



## ST. LAWRENCE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

5223 N. Himes Avenue Tampa, Florida 33614  
Phone: (813) 879-5090 Fax: (813) 879-6886  
Website: [www.stlawrencecatholicsschool.org](http://www.stlawrencecatholicsschool.org)

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## ACADEMIC PROGRAM

### Curriculum

The curriculum is designed to assist students in becoming actively involved in the learning process and in assuming greater responsibility for their own learning. Critical and creative thinking skills, as well as competence in the basic skills, are integral parts of the curriculum. The Diocesan curriculum guidelines, consistent with the Florida Department of Education guidelines and standards set forth by the Florida Catholic Conference are followed for the teaching of all subject areas. St. Lawrence Catholic School is fully accredited by the Florida Catholic Conference.

Our goal is to enable our students to grow in their knowledge and love of God through the teachings of Christ and His Church. It is also our intention to prepare them academically, socially, physically, emotionally, and morally to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

The daily academic areas offered at St. Lawrence are Religion, Math, Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science. Additional weekly subjects may include Physical Education, Music, Art, Media, Technology, and Foreign Language.

St. Lawrence does not honor parent requests for particular classes and/or teachers. All teachers at St. Lawrence are able to lead their students through positive, productive lessons of learning.

## Core Courses

### Mathematics

The mathematics curriculum equips students to successfully deal with the concepts and skills necessary to meet the needs of everyday life. Students come in contact with the basic foundations of mathematics followed by skill, practice, and application. Problem solving strategies and thinking skills are developed at each grade level. The curriculum begins with mathematics skills and proceeds through pre-algebra and algebra in the middle school grades.

**Math Groupings:** Math levels at all grades are determined by teacher input, TerraNova scores, placement test, grades, and general math skills of the student developed over time. In order to allow teachers to meet students' individual needs in mathematics instruction, students in grades 6-8 are placed into specific math groups.

Placement in all Math classes is based on the criteria mentioned above. All student progress in mathematics is carefully evaluated to ensure mastery, understanding, and readiness for high school. All placements are probationary and contingent upon ongoing acceptable performance in the class. **Administration reserves the right to decide all student placements for coursework.**

**Advanced Math** begins in Grade 6. Students must meet the class average, Terra Nova score, and placement test to qualify. These students will complete one and one-half years of Math each year, qualifying them for Algebra 1 (9<sup>th</sup> Grade Math) as an eighth-grade student.

### Language Arts

The Language Arts curriculum covers the areas of reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, composition, library skills, and appreciation of literature. These components are also integrated into the content areas of religion, social studies, science, and mathematics. The Reading Counts program is used at various grades throughout the curriculum. This enrichment program has been implemented to foster a child's love of reading and to enhance reading for comprehension.

Handwriting as a means of recording and communicating ideas begins early in kindergarten. Zaner-Bloser handwriting is the model used in our school. Manuscript writing is used until the second semester of grade two when there is a transition to the cursive form. Neatness, legibility, and uniformity are stressed.

**With the exception of Math and ELA/Reading, all middle school classes (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup>) complete the same curriculum for that grade level. These classes may move at different paces and/or use different methods of instruction/approach but accomplish all the standards and benchmarks. Each group may be given different class, homework and/or enrichment assignments as needed.**

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### Social Studies

Social Studies is the study of life and living. It is a holistic discipline. Students are provided with understanding, knowledge, and skills that will promote effective social behavior. Students learn civic responsibilities. Emphasis is placed on developing positive attitudes toward all people. The social studies program includes instruction in history, political science, geography, economics, Florida History, and civics.

The social studies program is a multi-media program. Technology, maps, charts, graphs, films etc. enhance the basic text at each grade level. **All middle school classes (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup>) complete the same curriculum. These classes may move at different paces and/or use different methods of instruction/approach but accomplish all the standards and benchmarks. Each group may be given different class, homework and/or enrichment assignments as needed.**

### Science

The science curriculum helps students to develop an awareness of God's creativity as evidenced throughout our vast universe. Students are afforded the opportunity to observe, explore, discover, and experiment throughout the curriculum. The science program is designed to help students increase their thinking skills. Students are able to determine cause and effect, apply known concepts to new situations, make inferences, and predict outcomes. The curriculum provides for concept continuity by presenting a balanced and in-depth treatment of life science, earth science, and physical science based upon our Catholic beliefs. Laboratory experiences are provided in the middle school curriculum. Health and concepts of human growth and development are also covered at each grade level in a grade appropriate manner. Content and activities in the primary grades focus on familiar, concrete experiences in the student's immediate environment. Students in the intermediate and middle school levels deal with concepts and activities requiring more abstract thinking. They learn to solve problems through active investigation and discovery. **All middle school classes (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup>) complete the same curriculum. These classes may move at different paces and/or use different methods of instruction/approach but accomplish all the standards and benchmarks. Each group may be given different class, homework and/or enrichment assignments as needed.**

### Religion

Instruction in the truths of the Roman Catholic Church and development of these truths in each student are integral to the total academic program at St. Lawrence Catholic School. The catechetical series used for formal instruction in the school are publications unsurpassed in lucidity of doctrine; in fidelity to God's revelation; in pedagogical approach; in stimulation of real interest in, and love for the Faith; in application to daily Catholic living; and in true formation of young people.

The study of the Blessed Trinity, the doctrines, traditions, and scripture of the Church, the articles of faith, the lives of the saints, the sacraments, and the commandments enhances the development of our students' sense of worship and spirit of prayer. This enables them to become lifelong Christians and contributing members of the community.

**The sharing of our faith is the primary reason for St. Lawrence Catholic School's existence.** The sacramental life of the children in the Catholic tradition is an important component of the religion program. Religious instruction is part of each day. Students attending our school are required to participate in all religious activities. Religious practices in the family are also required.

Sacramental preparation is handled at the parish level with supportive instruction in the school and religion classes. The sacramental life of the student is fostered by:

- Catholic doctrine and tradition.
  - Bible study.
  - Attendance at weekly Mass (Parents are encouraged to attend.).
  - Regular opportunities for receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
  - Social Justice teachings.
  - Support the preparation for the reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation.
  - Regular opportunities for communal prayer (Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Station of the Cross, Rosary, etc.)
  - Regular opportunities for service to the community.
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### Additional Courses

#### Information Technology/Computer

Students are afforded many opportunities to enhance their learning through the use of technology. In Technology class students learn to use word processing and spreadsheet programs. They also develop database skills and typing skills. Multimedia software, including video and audio technologies, is incorporated into the various subject areas such as math, science, social studies, and language arts.

Students have access to computers in the media center as well as in the classrooms. Many of the classrooms are equipped with laptops for student use. All classrooms, the media center and the Early Childhood Center are networked. Internet services are available to students. Restrictive software limits Internet use to appropriate sites.

Smart Boards, I-Pads, network, and Internet access have been added to the many tools that enhance and support the educational goals of St. Lawrence Catholic School. We strive to equip our classrooms with the latest in educational technology. The use of these resources is a privilege, not a right. **Parents/Guardians and students must be familiar with the school's Acceptable Use Policy for Computer and Telecommunications. All students and parents must complete and sign the policy yearly to gain access to technology in the school.**

#### STREAM (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts, Math)

STREAM education integrates concepts that are usually taught as separate subjects in different classes and emphasizes the application of knowledge to real-life situations. These lessons help students think "outside the box" to work on real world problems. Many STREAM lessons involve project-based learning and hands on activities such as building models and simulating situations.

#### Physical Education

The physical education program performs an important role in the total education of each student at St. Lawrence. Through well-balanced sequentially planned learning experiences the physical education program is designed to provide for the development of basic motor skills; develop the components of physical fitness such as strength, muscular and cardiovascular endurance, flexibility, agility, and balance; provide opportunities through the medium of physical education for the development of a positive self-concept and interaction with others; and develop desirable health and safety attitudes and practices.

Provided a student is unable to participate in physical education class for a period of one or two days, he/she must have a written excuse from the parent; should non-participation extend to three consecutive days, the student must have a written excuse from a physician. **Alternative assignments will be given to students whose non-participation lasts for more than one week.**

Students are expected to wear the proper PE uniform for physical education class; however, should a student come to class improperly attired, participation remains mandatory. Exceptions to participation occur when a child is sick or injured.

#### Media Center

Library skills are taught and alternated with special projects that correlate with pleasure reading and the development of research skills. Emphasis is placed on reading motivation through the Reading Counts program, book talks, story times, displays, and special class projects. There exists a wealth of books and materials designed to stimulate the minds and interests of students. Each class usually has the opportunity to check out books on a weekly basis. Library fines are assigned for late, lost, or damaged books. Students who have lost or damaged books do not receive progress reports or report cards until account is cleared. Students in Grades 6 – 8 will participate in a Florida Virtual Class during Media periods.

#### Spanish

Spanish vocabulary, common expressions, grammar, and culture are all part of the Spanish curriculum. Throughout the program vocabulary building and pronunciation skills are achieved through specific vocabulary, songs, games, and short dialogues. Each level builds on the previous level so that students are provided with a firm spoken, written, and cultural base to carry them into their later formal language study.

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### Music

Our primary Music program provides an opportunity for students to express rhythm and moods through sounds and movement, which assists them in the development of basic motor skills. The music curriculum enables students to recognize musical instruments and periods of music. Students grow in ability to enjoy music for its melody, tone, quality, harmony, and expression. They also develop an understanding of the importance and beauty of singing liturgical music as a form of worship. Liturgical Music is a required component for our third through fifth grade students. Students are introduced to musical instruments in the intermediate grades and can continue this instruction through the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Band is offered on campus before and after school for an additional charge for those that are interested in grades 3 - 8.

### Art

Art is an integral part of learning. Through art, students become more aware of the world. Children learn to express themselves and take pride in the knowledge of their own creativity. A wide variety of experiences, methods, and materials are presented that give the student a strong appreciation of art in its many forms. Students are provided opportunities for imaginative and creative art experiences that nurture self-expression.

### Remedial Program

We endeavor to meet the need of all our students as they attempt to develop their God-given talents. We recognize that students have a variety of learning styles and we will provide opportunities to enhance various learning styles within our capabilities. Students who need additional assistance to achieve desired learning outcomes will be accommodated by means of a Student Support Plan as determined by school personnel. Title I services, a federally funded program, is offered to students upon teacher recommendation and qualification according to the Title I guidelines. Students requiring additional help in math and/or reading and live in designated geographic areas may receive this service. St. Lawrence also has a full time Math Specialist, Reading Specialist, and an Exceptional Student Educator to assist our students who need additional academic support. Reading Skills, a small group class, is taught in grades 5-8 to bring students to grade level expectations.

Students meeting specific criteria for learning disabilities may be eligible for academic/behavioral testing through Hillsborough County Schools. Parents may also seek private testing through an outside source. St. Lawrence is able to provide reasonable accommodations to students on Student Support Plans; however, St. Lawrence is not a special needs school. The administration reserves the right to decide whether the school is capable of giving suggested accommodations to students on Support Plans.

### Accelerated Learning Program (ALP)

Under the direction of the Principal and School Counselor, the Accelerated Learning Teacher (ALP) perform both instructional and non-instructional duties. The ALP Teacher will help identify accelerated learners through standardized test scores and teacher recommendations. Students are monitored yearly to ensure that they continue to meet the guidelines to participate in ALP. ALP is an optional program at St. Lawrence. Final determination of participation in ALP rests with the ALP Teacher and Administration. The ALP Teacher will expose students to various topics, areas of interest and fields of study to explore and develop, individually or in small groups. Students will be provided with the skills and resources necessary to acquire advanced level content and thinking skills. The ALP Teacher will create opportunities for students to apply their skills to interests, problems, and projects that they may want to pursue. The ALP Teacher and classroom teachers will often work collaboratively to extend specific topics and curriculum. This program is available in grades K-4.

### Standardized Testing

**MAP Testing:** This test occurs three times per year for students in Grades K – 8 that measures student achievement and growth, independent of grade level.

**Terra Nova:** This test takes place in the spring as an achievement test given to students in Grade 2 – 8. This is a nationally normed test taken by all Catholic schools in Florida.

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