



MARIAN CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

An exceptional education rooted in faith, family and tradition.

Marian Catholic High School Aquinas Program Handbook

July 2021

Mission:

The Marian Catholic Aquinas Program offers a Christ-centered, quality academic education within a Catholic School environment for children with identified specific learning disabilities. Emphasis is placed on helping students to gain self-advocacy skills, increased confidence and develop leadership while supporting individual learning differences. We strive to educate the whole child in the areas of physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual development, while respecting the dignity and potential of each person.

Vision:

Results in the classroom, Success in life.

Values:

To meet the diverse learning needs of each student enrolled in our Aquinas Learning Support Program by implementing the Diocesan model.

Admission/Eligibility Requirements:

To be considered for the Aquinas Program, the following evaluations must be submitted:

- A full psycho-educational evaluation completed within the past three years or less including:
 - WISC-IV
 - Math Inventory
 - Reading Inventory
 - Perception Test
- A neurological evaluation, if applicable.
- The student's most recent annual report card.
- The student's most recent Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Students must be diagnosed with a specific learning disability, be of average or above-average intelligence, and possess an eagerness to learn and cooperate and be eligible for special education services.

Students are fully incorporated into their Catholic School and are responsible for all rules and regulations.

Transportation will be provided by the student's local school district if the outer boundary of their school district of residence is within a 10-mile radius of the Aquinas Program.



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I. **Determine eligibility and acceptance for the Aquinas Program**

- Brochure and registration packets are given from Marian Catholic to the parents/guardians of the student.
- Packet is returned with the Marian Catholic cover sheet, recent psychological testing (within three years), IEP, and most recent report card to the Director of Studies at Marian Catholic. Once received by the Director of Studies and reviewed by the Head of School, it will be forwarded to the Diocesan Office of Education if needed for consultation.
- Testing is reviewed by the Diocesan Office of Education to determine if the student is accepted into Aquinas upon request from the school.
- For eligibility, the student must be diagnosed with a Specific Learning Disability as the primary diagnoses and have a recent (within three years) psycho-educational evaluation.
- A call and/or an acceptance letter is made to the parents/guardians to inform them as to whether child is eligible for the program, from Marian Catholic.
- If child is eligible an appointment is made with student/family to meet with the Director of Studies, Director of Student Support Services, and Head of School to discuss the needs of the student and see the program.
- New students are invited to visit their new classroom.
- *All paperwork and tuition must be confirmed prior to services beginning.*

II. **Develop individualized Instructional Plan (IP) for each student.**

- During the first week of school, an **accommodation sheet** for each student is given to those general education teachers who will be working with that student.
- During the first week of school, a **meeting with subject area teachers** who will be working with Aquinas students is held and the students' needs as reflected on the accommodation sheet are explained.
- Following updated testing in the Spring, each student will receive an annual Instructional Plan (IP) by the end of the **academic year/June** including updated Present Educational Levels, new goals, and accommodations/adaptations. IPs will be reviewed with a parent meeting including the Head of School, Director of Studies, Director of Student Support Services, and the Diocesan Office of Education where applicable.



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- Revisions can be made to the IPs throughout the year. This meeting can be initiated by the Director of Studies, Director of Student Support Services, Head of School, Teacher and/or Parent.
- The Instructional Plan will include the following areas:
 - Present Educational Levels of Performance
 - Measurable Goals/Objectives
 - Specially Designed Instruction (Accommodations/Adaptations)
 - Progress Monitoring documentation
- Aquinas students receive report cards with general education students at designated times throughout the year along with a progress report of their IP goals utilizing the IP goal page.

Program Structure:

- There are Aquinas classes at Marian Catholic High School. They are based upon scheduling options and the individual student.
- Students are included in Homeroom and other classes as the team deems appropriate.
- Accommodations and Adaptations will be implemented in the General Education Classroom for pace, content, expectations, and quantity of work on an individualized basis from the General Education Teacher, with support from the Aquinas Team.
- Major Unit Assessments for General Education Classes need to be announced 1 week prior. Quizzes do not need to be announced.
 - All assessment content needs to be included on the Study Guide.
 - Adaptation of the Assessment is to be completed by the Aquinas Team in Consultation with the General Education Teacher if deemed appropriate in the individual student IP.
- Study guides will be provided to the Aquinas Case Manager and all Aquinas students from the General Education Teacher. The Study Guide is required to be a detailed sheet of information on the specific material to be remembered from the Content area.

Marian Catholic Aquinas Schedule:

- Students will be scheduled for at least one period/day of Learning Strategies with parental agreement.
- Students will receive elective credit each year for the Learning Strategies class.

166 Marian Avenue | Tamaqua, Pennsylvania 18252-9789
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Formal Assessments for Aquinas Learning Support

- Reevaluations every three years need to be recommended and directed to the Public-School District of residence for each student who is currently attending Marian Catholic.
- Ongoing data collection must be provided for individual student goals to provide to the Public-School District of residence for completion of that re-evaluation.

Personnel Responsibilities

The Diocesan Office of Catholic Education (From the Diocese of Allentown Aquinas Handbook)

- Will publicize the program to principals, pastors and parents on Diocesan website.
- Will assist in the recruitment of students for the program, and be a consultant for program eligibility through review of psycho-educational information received upon request.
- Will assist in the hiring and interviewing of the special education teachers upon request.
- In consultation with annual Intermediate Unit meetings, arrangements for additional government loans of texts, instructional materials, and equipment for the classrooms when available.
- Will provide supervision of the program for students with learning disabilities.
- Will provide professional development for teachers and administrators as needed/requested.
- Will assess the parishes as the students enrolled in the Aquinas Learning Support Program.

Marian Catholic High School

- Will receive the tuition collections from FACTS and/or the parents and deposit them and maintain financial records for the program.
- Will review parent requests for financial aid and provide some financial assistance if funds are available.
- Will provide classrooms for use by the Aquinas Learning Support Program, furniture, and resource materials.
- Will provide day-to-day on-site supervision and management of the program (Head of School).

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- Will help the teachers of students with learning disabilities integrate into the general education classrooms for certain subjects according to their needs and abilities.
- Will integrate the program as part of the school and include the students and parents in the school's regular programs and activities.
- Will instruct the general education teachers to provide necessary accommodations and adaptations as suggested on each student's Accommodation sheet and provide ongoing monitoring for implementation.

Head of School/Principal

- Collaborate with the Diocesan Office of Education when interviewing students/families for acceptance into the Aquinas Learning Support Program.
- Collaborate with the Diocesan Office of Education when interviewing candidates for hire into the Aquinas Learning Support Program.
- Ensure all documentation and financial obligations are confirmed prior to services beginning through Finance office of Marian Catholic High School.
- Integrate the Aquinas Learning Support into the school and include the students and families in the school's program and activities.
- Integrate Aquinas Case Managers into duties/responsibilities the same as the general education teachers.
- Provide scheduling oversight and supervision for Inclusion of the Aquinas Learning Support students and case managers.
- Assist the general education teachers in working with the students and case managers from the Aquinas Learning Support Program.
- Provide day-to-day on-site supervision and management of the program.
- Conduct observations and evaluations of Aquinas Case Managers.
- Provide ongoing professional development for all teachers and staff working with students with learning disabilities.



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General Education Teachers

- Maintain confidentiality of all Aquinas Learning Support students' information.
- Review and sign off to confirm understanding and commitment of implementation to individual student accommodations and adaptations annually.
- Collaborate regularly with Director of Studies and Director of Student Support Services on individual student progress.
- Write information legibly on board for all students to read and follow.
- Provide copies of notes to all Aquinas Learning Support students in advance when articulated on a student's IP.
- Homework must be clearly stated.
- Prepare study guides including information of the important material to be assessed in content classes.
- Provide the content assessment to the Aquinas Case Manager at least three days prior to the scheduled test.
- Provide assessment dates to the Aquinas Learning Support Students and Case Manager one week prior to the scheduled date of the test.

Aquinas Case Manager

- Maintain confidentiality of all Aquinas Learning Support students' information.
- Prior to the first day of school prepare and distribute each Aquinas Learning Support Student Accommodation sheet.
- During the first week of school meet with the general education teachers to review and discuss individual student needs and the nature of the students' disabilities.
- Collaborate with general education teachers to support implementation of accommodations and adaptations within the general education classroom and curriculum.



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- Schedule time to work in the general education classroom to provide the Aquinas Learning Support Students additional guidance and instruction.
- Implement organizational strategies to include checking homework assignment books and providing assistance when needed.
- Provide Progress Report on individual student goals with the report card.