

Academic Offerings and Policies

1. Academic Probation

Our school encourages all students to reach their fullest potential through the academic program.

Academic Responsibilities

Each student is responsible for the timely and satisfactory completion of projects, class work and homework. Grades on tests and projects should be commensurate with the student's ability.

A student who does not fulfill his/her academic responsibilities will be placed on academic probation during which evaluation of the student's progress is monitored.

Conditions and Consequences of Academic Probation

- a. The parent(s)/guardian(s) and student will confer with the administration and the classroom teacher. The teacher will outline the student's program for improvement.
- b. The teacher will inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student's progress. The process will follow the stated format:
 - parent contact
 - progress reports
 - periodic meetings with the student
 - report cards
- c. If a student is successful in meeting his/her academic responsibilities, the student will be removed from academic probation and the parent/guardian will be notified in writing.
- d. If the student is unsuccessful in meeting his/her academic responsibilities, the administration will review the student's continued enrollment in the school.

2. Accommodation Program

The Office of Catholic Education established guidelines for modifying and adapting curriculum to meet the learning needs of all students. Mary, Mother of the Redeemer Parish School is committed to providing for the needs of individual students. The Accommodation Program is designed to provide adaptations to the curriculum so that high expectations are maintained for all students. The administration, faculty, and Intermediate Unit personnel work in consultation with the student's parent to determine the need for classroom accommodations. Parents are required to sign a permission slip before a student will receive classroom accommodations. Any student who participates in the Accommodation Program will receive an Accommodation Sheet in the trimester report card. A copy of the Accommodation Sheet will be placed in the student's confidential file.

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3. Classroom Assignments and Placements

Teachers collaborate in each grade to determine the most beneficial placement for all students, with regard to each child's promotion. Teachers' professional observations help guide their assessment of where each child will best thrive. The observation and collaboration processes take considerable time and are carefully evaluated.

Teacher input is essential to assignments and placements, and their efforts are reviewed with the administration. Each child's welfare is treated with the highest regard. This process will be followed for each promotion list. Parent requests, while taken into consideration, will not be the determining factor for classroom placement of children.

4. Class Participation

Students are expected to:

- be attentive and respectful to school staff
- show respect and concern for other students
- actively participate in class by responding orally or in writing as circumstances dictate

5. Closing Exercises

Participation in closing exercises is a privilege, not a right. The school has the right to deny any student participation in closing exercises if, in the view of the school, the student's conduct, academic, or disciplinary record indicate that the privilege should not be extended.

6. Curriculum

The curricula followed by the students in the parish elementary schools of the Archdiocese are developed by and/or approved by the Superintendent of Schools through the Department of Elementary Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment.

Guidelines for specific curriculum areas are prepared and disseminated through the Office of Catholic Education. In teaching the content of any curriculum area, teachers adhere to the content of the most recent curriculum guidelines, rather than any specific textbook series.

Elementary curriculum guidelines are copyrighted material. Parents have the right to request to review the guidelines with the administrator/teacher. All curriculum can be accessed through the website for the Archdiocese at <http://archphila.org>. Follow the links through Education to get to Elementary Education.

Integrated Language Arts – Grades 1 – 8

The Archdiocesan Integrated Language Arts Curriculum (ILA) reflects the Standards of the National Council of Teachers of English and the Pennsylvania Framework. Instruction in Integrated Language Arts has strong foundations in literacy: *reading, writing, thinking, speaking, listening, and visualizing*. Skills are further developed in *critical thinking, literacy evaluation, methods of research, competency in self-expression, and metacognitive awareness*.

Reading

Anthologies have a range and variety of literature including classics and contemporary works that include options for study by theme or genre.

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Writing

The writing process, with the sub-processes of *prewriting, drafting, editing, and publishing*, with both linear and recursive movements of *revision*, is the model plan for the teaching of writing. In addition, some *free writing* should be integrated into the *before/during/after* segments of the literacy lessons. *Writing to learn* experiences in the content areas, as well as in ILA classes, serve to increase comprehension and recall of material.

Vocabulary, Phonics, Spelling, Grammar

Components in any literature-based program include direct instructional and developmental lessons in vocabulary, phonics, spelling, and grammar. These skills, however, are not taught in isolation, but in relation to the literacy instruction/assessment classes.

Spelling

The Spelling strand of the ILA Guidelines suggests consistent instruction in phonetic analysis (Grades 1-3), structural analysis (Grades 4-6), and etymology (Grades 7-8).

Library / Reference Skills

Strong emphasis is placed upon the library/reference skills strand included at each level of the ILA Program.

Portfolio Assessment

Assessment and instruction are closely linked. With Integrated Language Arts many sources of assessment data can be used to document and evaluate a student's progress in literacy. The Office of Catholic Education supports a portfolio approach to evaluation since it reflects a "work in progress" philosophy rather than a traditional "mastery of skills" perspective. Portfolio assessment provides a wide variety of student data sources and activities as indicators of each student's growth.

The **Permanent Portfolio** should contain the minimum archdiocesan required documents. At least two years of the latest progress documentation must be maintained in the Permanent Portfolio.

The **Working Portfolio** should contain a variety of formal and informal assessment tools that reflect the student's growth within a one-year period. The contents of the Working Portfolio are reviewed periodically throughout the year by the teacher, student, and the parent(s)/guardian(s). By the end of the year, items from the Working Portfolio should be selected for inclusion in the Permanent Portfolio.

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Mathematics – Grades 1 – 8

The Elementary Mathematics Curriculum is a carefully planned program that focuses on the understanding of basic concepts and mastery of skills, and applying these skills through extensive instruction and practice. Consistent with the state and national standards for mathematics instruction, the curriculum focuses on problem solving which is considered vital to every skill developed. The curriculum also places strong emphasis on communicating mathematically, making real-life and content-area connections, and developing reasoning skills.

The mathematics teacher is expected to begin each lesson with exercises in drill and maintenance to strengthen and reinforce skills previously taught. Instruction in study skills and the use of manipulatives and technology are deemed essential to an effective mathematics program.

Diagnostic testing is encouraged as an effective teaching tool. Mastery of each level is determined by archdiocesan level tests that are to be used at the completion of each level.

The Elementary Mathematics Curriculum is divided into nine levels of instruction beginning with Level One and extending beyond the eighth year requirements with a Pre-Algebra Curriculum.

Honors Mathematics Program

Students capable of completing the prescribed curriculum in seven years are enrolled in the Elementary Honors Mathematics Program. The students in this program are identified in their third and fourth year and begin an acceleration of levels 4 through 8 in their fourth and fifth year. Having completed level eight in their seventh year, these students complete a course of Algebra I in their eighth year. The school administrator and the mathematics coordinator carefully monitor the program with the use of management guidelines prepared by the Joint Elementary/Secondary Mathematics Committee. Students who complete this program, and satisfactorily master the Algebra I curriculum according to criteria established by the Joint Committee, are able to test to begin their second-year of secondary mathematics in the freshman year.

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Mathematics Priority Topics

Skills included at all levels: Place value, problem solving and estimation

	First Semester	Second Semester
Grade 1	Understanding of concepts of addition/subtraction; facts through sums of 10	Basic facts through sums of 18; two-digit addition and subtraction without re-grouping
Grade 2	Two-digit addition with re-grouping; addition of three or more addends	Two-digit subtraction with regrouping; measurement, time and money
Grade 3	Adding and subtracting multi-digit numbers with re-grouping; understanding of concepts of multiplication and division	Basic multiplication and division facts through the nine times table; multiplication of multi-digit numbers by single-digit numbers; division by one-digit divisors
Grade 4	Multiplication of two-digit numbers by two-digit numbers; division by one-digit divisors with remainders	Division by multi-digit divisors zeroes in the quotient; bar graphs; introduction of fractions
Grade 5	Concepts of fractions; ordering and comparing fractions; addition and subtraction of fractions	Multiplication of fractions; division of fractions using formulas
Grade 6	Concepts of decimals; ordering and comparing decimals; operations of decimals	Ratio, proportion, scale; concept of percentage; percentage formula; operations with percentage; circle graphs
Grade 7	Consumer applications of percentage; Integers; all operations using variables in formulas	Plane geometry; perimeter, area, circumference, angles, geometric relationships; measures of central tendency; probability
Grade 8	Rational numbers; all operations; understanding, writing and evaluating algebraic expressions and equations; writing	Powers and roots; solid geometry: volume and surface area; real numbers: graphing solution set

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Science

The following concepts are developed through the Lab Learner Program.

Grade 1

Our Senses
Staying Safe
Properties of Solids and Liquids
Discovering Life
Weather Changes

Grade 2

Weight & Volume
The Earth's Surface
Water Cycle & Its Phases
Health & Hygiene
Investigating Sound

Grade 3

Properties of matter
Exploring Electricity
The Human Body
Our Solar System
The Sun & Your Skin

Grade 4

Microscopes & Magnification
Chemistry, Matter & Interactions
Forms of Energy
Ecosystems & Adaptations
Light & Optics

Grade 5

Work/Simple Machines
Earth's Forces
Investigating Heat
Microscopic Explorations
Inheritance/Adaptations
Tobacco, Alcohol & your Health
Exploring Density

Grade 6

Properties of Matter
Solutes/Solubility
Weather/Erosion
Kinetic/Potential Energy
Resources
Atmosphere
Space
Underwater Force/Pressure
Watersheds
Capstone Inquiry: Water Quality of the Chesapeake Bay

Grade 7

Sensory Perception
Cellular Organization
Genes and Proteins
Cell Cycle and Cancer
Adaptation
Photosynthesis, Ecosystems
Locomotion, Flight
Capstone Inquiry: Sickle Cell Disease and Malaria

Grade 8

Friction, Simple Machines
Electricity and Magnetism
light, Sound Waves and Pressure
Heat and Heat Transfer
Atomic Structure
Chemical Reactions, Acids and Bases
Open Inquiry: The Pendulum

Social Studies - Grades 1 – 8

The Elementary Social Studies Curriculum is based upon the National Council for the Social Studies Scope and Sequence. The goals of the Social Studies Curriculum include the development of knowledge, skills values and social participation appropriate to the children's age grade level.

Grade 1 The Individual in Primary and Social Groups; Understanding School and Family Life

Grade 2 Meeting Basic Needs in Nearby Social Groups; The Neighborhood

Grade 3 Sharing Earth and Space with Others; The Community

Grade 4 Interdisciplinary Study of the Local Region; Pennsylvania

Grade 5 The Western Hemisphere; The United States and Its Close Neighbors

Grade 6 The Eastern Hemisphere; Representative World Regions

Grade 7 Building a Strong and Free Nation: BC – 1853

The United States: Early American Civilizations through Manifest Destiny

Grade 8 Building a Strong and Free Nation: 1850 – 1960

The United States: Road to the Civil War to the New Frontier

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Specialty Subjects

Specialty Subjects are required as part of the elementary school curriculum by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Specialty subjects include: Technology, the Arts (*Music and Visual Arts*), Physical Education, and World Languages.

Fine Arts: Art/Music

This area of the curriculum is designed in keeping with the National Standards for Arts Education.

World Languages

Schools may include modern world languages in the elementary curriculum where feasible. The school administrator must ensure that the program is taught by teachers who are competent in this area.

Physical Education

Physical education is vital to the development of the student and is required as part of the elementary curriculum of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Technology

There are two major areas in the use of technology in our schools: basic technology skills and specific curricular applications of technology. Elementary Technology Guidelines include the following topics: general computer literacy, word-processing, spreadsheets, database, LOGO programming, and telecommunications.

7. Graduation

Eighth grade students who have completed the prescribed course of study, and maintained a suitable discipline record, are eligible for graduation if all financial obligations have been met. Procedures for graduation are determined by the administration and the eighth grade teachers.

8. Homework

Homework refers to an assignment made by a teacher that will positively reinforce a concept presented in class. Homework includes both written and study assignments, and should be done by the student independently. While this does not preclude parental help or interest, the assignments should not require undue parental assistance or supervision. Ample time should be allowed for the completion of out-of-class research assignments or projects.

Since each student has different capabilities and interests, it is difficult to denote the specific amount of time to be spend on assignments. The following time per night is suggested for homework; this includes both written and study assignments:

Grades 1 and 2	30 minutes	Grades 5 and 6	90 minutes
Grades 3 and 4	60 minutes	Grades 7 and 8	120 minutes

The school realizes that students and subjects vary. The objective is not adherence to the time suggestions, but the extension of learning beyond class time. In the event of absence or suspension, all homework and missed assignments are to be made up.

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Efforts will be made to have the assignments on line for the convenience of families. Please check on line for daily, as well as, ongoing work. If a problem arises, the teacher should be contacted.

Homework may be assigned to students Monday through Thursday. Homework will not be assigned to students on Friday. No tests or quizzes (with the exception of Terra Nova and daily maintenance) will be given on Mondays.

Homework Illness Policy:

For short absences students should make arrangements with classmates, check assignments on-line or obtain them when they return to school. Students will be allowed one make-up day per each day of absence due to illness. For long term absences, please contact the teacher.

Homework Vacation Policy:

Parents are strongly discouraged from planning vacations during the academic year. While family time is certainly valuable time, interruption in the educational process can present difficulties for some children. However, when absences due to vacations are unavoidable, the following policy will apply:

- Homework and/or class assignments will not be given prior to the start of the vacation
- No work will be given so that it may be done during the time of the vacation
- Upon return, all missed work and assignments will be given to the student. The timeline for completion of this work will equal the number of days the student is out. As an example, for 3 days, then he/she will have 3 days to complete all missed work.
- All completed work must be signed by a parent/guardian

9. Honors Math

The Elementary Honors Mathematics Program is intended to meet the needs of those students who are capable of completing the prescribed curriculum in seven (7), instead of eight (8), years. The students in this program are identified in grade three (3), and begin formal instruction in grade four (4), continuing through grade eight (8). The Algebra I course used by the secondary schools in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia is the eighth (8th) grade honors curriculum.

The principle criteria for admission to this program, as stated in the Archdiocesan guidelines for the Elementary Honors Program, include:

- a. Cognitive Skills Quotient of 125 or above and
- b. Standardized test scores in mathematics and Reading, above the 90th percentile, and
- c. Consistent scores of 95 or better on Archdiocesan Level Evaluations.
- d. Periodic evaluation will be used to determine continued participation in this program.

Participation in the Honors Math Program is contingent upon the approval of the Archdiocesan Mathematics Committee.

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10. Preparation for Class

The student is responsible for completing all class assignments and homework on time. Failure to do so indicates a lack of serious preparation for class. Incomplete homework assignments will ultimately affect the student's effort grade on the report card.

The daily performance of students is assessed by the teacher. Copybooks, worksheets and class participation are important indicators of overall effort. All students must be encouraged to use copybooks properly. Students should not tear pages from copybooks, skip pages, or use copybooks as a drawing or scribbling pad.

11. Progress Reports

Progress reports will only be available through Gradelink.com. Hard copies will no longer be printed and sent home from school. Learning not only cultivates intellectual skills, but also responsibility for one's actions; we will also issue a progress report for any of the following reasons:

- Neglect of written homework
- Student not working to ability
- Failure to listen to and follow directions after repeated warnings
- Lack of responsibility handing work in on time or failure to return a test paper signed by parent/guardian
- Absence work not made up after a reasonable amount of time
- Carelessly completed class work after explicit directions have been given by the teacher
- Carelessly written or incomplete homework assignments
- Doing homework in class
- Neglect of study homework

12. Retention

Student progress is monitored throughout the school year. During the second trimester the teacher will contact the parent/guardian of a student who continues to experience difficulty to discuss the possibility of retention and support services. By the end of May the teacher(s) will schedule a follow-up meeting with the parent(s)/guardian(s). If retention is indicated, parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive an official notification which is to be signed and returned to the school administration. Promotion or retention is at the discretion of the administration in consultation with the teacher.

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13. Remedial Services

MONTGOMERY COUNTY INTERMEDIATE UNIT ACT 89 / TITLE I

These programs provide remedial, corrective, or developmental reading skill reinforcement for the students of Mary, Mother of the Redeemer Parish School. Students are considered for these programs based on their performance in the Terra Nova Test, Temple Informal Reading Inventory, and classroom teacher recommendation or parental request. These services are coordinated with the classroom teacher to maximize reading, thinking, and learning potential.

Speech and Language Services

Speech and language services are provided by Act 89 through the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit. Children are selected to receive services when standards of sound production, fluency, language use, form, or content fall below normal standards for the child's age and ability. Referrals for evaluations are initiated by staff, parents/guardians, or the children themselves. Evaluation and treatment are only provided following the consent of the parent/ guardian.

Reading and Math Services

Remedial services are provided by Act 89 for students in those days authorized through the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit. Students are considered for this program based upon classroom teacher recommendation, performance in the Terra Nova test, and informal diagnostic tests administered by the I.U. teacher. These services are coordinated with the classroom teacher to provide the maximum benefit for the student. Service is only provided following the consent of the parent /guardian.

Counseling and Psychological Services

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania provides counseling and psychological services through the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit.

The school counselor provides quality service to Mary, Mother of the Redeemer Parish School community by consulting with the school administration, faculty, and parents/guardians regarding individual students. Individual and group counseling are available to the students. The counselor recommends suitable referrals when needed.

After appropriate consultation, individual students are eligible for educational and psychological testing. The school psychologist consults with the school administration, faculty and parents/ guardians in order to prepare for the testing procedure. Following the testing, the school psychologist meets with the student's parents/guardians to review the complete report. After parental permission is secured, the school psychologist shares recommendations with the school administration and the faculty in order to provide the student with the assistance needed.

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14. Report Cards

Report cards are issued three times a year to students in Grades 2 through 8. Students in Grade 1 receive a Progress Report for the first report and report cards for the remaining two times. Kindergarten students receive a Progress Report for all three trimesters. Distribution dates for report cards are listed on the school calendar. Each student is responsible for his/her own report card grade by satisfactorily fulfilling the following requirements:

- major testing (at least three tests in the major subjects)
- quizzes
- oral and written reports
- independent classroom work
- active participation in classroom lessons and activities
- class/individual projects

15. Standardized Testing

Terra Nova Testing will be administered in March to students in Grades K through 7. Students in these grades will take the Complete Battery Plus, Third Edition, which is the new edition of the testing. In View (ability testing) is given at the beginning of the testing dates.

At the Kindergarten level, testing is done to obtain criterion-referenced scores only for the purpose of determining the effectiveness of the Kindergarten program. No normed scores/individual scores are generated at this level.

The results are communicated to parents and are utilized by the school for curriculum planning.

16. Student Books and Materials

Every student must carry his/her books to and from school in a suitable book bag. Books, copybooks, and materials are to be properly identified with a child's name, school, address, and room number. The student and parents/guardians must pay for all lost or damaged schoolbooks, in full. A charge will be made at the rate at which the books were purchased. Students are expected to take care of their personal belongings, their books, and their clothing. They are also asked to help care for the school buildings and the adjoining property. Any malicious damage will necessitate compensation.

17. Student Recognition

Honor Awards

Grade 5 – 8 are eligible for honor awards if trimester report card grades warrant recognition.

First Honors

- Average – 92 or higher
- Individual grades – 89 or higher
- Other report card assessments*
“3” or higher

Second Honors

- Average 86 or higher
- Individual grades – 83 or higher
- Other report card assessments*
“3” or higher

Students “earn” grades and assessments. They are not “given” by school personnel. Grades cannot be arbitrarily adjusted. Student detention during a trimester can impact Honor Recognition regardless of individual grades.

*excludes Physical Education assessment

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18. Test Grades

All tests are to be signed by parents/guardians and returned promptly.

19. Text Selections at Mary, Mother of the Redeemer School

Integrated Language Arts

- K-5 Harcourt School Publishers
- 6-8 Prentice Hall School Division
- 5-8 William H. Sadlier Inc. – Vocabulary Workshop
- 4-8 Loyola University Press – Exercises/Voyages in English
- K-8 Universal Handwriting

Mathematics

- K-6 Sadlier Oxford
- 7-8 Prentice Hall School Division
- Honors Prentice Hall School Division

Music

- K-6 Silver Burdette/Ginn Publishers
- 7-8 Prentice Hall School Division

Religion

- K – Loyola
- 1-3 RCL Series
- 4 – 8 Loyola

Science

- K – 8 Cognitive Learning Systems LabLearner

Social Studies

- K – 3 Scott Foresman / Pearson Education
- Gr. 4 Penns Valley Publishers
- 5 – 8 Prentice Hall School Division

Spanish

- K – 6 Hayes Publications
- 7 – 8 Prentice Hall School Division