**New Diocese of Allentown Elementary Report Cards and Trimesters for the 2016-2017 School Year**

The Diocese of Allentown Mission statement expresses the “Commitment to assist students to achieve academic excellence in faith filled environments that foster Communities of Faith.” This journey towards excellence happens in many ways; most recently, in changes to the report card and the start of trimesters to mark the learning and reporting schedule.

The Diocese of Allentown’s elementary report card has gone through a revision to accommodate the Diocesan expectations and standards, the awareness of the skills and understanding that students will need in order to find success in secondary school, college and in the workplace. The purpose of the change is that we continue to plan, work, and teach in order that our students achieve academic excellence. This is done by using research based standards, best practices from the literature, and the experience of successful teachers, all within the context of a faith community.

The use of Trimesters as a research based grading is developmentally appropriate for elementary and middle school students. Instead of the 9 weeks that we have now, each trimester is 12 weeks in length, extending the instruction and marking period from 45 to 60 days. The trimesters are August, November and March and report cards are given December, March and June. Progress reports will be distributed in the middle of each trimester. Conferences are planned for the end of October. The scheduling of conferences at this time not only allows an opportunity for schools and students to improve in their efforts, but also provides opportunities for parents and teachers to collaborate by sharing insights into the needs of each child.

As we continue with the implementation of the new report cards and all that is entailed with it, may we continue to journey together giving the students of the Diocese of Allentown an excellent education that integrates the knowledge and practice of the Faith, instilling in our students a lifelong commitment to learning and to Catholic values. This will prepare our students to take their place in the world as men and women of Faith, Service and Leadership.