



SMCS AQUINAS PROGRAM

FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

The SMCS Aquinas Program offers specialized instruction for high ability students in grades 3-5. Students work at a higher pace while digging deeper into the content to gain greater knowledge and depth.

SMCS Aquinas Students....

- Have higher abstract logical reasoning skills
- Manipulate information about a topic in order to draw unique inferences
- Thrive on complexity in the curriculum
- Engage intellectually and have unique, original ideas
- Flourish in a challenging environment led by a certified gifted and talented teacher

The program is open to students who apply, complete the assessment process, and are admitted into the program. Potential participants will have demonstrated the ability to set and work toward goals and to work independently. Invitations for admission are based upon standardized assessment results, prior completion of classroom projects, and administrator recommendation.

THE SMCS AQUINAS PROGRAM SCHOOL DAY

The SMCS Aquinas Program's curriculum meets and exceeds diocesan expectations, and focuses on specialized instruction. Students receive specialized instruction in areas including:

- Art
- Language arts
- Library
- Mathematics
- Science (includes Project Lead the Way modules)
- Social studies

Students integrate with their age peers at St. Mary Elementary for:

- Faith-building activities, liturgy, and sacraments
- Lunch and recess
- Physical education
- Vocal/instrumental music
- World languages

Students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of learning styles including:

- Field trips
- Independent study
- Inquiry-based learning
- Learning contracts
- Project-based learning
- Service-learning projects
- Small-group work





EVALUATION PROCESS

- The Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) evaluations are administered, one on each day of testing.
- Computer-based assessments are administered by the Aquinas program coordinator/teacher.
- Students unable to test due to pre-planned events (vacations, medical treatment, etc.) must wait for summer testing.
- Scores will be reviewed and assessed by the evaluation team. The Aquinas Program coordinator/teacher is not part of the review process, and students' names are removed from the tests for evaluation.
- Assessment scores are evaluated using established criteria to determine program eligibility.
- Applications that meet the eligibility requirements are ranked within four tiers through a process that combines achievement and ability scores.

NOTIFICATION

- Parents receive a letter stating their child's acceptance or decline of acceptance for the program.
- Starting with tier 1 qualifiers, eligible students will receive placement offers and enrollment forms.
- Pending enrollment results, other qualifiers may be wait-listed until the enrollment target of 22 is reached.

TUITION

- For the 2019-20 school year, the Aquinas Program tuition is \$4,600 per child.
- Tuition can be reduced to \$3,475 through the generous Ray and Marie Miller tuition grant option available to Aquinas students.
- Additional tuition assistance is available, and WPCP voucher students are eligible to apply for the program.

CONTACTS AND INFORMATION

For additional information about the program, please contact one of the following personnel:

- **Stacy Sweetalla**, SMCS Aquinas Program Coordinator/Teacher, 725-5351, ssweetalla@smcatholicsschools.org
- **Sandra Piotrowski**, St. Mary Elementary School Principal, 725-5351, spiotrowski@smcatholicsschools.org
- **Helen Englebert**, SMCS President, 722-7796, henglebert@smcatholicsschools.org
- Visit smcatholicsschools.org/smcs-aquinas-program

