

# excellence IN EDUCATION



## **Classroom Improvement Initiative**

As part of this effort, new built-in classroom storage units have been installed in grade 1-5 classrooms. New lockers in school colors for grades 1-3 and additional lockers for grades 4-6 have been installed as well as new lockers for grade 8. Grades 1-8 feature new contemporary desks that combine elegance, durability, and functionality to enhance student collaboration. Each desk features a steel book box and backpack pegs that serve various functions in the classrooms. The new classroom furniture also includes student chairs which allow for students to sit comfortably in four positions facing front, either side, or rear. The chairs feature a flexing seat back that provide support for the students and allow them to turn with less restriction. The new furniture design helps students' attention spans and makes students more actively engaged in the classroom. The new lockers, storage cabinets and desks have helped both students and teachers with organization and storage, improving the functionality and the overall classroom environment.

St. Sebastian Parish School has a long history of excellence in education. Our students consistently score in the top 90% of students nationwide in assessments. Our graduates experience great success in academics and many go on to pursue leadership roles in high school and college. The St. Sebastian Parish School graduating class of 2020 received more than \$390,000 in scholarships and awards as they moved on to high school.

## **Technology**

Technology has been a continued focus of St. Sebastian Parish School during the recent years. Our students have the latest technology at their fingertips. Students have daily access to over 250 iPads, 200 Chromebooks, mini-iPads and laptops to assist with their learning. Our school's 1:1 Chromebook Initiative provides all students in grades 1-8 with a Chromebook laptop computer. This leads to an overall enhanced educational experience, better student organizational skills, and learning and sharing beyond the walls of the conventional classroom. It allows greater accessibility to technology while preparing students for an ever-changing world, removes the need to schedule computer lab time or share mobile carts, and creates a sense of responsibility through personal ownership. Moreover, our 1:1 Initiative makes learning available at our students' fingertips and enables teachers to easily track both student progress and needs for further instruction.

We have interactive display boards that transform every classroom into collaborative learning spaces and each classroom is equipped with a Beam audio device. These small portable sound bars are enabled with Bluetooth technology that links with microphones that are worn by teachers and allow students to hear lessons more clearly. Classrooms are also equipped with HoverCams. These document cameras allow teachers to be visible to students at home while teaching lessons, as well as students in the classrooms when doing science experiments, showing work with math manipulatives and sharing worksheets. There are newer lab tables in the 7th and 8th grade science classrooms which complement our state-of-the-art science facilities. Every student has the additional benefit of utilizing the technology in our Technology Learning Lab with its green screen technology and two 3D printers. The school also points with pride to our newly remodeled library which contains numerous titles for all aged students.

## **Science Technology Religion Engineering Arts and Math (STREAM) Education**

St. Sebastian Parish School is STEM designated from the State of Ohio and recently launched a STREAM education initiative that focuses on hands-on experiences where students are active participants in the learning process that also incorporates service learning. This type of learning helps students learn skills of communication, collaboration and cooperation, creativity and innovation, and critical thinking and problem solving. Student-centered instructional strategies enhance students' learning, achievement and retention and STREAM education helps students appreciate the connections between these individual disciplines and demonstrates that problem solving involves researching, collecting, and analyzing various types of information. These are vital skills that will help students prepare for their academic and professional futures that are becoming increasingly reliant on technology while also learning critical communication skills.

Our STREAM initiative involves both classroom activities and extra-curricular opportunities and our teachers are designing and implementing STREAM lessons that allow students to discover, assemble and interpret information. Extracurricular activities like Coding, MATHCOUNTS, Lego Club, Robotics and Drone Club provide avenues for students to experience STREAM topics beyond the curriculum.

## **Innovation Lab**

Our school's Innovation Lab was built in the summer of 2017. This lab has become a hub for student-centered, STREAM-based collaboration where students are challenged to be creative, take risks, experiment, prototype, and let their curiosity guide their discovery. In the lab, you can find students programming robots, flying drones, building Soap Box Derby cars in preparation for the Gravity Racing Challenge, preparing for the Genius Project as well as analyzing data and new ideas on the large interactive display board and even building on the Lego wall.