



HOLY CROSS  
SAINT BERNADETTE  
SAINT THOMAS MORE  
SAINTS PETER & PAUL  
OUR LADY OF LOURDES

*A Collaboration of Parishes, Schools, Parents and Community Partners*

## FREQUENTLY USED EDUCATION TERMS

### **Accreditation and AdvancED Accreditation**

All Consortium schools are all fully accredited by the Nebraska Department of Education. Moreover, we follow Archdiocesan educational standards that exceed state and national requirements. Our students consistently perform in the top 25 percent of the nation for core subjects like math, language arts, reading, social studies and science.

When we say our schools are accredited, it means our schools comply with Rule 10 provisions from the Nebraska Department of Education. These regulations and procedures are intended to establish equality of educational opportunity for all students in elementary and secondary schools.

In addition to state accreditation, two of our Consortium schools are also AdvancED Accredited. AdvancED Accreditation is a third party assessment of school quality that goes beyond state accreditation, and is focused on continuous improvement. To receive AdvancED Accreditation, schools must meet AdvancED standards and accreditation policies, engage in documented continuous quality improvement, and demonstrate quality assurance through a rigorous internal and external evaluation process. Our goal is to have all Consortium schools AdvancED Accredited.

### **Blended Learning**

In a blended learning classroom, traditional classroom instruction from a certified teacher is combined with computer-mediated activities. Technology is used to transform and improve the learning process for our students.

Blended learning supports our educators in collecting data to help customize instruction and assessment of students based on individual needs. Consortium students have access to chrome books, i-pads, smart boards, and other technology to help guide the learning process. These instructional support tools allow our teachers to provide customized instruction specific to the needs of each student.

### **Differentiation**

Differentiation, or differentiated instruction, is the use of ongoing assessments to identify our students' strengths, as well as their needs in order to help each student progress at his or her own pace.

Differentiation helps our teachers provide each student with a customized approach to learning through experiences and tasks geared toward the needs of the individual student. This allows each of our students to achieve his or her personal best academically.

Differentiation at the Consortium schools often involves small group instruction, tiered assignments, and use of technology as an instructional tool.



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## Guided Reading and Balanced Literacy

Guided reading is an instructional approach that allows teachers to assess each child's reading abilities and then match books at a level that helps to develop reading skills at the student's own pace. Guided reading is another way in which our teachers differentiate instruction.

Balanced literacy involves teaching reading and phonics, writing, speaking and listening in an interconnected and engaging way. The goal of a balanced literacy program is to guide students toward proficient and lifelong reading.

## Professional Development or PD

Professional development, or PD, enables us to provide ongoing educational opportunities to our staff to help build their competencies in the dynamic world of elementary education. The Nebraska Department of Education requires ten hours of professional development annually. The Omaha Catholic School Consortium goes beyond this requirement by providing our teachers with ten days of professional development annually.

## School Improvement Plan or SIP

Each of our Consortium schools have a School Improvement Plan, or SIP. This means we have a systemic process and plan in place that ensures continuous quality improvement at our schools through analysis, action planning, professional development, implementation, monitoring, and adjusting. The School Improvement Plan identifies our focus areas and priorities necessary to raise achievement for all of our Consortium students. Additionally, a school improvement planning process is one way we meet the requirements of our Rule 10 Accreditation from the Nebraska Department of Education.

## Station Rotation

Station rotation is a learning model that incorporates teacher- led instruction, technology-based learning activities, and small group or one-to-one work in the classroom.

Students break out into small groups and rotate to each of these learning stations at specific time intervals. Each station encompasses the learning objectives, but in a different way to engage a variety of teaching strategies and learning activities. For example, a math lesson using a station rotation model might involve students rotating between small-group work with the teacher to introduce the math concept, working on computers or tablets to solve math problems, using stations with manipulatives, or working on creative projects independently.

For more information on the station rotation model, visit

<https://www.khanacademy.org/resources/using-technology-in-the-classroom/four-different-blended-learning-models/v/sscc-blended-station>



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## **Student Assistance Team or SAT**

Student Assistance Team, or SAT, is a team of professionals including the school administrator and a group of teachers who monitor and evaluate student growth goals that are established throughout the year. Classroom assessments help determine if instructional strategies are effective in improving student growth. Areas of need are identified and individual attention is given to a student to help him or her improve deficient skill(s). The student is assessed each week to ensure skill mastery.

## **Triangulation of Data and Data Folders**

Triangulation of data involves collecting student academic performance information from a number of assessments and sources (at least three) to determine student progress and learning needs. At the Consortium schools, every teacher has a folder of data on each student to help customize instruction to meet the learning needs of our students. Students identified as below grade level receive support from the Student Assistance Team.

## **Whole Group Instruction**

Whole group instruction is direct instruction from a certified teacher using traditional classroom materials like textbooks or worksheets. Whole group instruction provides minimal differentiation and is often used to introduce a new concept. Whole group instruction is a first step in the learning process, and is most effective when it is immediately followed by small group interactions. This is why our Consortium schools supplement whole group instruction with small group activities.

Whole group instruction exposes every student to key concepts and new information at the same time and sets the stage for small group learning activities.