



BISHOP BARAGA CATHOLIC SCHOOL **LEVELED LEARNING PROGRAM** **GRADES 2-7**



Leveled learning is a 3-tiered system that creates a broader scope of differentiation to our classrooms. To better understand the program, it's sometimes helpful to understand its origin.

As educators, we all know and understand that students learn differently, whether it's through different learning styles, resources, or at their own pace...it's different for each child.

As children progress through each grade, gaps are created along the way. Areas of knowledge that students don't grasp fully. They may have a general understanding of the content, but there isn't that mastery level that is achieved. As these gaps continue throughout their learning, they get bigger and bigger if not addressed. Eventually, some of these gaps can grow out of control, leaving students feeling inadequate and discouraged – which furthermore leads to lack of engagement in learning. As educators, this is the absolute worst thing that can happen. Because when a child stops engaging in learning, their capacity for growth has decreased.

On the other hand, some students learn at a faster pace, which can sometimes be just as big of an issue. Because in this case, you have a student that may be bored, and when students get bored, they too stop engaging, leading to a decreased growth capacity.

To complicate this even further, ALL students learn DIFFERENTLY with EACH and EVERY subject. So as teachers, we are constantly working to keep our eyes on how each child learns in each subject, while also addressing the gaps as best as we can.

In 2018, the middle school teachers at Bishop Baraga made the conscious decision to place students in levels opposed to students staying in their home rooms during the times that Math and Reading/Language Arts were taught. The group of teachers put in extra time looking at each child's standardized testing scores, their cumulative grades, work habits, and work capacity. Taking into consideration all of these factors, we leveled students and placed them in a classroom that they would be most successful in. The levels were tiered like this.

Level 3 - Basic Foundations
Level 2 - Intermediate Development
Level 1 - Advanced Level

After placing students in their appropriate level, and rolling this out to parents individually during parent teacher conferences, the program began.



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Fast forward to 2022. We have been doing leveled learning for 4 years now in grades 5-7. In those 4 years, we have seen:

- A greater capacity for student growth
- More diversity and stimulating engagement within classrooms
- Less behavior issues, resulting in a more conducive learning environment
- More teacher collaboration, resulting in more effective instruction
- Less students struggling with concepts they cannot understand

Most importantly, what we continue to see through this program, is that when we put students into environments in which they feel comfortable and successful, their engagement in learning increases, leading to a deeper understanding of concepts, the quickest way to close the learning gaps, and an increase in a student's capacity to learn.

As we approach 2022-23, we have decided to stretch leveled learning to our lower elementary students in grades 2-4. This year for both Math and Reading, students will be placed in the levels in which they are most successful. Our teachers will be looking at all the necessary factors to make these decisions, and we re-evaluate each student every term. Parents will be notified of any movement a student is making, and will be able to be part of the process the entire time.

Teachers will be teaching these subjects during the same times during the day, and the lower elementary grades will also have instructional aides to help best facilitate this program.

So as we move into this school year, we appreciate your support in making these educational decisions for your children and their academics. We are extremely excited to make our partnership with parents stronger, and bring the best academic model to our students as we strive to provide the highest quality Catholic school education.

If you have any questions regarding leveled learning, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or your home room teacher for more information once the school year gets underway.

Our teachers and staff greatly appreciate your trust and support in making the best educational decisions for your children in order to provide them the highest quality Catholic education.