

## Diaspora Ministry assists Erebuni School in Belmont, Mass.



At the Erebuni School with new teaching materials.

**BELMONT, Mass.** – A supply of textbooks, teachers' manuals, CDs, DVDs, and other teaching aids were delivered to the Erebuni Armenian School in Belmont, Mass., in March 2009 as a part of a program instituted by Armenia's new Diaspora Ministry.

"Keeping the Armenian language alive is vital to preserving our heritage and it is the responsibility of our nation to see to it that all Armenian children in the diaspora have the opportunity to learn their mother language," said Hranush Hakobyan, who heads the ministry, established in 2008.

Ms. Hakobyan has served in Armenia's political life for numerous years, always championing human rights, youth programs, education, and healthcare. As an important part of her new ministry Ms. Hakobyan has pledged programs to unite the Armenia diaspora with the motherland. Helping to educate diaspora youth in their native Armenian language is important to her.

These teaching aids were requested by **Armine Medzorian**, the recently appointed director of the Erebuni Saturday school. This school is the only one in Greater Boston that teaches the Eastern

Armenian that is used in Armenia, Russia, and Iran. Parents of the Erebuni students prefer their children to learn Eastern Armenian, as they are mostly from those countries. There are two other active day schools in the Boston area that teach Western Armenian, which is spoken by Armenians whose families come from Western Armenia.

An increasing number of people visit Armenia today, especially since independence. The need to learn the Armenian language and the importance of Eastern Armenian in particular grows every day as it is spoken in the motherland, Ms. Medzorian argued.

New times, new technologies, and innovations have brought new words and a new vocabulary to the language. Even for speakers of Western Armenian who learned the language from their parents and grandparents, there's a need to learn new words. Teachers, especially, have this need, she added.

"We want to thank the Diaspora Ministry for their support and for helping our school by providing these materials," Ms. Medzorian said. "It is wonderful to see how diaspora-Armenia connections are getting stronger and closer. These

books will be used as reference books for our teachers as well as textbooks for the students. We watch documentaries on history, so the DVDs and CDs we received will be used for educational purposes".

Established 21 years ago by Armenians who had immigrated to the United States from Iran, the Erebuni school has 50 students and is growing. It has 8 teachers and 3 substitutes, all qualified to teach Eastern Armenian. Students range from ages 5 to 16. Besides language classes, the school has a strong focus on Armenian history, literature, religion, and geography. Also, the school schedules two annual performances, one of which is a theatrical event based on classics by Armenian writers and also has its own orchestra that performs Armenian folk songs.

There is an open house on May 30th from 10 to 12:30 for anyone who wants to find out more about the Erebuni Saturday school.

The Erebuni School has a modest budget, operating mostly on donations from parents, friends of the school, the public at large, and a number of dedicated volunteers. ☞

connect: amedz@verizon.net  
1-781-883-4470