



DIOCESE OF SUPERIOR

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Statement on Common Core Standards

Bishop Peter Christensen

December 10, 2013

There has been much discussion around the Common Core State Standards throughout our state. Much of this discussion has stirred concerns of how our fifteen Catholic elementary schools in the Diocese of Superior will handle them. Our diocese has not only been researching the impact of these standards on our Catholic schools, but also on our public schools. With over 70% of our children and youth attending public schools, the Diocese of Superior will continue to monitor the impact of the Common Core State Standards on all education. It is important that our Catholic children in the Diocese of Superior are given the opportunity to have a quality education with high standards.

Catholic Schools in the United States have a long history of being leaders of excellence in education. Many public counterparts are using models of successful Catholic schools to revitalize their programs. Thus over the years there have been more and more national and state requirements developed in hopes to emulate the strong characteristics displayed by Catholic schools in the United States. The Common Core State Standards are another attempt by national organizations to build up a strong model set by Catholic schools. Because the Common Core State Standards have not been field-tested nor been around long enough to realize their impact, Catholic Schools should not fear them but monitor them.

For over 175 years, Catholic schools in the Diocese of Superior have been committed to providing a virtue-nurturing and exceptional education. We hold as our mission to prepare students spiritually, academically, and physically to proclaim and live out the Good News in preparation for eternal life. We do not plan to alter this commitment.

Because we have fifteen Catholic elementary and middle schools with no Catholic high schools or colleges, our schools review the Wisconsin public school standards and various national standards to ensure that our students exceed them before entering high school. As proof, our students generally rank in the top of their public high school classes because of the strong and rigorous curriculum and expectations instilled on them in elementary and middle school. Parents entrust their children to our schools for a faith based, morally true environment of learning while providing training in skills that ensure future success. We provide a rigorous curriculum that helps students build a strong work ethic while being diligent learners.

To continue the long history of high academic success, Catholic schools in the Diocese of Superior will continue to develop our own curriculum and standards while viewing various state and national resources. In no way will the schools sacrifice our goals and expectations to conform to any one specific resource other than what we develop. Therefore, the Diocese of Superior will not adopt the Common Core State Standards as a whole. We will continue to monitor them against national testing and public high school entrance requirements while we build our own standards.