

National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective

Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools

Rubrics for Benchmarks

Standard 7: An excellent Catholic school has a clearly articulated rigorous curriculum aligned with relevant standards, 21st century skills, and Gospel values, implemented through effective instruction.

Benchmark: 7.1

The curriculum adheres to appropriate, delineated standards and is vertically aligned to ensure that every student successfully completes a rigorous and coherent sequence of academic courses based on the standards and rooted in Catholic values.

Level 4 Exceeds Benchmark	The curriculum in all subject areas specifies research-based and mission appropriate standards. The written curriculum as a whole gives easily accessible evidence that it is vertically aligned to ensure that every student, no matter what courses taken, successfully completes a rigorous and coherent sequence of academic courses based on the standards and rooted in Catholic values. The curriculum has been mapped for purposes of realizing gaps and overlaps in content.
Level 3 Fully Meets Benchmark	The curriculum adheres to appropriate, delineated standards, and is vertically aligned to ensure that every student successfully completes a rigorous and coherent sequence of academic courses based on the standards and rooted in Catholic values.
Level 2 Partially Meets Benchmark	The curriculum identifies standards being addressed throughout the program of studies. Students are required to complete a specified sequence of academic courses, but these courses are not vertically aligned to ensure coherence and rigor.
Level 1 Does Not Meet Benchmark	The school does not have and use a standards-based written curriculum to provide a sequence of academic courses for students.
Possible Sources of Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Graded course of study• Standardized test scores• National standards• Curriculum maps• Specific notation of Catholic values in the curriculum• Course sequence• Common assessments• Written curriculum



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Benchmark: 7.2

Standards are adopted across the curriculum, and include integration of the religious, spiritual, moral, and ethical dimensions of learning in all subjects.

Level 4 Exceeds Benchmark	Rigorous standards are adopted across the curriculum and include integration of the religious, spiritual, moral, and ethical dimensions of learning in every unit in every subject.
Level 3 Fully Meets Benchmark	Standards are adopted across the curriculum and include integration of the religious, spiritual, moral, and ethical dimensions of learning in all subjects.
Level 2 Partially Meets Benchmark	Standards are adopted in some areas of the curriculum, and occasionally include integration of the religious, spiritual, moral and ethical dimensions of learning in all subjects.
Level 1 Does Not Meet Benchmark	Standards are not identified throughout the curriculum. Ad hoc curriculum and instruction may occasionally include integration of the religious spiritual, moral and ethical dimensions of learning but without any systematic organization.
Possible Sources of Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Graded course of study for all subject areas demonstrating noted dimensions• Mission statements• Curriculum standards• National standards• Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework for the Development of Catechetical Materials for Young People of High School Age• Sources of standards- ISTE, NCTE, Common Core Standards, etc.• Analytical data for determining rigor• Teacher Course syllabi, curriculum maps, and teacher units and lessons



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Benchmark: 7.3

Curriculum and instruction for 21st century learning provide students with the knowledge, understanding and skills to become creative, reflective, literate, critical, and moral evaluators, problem solvers, decision makers, and socially responsible global citizens.

Level 4 Exceeds Benchmark	Curriculum and instruction for 21st century learning provide students with the knowledge, understanding and skills to become creative, reflective, literate, critical, and moral evaluators, problem solvers, decision makers, and socially responsible global citizens. Evidence of student knowledge, understanding and skills is manifested in innovative projects that are infused with Gospel values and recognized by professional entities (national organizations, academic groups, research scholars, etc.) as exemplary. Students' performance and work products consistently throughout the academic program demonstrate critical, creative, literate, and moral thinking related to solving real world problems and making moral decisions.
Level 3 Fully Meets Benchmark	Curriculum and instruction for 21st century learning provide students with the knowledge, understanding and skills to become creative, reflective, literate, critical, and moral evaluators, problem solvers, decision makers, and socially responsible global citizens. Student performance and work products demonstrate critical, creative, literate, and moral thinking related to solving real world problems and making decisions.
Level 2 Partially Meets Benchmark	Curriculum and instruction for 21 st century learning is evident in some subject areas and results in emerging knowledge, understanding and skills for students to become creative, reflective, literate, critical and moral evaluators and/or problem solvers and/or decision makers and/or socially responsible global citizens. Curriculum and instruction for 21 st century learning is not an obvious priority.
Level 1 Does Not Meet Benchmark	Curriculum and instruction for 21 st century learning is not included. Expectations of providing knowledge, understanding and skills for students to become moral evaluators, problem solvers, decision makers, and/or socially responsible global citizens are not articulated



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	in the curriculum and are not evident with any regularity during instructional periods.
Possible Sources of Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Graded course of study• Curriculum guides• Lesson plans• Technology plan• Use of case studies, problem-based learning, service learning• Emphasis on processes of learning• Job descriptions of faculty• Public recognition of curricular effort• Student awards• Common assessments and classroom-based assessments

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Benchmark 7.4:

Curriculum and instruction for 21st century learning prepares students to become expert users of technology, able to create, publish, and critique digital products that reflect their understanding of the content and their technological skills.

Level 4 Exceeds Benchmark	Curriculum and instruction for 21st century learning prepares students to become expert users of technology, able to create, publish, and critique digital products that reflect their understanding of the content and their technological skills. Exemplary digital products created and/or published by students serve the common good of the school, parish or broader community. Student products and performance require students to consistently and regularly be expert users of technology, able to create, publish and critique digital tools in all disciplines and at all levels.
Level 3 Fully Meets Benchmark	Curriculum and instruction for 21st century learning prepares students to become expert users of technology, able to create, publish, and critique digital products that reflect their understanding of the content and their technological skills. Student products and performance require students to be expert users of technology, able to create, publish and critique digital tools.
Level 2 Partially Meets Benchmark	Curriculum and instruction for 21st century learning prepares some students to become users of technology, able to create, perhaps publish, and/or critique digital products that reflect their understanding of the content and/or their technological skills.
Level 1 Does Not Meet Benchmark	Few if any students have opportunities to participate in the use and critique of either sophisticated digital products or technological processes to create sophisticated digital products as the curriculum does not demand such.
Possible Sources of Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technology plan• Access to hardware and software• ISTE standards• Graded course of study• Curriculum guide for technology• Integration of technology in content areas



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student work and projects demonstrating technological skills• Classroom-based assessments
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Benchmark: 7.5

Classroom instruction is designed to intentionally address the affective dimensions of learning, such as intellectual and social dispositions, relationship building, and habits of mind.

Level 4 Exceeds Benchmark	Classroom instruction is designed to intentionally address the affective dimensions of learning, such as intellectual and social dispositions, relationship building, and habits of mind. Affective dimensions of learning are sequenced and articulated for all grade levels and/or subject areas and incorporate Gospel values.
Level 3 Fully Meets Benchmark	Classroom instruction is designed to intentionally address the affective dimensions of learning, such as intellectual and social dispositions, relationship building, and habits of mind. Unit and lesson plans show deliberate attention to such things as perseverance, risk taking, collaboration, self-regulation, initiative, etc. Affective dimensions of learning incorporate Gospel values.
Level 2 Partially Meets Benchmark	Classroom instruction is sometimes designed to address the affective dimensions of learning, such as intellectual and social dispositions, relationship building, and/or habits of mind. This occurs on an ad hoc basis dependent on teacher's interest.
Level 1 Does Not Meet Benchmark	There is no expectation that the affective dimensions of learning are intentionally addressed in classroom instruction.
Possible Sources of Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lesson plans• Curriculum guides• Graded course of study• Published programs to develop affective dimensions of learning i.e. materials from the Committee for Children• Staff members with expertise in such areas - mental health therapists, school counselors, school psychologists, etc.• Professional development for faculty and staff on topics such as non-academic barriers to learning, social and emotional development of children

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Objectives and curriculum in the affective domain• Rubrics that include the affective dimensions of learning
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Benchmark: 7.6

Classroom instruction is designed to engage and motivate all students, addressing the diverse needs and capabilities of each student and accommodating students with special needs as fully as possible.

Level 4 Exceeds Benchmark	Classroom instruction is designed to engage and motivate all students, addressing the diverse needs and capabilities of each student and fully accommodating students with special needs. An intervention specialist provides services to students with special needs, ensuring required support services are provided. Gifted students participate in course work or programs designed to challenge, motivate, and inspire these students to meet their potential. Teacher coaches assist teachers in designing and delivering instruction to meet the needs of all students.
Level 3 Fully Meets Benchmark	Classroom instruction is designed to engage and motivate all students, addressing the diverse needs and capabilities of each student, and accommodating students with special needs as fully as possible. Units and lesson plans give evidence of differentiation.
Level 2 Partially Meets Benchmark	Classroom instruction engages and motivates some students and sometimes addresses the diverse needs and capabilities of students. Students with special needs do not have their needs fully met. Whole group instruction is the dominant methodology. There is some variation in classroom instruction and attempts are made on the part of some teachers to differentiate instruction. There are no school-wide programs that provide a systematic means of meeting the needs of all students.
Level 1 Does Not Meet Benchmark	Whole group instruction is the norm. For the most part students are given the same assignments and expected to complete them within a similar time frame. Accommodations for students with special needs are not available.

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Possible Sources of Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Qualifications of teachers to instruct students with special needs and/or students who are gifted• Availability of support services for students with special needs• Agreed upon Catholic educational plan/ IEP and/or ISP and/or 504 plans/plans reflective of the psycho-ed evaluation• Lesson plans that note differentiation of instruction• Lesson plans that note differentiation of assessment• Specific academic plan for students recognized as gifted• Means to assess students as special needs or gifted under federal or state guidelines• Special materials and resources to meet the needs of students identified as special needs or gifted• Teacher coach job description
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Benchmark: 7.7

Faculty collaborate in professional learning communities to develop, implement and continuously improve the effectiveness of the curriculum and instruction to result in high levels of student achievement.

Level 4 Exceeds Benchmark	Faculty collaborate in professional learning communities to develop, implement and continuously improve the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction to result in high levels of student achievement. All or most of the following are present: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members of the professional learning communities use current best practice to analyze data from, to include but not be limited by, standardized achievement tests, individualized skill tests, and classroom teacher-made assessments.• Data teams and growth/value added data are familiar to the professional learning communities.• In addition, professional learning communities are evidenced for art, music, physical education, technology, and/or elementary level foreign language teachers. These may be within a school or among schools and may be face-to-face gatherings or virtual opportunities.
Level 3 Fully Meets Benchmark	Faculty collaborate in professional learning communities to develop, implement and continuously improve the effectiveness of the curriculum and instruction to result in high levels of student achievement.
Level 2 Partially Meets Benchmark	There is some collaboration among faculty members. All or some faculty members are part of a professional learning community. Purposes for the professional learning communities are unclear and/or there is little evidence of improvement in effectiveness of the curriculum and/or improvement in student achievement.
Level 1 Does Not Meet Benchmark	Faculty members collaborate little or not at all. Most teachers plan, instruct, and assess without sharing ideas or concepts with faculty members within the school or with faculty members from other schools teaching similar grades and content. Opportunities for collaboration



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	are not present.
Possible Sources of Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report of professional learning community membership• Goals for professional learning communities• Outcomes of professional learning communities• Minutes from faculty meetings and PLC meetings• Achievement score data that reflects goals of professional learning communities• Common assessment results

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Benchmark: 7.8

The faculty and professional support staff meet (arch)diocesan, state, and/or national requirements for academic preparation and licensing to ensure their capacity to provide effective curriculum and instruction.

Level 4 Exceeds Benchmark	All faculty and professional support staff meet (arch)diocesan, state, and/or national requirements for academic preparation and licensing to ensure their capacity to provide effective curriculum and instruction. All faculty and professional support staff are provided professional development opportunities and complete an individualized professional development plan. Some faculty members are recognized for outstanding service to the profession for participation in professional organizations, presenters at professional conferences, facilitators for professional workshops, or are authors of scholarly publications.
Level 3 Fully Meets Benchmark	The faculty and professional support staff meet (arch)diocesan, state, and/or national requirements for academic preparation and licensing to ensure their capacity to provide effective curriculum and instruction. Compliance with these requirements is factored into all employment decisions.
Level 2 Partially Meets Benchmark	The majority of faculty and professional support staff meet (arch)diocesan, state, and/or national requirements for academic preparation and licensing to ensure their capacity to provide effective curriculum and instruction. Those not in compliance are aware of necessary steps to ensure academic preparation and licensing and are expected to complete those on a designated timeline.
Level 1 Does Not Meet Benchmark	Many of the faculty and professional support staff do not meet (arch)diocesan, state, and/or national requirements for academic preparation and licensing to ensure their capacity to provide effective curriculum and instruction. Those not in compliance are not aware of necessary steps to ensure academic preparation and licensing and/or are not expected to complete them.
Possible Sources of Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certificates or licenses for faculty and staff• Individualized professional development plans• Verification of activities with professional organizations



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evidence of professional publications on-line and in print• Diocesan in-service records, tracking program for in-service• Conference proceedings and programs• Copies of presentations and/or shared works• Published professional materials• Job expectations• Credential requirements for jobs
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Benchmark: 7.9

Faculty and professional support staff demonstrate and continuously improve knowledge and skills necessary for effective instruction, cultural sensitivity, and modeling of Gospel values.

Level 4 Exceeds Benchmark	Faculty and professional support staff consistently demonstrate and continuously improve knowledge and skills necessary for effective instruction, cultural sensitivity, and modeling of Gospel values. The school establishes integrated goals for effective instruction, cultural sensitivity, and modeling of Gospel values and can provide evidence of student growth in cultural sensitivity and Gospel values throughout and at the conclusion of school programs. Individual faculty members align professional goals with school goals and intentionally review their own progress and improvement for effective instruction, cultural sensitivity, and modeling of Gospel values. Evidence of these goals is visible in school culture.
Level 3 Fully Meets Benchmark	Faculty and professional support staff demonstrate and continuously improve knowledge and skills necessary for effective instruction, cultural sensitivity, and modeling of Gospel values. Annual goal setting includes plans for continuous improvement in effective instruction, cultural sensitivity, and modeling of Gospel values.
Level 2 Partially Meets Benchmark	Some faculty and professional support staff demonstrate and show emerging knowledge and skills needed for effective instruction, cultural sensitivity, and modeling of Gospel values. Some professional development in these areas is provided.
Level 1 Does Not Meet Benchmark	Faculty and professional support staff have minimum or basic knowledge and skill for effective instruction, cultural sensitivity and/or modeling of Gospel values. Observation in the school reveals ineffective instruction and/or insensitivity to cultural differences and/or absence of Gospel values.

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Possible Sources of Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cultural competence in-service• Strategic plan• Classroom observation records• Faith formation opportunities• Professional development –effective instruction• Lesson plans• Surveys of faculty and professional support staff• Annual goal setting includes plans for improvement in these areas• Annual accreditation compliance reports• Curriculum maps• Surveys of students and parents• Template for individual faculty goal setting
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Benchmark: 7.10

Faculty and staff engage in high quality professional development, including religious formation, and are accountable for implementation that supports student learning.

Level 4 Exceeds Benchmark	Faculty and staff deliver and engage in high quality professional development, including religious formation, and are accountable for implementation that supports all student academic learning and growth in faith formation, which are evidenced through targeted assessment. Review of faculty performance includes monitoring of level and effectiveness of implementations. Professional development objectives are tied to student learning needs and mirror the focus of professional development currently in place. Faculty create planning documents for the implementation of professional development, and the assessment of the effects of the implementation are ongoing and frequent.
Level 3 Fully Meets Benchmark	Faculty and staff engage in high quality professional development, including religious formation, and are accountable for implementation that supports student learning. Faculty set goals for improvement and select professional development for growth. The effectiveness of the professional development is measured by student learning growth.
Level 2 Partially Meets Benchmark	Some or all faculty and staff engage in high quality professional development in some subject areas and perhaps religious formation. Implementation of professional development concepts and strategies is inconsistent.
Level 1 Does Not Meet Benchmark	Faculty and staff do not engage or engage minimally in professional development. When professional development occurs there is no accountability for implementation.

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Possible Sources of Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individual professional development plans• Lesson plans• Surveys of faculty and staff• Student achievement scores• Record of workshops attended• Pre and post conference notes -Records of change in practice as a result of professional development• Faculty/staff retreats• School professional development plans• Catechetical course work• Participation in the Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation or similar on-line or face-to-face catechetical formation courses or communities• Catechetical certification levels• Outcomes of growth in faith formation such as ACRE or similar tests• Results of catechetical assessments such as ACRE• Curriculum maps
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