



**Catholic Diocese of Biloxi**  
*Living and Learning in the Light of Faith*

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Dear Parents:

As we approach the beginning of a new school year, I want to thank you for making the choice of Catholic education. The education of a child is one of the most important decisions to be made. Each Catholic school in the Diocese of Biloxi is unique – reflecting the history and culture of the community. The individuality of each school is important; however, the common thread of Christian values and academic excellence is present at every school. We always welcome your involvement and input.

Our students consistently rank high on national standardized tests. This is a tribute to the principals, teachers, parents, and students. We believe our students should be prepared on a national and global level. All of our schools are accredited through the national accrediting agency AdvancED (previously SACS) and through the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE).

Because of accreditation through MDE, our schools use the Mississippi Curriculum Framework as the BASELINE curriculum. It is the very minimum of what is expected from our students. We take that framework and increase the requirements, standards, and rigor. Beginning with the 2014 school year, the English Language Arts and Mathematics Mississippi Framework will go to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Our teachers are being trained on the Common Core during this school year. This training also includes data analysis and curriculum mapping. The Common Core State Standards are being brought out in phases and we are monitoring closely to determine what is best for our students. At this time, we are undecided if all of the CCSS will be implemented in our schools. We will in no way decrease what is expected of our students. With 47 states adopting Common Core State Standards, all nationally normed standardized tests such as the Stanford Achievement Test, Terra Nova, and ACT will be aligned with CCSS. Therefore, we must prepare our teachers. MDE may require us to have all our students tested on the CCSS as a requirement for accreditation. What is best for our students will always be our guiding force and the curriculum of our Catholic schools will remain at the highest level.

The principals of our schools are well-trained and knowledgeable regarding curriculum. Please feel free to talk with the principal of your school if you have any questions. Again, thank you for the trust you place in our Catholic schools.

Sincerely in the Lord,

Mike Ladner, Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Education