

Mrs. Smoot responds to Parent Survey

Feedback # 3 Spanish Class

Five years ago, the Office of Catholic Schools and Centers (OCSC) gathered world language teachers from elementary and high schools across our diocese to formally write World Language Curriculum. Representative administrators with linguistic backgrounds, and representation from the OCSC were also included in the panel. These educators worked together for 2 years to write a curriculum that would meet the needs of all our Catholic schools. Their overview states, "The Diocese of St. Petersburg World Language Curriculum is planned for grades K through 12 and covers the core concepts of language learning for students within our diocesan Catholic schools: Communication, Culture, Connections, Comparisons, Communities, and Catholicity."

The curriculum is written in grade bands (or levels) K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and High School (first year, second year, third year, and fourth year). The focus in primary (K-2) is to be familiar with folktales or stories, objects, music, and common names. Students learn about the target countries' culture.

In grades 3-5 students will initiate and sustain spoken, written or signed communication by providing and obtaining information, expressing feelings and emotions, and exchanging opinions in culturally appropriate ways in the target language. Students will also compare and contrast the language and culture to a higher degree at this level. They will also begin to decode words, phrases, and sentences using knowledge of letter/symbol-sound correspondences and contextual clues.

Middle school instruction typically begins the students' formal use of textbooks. Students in middle school will understand written expression, whether in magazines, textbooks, newspaper sources, or the internet. Assignments at this level would include creating and presenting student-generated works (skits, songs, poems, stories, reports). It is not until high school that students are expected to initiate and sustain spoken, written or signed communication in a target language.

The foreign language instruction in schools within the Diocese of St. Petersburg comes in a variety of settings. The majority of elementary/ middle schools have instruction one or two days a week with students participating in class one day per week. St. Paul Catholic School has placed a high importance on foreign language instruction by having a full time Spanish teacher. Students in EC 3 thru grade 5 have Spanish classes twice a week. Students in grade 6 have Spanish 3 times a week, and 7th and 8th grade have Spanish classes 4 times a week. Being that we have students moving to high school both in and out of the diocese, Maestra uses the Florida standards as well as the Diocesan standards. The goal of our Spanish instruction is to enable students not only to study the Spanish language but to develop a love and understanding for the Spanish culture.