

March 12, 2014

Dear Catholic School Pastors, System Presidents and Principals:

I wanted to take a minute to let you know that work on revising our diocesan education standards is well underway. Jane Schueller, Diocesan Curriculum and Instruction Director, in collaboration with school administrators, teachers and parents, is working diligently on improvements to the existing diocesan standards. The group is using a variety of sources including our current standards, the Archdiocese of Denver's standards, the McRel collection of standards, national teachers' standards, and various state standards to update our current unique standards.

At the same time, Bishop Ricken and the Diocesan Department of Education are collecting and reviewing data concerning students' performance and the various textbook series which are currently in place. Bishop is well aware of the efforts of the Department of Education, the Faith Integration Committee, school administrators and teachers to integrate the Catholic faith into all aspects of our schools' operations. Based on the input we have received from these sources, it appears that the decision announced in the February 17, 2014 memo to all system presidents and school principals regarding the use of Common Core aligned math and language arts textbooks, was a bit premature.

As we looked at longitudinal Measurement of Academic Performance (MAP) student assessment results and heard testimony from several groups, including many of you and parents, it appears that a more measured and thorough approach is needed in deciding which math and language arts textbooks should be utilized.

Therefore, once the work on upgrading the diocesan math and language arts standards is completed, Bishop Ricken will convene a special textbook task force. The task force will be charged with evaluating a number of math and language arts textbook series, using the diocesan standards as the major criteria for selection. This process will be much the same as the process employed by the task force which selected the five religion textbook series for Grades K-8, and which is being done currently for high school religion textbook series. We anticipate this work would begin in late-August or early-September and take the better part of the 2014-15 academic year.

Consequently, the textbooks would be measured against our diocesan standards even if the textbook says "aligned with Common Core State Standards" on the cover. As you know, Bishop Ricken wants our schools to only use diocesan standards and that is what we will be holding all textbooks up against. If there are textbook series which correspond with our standards and are deemed to be the best choice, they will be approved by Bishop Ricken for use in our schools, even if the book is marketed as a "Common Core aligned" textbook.

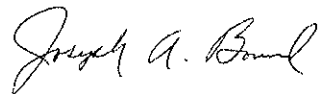
This decision is being made by Bishop based on the fact that the Catholic school teacher is a key part of our educational process. Bishop recognizes and supports that our teachers and administrators have been taught through our Department of Education in-services and religion certification programs, how

to integrate the Catholic faith into whatever discipline they are teaching including math and language arts. In order to provide the very best Catholic education, these dedicated teachers need a large number of resources at their disposal. As you have all done before, you will need to follow up to make sure these resources are providing the necessary support for your teachers and students.

Therefore, at the present time, we support the continued use of your current math and language arts textbooks. Once the special task force's work is completed and is approved by Bishop Ricken, a list of approved textbook series will be announced for your use in purchasing a new math or language arts series. Please delay the purchase of any new textbooks until the list of approved textbooks is published.

Please feel free to share this memo with parents and other interested parties.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joseph A. Bound".

Joseph A. Bound,  
Director of Education  
Diocese of Green Bay