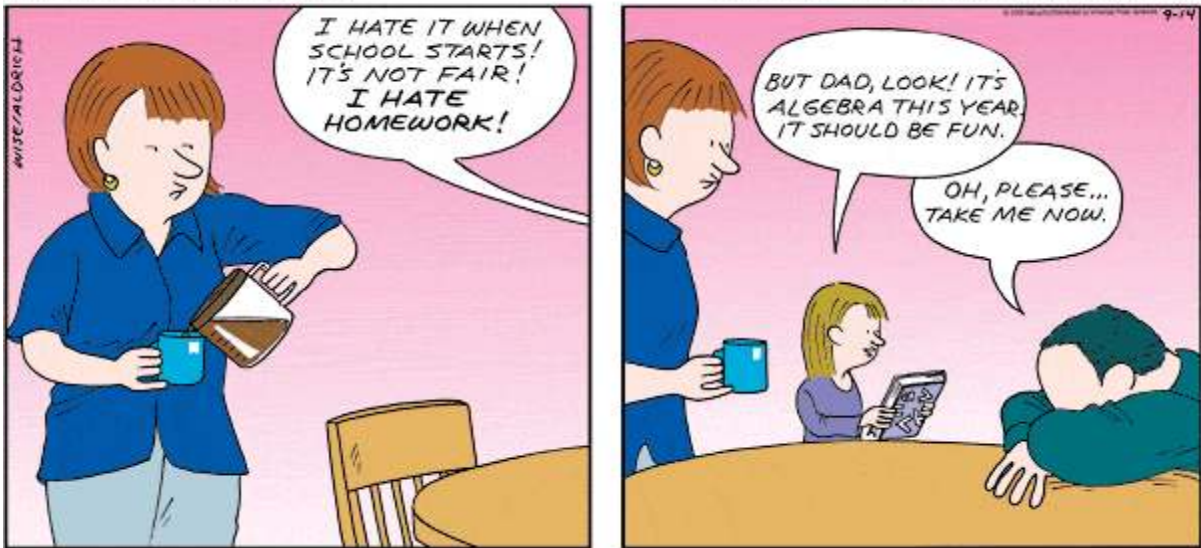


Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Regarding the ASCA Curriculum

This document was prepared as a summary of some of the topics that were discussed at Curriculum Committee meetings throughout the 2007-08 school year. It will be updated as new topics are addressed.

REAL LIFE ADVENTURES

BY GARY WISE & LANCE ALDRICH



How much homework is expected per night at each grade level?

On average, 10 minutes per grade per night is expected.

- Kindergarten – Practice
- 1st Grade – 10 minutes
- 2nd Grade – 20 minutes
- 3rd Grade – 30 minutes
- 4th Grade – 40 minutes
- 5th Grade – 50 minutes
- 6th Grade – 60 minutes
- 7th Grade – 70 minutes
- 8th Grade – 80 minutes

Why does 3rd grade seem to have so much more homework than other grades?

Grade 3 is a transition year between the primary academy and the intermediate academy. Assignments are often project based and longer term. We expect more responsibility on the part of the student to write their assignments down and turn them in on time.

Why are we using the University of Chicago Everyday Math program rather than a more traditional math program?

A committee examined math programs for a year before selecting Everyday Math. The research is strong that this is a superior way to learn math. Please see <http://everydaymath.uchicago.edu/parents/index.shtml> for specific research and parent connections.

What is the purpose of the Mad Minute?

The Mad Minute is a timed proficiency test in the four functions (+,-,x, ÷) It is used to develop mental mastery of math facts and to supplement to the Everyday Math program. This allows practice on more traditional math computation. The Mad Minute is used in first through fourth grade.

How did ASCA do on the Iowa Tests this year? Why aren't the school's scores available on the ASCA website?

Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) scores are intended to be used for curriculum planning and decisions on a student's individual programming. Our school finds these results very important and we are proud of the fine job that our students did. You have given us good learners and they have proven that with their fine test results The Diocese of Joliet does not post scores by individual school but rather by the entire diocese. The purpose for testing as stated is not for competition between schools but rather seeking our individual bests. Please see www.dioceseofjoilet.org for recent scores.

What is the DIBELS? Can I receive my child's DIBELS score?

The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) are a set of standardized, individually administered measures of early literacy development (meaning kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grades). The measure is designed to be short (one minute) fluency measures used to regularly monitor the development of pre-reading and early reading skills. DIBELS is just one of our reading progress tools. It is part of individual progress reports and used when it is important for planning for a child. It is not typical to post these scores. It is part of individual progress reports and used when it is important for planning for a child. The most important tool for parents is the Houghton Mifflin reading tests that teachers share with parents. As a parent reading to and listening to your primary child read is the most important way you can help improve their reading.

What specific text books are used in each grade?

Religion	Harcourt - Call to Faith K – grade 8
Math	Everyday Math K-grade 6 McGraw Hill pre-algebra & algebra grades 7-8
Reading	Houghton Mifflin K- grade 4
Spelling	Houghton Mifflin K- grade 1
Sadlier Vocabulary Workshop	grades 2-8
English/Writing	Write Source by Houghton Mifflin K- grade 4
Humanities	Various fiction to support the humanities approach in grades

Handwriting	5-8 McDougall Littell 5-8 Peterson Directed (formerly Palmer Method) K-2 Manuscript and 3- 8 cursive
Spanish	Enrichment Spanish weekly grades 1-5 ¡En Espanol! McDougal Littell grades 6-8
Health	No text – Curriculum directed by the State Standards and the Diocese of Joliet. It centers on fitness, health and nutrition, conflict resolution, trust, and team building
Science	Foss K-grade 8
Social Studies	Harcourt K – grade 4 Humanities approach grades 5-8 (5 – geography, 6 - world history, 7&8 - American History)

What is a Differentiated Instruction? How can I learn more?

Differentiation is a teaching technique to address different learning styles and abilities. We are learning more everyday how to better meet students needs. Please visit www.caroltomlinson.com to learn more.

What is ASCA doing to provide extra help for children who need it?

We use resource staff for math and reading. Also District 203 offers direct services for qualified students.

What is ASCA doing to provide enrichment to gifted students?

ASCA seeks to meet these needs through differentiation within the classroom. Students in the 95th – 99th stanine do have some special programming, as needed. We also offer qualified students an accelerated math program in grades 4-8.

Where can I go to get more information on Curriculum related topics?

Classroom teachers will provide web connections where available. Expectation from the Diocese of Joliet can be found at:
<http://www.dioceseofjoliet.org/cso/curriculum.asp>

Will ASCA ever have the ability for parents to go to the school's website and get info on their child's work so they can follow along and keep up with what they are working on and how they are doing? This mostly pertains to grades 6- 8.

This is now available for parents of Junior High Academy Parents.

What is ASCA's approach to science?

ASCA science program is problem-based, interactive, and scientific focused. Research is strong that problem based learning is most effective in science. Illinois Math and Science Academy advised us to select and implement a problem based program.

How does ASCA teach about the sacraments? How does that relate to the

sacrament preparation we do at the parishes? Why can't the children make their First Communion together at the school?

Sacraments are a function of the child's parish. We do prepare students and offer catechesis. Once the students receive their First Communion, we have a wonderful celebration here at the school for our students.

Is our vocabulary/spelling curriculum more advanced than what they use in other schools for kids this age?

Our program is highly respected as both a spelling and a vocabulary curriculum. This is the same program, Sadlier Vocabulary Workshop, that Benet High School uses for their vocabulary program.

Who do I contact if I have concerns about curriculum related topics?

Start with your teacher and follow-up with the principal if needed. As a reminder, part of the signing the handbook includes the FOCUS document from the Diocese of Joliet. That document outlines the appropriate communication channels.

What is the Curriculum Committee?

The curriculum committee is a subcommittee of the ASCA School Board. The committee typically meets on the 3rd Friday of each month during the day. Topics have included:

- 1 a deeper dive into a specific area of the current curriculum
- 2 discussion around enhancements to the curriculum (such as an introduction to Marilyn King's Olympic Thinking)
- 3 general discussion around questions or concerns that parents have around text books, homework, communication, the ASCA website, etc.

The meetings are open to all parents. Come whenever you can to be part of this committee.