



**OFFICE OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION**  
**Catholic Diocese of Richmond**  
7800 Carousel Lane • Richmond, Virginia 23294-4201

September, 2014

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Beginning this fall, students in grades two to eight throughout the Diocese of Richmond will benefit from a newly adopted assessment tool, the Scantron Performance Series. Unlike the Terra Nova tests, the Scantron Performance Series assessments are completely computer-adaptive and adjust to each student's ability. Classroom teachers will have real-time information to determine the student's next steps for academic growth as well as to differentiate instruction in order to meet the learning needs of students.

Tests in Math and Reading will be administered three times this school year – September, January and March. The fall test is a diagnostic tool that will provide information on the student's ability in Math and Reading, and will help teachers to establish a learning target for the end of the academic year in both subject areas. Administrators and teachers will use this baseline data from the beginning of the year assessments to identify the proficiency levels of students and design instruction to meet their learning needs. Using suggested learning objectives generated by the data, the teachers will work on learning goals for students. The mid-year test will chart the student's growth toward the end-of-the-year targets. After receiving data from the mid-year assessment the teachers will be able to compare the earlier data and share information at conferences with parents/guardians about the academic growth of students. Feedback is an essential component of student progress, and your child's teacher will be able to share specific information on how well your child is achieving their learning goals after the mid-year assessment. Having student performance data to inform the parent-teacher discussion is very valuable to both teachers and parents/guardians, and especially to the student. The end-of-the-year test, the summative assessment, will determine how well the student has achieved the learning targets. Parents/guardians will receive a printed assessment report after the end-of-the-year testing is completed.

The Scantron Performance Series assessments enable teachers to chart individual student's academic growth over time which then leads to higher achievement levels. Principals and teachers want to personalize your child's educational experience. Catholic education is an investment in the future of our Church and world and your child's success is the focus of that investment.

Sincerely in Christ,

Miriam Cotton  
Assistant Superintendent