

Academic Excellence

Standard 9

An excellent Catholic school provides programs and services aligned with the mission to enrich the academic program and support the development of student and family life.

Narrative Summary

St. George Catholic School provides programs and services aligned with the mission to enrich the academic program and support the development of student and family life. These programs and services are designed to enrich the academic program and meet the special interests and needs of the students. A strong service component is incorporated into programs and services while providing students an opportunity to develop strong leadership, decision making skills and cooperation within groups.

Commendations

St. George Catholic School offers a wide variety of co-curricular and extracurricular activities to the students to help enrich the lives and interests of the students and offer outside activities that enhance and incorporate the students' differing needs and talents. Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities at St. George Catholic School provide opportunities outside the classroom for all students to further identify and develop their gifts and talents and to enhance their creative, aesthetic, social/emotional, physical and spiritual capabilities. The school offers basketball, football, intramural soccer, cross country, swimming, track, cheer, dance team and volleyball through the athletics

program. Students develop a strong sense of leadership, teamwork, and community skills while participating in these events. The clubs and organizations offered at St. George Catholic School not only enhance similar attributes, but also foster development of stewardship, citizenship, and community outreach. Beta Club, Student Council, Math Club and Scouts are available to the students at St. George Catholic School. In addition to athletics and club activities, students can also choose to share their gifts and talents in the annual Talent Show, band, choir or as a liturgical dancer, lector or altar server. Students in these activities adhere to the St. George Catholic School policies and are actively supported by the students' parents/guardians. 100% of staff, 88% of students and 94% of parents surveyed in the AdvancEd Defining Characteristic survey of 2013 agree that St. George Catholic School provides extracurricular and co-curricular activities that contribute to the education of the whole child. Communications regarding these activities are continuous and consistent. Students who participate in these activities are recognized for their accomplishments during morning assembly, on the school's Facebook page, in Dragon Tales, published magazine articles and during award ceremonies.

Recognizing that a student's academic achievement is greatly dependent on emotional well-being, St. George Catholic School provides guidance services, wellness programs, behavior management programs and ancillary services to support students. Students and parents/guardians are informed of these services via the school website, handbook and through personal inquiry. St. George Catholic School has on staff a full time nurse and a full time guidance counselor. The school nurse is able to take care of minor emergencies and has instituted a very complete health information system. The school guidance counselor is available to the students to ensure that emotional needs do not interfere with achieving academic success. In addition to individual counseling, the counselor is scheduled to meet with classes every other week in grades 1-5. The counselor coordinates Individual Needs Committee meetings, meets with parents, facilitates anti-bullying campaigns, Red Ribbon Week, Girls on the Run, OT and speech. Students who qualify for accommodations based on psycho-ed evaluation receive an instructional plan. These plans are kept in a red folder along with the evaluation and become part of the student's permanent record. These records are accessible to the teachers, but are kept confidential. Academic concerns are addressed by all teachers who work with the students throughout the day. The Reading Enrichment teacher can provide small group intervention as needed using the RTI (Response to Intervention) component of the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt reading series. This intervention provides a framework for meeting the academic needs of struggling learners. St. George Catholic School has two math specialists. A part time math specialist works with small groups of first grade students within the classroom. Planning and collaborating between the specialist and

classroom teachers adds relevance and rigor to the first grade curriculum. The other math specialist has a full time position and works with small groups of second and third graders. With the support of a math specialist in the primary grades, St. George Catholic School's standardized test scores in 2nd grade math have increased from 57 (NCE) in 2012 to 61 in 2013.

St. George Catholic School offers numerous school-wide programs which promote and enrich opportunities for parents/guardians to partner with school personnel. The cooperation that exists among the administration, faculty and staff, the parents/guardians, and the students is one of the strengths of this school. According to the AdvancEd Program Effectiveness survey of 2013, 100% of staff believes that St. George Catholic School provides opportunities for parents/guardians to be involved in the education of their children. Parents/guardians are utilized as volunteers in the classroom, library, cafeteria, and computer classes on a daily and/or weekly basis. St. George Catholic School has a partnership with parents/guardians for school-wide events and organizations such as the Scholastic book Fair, the school fair and auction, Grandparent's Day, parent seminars, athletic events, Men's Club, and Home and School Association. Communications regarding events and opportunities to participate with the school can be found on the school website, facebook page, teacher's newsletters, emails, phone outreach calls and Dragon Tales, the school's weekly newsletter.

Recommendations

It is recommended that St. George Catholic School offer more clubs similar to that of Dragon Visions.

Hiring an additional guidance counselor to meet the needs of the schools population is a recommendation.

In order to facilitate small group instruction more effectively, it is recommended that St. George Catholic School hire an assistant for the fourth grade classes.

It is also recommended that St. George Catholic School provide additional enrichment classes/gifted classes for upper grade students.

Rating of Standard

Based upon the evidence, recommendations and benchmark ratings for Academic Excellence Standard 9, St. George Catholic School rates themselves at level 3.