



ARCHANGEL GABRIEL  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

March 4, 2020

Good Evening AGS Parents.

In my State of the School message, I mentioned that several curriculum changes were coming and that more information would be forthcoming. This communication will provide a little more detail as to what is on our horizon.

First, we are changing our English Language Arts texts to the McGraw Hill Wonders Series. We will implement this program in grades K - 5. There are several positives to making this change. One, it is a research based program that ties multiple pieces of the ELA curriculum together in that it focuses on phonemic awareness, word analysis, vocabulary development, fluency, comprehension, and written expression. Secondly, the objectives to the Wonders series are consistent with the Acadience Assessment Tool for phonemic awareness and fluency development. Our goal is that all students will be reading at grade level when they leave Grade 2 so they are prepared for the increased challenges of content informational reading in grades 3 through 5.

We are also looking to implement a writing initiative in the Middle School, with vertical alignment from grades 3 through 8. The decision to implement this came from our CDT data, which showed that we needed to strengthen our students' writing skills. The CDT's test on components of content areas, such as Reading, Writing, and Math. This initiative will be introduced in stages to promote consistent implementation across grades 3 through 8. We will work on writing with one unified writing rubric across all grades as well as begin to expand on the writing process in our initial phase.

My vision is to have a comprehensive program that touches on the main genres of writing, narrative, informational, and persuasion in grades 6 through 8. Additionally, my ultimate goal is to have each graduating 8th grade student complete a research paper that is completed in conjunction with a content area and English teachers, with content teachers working on focus and content and English teachers working on proper organization, style, and convention.

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I look forward to seeing this program fully implemented over the coming months. As mentioned in my Introductory Letter last July, change will only happen when it is based on data and an understanding of the context. This initiative checks both of these areas. This is not the end, however. We continue to look for other ways to improve our school. The staff and faculty have the goal of making AGS the best school in the South Region, as well as the entire Diocese. A special thank you goes out to all who have helped me along this journey. Guided by the Holy Spirit, nobody can stand against a united people and the power of our Lord and Savior.

Peace in Christ.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dr. B Swiger".

Dr. Brad Swiger

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