Curriculum Overview

At Saint Paschal Baylon School (SPBS) our goal is to help develop and form students who **demonstrate good character and competency**, and who **make good choices**. SPBS provides formation for the whole child, in order to maximize the gifts and talents given by God to each student. Our mission is: **Instilling Excellence in Faith, Academics and Service.**

Saint Paschal Baylon School offers a challenging, comprehensive and relevant curriculum to equip our students with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed both now and in the future. In order to be successful in today’s complex world and academics, our students must learn how to analyze information or circumstances they have never seen before, and then anticipate what to do next. They also need to know how to keep learning and adapting as content and circumstances continue to change at an ever-accelerating pace. To help students achieve these goals, we regularly examine what we teach, how we teach, how effectively we teach, and adjust to better meet the strengths and needs of our students.

In order to help our students succeed in today’s global community, we include and integrate the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), **adapted to enhance our SPBS curriculum**. We develop in our students higher level critical thinking skills needed for literacy, interpretation of data, and technology. At SPBS we work diligently to incorporate a very wide range of experiences for students, built on the longstanding Catholic education tradition of...**instilling excellence in the formation of the whole child.**

**ST. PASCHAL BAYLON SCHOOL LEARNING EXPECTATIONS PLEDGE**

As an SPBS student I pledge:

To be an active Catholic Christian;
To study diligently;
To respect others;
To strive for self-control;
To appreciate the beauty in the Fine Arts;
To be fair.

**COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS MISSION STATEMENT:**

“The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) provide a consistent and clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they must do to assist them. These standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need now, and for success in college and careers. With American students fully prepared for the future, our communities will be best positioned to compete successfully in the global economy.”
Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English Language Arts (ELA) refer to specific standards of reading, writing, speaking and listening—the mastery of which allows students to leave high school “college and career ready” in literacy. These standards are designed to help propel students toward critical, attentive reading; logical, higher-level evidence-based reasoning; and creative, purposeful expression. This foundation for competency in literacy starts in our Kindergarten, and it builds through each successive grade level at Saint Paschal Baylon School (SPBS).

In the areas of English Language Arts and literacy, the Common Core State Standards have essentially introduced three major changes to our teaching focus: 1. **Informational Text** - Students will continue reading and writing. However, in addition to stories and literature, they now read more texts that provide facts and background knowledge in areas including Science and Social Studies. 2. **Textual Evidence** - Students are expected to read more challenging texts and are asked more questions that require them to refer back to what they have read. 3. **Vocabulary in Context** - There is an increased emphasis on building a strong vocabulary, so students can read and understand more challenging material.

**Mathematics (CCSS.Math)**

Common Core State Standards in Math (CCSS.Math) are designed to achieve a greater depth of application and understanding for individual students in the Mathematical curriculum across grade levels, starting with our Kindergarten class. This initiative - while not reflective of our precise SPBS Math curriculum, includes components of good teaching and high achievement. These standards are thoroughly studied and in many cases exceeded at SPBS. We encompass the full spectrum of CCSS.Math concepts and skills in the scope of our K-8 Math Program.

In terms of the Common Core Standards for Mathematics, the three primary changes below in teaching and curriculum have occurred at SPBS: 1. Teachers concentrate on teaching a more focused set of major Math concepts and skills. This allows our students time to master important ideas and skills in a more organized way throughout the year, and from one grade to the next. 2. Teachers present richer and more challenging Math content areas. 3. Teachers engage students in solving “real world” problems, in order to inspire greater interest in Mathematics, and help make it more apparent to students how Math concepts are truly needed and applied in daily real life situations.

At Saint Paschal Baylon School, we provide students with the curriculum, skills, faith and knowledge they need in order to be successful both now and later in life. Educational standards help our teachers ensure our students have the skills and knowledge they need to be successful, by providing a framework for student learning.

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) implementation began in the fall of 2012 at SPBS with ELA, and in the fall of 2014 with Math. Common Core is often misunderstood to be a “mandated curriculum”. In fact, it is a revised, broad set of national standards established to shape and govern general educational standards and assessments in the public schools. At SPBS, however, we consider the state and national standards to be a minimum “framework”: our standards aim for higher/broader goals. As a Catholic private elementary school, SPBS is able to be flexible regarding the implementation of Common Core Standards, unlike public schools. We have elected to delete what we feel does not best serve our educational goals: we include ideas that best serve our students.

SPBS uses California State Standards as a framework, but goes beyond those standards in designing each grade’s curriculum. Within the overall context of our general SPBS Mission Statement of “Providing Excellence in Catholic Education”, we strive to exceed the outlined CCSS, and provide students a higher level of learning.