



August 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians,

In April 2017, elementary schools across the Archdiocese of Chicago administered the ACT Aspire summative test for the second time to all students in grades 3-8. The ACT Aspire assesses students' academic proficiency in five academic areas: English, Reading, Math, Science and Writing. Students completed the exam over four mornings at their school.

ACT Aspire is aligned to the rigorous curriculum standards that inform classroom instruction in all classrooms across the Archdiocese. More information about the ACT Aspire, including grade-level test exemplars for each subject test, can be found on www.discoveractaspire.org.

The Archdiocese's Office of Catholic Schools is pleased with the collective performance of all students in the Archdiocese as reflected in the second administration of the ACT Aspire test. The table below provides the average score for all students in grades 3-8 who completed the ACT Aspire this past spring. Additionally, the average scale score for 2016 and 2017 is provided for each content test. This comparison data reveals that the results from 2016 to 2017 have stayed consistent without any significant gains or declines in academic performance over the past two years. Improving student performance in writing continues to be a goal for all Archdiocesan schools as writing proficiency is an essential skill and required for high school and college success.

A *sample* of student performance results for all Archdiocesan students in grade 3 for each of the content areas tested by ACT Aspire is provided in the following table. Terms found in the table are also explained below. **Complete scores for grades 3-8 across the Archdiocese and for your school can be found in the attached document.**

- **Aspire Benchmark:** This numeric score indicates the benchmark that indicates grade-level proficiency. This metric does not change from year to year.
- **AoC Average:** This numeric score reflects the average score across the approximately 5,000 students across all grade-levels who tested in the Archdiocese.
- **National Average:** This numeric score reflects the average score for all students nationwide who took the ACT Aspire in the spring of 2017.
- **Readiness Level:** Scores for each subject test area reflect the average performance of all students in this grade level categorized into one of the following levels: *Exceeding, Ready, Close* or *In Need of Support*.



	Grade	English	Math	Reading	Science	Writing
Aspire Benchmark	3	413	413	415	418	428
AoC Average 2017	3	419	415	415	417	425
AoC Average 2016	3	419	415	415	417	424
National Average 2017	3	417	413	413	415	422
Nat'l Average 2016	3	417	413	413	415	422
AOC Readiness Level 2017	3	Exceeding	Ready	Ready	Close	Close
AOC Readiness Level 2016	3	Exceeding	Ready	Ready	Close	Close

Your school will provide individual student performance results for ACT Aspire, as well as grade-level results and readiness levels for students in grades 3-8 that can be compared to the average performance of other Archdiocesan students. While it is interesting to note the national average for each subject level test, it is most important to acknowledge the performance level of students in relationship to the Aspire benchmark for that grade level.

Thank you for your continued partnership in your child's education.

With best wishes for a successful new school year,

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 Superintendent of Catholic Schools