



June 30, 2022

Dear Parents,

Happy Summer to you and your families! While it seems like just yesterday, we waved goodbye to our 583 students; we are excitedly turning the page to prepare for a fun-filled 2023-2024 school year with the return of many Mater Dei traditions and adding in several new events.

This morning, we mailed the TerraNova NEXT Score Reports for your child/ren who took them in March 2023. The scoring center was delayed in mailing the home copy for each student's test, and we appreciate your patience in awaiting these results. This year, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia decided for all Grades 2 through 7 students to take the TerraNova NEXT test, a new format for our students. This new format was designed to be more rigorous and aligned with national standards. Specifically, the content areas of Reading, Language, and Math test questions focused on higher depths of knowledge.

As a school community, we are so grateful to our faculty and staff, whose commitment to academic excellence has never wavered throughout the 2022-2023 school year. This year, Kindergarten through Grade 6 teachers leaned into the DIBELS testing data to improve instruction. Specifically, Kindergarten through Grade 2 teachers incorporated the Heggerty Phonological Awareness Program. This researched-based program focuses on eight phonemic awareness skills, along with two additional activities to develop letter and sound recognition, and language awareness, which are skills students must master to become successful readers. The success of our students reflects the many hours of planning, instructing, and assessing our teachers spent to individualize instruction to meet student needs.

The school results of the TerraNova NEXT scores are essential for a variety of reasons, as outlined below:

- TerraNova NEXT test results are NOT used by the school to reflect any academic grades on a report card.
- The teachers and administration review testing results to help plan and adjust instruction to fit the needs of our students. Using grade-level testing data, we can identify the strengths and areas of improvement in the curriculum areas of Reading, Language, and Mathematics.
- Teachers review the testing results to identify which students may need further extension activities or additional support in different content areas. TerraNova NEXT results provide insight into which students would benefit and be eligible for special classes such as Academic Resource Rooms and Honors classes.
- While the TerraNova NEXT Test was new this year, we use each year of Terra Nova testing to track a student's academic progress over his/her whole school life, not just one year. Because the diocese stayed with the TerraNova testing program, we have longitudinal data on a student's academic performance as he/she progresses through the grade levels. If a child moves to another school in the diocese or even another state, the record of that student's test results usually goes along. *(This is just one of the benefits of taking a nationally standardized test. All students are compared against the same standard.)*
- It is important to remember that standardized tests are only one measure of your child's progress. Teacher observation and class participation, for example, are equally important measures of a student's school progress and add to a child's whole story.

What do the scores mean?

- The TerraNova NEXT score reports provide a Cognitive Skills Index (CSI) score from InView Tests. This score measures provide a highly reliable measure of the overall academic aptitude of a student.
- TerraNova NEXT testing provides an Anticipated Achievement score which is determined based on the results of the InView test, student age, and student grade level. This score gives insight into what the student is expected to achieve in the content areas based on the CSI score.
- The TerraNova NEXT scores reported on the Parent Report are percentile ranks, not the percent of items correct on any subtest. The score reported on each test (NP or national percentile) compares your student's performance to that of students in the same grade in the nation. In other words, it ranks your child's score against many students in the country who took the same test. For example, a percentile of 78 means the student did as well or better than 78 % of students in the country. The 50th Percentile represents the average performance of a child in that grade level.

What isn't reflected in these scores?

- The TerraNova NEXT scores do not measure a student's creative mind or kind heart. Here at Mater Dei, we celebrate each child's unique nature by inspiring the values of Faith, Excellence, Service, and Community, which are also not reflected in any TerraNova testing report. The scores give insight into how a child learns but

never define the specialness and worth of each individual.

How does a parent use these scores?

- The score from a single battery of tests is not necessarily an accurate indication of the overall understanding of a content area. With this in mind, it is recommended that all reporting of student achievement be used to observe strengths and opportunities for growth for each student.

This is just a brief overview to give you a reference point. After reviewing your child/children's progress, if you have any specific questions, we will be happy to meet with you to discuss the results.

Thank you for being so committed to Mater Dei Catholic School. Have a wonderful summer! We look forward to seeing you in September to celebrate our 12th year at Mater Dei Catholic School. May God bless all our wonderful families and keep you safe this summer!

Most sincerely,

Miss Diane E. McCaughan
President

Miss Elizabeth A. Waltrich
Principal

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