

## **CURRICULUM**

Curriculum planning is an ongoing and comprehensive process of developing, implementing, evaluating, and redesigning priorities for what students should know, be able to do, and value as a result of learning. Students of St. Stephen Protomartyr School receive instruction in the following subject areas and generally in accord with the time allotments suggested by the Catholic Education Office and established local needs: Religion, Language Arts (Reading, Phonics, English, Spelling), Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Handwriting, Music, Art, Physical Education and Computer Education. The curriculum consists of all the subject area taught. It must be recognized that although learning is broken down into specific subject areas for ease of learning, the curriculum is an integrated program. Skills learned in one subject area are reinforced in another.

## **SELECTION OF RESOURCES**

The selection of instructional resources for a school is guided by the curriculum goals specified for each subject and grade level. The characteristics of the local school and the particular needs of its children should be considered when selecting instructional resources.

## **DUAL ENROLLMENT**

Dual enrollment is a method of providing courses and programs to a student that the school itself cannot provide due to staffing and/or finances. Missouri state law also allows Catholic school students to be dually enrolled in public schools in order to participate in specialized programs or to receive special education or remedial reading and mathematics services.

- Dual enrollment is possible only in another accredited school.
- St. Stephen Protomartyr Catholic School is the primary educational provider. The other school is a supplemental provider.
- St. Stephen Protomartyr Catholic School is responsible for instructing the student in the core curriculum (religion, language arts, mathematics, science and social studies).
- A student is not considered absent from St. Stephen Protomartyr Catholic School when in attendance at the other school.
- In determining whether dual enrollment is a viable option for meeting a student's educational needs, consideration should be given to the impact of the student's absence to attend the supplemental program on the student's learning the core curriculum in the St. Stephen Protomartyr Catholic School.
- A written plan should be developed whenever a dual enrollment is established and placed in the student's cumulative file. This plan should include specific information regarding:
  1. The educational purpose the dual enrollment arrangement is intended to achieve.
  2. The amount of time the student will be away from St. Stephen Protomartyr Catholic School.
  3. The mechanism by which the St. Stephen Protomartyr Catholic School will receive information from and provide information to the supplemental program, including attendance/absences.
  4. Transportation to and from the St. Stephen Protomartyr Catholic School.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

Sometimes parents and/or teachers suspect a situation may exist which is in some way interfering with the child's learning process. Arrangement can be made with different agencies to screen the child and assess the needs. Decisions as to how best to meet the special needs of the student are made once professional diagnosis has been completed.

## **PROMOTION**

Students are promoted to the next grade upon satisfactory completion of the required academic work for the current grade level. Students who are achieving below grade level, may be asked to attend a summer school program and/or tutoring before being promoted to another grade level.

## **RETENTION**

Students may be retained in the current grade level if they have not mastered the concepts and skills sufficiently to be successful at the next grade level.

## **PROMOTION BY ONE OR MORE GRADE LEVEL**

Promotion of a student by more than one grade level is possible in elementary schools in the Archdiocese at any grade level. Such a promotion is also possible in a certain subject area only. The decision to promote students in this fashion is made by the school. This decision, however, always involves mutual agreement among the school, parents, and student. Judgment for the recommendation is based on standardized and classroom testing data, teacher observation, evaluation of the student's work samples, and the student's social and emotional readiness.

## **HOMEWORK**

Assignments for home have a definite relation to work done in school and help to reinforce the concepts presented that day. Parental interest in written and study assignments is important - but this interest should be limited to supervision. If a child consistently states there is no homework or it has been completed at school, it might be wise to check with the teachers. Children often do not consider anything homework unless it is written work, thus important study and research assignments are often neglected. Students who legitimately have no assignments should be encouraged to read a book or a magazine for a specified period of time. Care is taken that homework is not excessive. Assuming that a regular time and a definite place away from distractions is provided, and that the child has used in-school time and at-home time well, the following guidelines should be average for a normal day. Some days there might be slightly more, other days, slightly less.

Kindergarten ---about 10 minutes  
Grade 1 ----- about 15 minutes  
Grade 2 ----- about 20 minutes  
Grade 3 ----- about 30 minutes

Grade 4 -----about 40 minutes  
Grades 5 & 6 --- about 60 minutes  
Grades 7 & 8 --- about 90 minutes

Homework should not generally exceed this time allotment. If it does so consistently, you are asked to call the teacher to discuss the matter.

## **MISSING HOMEWORK POLICY (8-2008)**

If a student does not have his/her homework, s/he will receive a homework slip. The slip should go home the day it is received and be returned the next day with a signature from a parent/guardian along with the missing work from the prior day. If the homework slip and homework are not returned the next day, the student will have his/her behavior card signed and the grade will result in a zero. Please note: all homework that is late will be assessed with a late grade that is at the discretion of the teacher.

Grades K-4: Accumulating 5 slips in one quarter will result in a detention.

Grades 5-8: Accumulating 10 slips in one quarter will result in a detention. Grades 5-8 generally have more homework than the other grades hence the difference in slips allowed.

Homework is assigned to reinforce skills that the student has learned each day. It is not a punishment. Please see the handbook for appropriate homework times for grade levels. We appreciate your support. We wish you a successful year.

## **GRADING SYSTEM AND REPORT CARDS**

Each family has a screen name and password through the school website. Parents and students are asked to log on frequently to obtain information about grades and progress. Students' grades are available online all school year.

The report card is a concise method of communicating to parents and students the level of growth attained during a specific period of time. It should be discussed by the parent and student and serve as a positive tool to effect continued growth.

Report cards have been developed by teachers at each level (K, Grades 1-3 and Grades 4-8). These have been developed to meet the needs of the students and parents. Students receive report cards four times a year through the school website: [fastdir.com/saintstephenstl](http://fastdir.com/saintstephenstl).

Those families who do not have access to the internet, need to let the office know immediately. The office will send home paper copies of information.

## **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Formal parent-teacher conferences are scheduled at the time of the first report card. Additional conferences may be scheduled throughout the year any time the parent or the teacher feels the need. Arrangements for such conferences are made by calling the school office (752-4700) during regular school hours or by sending a written request to the teacher or principal. A mutually agreed upon time will be arranged. Faculty members will not be interrupted during the school day for conferences or phone calls and are not to be contacted at their residences unless the faculty member invites parents to telephone him/her at home.

## **GRADUATION**

To graduate from a Catholic elementary school in the Archdiocese of St. Louis, a student must have successfully completed the minimum academic and religious requirements of the school, maintained a satisfactory attendance record as defined by the school, demonstrated satisfactory conduct, and completed all financial obligations.

### **DISMISSAL OF GRADUATING STUDENTS**

Graduation activities and events should be scheduled as close as possible to the official ending of the school year. Eighth grade students, like the other students within the school community, should be provided with a minimum number of 174 days of student instruction.

### **CEREMONIES**

It is appropriate that students, parents, and teachers be consulted in planning events connected with the graduation ceremonies and events. However, the pastor and principal must approve all activities and events.

In order to be eligible to participate in the commencement exercises, a student must have fulfilled all the graduation requirements as stated above. A Eucharistic liturgy with students, parents, and staff should be central to celebrating these events. Other events and aspects of the celebration should be planned in light of such factors as the significance of the event in the student's overall education and the financial burden to school and family.

### **CONTENTS OF RECORDS**

The cumulative active file of students currently enrolled in the school includes the following:

- a cumulative record that contains the following: date of entrance, social security number, identification data, profiles of all standardized ability and achievement tests, annual final grades for each subject and name of the teacher, records of Baptism (actual Baptismal record needs to be provided), First Communion, First Reconciliation, and Confirmation, date of graduation, withdrawal and placement for the next educational experience
- attendance record card
- results of educational, speech/language, behavioral, social, emotional, and/or physical evaluations to determine and recommend adjustments to address the presence of a special need that affects learning or functioning in the school setting.

### **ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS BY PARENTS**

Parents/guardians have the right to inspect and review the official active file of their children. In the event the parents are separated, or divorced with joint legal custody of the student, or divorced parent having visitation rights, both parents are entitled access to their child's record and information regarding their child's education. This information includes, but is not limited to report cards, progress reports, notices of disciplinary action, and similar information. In the event that the payment of tuition is shared financial responsibility between the parents, the school may share information about the timely payment of tuition and fees by one parent with the other parent. The failure of one parent to make payments when due can impact the continued attendance of the student, issuance of report cards, and the admission of the

student for the next school year. A parent needs to know the status of payments in arrears in the event that the parent wishes to make the payments, preventing a disruption in the student's education. In the event the child's mother and father were never married, the natural father may have access to the school information and records to the extent that it is granted in writing by a court or the child's custodial parent. In the event that a child is living with grandparents, relatives, or others, these individuals may have access to the school information and records to the extent that it is granted in writing by a court or the child's custodial parent. A non-custodial parent who has been denied visitation rights is not entitled access to his or her student's records/information. A non-custodial parent who has restricted or supervised visitation rights resulting from a finding of domestic violence or abuse may receive records and reports that do not include the address of the custodial parent or the child.

### **TRANSFER OF RECORDS**

There should be no release of student records to other schools, institutions, agencies, or individuals without the prior written consent of a parent/guardian, or the former student if age eighteen years or older. Records are not released to parents or students but are transferred directly from the school to the institution designated to receive them. Students' records may be released without prior consent in the following circumstances:

- To school officials, including teachers and counselors within the school or school system who have legitimate interest.
- To the courts when subpoenaed. The Catholic Education Office should be consulted regarding release of student information or records to government officials or to anyone else claiming to be authorized.

### **RELEASE OF STUDENT DISCIPLINE INFORMATION**

Student discipline information is not part of a student's cumulative or permanent record file, and as such, is not included when parents authorize information to be provided to another school or agency. Making this information available to any person or institution must only be done with the specific written consent of the student's parent or guardian and the student, if 18 years old or older and still enrolled in the school. This applies to providing both written and/or oral information.

### **GUIDANCE INFORMATION**

School guidance counselors have the need to obtain information and record anecdotal notes about individual students with whom they meet, and to maintain that information during the period of the student's enrollment at the school. These should be kept in a professional manner, and in a format which allows the information and the date obtained to be readily identified and understood. School guidance counselors should maintain the security and privacy of information about individual students obtained in the course of performing their responsibilities. However, information shared by students with school guidance counselors, either verbally or in writing, is not considered "privileged communication" and students do not have the right to expect absolute confidentiality. A school guidance counselor may generally keep this information confidential. However, if the life, health, or safety of the student or another person is in jeopardy, or if a serious legal situation is involved, the information must be reported or acted upon in accordance with state laws and Archdiocesan and school policies. Since educators do not have the benefit of "privileged communication" under Missouri law, a school guidance counselor could be held liable for failing to act upon such information, if the student or another person is injured. Information obtained and/or recorded by a school guidance counselor is part of a school's formal and informal student information system, and is not the personal property of the counselor. When a school

guidance counselor ceases to be employed by a school, all files, reports, and anecdotal notes about students must remain in possession of the school. The school should maintain the files for a period of 15 years.