of the over-arching considerations. School size, price, location, sports, theatre, technology, and academic offerings were highlighted for the students. School choice in Massachusetts opens another area of opportunity.

Students entering their last year of middle school focused on making the best decision for their needs. Shadowing a current student for a day, Open Houses, and other special events are tools used for finalizing decisions on where to apply. Specific deadlines and procedures for applying will arrive in the coming weeks. Many schools require eighth graders to sit for admission examinations in the fall, for which registration is required. Applications, essays and recommendations may be due in the same timeframe. All of these requirements were explained by High School representatives. Guidance Counselors spelled out course offerings and answered curriculum questions. Attending coaches and extracurricular activity leaders engaged many students with their enthusiasm for their programs. The pride of the High School staffers who attend High School Night was clear. The inclusion of recent ICS alumni, speaking one-on-one with prospective students, helped the high schools reach incoming students through those who have recently undergone this sometimes intimidating process.

Presentation media has expanded to include printed materials, power-points, and social networking as a new way to reach prospective students. Many schools in attendance extended personal invitations to Fall theatre or sporting events to showcase their schools. Both methods of delivering important information were demonstrated at ICS. However, the personal touch ruled the day with Admissions, Coaches, Teachers, Staff, and current students eager to share their own ways of informing and welcoming attendees.

The Immaculate Conception School is very grateful to the outstanding representatives from the high schools and the attendance and participation of many students and parents from area communities. We look forward to continuing these community efforts for the benefit of all members.