

Saint Thomas Aquinas Distance Learning Catholic Academy

Knowledge must result from the activity of the pupil's own mind. Along with acquiring knowledge with the aid of the teacher, he can also acquire knowledge by applying his mind by which he knows the first principles of all knowledge. The teacher often points out issues, which the pupil had not thought of and shows the relationship between the concepts which the pupil would have not noticed without the teacher pointing them out...

Saint Thomas Aquinas

St. Thomas Aquinas' philosophy centers around the following beliefs:

- ❖ each student has been created in the image and likeness of God;
- ❖ the school community shares in the responsibility to help all students develop their God-given talents, to the best of their ability;
- ❖ the school community shares the responsibility of creating a safe atmosphere of caring, sharing, and challenge.
- ❖ each student learns most successfully through differentiated educational opportunities, and religious experiences;
- ❖ each student deserves individualized attention and recognition.

Saint Thomas Aquinas Distance Learning Catholic Academy has been established to provide a Christ-centered instructional program, which is student-centered, differentiated and academically challenging, using diagnostic testing and frequent benchmark indicators to accurately regularly measure student progress.

School Design

Saint Thomas Aquinas Distance Learning Catholic Academy will provide real-time instructional experiences, with students in the following ways:

- ✓ **Mini Lessons:** Students would participate in real-time mini lessons on specific topics during specific times established by teachers.
- ✓ **Small Group Instruction:** There will be instructional time devoted to teaching in small groups. One of the benefits of remote learning is that it eliminates the need to manage large classes at the same time.
- ✓ **Scheduled Office Hours:** students can join office hours to ask questions or discuss learning with their teachers and classmates during specific times established by teachers.

Teachers will communicate student learning expectations, provide resources, collect assignments, and provide feedback, using a platform most appropriate to meet their needs.

- ✓ Students will have daily lessons in the various subject areas;
- ✓ When a learning experience includes a project or extended application of learning over multiple days, lesson updates will be posted. (If students are required to engage in a project or extended application of learning, the project will be broken down into smaller actions/outcomes with deliverables/check-ins);
- ✓ A written explanation and/or recorded video/screencast to introduce, explain tasks, or provide instruction for a lesson
- ✓ Digital/scanned resources, assignments, etc.
- ✓ Teachers will respond to student and parent e-mails/questions within 24 hours.

Saint Thomas Aquinas Distance Learning Catholic Academy will implement the following tools as part of our students' online experience.

- ✓ All students will use I-Ready software for benchmark assessments and independent, standards-based activities
- ✓ Google Classroom will serve as the Learning Management System for grades 3-8
- ✓ Grades K-2 will use SeeSaw software as part of their online learning

Curriculum & Assessments

- ✓ The Academy will implement I-Ready software as our benchmarking assessment tool. Data from the program will be used to inform instructional needs and grouping.
- ✓ The Academy will select digital resources to supplement instruction in core subjects.
- ✓ Student learning will be assessed through a combination of project-based learning, formative assessment, performance tasks and online activities aligned to standards.

Instructional Plan

- ✓ Instruction will begin with whole group mini-lesson, followed by students meeting with their teacher in a small groups setting, or working individually, on an independent assignment.
- ✓ Teachers will work with select groups; students not meeting with their teacher will work on an independent assignment.
- ✓ Teachers will use interactive activities like icebreaker or other team-building activities to form connections between and among their student groups.

Sample Student Schedules

Sample Kindergarten Schedule					
8:30am-9am	Morning Mtg/Religion	Morning Mtg/Religion	Morning Mtg/Religion	Morning Mtg/Religion	Morning Mtg/Religion
9am-10:30am	Blended ELA Instruction*	Blended ELA Instruction	Blended ELA Instruction	Blended ELA Instruction	Blended ELA Instruction
10:30am-11am	iReady Literacy work	iReady Literacy work	iReady Literacy work	iReady Literacy work	iReady Literacy work
11am-12n.	Blended Math Instruction	Blended Math Instruction	Blended Math Instruction	Blended Math Instruction	Blended Math Instruction
12.-12:30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:30pm-1pm	iReady Math work	iReady Math work	iReady Math work	iReady Math work	iReady Math work
1pm-1:45pm	SEL/Art/Music	SEL/Art/Music	Professional Development (collaborative planning, workshops, etc)	SEL/Art/Music	SEL/Art/Music
1:45pm-2:30pm	Blended Science or Social Studies Instruction**	Blended Science or Social Studies Instruction**		Blended Science or Social Studies Instruction**	Small group Enrichment Activity

Sample Student Schedules

Sample Schedule for Grades 1-5					
8:30am-9am	Religion	Religion	Religion	Religion	Religion
9am-11am	Blended ELA Instruction plus iReady Literacy work	Blended ELA Instruction plus iReady Literacy work	Blended ELA Instruction plus iReady Literacy work	Blended ELA Instruction plus iReady Literacy work	Blended ELA Instruction plus iReady Literacy work
11am-12n.	Blended Math Instruction	Blended Math Instruction	Blended Math Instruction	Blended Math Instruction	Blended Math Instruction
12-12:45	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:45pm-1:30pm	Blended Social Studies	Blended Social Studies Instruction	Professional Development (collaborative planning, workshops, etc)	Blended Social Studies Instruction	Blended Social Studies Instruction
1:30pm-2:15pm	Blended Science Instruction	Blended Science Instruction		Blended Science Instruction	Blended Science Instruction
2:15pm-3pm	SEL/Art/Music/iReady Math work	SEL/Art/Music/iReady Math work		SEL/Art/Music/iReady Math work	SEL/Art/Music/iReady Math work

Sample Schedule for Middle School					
8:30am-9am	Religion	Religion	Religion	Religion	Religion
9am-10:45am	Blended ELA Instruction*	Blended ELA Instruction	Blended ELA Instruction	Blended ELA Instruction	1-1 student conferences or Independent Student Activity
10:45am-11am	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
11am-12n.	Blended Math Instruction	Blended Math Instruction	Blended Math Instruction	Blended Math Instruction	Blended Math Instruction
12-12:45	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:45pm-1:30pm	Blended Social Studies Instruction	Blended Social Studies Instruction	Professional Development (collaborative planning, workshops, etc.)	Blended Social Studies instruction	Blended Social Studies Instruction
1:30pm-2:15pm	Blended Science Instruction	Blended Science Instruction		Blended Science Instruction	Blended Science Instruction
2:15pm-3pm	SEL/Art/Music	SEL/Art/Music		SEL/Art/Music	SEL/Art/Music