

# Curriculum Instruction

## What Students Learn

**The school provides a challenging, comprehensive and relevant curriculum for each student that fulfills the school’s philosophy and mission, strengthens Catholic identity, and achieves the student learning expectations. The ultimate goal is to build a continuum of learning that makes sense for all students – one that builds upon itself to create the cumulative effect desired.**

The curriculum of Holy Angels School focuses on the development of the student as a whole person. It encompasses the school’s mission and philosophy of developing the whole child, spiritually and academically. The challenging and comprehensive curriculum is geared towards preparing students for success in higher education.

*School  
Brochure*

*Philosophy and  
Mission  
Statement*

The faculty and staff developed the Student Learning Expectations based on the ideal profile of a student of Holy Angels School. The adopted learning expectations are categorized as the following: *Be Like Jesus, Be the Best You Can Be* and *Be Responsible Citizens*. A Student Learning Expectation chart is posted in every classroom, so that teachers and students can refer to it frequently. Teachers adhere to the Student Learning Expectations and highlight the various areas involved in the day’s lesson in their lesson plan books. Additionally, children are asked to identify which Student Learning Expectations are being exemplified in each lesson at the top of their assignments.

*Student  
Learning  
Expectations  
Chart*

*Lesson Plan  
Books*

*School Website*

*Students’ Work*

As individuals and as members of the community of faith, students are invited to become active participants in their own Christian development. There is a focus on faith formation through daily prayer, participation in monthly school Masses, altar serving and preparation for the Sacraments. Concern for others is shown through school wide support of the Holy Childhood Association, donations to the St. Vincent de Paul Society’s Adopt-a-Family Program, fundraising for the Wheelchair Foundation, care for the less fortunate in Kenya and books sent to aid students and teachers in the Philippines. These and other activities help to encourage students to *be like Jesus, be the best you can be and be responsible citizens*.

## How Students Learn

**The professional staff uses research based knowledge about teaching and learning; and designs and implements a variety of learning and formational experiences which actively engage students and are consistent with the school’s philosophy, mission and learning expectations.**

In order to aid students in developing strong foundations in curriculum areas, various strategies are utilized at Holy Angels School to facilitate student learning. In the classroom, teachers strive to address the multiple intelligences of students through a variety of methods including use of the Slingerland Method to introduce new concepts, hands-on activities, cooperative groups, research projects, student presentations, technology integration across the curriculum, lecture/discussion method and peer editing of written work. In accordance with the Archdiocesan requirements, we will begin using curriculum mapping in various subject areas to track student growth and improve student achievement.

*Multiple  
Intelligences Chart*

*Written & Electronic  
Portfolios*

*Alternative  
Assessment*

*Sustained Silent  
Reading*

*Journals*

*Rubrics*

Integration of subjects is achieved whenever possible. Examples of such integration include the following: learning stations, re-enactment of Scripture stories and the Stations of the Cross, creation of original books based on biblical themes, writing articles for the school’s quarterly newspaper, playing games to learn historical facts, participating in the annual parish and school festivals, emphasizing language arts, creative arts and social studies.

*Art exhibits*

*Liturgy in Motion*

Teachers encourage integration of technology throughout the curriculum by assigning research reports, essays, letters and book reports which students are allowed to complete using the mobile computer lab. With a fulltime technology coordinator on staff, students have access to the mobile lab once a week for their scheduled class. Students are also encouraged to use the computer lab on a “drop in” basis, during which time they may work on research projects, essays and reports or search the Internet. Students also make and create PowerPoint presentations. In addition, each classroom is equipped with a computer connected to the Internet. Teachers also utilize interactive educational programs such as TV programming and videos offered by the Catholic Tele-media Network (CTN). In

*School technology  
plan*

addition, Brainpop.com along with other educational software such as Kid Pix, Kidspiration and Inspiration are incorporated during classroom instruction. With the ever expanding advancement in technology, faculty and staff will continue to integrate technology throughout the curriculum to ensure students' learning and eventual success.

When lesson planning, teachers consider students' learning styles to ensure that students are active learners. What students learn is greatly influenced by the various resources offered. Strategies from various programs help students optimize their learning experiences. Even though curriculum articulation meetings are held every so often among the faculty and staff, it would be beneficial to schedule more articulation meetings to allow teachers to share experiences, expertise and concerns from their individual classrooms.

*Smart Discipline  
Program*

*Safe and Caring  
Schools Program*

The school has a fulltime science teacher who teaches science to third through eighth graders. Students in Kindergarten through second grade are taught science by the classroom teacher. The science lab provides students the opportunity to do hands-on science activities. Sixth, seventh and eighth graders participate in the annual San Mateo County Science/Math/Technology Fair. In addition, these projects are also displayed during Open House of Catholic Schools week.

A committee of educators from the schools of the Archdiocese of San Francisco recently revised the Science Guidelines in order to align them with the current Science Content Standards for California. Students in grades three through six study physical, life and earth science. In the upper grades, seventh grade studies earth science and eighth grade concentrates on life science.

Kindergarten and first grade have fulltime teacher assistants. Grades two through eight have part-time teacher assistants. These additional staff members assist the teachers by conducting small group instruction in reading, algebra and other subjects.

In doing research projects, students rely primarily on local libraries, school and home computers. The school library continues to be updated. Improvement of the library bolsters reading for enjoyment.

In the meantime, in order to supplement the present library book collection, students have the chance to purchase books via Scholastic and Troll book orders and at the bi-annual Scholastic Book Fairs. Classes practice Sustained Silent Reading to encourage reading for pleasure and knowledge. In addition, the upper grades are grouped with the younger grades to form Reading Buddies. Teachers also encourage students to visit their community libraries and local bookstores.

Opportunities for student enrichment are offered at Holy Angels. As part of the algebra program, students in seventh and eighth grade are placed in groups according to skill level. Eighth graders have three levels: beginning, intermediate and advanced, while the seventh graders have two levels: beginning and advanced. Strong spellers in grades four through eight are given the opportunity to participate in the annual school spelling bee, with the winner continuing on to the Scripp's Spelling Bee. Opportunities for student leadership include participation in Student Government, the Student Family Program, safety patrol and altar serving. After school extracurricular activities include participation in Liturgy in Motion, choir, band and art classes, CYO volleyball and basketball, Daly City Park & Recreation basketball, flag football and baseball.

The school has adapted specialized classes that develop the gifts and talents of all students. Students are given the opportunity to shine and use their own talents in areas in which they excel. Those who are dramatically inclined and wish to develop their skills, may audition for a role in the annual Christmas program. Band class and choir are available to students who are musically talented. Dance class is integrated with social studies and religion. Art classes are not only part of the regular curriculum, but are also offered in the Extended Care program. The use of researched based strategies for teaching facilitates meeting the needs of all students.

*Student Executive Board*

*Student Council*

*Class Officers*

*Multiple Intelligences Chart*

*Portfolios*

*Rubrics*

*Writing Process*

*Cooperative Learning*

## How Assessment Is Used

**Teacher and student use of assessment is frequent and integrated into the teaching/learning process. Assessment results are the basis for:**

- **measurement of progress toward the student learning expectations;**
- **regular evaluation and improvement of curriculum and instruction;**
- **allocation of resources**

Holy Angels School assessment takes on several forms depending on grade level. Methods which emphasize student accountability and encourage students to be self-evaluators include the following: the use of rubrics, peer editing, group and individual self-evaluations, student/teacher conferences, authentic assessment, teacher made tests, bench mark tests, student writing portfolios and general curriculum portfolios, video and audio portfolios, homework assignments, small group and class discussions. Work is sent home on a regular basis so parents have the opportunity to monitor student performance. Mid-quarter progress reports are given to students so improvement can be made before the end of each quarter. The school utilizes SnapGrades, an online gradebook, giving parents access at any time to monitor students' progress.

*SnapGrades*

If a student experiences difficulty in academics, teachers may recommend subject tutoring or testing with the Title I Multi-sensory instructor. Academically "at risk" students participate in the school's multi-sensory pullout program. In the program, students work with the Title I Multi-sensory instructor a minimum of once a week. In addition, the Student Success Team (SST) was formalized in 2005 to help the students achieve academic success.

The IOWA tests are given to the students in grades two through eight at the beginning of the academic year to evaluate academic progress and are beneficial in assessing students' strengths and areas of growth. During the last three years, average IOWA scores have steadily increased in the academic areas of reading, math and language arts. However, there is a need to improve reading comprehension scores. IOWA test results are reviewed during the fall parent-teacher

*IOWA Test Results*

conferences in conjunction with the first quarter report card. Both IOWA test scores and report card results are used to determine student goals for the year.

Holy Angels School adopted the writing series, Step Up to Writing, beginning in Kindergarten through eighth grade, as mandated by the Department of Catholic Schools. Faculty and staff have taken training classes to help them integrate this series into the curriculum. The implementation of Curriculum Mapping will further assist teachers in tracking student growth and achievement.

Assessment often reveals the need for improvement in academic areas. During faculty articulation sessions, areas of strengths and growth in the curriculum are discussed. Remediation often involves a discussion of allocation of resources.