



Dear Diocese of Sacramento Catholic School Families,

Welcome to the 2026–2027 school year! On behalf of the Diocese of Sacramento Catholic Schools Department, I am delighted to welcome our students, families, teachers, staff, pastors, and school leaders back for another year of learning, faith, and community.

Last year, our diocesan theme of Renewal invited us to reflect on our mission, strengthen our commitment to our faith, and consider how we can continue to grow in service to our students and families. This year, we build upon that work with our new theme:

Grounded in Faith. Guided Forward.

These words capture both who we are and where we are going. We are ***Grounded in Faith*** because Christ remains at the center of our schools. Our Catholic identity is not simply something we teach; it shapes how we learn, how we serve, how we care for one another, and how we understand the unique gifts and dignity of every child entrusted to us.

And we are ***Guided Forward*** because our mission calls us to continually grow. Catholic education has a rich and beautiful tradition, but it also requires us to look ahead, to strengthen teaching and learning, develop exceptional leaders, care for our students, steward our resources responsibly, and ensure that Catholic education remains vibrant and accessible for generations to come.

As part of this commitment, the Catholic Schools Department has restructured how we support our school principals. Our diocesan Directors will now provide specialized leadership and support across five key areas: ***Catholic Identity and Religious Leadership; Instructional Leadership and Curriculum; Student Services and School Culture; Administration, Operations and Finance; and Community,***

Communications and Enrollment. This model allows us to bring deeper expertise, greater consistency, and increased collaboration to all 32 of our schools while empowering our principals to lead their individual school communities with confidence.

Our work this year is centered around five diocesan priorities:

- **Grounded in Faith:** Deepen Catholic identity and strengthen our partnerships with pastors and parishes.
- **Guided by Excellence:** Foster outstanding teaching, learning, and instructional leadership.
- **Grounded in Care:** Build safe, joyful, and nurturing school communities where every child is known and loved.
- **Grounded in Stewardship:** Ensure responsible financial management and long-term sustainability.
- **Guided Forward Together:** Strengthen enrollment, communication, collaboration, and community partnerships.

While these priorities guide our work at the diocesan level, the heart of Catholic education remains what happens each day in our schools: a teacher beginning class in prayer; a principal greeting students by name; a pastor celebrating Mass with the school community; students discovering their God-given gifts; and families partnering with us in the formation of their children.

To support our journey this year, our principals across the Diocese will engage in the study of ***Educating for Eternity: Making Every Class Catholic*** by Brett Salkeld, Ph.D. This thoughtful resource will serve as the foundation for our ongoing professional and spiritual formation, helping educators deepen their understanding of how the Catholic faith can be intentionally woven into every subject, every lesson, and every classroom experience. We are also pleased to welcome Dr. Salkeld as the keynote presenter for this year's Catholic Educators Day for all of our staff and faculty in our Catholic schools, where he will further inspire and equip our teachers to bring this vision to life. As we live our theme, ***Grounded in Faith. Guided Forward.***, this shared formation will strengthen our commitment to forming not only knowledgeable students, but joyful disciples of Jesus Christ who are prepared to live lives of faith, service, and purpose.

Thank you for choosing Catholic education and for the many sacrifices you make to provide this gift to your children. We recognize the tremendous trust you place in us. It is an honor and a privilege to partner with you in forming young people who are prepared not only for academic success, but for lives of faith, service, leadership, and purpose.

As we begin this new school year, I pray that we remain firmly *grounded in our faith*, trusting that God is present in our work, and confidently *guided forward*, knowing that we share this mission together.

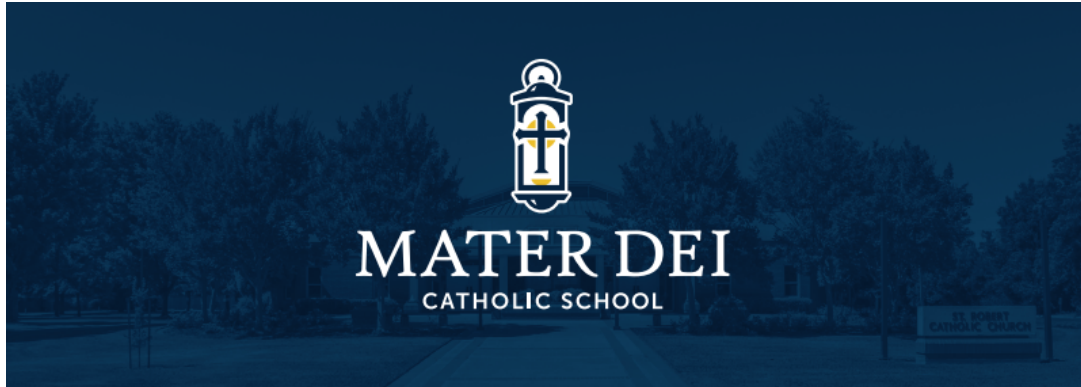
May God bless your family and all of our Catholic school communities throughout the Diocese of Sacramento. I look forward to all that the Lord has in store for us in the year ahead.

Warm Regards,



Dr. Katie Perata

Executive Director of Catholic Schools | Diocese of Sacramento



A New Beginning: Welcome, Mater Dei Catholic School!

As we welcome our families back for the 2026–2027 school year, we are excited to celebrate a very special new beginning in the Diocese of Sacramento: the opening of Mater Dei Catholic School!

Located at St. Robert Parish in Sacramento, Mater Dei brings together the rich histories, traditions, and communities of St. Patrick Academy, St. Charles Borromeo School, and St. Robert School into one regional Catholic school serving students in Transitional Kindergarten through Grade 8.

The name Mater Dei, meaning “Mother of God,” reflects the school’s Marian identity and its commitment to forming students in faith, academic excellence, service, and leadership. The school’s new mascot, the Lions, represents courage, strength, leadership, and faith as students begin this new chapter together.

It is the beginning of a new chapter in Catholic education, one built upon the faith, dedication, and legacy of the communities that came before it. Mater Dei Catholic School honors those traditions while embracing an exciting future for our students and families.

Under the leadership of Principal Adriana Hilario, Mater Dei begins its inaugural year by honoring the traditions families have cherished while creating new opportunities for students to grow academically, spiritually, and personally.

The opening of Mater Dei is also a wonderful reflection of our diocesan theme, Grounded in Faith. Guided Forward. This new school community carries forward the faith, dedication, and legacy of three Catholic school communities while looking with hope toward all that lies ahead.

As we begin this new school year, we invite our entire Catholic school community to join us in welcoming and praying for the students, families, faculty, staff, and leadership of Mater Dei Catholic School as they begin their first year together.

Welcome, Mater Dei Lions! May God bless this new beginning and guide you forward!



STAR Renaissance Data 2025-2026

We're proud of the progress our students continue to make this year, and the data tells an encouraging story about both where our students stand today and how far they've grown to get there.

Roughly six in ten students across the diocese are meeting or exceeding district benchmark expectations - a solid foundation across the board. **Reading** is leading the way, with **65.5%** of students (4,169 of 6,369) at or above benchmark, closely mirrored by **Early Literacy** at **65.9%** (723 of 1,097 students). **Math** isn't far behind at **60.2%**(3,956 of 6,576 students). These numbers reflect thousands of students working hard every day, and the consistency across subjects shows a well-rounded academic program rather than strength in just one area.

Star Reading Current Student Growth Percentile (SGP)

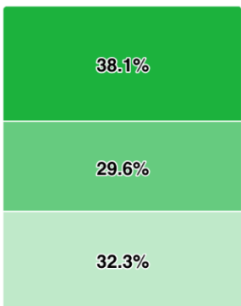
Star Reading Current Student Growth Percentile (SGP)

Fall to Spring 2025-2026

Fall to Spring 2025-2026

- 4,268 of 6,308 students scored at or above typical growth (35th current SGP) from Fall to the given test period

67.7% of students district-wide showed typical or better reading growth from Fall to Spring 2025-2026, nearly identical to last year's 68.0%. This is a solid result, with more than two-thirds of students on track or better.



● High Growth
● Typical Growth
● Low Growth

STAR Reading

Measures overall reading achievement and growth, including vocabulary, comprehension, and understanding of increasingly complex texts. Results help teachers identify strengths and areas where students may need additional support.

Star Math Current Student Growth Percentile (SGP)

Star Math Current Student Growth Percentile (SGP)

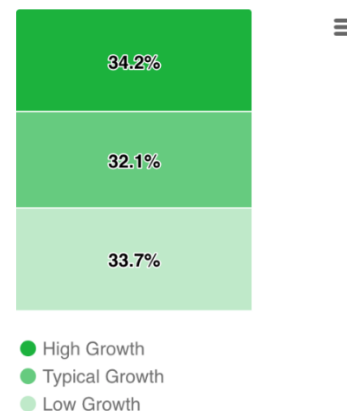
Fall to Spring 2025-2026

Fall to Spring 2025-2026

- 4,269 of 6,441 students scored at or above typical growth (35th current SGP) from Fall to the given test period
- This is up 2% from Fall to Spring 2024-2025
-

66.3% of students district-wide showed typical or better growth from Fall to Spring 2025-2026, up from 63.8% the prior year.

This is a positive trend and suggests math growth is moving in the right direction.



STAR Math

Measures mathematics achievement and growth across key skills such as number sense, operations, algebra, geometry, measurement, and data analysis. Results help teachers monitor progress and guide instruction.

Star Early Literacy Current Student Growth Percentile (SGP)

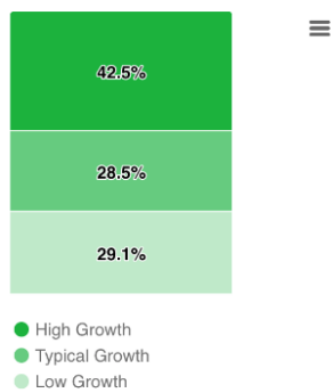
Star Early Literacy Current Student Growth Percentile (SGP)

Fall to Spring 2025-2026

Fall to Spring 2025-2026

- 735 of 1,036 students scored at or above typical growth (35th current SGP) from Fall to the given test period

District-wide, 70.9% of students showed typical or better growth from Fall to Spring 2025-2026, compared to 72% in 2024-2025. While results are slightly lower than last year, more than 7 in 10 students making typical or better growth is a positive result overall.



STAR Early Literacy — Typically Grades K–1

Measures early reading and literacy skills, including phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and foundational reading development. It helps identify where young learners are on their path toward becoming independent readers.

What's especially encouraging is what's happening beneath these numbers: student growth. Growth measures, which show how much progress students are making relative to their peers, regardless of where they started, tell a story of real, sustained effort throughout the year. In **Reading**, growth reached an impressive **74.3%** of students hitting strong growth targets earlier this year, and even after a natural seasonal dip to **67.6%** this spring, that's still two-thirds of our students demonstrating meaningful academic growth. **Math** growth has followed a similar rhythm, peaking at **73.3%** and **71.8%** at different points this year and currently sitting at **66.2%**, a strong majority of students actively building skills. **Early Literacy** has been the most remarkably steady of all, holding in a tight, healthy band all year and currently at **71%**, a testament to the consistency of our early-grades instruction.

Taken together, these numbers show a diocese where most students are not only meeting important benchmarks but are actively growing, many of them significantly outpacing typical academic growth for their peer group. The dips seen heading into spring are a normal part of the assessment cycle and don't take away from the real gains made throughout the year. With strong foundations in reading and early literacy, and math showing similar promise, our students are well-positioned for continued success. We can't wait to see what the data shows us this fall.



The Diocese of Sacramento was recently featured in NCEA's Bright Lights of Catholic Education Tour, highlighting the faith, academic excellence, and strong sense of community found throughout our Catholic schools.

During his visit, NCEA President/CEO Dr. Steven F. Cheeseman experienced Catholic education in action at Sacred Heart Parish School (Sacramento), St.

Ignatius Parish School (Sacramento), and St. Mel Catholic School (Fair Oaks).

From faith-filled classrooms and innovative academics to service, leadership, and vibrant school communities, each visit offered a unique glimpse into how our schools are forming students for God, for service, and for the future.

Dr. Cheeseman reflected on the strong Catholic identity he encountered throughout the Diocese and the many ways our educators and school communities are helping students grow in faith, knowledge, compassion, and leadership. His visit celebrated not only these three schools, but the shared mission of Catholic education across the Diocese of Sacramento.

We are grateful to NCEA for shining a light on the wonderful work happening in our schools and for sharing the story of Catholic education in the Diocese of Sacramento.

Read the full NCEA article:

[Bright Lights: Diocese of Sacramento](#)



Catholic Educators' Day
DIOCESE OF SACRAMENTO

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2026

ALL SCHOOLS WILL BE CLOSED
so our teachers and staff can attend this special day of faith, formation, and renewal.

Featuring Keynote Speaker
Brett Salkeld
Author of *Educating for Eternity: A Teacher's Companion for Making Every Class Catholic*

Brett's message will inspire and equip our educators to see every subject, every lesson, and every moment as an opportunity to lead students to Christ and eternity.

Let us *pray* for our teachers that they may be renewed in their faith, strengthened in their vocation, and inspired as they continue to form the hearts, minds, and souls of our students.

FAITH
to deepen our mission

FELLOWSHIP
to strengthen our community

FORMATION
to grow in knowledge and purpose

RENEWAL
to inspire hearts and vocations

Thank you FOR SUPPORTING OUR CATHOLIC EDUCATORS!
Grounded in Faith. Guided Forward.

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