

Curriculum Courier

The Curriculum
Newsletter of the Catholic
Schools Office in the
Archdiocese of
Galveston-Houston



October, 2020 Volume 3, Issue 1

Transforming Learning



by Debra Haney, M.Ed, Secretariat Director and Superintendent of Catholic Schools on October 1, 2020

Greetings to all of our teachers, principals and staff! I wanted to take this opportunity, in the first issue of the Curriculum Courier for the 2020-2021 school year, to share with you my gratitude for the amazing work that you are doing for our schools. I am humbled by your sacrifice and your ingenuity in serving your students amidst this pandemic, and I could not be prouder of how our schools, through YOU, have stayed connected to families and continued with engaged instruction! As we continue in this new school year, our theme of “Transforming Learning” could not be more appropriate. You have certainly done that in the last six months as you have learned about synchronous and asynchronous models of teaching; virtual, remote, and hybrid instruction; and a multitude of platforms, apps, and programs that can be used as tools in your instructional methodology. Your flexibility and your perseverance to keep on teaching amidst a multitude of obstacles in the way (pandemic, tropical storms, technology issues, etc.) is a feat that we celebrate every day in the Catholic Schools Office. Your role in our ability to retain and attract students has been critical to our schools, and your creativity in how you are managing your classrooms is awe-inspiring! Your dedication to your vocation is incredible, and we THANK YOU!

I pray that you will be inspired by the Virgin Mary and her role in educating her Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. Our blessed mother, Mary, taught by example and let two things determine her actions. She listened, considered the Will of God, and then she acted. She gave praise and glory to our God in all of her experiences, and she modeled a spirit of gratitude at all times. We have much to be thankful for in our lives, and the ability to bring our faith and our profession together in service to children is a true gift from heaven! Our Catholic schools function as an evangelizing mission of the Church and our efforts to form disciples of Jesus Christ should very much be driven by the life and ways of Jesus’s mother, the perfect parent and teacher. After all, our job is to do as she did – to form disciples that will transform the world!

Inspired by Mary, seat of wisdom, and driven by our desire to serve others, our role as Catholic educators is to contribute to the excellence in our schools as we seek to serve with mission through our Catholic identity, to lead our students and parents to greater roles in the work of the Church, to grow our students minds and hearts in knowledge and service, and to operate as good stewards in the work that we do for God’s glory. I want to thank you for joining me in this vocation of “transforming learning” in the 2020-2021 school year, and I again express my sincere and heartfelt gratitude to you for your passionate commitment to your school community and those that you minister to and with each day. May God bless you in abundance for your choice to serve in Catholic schools for the Archdiocese of Galveston – Houston!



CSO Hires New Director of Educational Technology and Data

by Laura Rolo on October 1, 2020

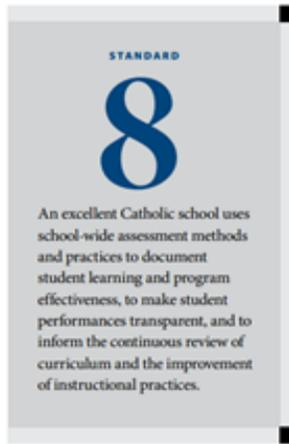
As an impatient youth, my dad often told me when I got older, time would pass more quickly. Even now, my husband frequently quotes his own father's favorite saying of "c'mon Christmas!" whenever we anxiously await something to happen and time doesn't pass quickly enough. This summer at the CSO, it seemed like we were waiting for Christmas. We had an open position to fill for the Director of Educational Technology and Data, and the discernment and interview process was an overly long advent season, so to speak. However, it was a fruitful one, full of prayer and patience, as we can now happily say the position is filled! Allow me to introduce to you our newest CSO family member, Mr. Brandon France. Brandon and his wife Amy are in the process of moving to Houston from California. They are newlyweds, married just this past July. Brandon is coming to us from St. Monica Catholic High school in Santa Monica, CA. where he served as the Director of Innovative Learning, the Humanities Department Lead Teacher, and Summer School coordinator. He earned his undergraduate B.A. in Social Science from Azusa Pacific University, holds a Master's degree in Educational/Instructional Technology from National University, and will complete his doctoral program in 2022 from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign as a Doctor of Education. He and his wife are active in parish and school ministries, and are excited to begin their search for a parish home here in the Archdiocese. Please help us give a big TEXAS-sized welcome to Brandon as he takes on his new role at the Catholic Schools Office beginning Wednesday, October 14th! And...Merry Christmas!



The What and Why of NSBECS

by Renee' Nunez on October 1, 2020

What are the NSBECS and why are they important? NSBECS stands for National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Elementary and Secondary Catholic Schools. **Why do we have the NSBECS?** They describe how mission-driven, program effective, well-managed, and responsibly governed Catholic schools operate. NSBECS are grounded in Church teachings, best practice, and proven success to ensure the future of Catholic education in the United States. The National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) owns the NSBECS and is currently under reorganization to better promote and support implementation of the NSBECS in four Domains – Mission and Catholic Identity, Governance and Leadership, **Academic Excellence**, and Operational Vitality. On July 1, 2020, our Catholic School Office was similarly restructured based on the NSBECS. We are excited about our new **Academic Excellence Team**. The AE Team is led by Reneé Nunez, Assistant Superintendent for Academic Excellence with Laura Rolo, Director of Instruction and Professional Development, and Benita Gonzales, Director of Student Support Services as members. Let the AE Team know how they can support your school. They want to hear from you.



Academic Excellence includes Standards 7, 8, and 9 and their 15 benchmarks.

You will hear more about the NSBECS as time goes on and our work in the Archdiocese is guided by them. In the next edition of the Curriculum Courier we will dive deep into Standard 7 and the 10 benchmarks that guide the work that we do every day in our classrooms across the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

Do you want to learn more about the NSBECS now?

[READ MORE HERE](#)

Our Lady of the Rosary

October 1, 2020

The month of October ([Overview](#) - [Calendar](#)) is dedicated to the Holy Rosary. According to an account by fifteenth-century Dominican, Alan de la Roch, Mary appeared to St. Dominic in 1206 after he had been praying and doing severe penances because of his lack of success in combating the Albigensian heresy. Mary praised him for his valiant fight against the heretics and then gave him the Rosary as a mighty weapon, explained its uses and efficacy, and told him to preach it to others.

Since the prayers of the Rosary come from such excellent sources — from Our Lord Himself, from inspired Scripture, and from the Church — it is not surprising that the Rosary is so dear to our Blessed Mother and so powerful with heaven.



If we consider the power of the Rosary as seen in its effects, we find a great abundance of proofs of its wonderful value. (***Read the rest of this article [here](#)***)

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Check out this space for instructional and religious resources! Have a resource to share? Send it to csogeneral@archgh.org

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[Curriculum Growth Continuum](#)

Use the password **curriculum-archgh** to access to all curriculum resources!



Download the lead4ward app today for FREE access to great instructional resources! Check out the revision/editing checklists for ELAR, and the Academic Vocabulary resources for the four core content areas.



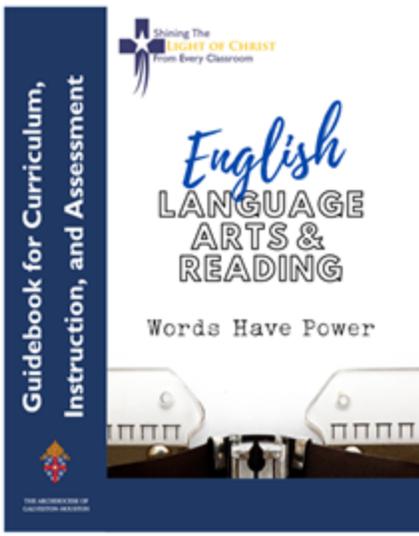
Get this **free** weekly newsletter focusing on student wellness. Thank you to Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School in Texas City for the recommendation:

“Studies Weekly started a new product this year in response to COVID called Well-Being Weekly. Right now it is being offered for FREE! We paid for a subscription with our funding as part of our guidance and homeroom programs. In response to COVID we wanted to have something we can use daily if needed. We already use the Science and SS Weekly newspapers too. It is a great resource and the teachers and kids love the newspaper format. It is also available digitally for the online learners”.

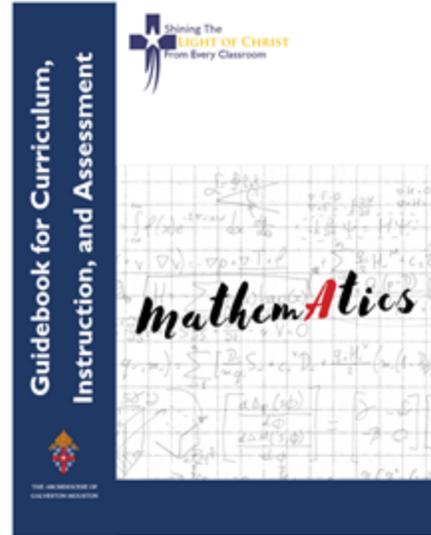
<https://store.studiesweekly.com/well-being/TX/8/en>



Conducting writing conferences is an important part of a successful writing workshop approach. If you'd like get some advice and training from professionals to improve your conferencing skills, check out this live webinar opportunity from the experts at Heinemann: [Improving Writing Conferences with Students](#)



[ELAR](#)



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Get to know our **GUIDEBOOKS!** Click **ELAR** or **MATH** above for instant access to our newest curriculum resources.

Science and Social Studies Guidebooks will be developed this school year!

Click this link to **SEE THE SCHEDULE & REGISTER!**

making MATH MOMENTS that MATTER

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NOVEMBER
7th-8th, 2020

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20+ SPEAKERS | CERTIFICATES | REPLAYS

Register for this **FREE** On-Line **MATH** Conference produced by Making Math Moments that Matter! Kyle Pierce and John Orr are well known for best practice in developing mathematicians who love learning math, and developing teachers who love teaching it!



More Great MATH PD!

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) has three more **free, live 60-minute webinars** next week in [100 Days of Professional Learning](https://www.nctm.org/100). Visit [nctm.org/100](https://www.nctm.org/100) to view the schedule, to register, and to access free recordings of completed webinars.



October 7th is a session on **rich mathematical tasks**, which is emphasized in our Math Guidebook. If you can't view it live, register and watch it later with free access! If you are a math teacher, consider joining this national professional organization.



October is a busy month in the liturgical year. Keep up with feast days and memorials by using this [online calendar](http://www.catholicculture.org) from www.catholicculture.org

Like our NEW Curriculum Courier format? Have an article about your school that you would like to submit? Have a great resource to share? Send it to us at:

csogeneral@archgh.org

