



Saint Paul's School

CORE Pack Program

(Catholic Opportunity for Responsive Education)

Curriculum Policy



Curriculum

Saint Paul's School has chosen a goal-driven education model for the development and implementation of academic material used in the CORE Pack Program. Emphasis on student success is the cornerstone of a goal-driven education. Goals are the end products of the instructional process. Goals should be observable; however, internal changes in the learner should occur.

The CORE Pack Program curriculum focuses on learning in the following six domains:

- 1 Cognitive/Academic Development
- 2 Communication Development
- 3 Personal Development
- 4 Social/Interpersonal Development
- 5 Spiritual Development
- 6 Career Development

Designing the curriculum begins with the student's goals and objectives and includes the need to have high expectations for each CORE Pack Program student. Another critical component is having access to various elective and CORE classes at Saint Paul's School. The existing framework of elective and CORE classes is revisited each semester to ensure the best possible instructional program and supportive environment students.

Development of curriculum also takes into account various themes that can change on a yearly basis due to current events, such as the rotation of history and science classes, the creation of work and transition schedules, and the varied strengths and interests of the students in the program.

Cognitive/Academic Development

Description:

Cognitive/academic development refers to the acquisition of general knowledge and information. It involves the organizing and processing of general knowledge and information in a logical and systematic fashion to aid in the performance of tasks involving critical thinking and problem solving in a variety of

situations

Implementation:

For students with developmental disabilities, it is critical to introduce new material in a variety of ways through a systemic format and with many repetitions. Instruction for academic course content in Mathematics, Reading, English, Enrichment, and Transition Education is provided following these guidelines:

1. Mathematics:

The mathematics curriculum is individualized and based on the current skill level and needs of the student. Lessons and class projects are meaningful and will focus on showing students how they use math in everyday living situations.

Course content/objectives include the following:

- a) Functional application of addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and fractions.
- b) The use of money in functional situations.
- c) The use of measurement in functional situations.
- d) The concept of time in daily life.
- e) The use and application of calculators.

2. Reading:

The reading curriculum is individualized base on the current skill level and needs of the student. An individualized or group format is used to present academic material and a variety of instructional methods and/or technology is used.

Course content/objectives include the following:

- a) Basic sight-vocabulary including recognition of student's own first and last name in print, the use of picture clues to identify printed words, the use of context clues to identify printed words, recognition of survival words and symbols.
- b) Phonics/structural analysis including alphabetizing words, initial, medial, and final consonant sounds, initial and final blends, diagraphs, rhyming patterns, short and long vowel sounds, contractions, compound words, apostrophe (used to show

ownership), prefixes and suffixes, abbreviations and syllabication.

- c) Comprehension including the understanding of synonyms, antonyms, and homonyms. Identifying the main idea, giving details of a story by answering who, what, when, where, why and how questions, sequencing ideas in a story; identifying possible titles of a story; making predictions regarding story content; distinguishing between fact and fiction; identifying cause and effect; and comparing similarities and differences between stories.
- d) Oral reading fluency including the use of the proper voice intonation and interpretation of marks of punctuation when reading orally and the verbal or written recall of material read.

3. English/Written Language:

The English curriculum is individualized and based on the current skill level and needs of the student. An individualized or group format is used to present academic material and a variety of instructional methods and/or technology is used. Because of occupational and social implications, great emphasis is placed on the improvement of listening skills, following directions, and basic written language skills.

Course content/objectives include the following:

- a) Spelling to include the first and last name and names of family members, street names and city, color words and number words, the days of the week, months of the year, seasons, major holidays, and basic spelling rules
- b) Developing the habit of listening carefully and intently
- c) Developing the habit of asking clearly and courteously what needs to be known
- d) Letter writing – social and business (paper and electronic)
 - i. Placing return address in upper left corner when addressing an envelope
 - ii. Writing the title before the name (Mr./Mrs.) when addressing an envelope
 - iii. Placing a stamp in the upper right-hand corner of an envelope

- iv. Writing a variety of business letters (order letter, request letter, application letter, complaint letter)
- e) Filling out forms and reports
- f) Mechanics of written and spoken language
 - i. Capitalization and punctuation
 - ii. Basic parts of speech: nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and verbs
 - iii. Subject and verb agreement
- g) Construction of paragraphs or short compositions
 - i. Topic sentences
 - ii. Supporting details
 - iii. Summary and conclusion
- h) Dictionary skills
 - i. Alphabetical order
 - ii. Spelling and pluralization
- i) Development vocabulary
 - i. Alternative for overworked words
 - ii. Developing and usage of vocational vocabulary

Communication Development

Description:

Communication development, a broader and more inclusive term than language or speech, involves learning to impart thoughts, ideas, feelings, or opinions to one another through a variety of sensory systems. Information can be exchanged consciously or unconsciously through either visual, auditory, and/or tactile sensory systems.

Academic and social skills are enhanced through interactive communication processes. The CORE Pack Program recognizes the impact of each student's communication abilities on

cognitive development and the acquisition of new skills and new information. In addition, the outlined communication skills help give the student a solid base for dealing with conflict, taking constructive criticism, asking for assistance, and understanding and accepting consequences for one's actions.

Implementation:

- 1 Communication is fostered throughout each class offered by the CORE Pack staff.
- 2 Specific reading programs assist students with phonemic awareness, word attach, and comprehension skills.
- 3 Small group discussion emphasizes listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- 4 Specific skill development is emphasized in terms of vocabulary expansion, development of listening skills and strategies, development of phonemic awareness when approaching new words, maximizing potential in oral and written expression, and maximizing potential in functional reasoning and problem solving skills.

Personal Development

Description:

Personal development refers to the acquisition of abilities required in taking primary responsibility for one's own life. Self-determination and self-management are subsets of personal development that include the competencies necessary to make choices free from undue influence. Personal development provides the framework for people to become effective self-advocates and leaders.

Implementation:

Peer Mentor Program (Mentor Wolves), Transition Program, and Electives

Students broaden their general knowledge through a variety of tasks and skills presented while working with their mentors. The development of the peer mentor/CORE Pack student relationship helps the new students become informed and comfortable in their high school setting. When the opportunities arise, the CORE Pack student and peer mentor will perform school service activities, inside or outside the CORE Pack classroom, such as shredding and hanging flyers throughout the school providing opportunities for self-advocacy and responsibility. Additionally, when possible, the CORE Pack students receive assistance for their

elective classes, learn how to use the keyboard and computer as communication devices, and participate in activities that encourage cooperative learning, critical thinking, and personal responsibility. Students are given opportunities to make choices involving extracurricular activities, participation in various school events, and on-site work placements. Through the elective classes, students learn to become self-advocates for their learning needs. The primary focus of the personal development curriculum is *enabling independence* which includes helping students approach life with a positive attitude and a strong self-esteem.

Social/Interpersonal Development

Description:

Interpersonal development refers to the acquisition of abilities that are required to interact appropriately with others in both formal and informal settings. It involves the building of relationships through the development of social and communication competencies and the processing of group dynamics.

Implementation:

Having the opportunity to be a part of a Lasallian Catholic high school and the greater community is the most significant field for implementation of the curriculum in this domain. It is in this community that the daily interaction and conversation exchanges occur with peers, staff, and others. Participation in general education classes and in extracurricular activities also plays a major role in development in this area. Because building friendships and being successful in school are so important, curriculum in this area helps students learn how to interpret social cues, initiate conversations, and understand appropriate gestures of citizenship: obeying laws, valuing the environment, and showing civic responsibility.

Spiritual Development

Description:

Lasallian Catholic high schools strive for the development of the whole student. Spiritual development is encouraged through supporting students to live a life of holiness in daily activities based on the values of the Gospel.

Implementation:

Students explore and strengthen their own spirituality as they learn the main tenets of Catholicism. They learn to identify and recognize themselves as children of God and followers of Jesus Christ. The religious curriculum fosters an acceptance of self and others. Saint Paul's School offers and supports opportunities to live the faith by actively participating in liturgies, retreats, prayer services, and community outreach programs. Living the Gospel and giving witness to it are authentically assessed through service to the community.

Career Development

Description:

Career development is the accumulation of experiences through which individuals learn about the world of employment, develop and apply good work habits, and relate these work values to other roles and choices in life. The curriculum for Career Development provides individuals with information so that they make knowledgeable decisions about themselves in relation to the world of work.

Implementation:

The CORE Pack Program recognizes the importance of preparing students for a successful transition to adulthood. Designing a work and transition curriculum that incorporates life skills, affective skills, and employability skills is an ongoing process. The curriculum focuses on both the paid and unpaid work that one does as a responsible family and community member, citizen, volunteer, employee, and as a productive leisure and vocational participant. It includes important life skills lessons that teach students how they can be independent even with a disability.

The CORE Pack Program has an instructional component that compliments the skills taught in the classroom to those used in the work and community settings. Each student takes Transition class, and once an upperclassman, is scheduled for work settings within the school and at established community sites. The curriculum content is not only functional but also carefully blended to include the main areas of daily living and social skills with particular emphasis on career awareness and independence. Establishing and managing a checking and/or savings account at a local bank, transportation training, and community-based instruction play a major

part in this curriculum.

Part of the philosophy of the CORE Pack Program is that students will have a better idea of what type of job they will be successful and enjoy if given the opportunity to visit and work in several different job settings. Each student has the opportunity to have a vocational assessment, be assigned an individual or group job placement, and access other vocational training sites. Work sites are established both within the school setting and the surrounding community. These work sites give students an opportunity to experience a variety of jobs, discover the importance of good work habits, and realize their own strengths and challenges. Students receive classroom instruction on filling out job applications, interviewing techniques, appropriate behaviors and manners on the job, as well as instruction on how to utilize the various resources available for transportation, banking, and budgeting.

Elective Course Selections

Below is a list of typical elective classes which CORE Pack students may request. As with the general education student, course selection in a particular class is not guaranteed.

- Basic Computer Applications
- Band (percussion, guitar)
- Business
- Introduction to Art
- Gateway to Technology (8th Science)
- Theater I
- Multimedia
- Newspaper
- Spanish
- Yearbook

Assessment of Student Performance

Educational assessments provide evidence of student understanding of information and also reveal content and developmental areas requiring further improvement. Since students receive a

certificate of achievement, scores/grades are based on instructional objectives and the associated development and acquisition of the skills being taught. Evaluation of student achievement will be conducted using a combination of formative, curricular, and summative assessments and include the following instruments to substantiate the performance scores:

- Portfolio Assessments
- Performance Tasks
- Exhibitions and Demonstrations
- Teacher-created Tests and Quizzes
- Journals
- Rubrics
- Worksheets
- Participation and Behavior

The teacher's recommendations and conclusions concerning the student's achievements, abilities, strengths, weaknesses, and needs are based on the full range of that student's development as documented by the data and on the teacher's knowledge of curriculum and stages of development.

The grading policy for students in the CORE Pack Program reflects the unique character of the program and the individual achievement of the students. Grading is based on two main ideas:

- 1) Classes that are taught exclusively for students in the CORE Pack Program are nongraded and not eligible for Carnegie units. Notation that modifications were needed is documented on the report card and on the student's transcript.
- 2) When a student from the CORE Pack Program enrolls in a general education or elective class, no grade or a modified grade of Pass or Fail may be given; however, Carnegie credit will not be awarded. This will also be recorded as such on the report card and student's transcript. This grade in no way indicates that the student has met all of the requirements for that course as his curriculum may be modified to meet his individual needs. **The report card and transcript include documentation to this effect stating that the student did not meet the minimum requirements for course credit.**