

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2020 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[ ] Public or [X] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [ ] Title I [ ] Charter [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Peter James Rodgers  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Holy Rosary Academy  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 190 Graylynn Drive  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Nashville State TN Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 37214-2706

County Davidson

Telephone (615) 883-1108 Fax (615) 885-5100

Web site/URL http://www.holyrosary.edu E-mail rodgers.pete@gmail.com

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\* Mrs. Rebecca Hammel E-mail rebecca.hammel@dioceseofnashville.com  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Diocese of Nashville Tel. (615) 383-6393

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board  
President/Chairperson Mrs. Tanya Willis  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## **PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2020 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2014 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, or 2019.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2019-2020) unless otherwise stated.

**DISTRICT** (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - Middle/Junior high schools
  - High schools
  - K-12 schools
  - TOTAL

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)
- Suburban
- Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2019 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	14	23	37
K	14	17	31
1	7	16	23
2	7	16	23
3	8	19	27
4	14	14	28
5	16	20	36
6	15	21	36
7	20	18	38
8	15	29	44
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	130	193	323

\*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 3 % Asian
  - 2 % Black or African American
  - 8 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 71 % White
  - 15 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2018 - 2019 school year: 2%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain:

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	4
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	2
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	6
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	318
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.02
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %  
0 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 0 %

Total number students who qualify: 0

8. Students receiving special education services: 12 %

40 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- |                                  |                                                |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <u>2</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>16</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>1</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>2</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>16</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>2</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 4

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	19
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	6
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	2
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 13:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	96%	96%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2019.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes X      No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.      2013

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

To support and encourage the development of each child's unique set of God-given talents by providing an excellent education program that encompasses the whole child.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

## **PART III - SUMMARY**

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Holy Rosary Academy is a fully accredited Catholic, co-educational pre-K to eighth grade school located in Donelson, Tennessee. Holy Rosary opened its doors on September 14, 1954. At that time, the school had five classrooms, four Sister Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary teachers, and one lay teacher for kindergarten through eighth grade students. Now, as the school is celebrating its 65th Anniversary, Holy Rosary has become one of the largest schools in the Diocese of Nashville, accommodating more than 320 students from a variety of backgrounds, with 26 teachers and four teacher aides.

Since 1954, Holy Rosary Academy's mission has remained the same: to support and encourage the development of each child's unique set of God-given talents by providing a Catholic education grounded in Gospel values and committed to excellence. Holy Rosary Academy educates and guides the whole child by embracing each child's uniqueness, challenging individual potential, and instilling Christian values as conveyed through the Catholic Church. As the school community grows, administrators, faculty, and parents continue to build a program that weaves Catholic faith traditions with forward-thinking methodologies in an environment that promotes critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration.

Holy Rosary Academy is located in the Hermitage/Donelson area, typically considered an older community, but within the last few years a resurgence in the area has begun. A large number of young professionals and more immigrants have moved to the Donelson area. To support this growing community, Holy Rosary Academy students and community members participate frequently in local holiday parades, sing at local Rotary Club meetings and nursing homes, and volunteer at local Farmers' Markets. Community service is an important part of the Catholic faith and Holy Rosary's mission. Holy Rosary Academy students participate in several canned food drives, both for the Ladies of Charity within the parish community and for the local food bank. The eighth grade students and their second grade buddies team up to make cards and to fill bags for the local homeless population and for soldiers serving overseas. Many students collect items and fill boxes for the Samaritan's Purse Project. The National Junior Honor Society and Student Council raise money for schools in Haiti. Participation in these missions, and other community and national outreach projects, helps develop well-rounded individuals who understand the importance of a lifetime commitment to service and support to the global community.

Due to the recent growth of the immigrant population in the Donelson area, the international student population at Holy Rosary has grown significantly as well. To better serve and appreciate this important population in our community, Holy Rosary provides Spanish instruction for all students in pre-K through eighth grade. In these Spanish classes, students learn the parts of Catholic Mass in Spanish and then are encouraged to attend a Spanish-speaking Mass at the end of the year. In religion classes, special emphasis is given to Hispanic saints from South America, Spain, and other Spanish-speaking countries to connect these students with the lives of international saints.

A typical day in the life of a Holy Rosary student begins with WHRA, a unique, student-centered broadcast production with students in kindergarten through eighth grade participating. Students begin the morning watching a live broadcast from WHRA's studio in the school, with a different grade level responsible for the production each day. The broadcast begins with a prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance, and then covers the day's news, events, and announcements. With WHRA, students learn to "think on their feet" as they create a broadcast that is informative and entertaining. The principal uses WHRA to announce the weekly ROSARY student awards. Aligned with the mission, faculty, staff, or parents may nominate students who demonstrate characteristics of virtue highlighted through the monthly Gospel value. Students who are nominated by the teachers receive a ROSARY award and recognition on the WHRA broadcast. This program is an opportunity to celebrate students outside of the academic world and to recognize them for their uniqueness and contributions to the community, fulfilling the school's mission of embracing the whole child.

Holy Rosary Academy is very proud and honored that the faculty, students, parents, and administrators were awarded the 2013 National Blue Ribbon award. This award validates the commitment each of Holy Rosary's stakeholders had in making Holy Rosary what it is today. Since winning the award, the school's leadership remains committed to providing students with a high-quality education while meeting the needs of all students in the school's care. As a recipient of the 2013 National Blue Ribbon, Holy Rosary believes it has been able to retain talented and competent teachers, and has had the ability to recruit highly sought-after teachers so the school can continue to offer the same strong curriculum to students who attend Holy Rosary.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.**

**1a.** Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas

Holy Rosary Academy's curriculum is based upon the Diocesan Curriculum Map established by the teachers and administrators of the Diocese of Nashville. The Diocesan Curriculum Map is aligned with national and state standards. Each year, the Diocese of Nashville reviews the curriculum standards in a selected subject, and faculty members meet to analyze and edit the standards to keep them current and accurate. Holy Rosary Academy's mission is embedded into all facets of the curriculum. It is learned, it is applied, and it is celebrated.

The administration and faculty work to align the goals of the school with the mission in order to meet the needs of the whole student, both spiritually and academically. From pre-K through eighth grade, students are evaluated through entrance screenings and beginning-of-the-year assessments to identify their academic levels. Teachers create lessons that differentiate learning to reach all students. Through the Exceptional Ed program, students who may be below average or above average are identified and supported in their learning.

### **1b.** Reading/English language arts

The language arts program is very strong at Holy Rosary Academy, which is indicated by high scores on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). The Academy uses Vocabulary Workshop. This program stresses spelling, vocabulary, and proper grammar. Teachers in all subject areas acknowledge the importance of writing skills. Writing assignments and research skills are taught in each grade level. Teachers and students are encouraged to use the library as an extension of the classroom.

Within the last five years, through the help of a committee of teachers in pre-K through eighth grade, the school has also implemented a vertically-aligned reading program for students in pre-K through fifth grade that is now aligned with the middle school literacy curriculum. Assessments show that students are having an easier time transitioning from grade to grade and even concept to concept, now that each grade is vertically aligned.

The administration and faculty selected Pearson's Reading Street Reading Series for grades pre-K through fifth grade as the primary reading program. The foundations of the series are phonics, reading fluency, decoding, writing, grammar, and comprehension. Students, beginning in pre-K, are exposed to a balance of both non-fiction and fiction selections, with an emphasis on informational text. Teachers incorporate art, drama, and real-world events to engage students in reading, and connections are made across the curriculum with an emphasis on science and social studies. For example, when the fourth grade students study Ancient Greece, they also learn the Greek Alphabet song in music class, and fifth grade students participate in a rodeo while reading stories of the Wild West. Middle school students create skits and costumes to showcase literary themes.

The primary levels enrich curriculum using Orton-Gillingham methods as well as small group instruction. This program provides students the opportunity to practice fundamental reading skills. Students work independently as visual and auditory feedback is immediate and positive. Enrichment and supplemental programs are carefully selected by grade level leaders. Faculty members choose fiction and non-fiction selections to provide enrichment for students in grades four through eight. Novels are carefully selected to relate to other areas of the curriculum. For example, Holy Rosary middle school students read "To Kill A Mockingbird" by Harper Lee and "Number the Stars" by Lois Lowry and then participate in cross-curricular projects in multiple classes, all focused on these books.

Holy Rosary supplements the reading program with the Accelerated Reader program. This program provides both remedial and enrichment opportunities for all students. Scores are reviewed and analyzed. Teachers

decide on an appropriate individualized reading plan, and then information and scores are shared with parents during conferences.

Professional and support staff continuously collect, analyze and apply learning from a range of data sources in order to determine verifiable improvement in student learning, including readiness and success at the next level. The library teachers give each student in second through eighth grade a STAR Reading assessment twice annually. This establishes a reading level for each student and provides evidence of growth in reading. Assessments are given throughout the year to students beginning in pre-K to help teachers determine reading fluency and comprehension. These assessments are shared in parent-teacher conferences and help determine the focus of upcoming lessons, giving teachers real-time information on the knowledge and capabilities of students to improve student learning.

### **1c. Mathematics**

Holy Rosary Academy provides a rigorous mathematics program for all its students. The program provides every student with the opportunity to develop proficiency in all areas of mathematics. Students learn fluency in basic computational and problem-solving skills, how to communicate and reason effectively, and how to make connections among mathematical ideas across the curriculum.

To best meet the needs of the students and the mathematics curriculum standards, Holy Rosary uses a variety of math texts. The pre-K classes use Big Day, kindergarten uses Math Made Fun, first through fifth grades use Sadlier Math, and sixth through eighth grades use Holt McDougal.

Primary level teachers provide daily opportunities for exploration of mathematical relationships using standard manipulatives and other materials. Students at this level acquire foundational mathematical skills by discovering the relationships between their real-world experiences and numbers. Activities such as counting, creating patterns, and exploring mathematics through literature enable students to easily transition to more abstract concepts. Intermediate grades four and five continue to explore these relationships as they transition from concrete concepts to more abstract representations. Computer programs such as Accelerated Math and MathFacts in a Flash provide additional support.

Middle school students in grades six through eight enroll in Pre-Algebra. Students receive high-quality instruction at a developmental pace. Advanced mathematics students enroll in Algebra I. There is also a third level of math available for advanced students. These students will be given the opportunity to dually enroll in Geometry at the local high school, Pope John Paul II, earning math credits both at Holy Rosary and the high school, beginning in the 2020-2021 academic school year.

Mathematics teachers in grades kindergarten through eight created a vertical team that refined the curriculum to ensure alignment with national and state standards. The purpose was to identify and eliminate any gaps and redundancies in the mathematics curriculum, resulting in smoother transitions between grade levels.

The computer teacher gives students in second through eighth grades a STAR Math assessment three times a year to determine a student's progress in mathematics. Teachers share the report with parents in order to communicate growth in this subject and areas needing improvement. Teachers use these assessment tools to determine where students are struggling and what concepts need more attention. For example, a recent STAR math assessment showed low scores across the board in Geometry concepts for the sixth grade. Therefore, the teacher created "Formula Fridays," where she covers Geometry standards that typically come at the end of the year. She also created an independent practice packet that the class is completing in addition to the regular curriculum.

Accelerated Math is also used in all math classes as a spiral review of concepts, and as a student struggles, the program gives the student review problems, helping to solidify concepts and improve student learning.

## **1d. Science**

The science program at Holy Rosary Academy starts in pre-K. The curriculum begins using discovery-based activities and hands-on explorations at least once a week that build scientific background knowledge for children and give them the opportunity to hear and learn science terminology. The scientific method is incorporated into experiments in first grade. In pre-K and primary grades, students are exposed to activities that help them develop critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, and group work etiquette.

When the students enter the intermediate grade levels, they are exposed to more technology in science, experimentation using the scientific method, and group activities. The use of an online program, Mystery Science, helps students apply science concepts to daily life as students work in groups to conduct investigations that solve the mystery they were given in a short video. Group activities build on the skills previously introduced in the primary grades by requiring students to work in a group to test a hypothesis for a problem. Experiments are incorporated into classroom instruction when they support the concepts being taught.

In middle school, there is a shift in instruction as students learn to navigate scientific expository text. This daily instruction is taught throughout eighth grade as the students are exposed to more complex materials. Middle school students conduct experiments using the scientific method and complete STEM investigations that support the concepts learned in class.

The success of the science program at Holy Rosary Academy is seen in the students' performances in and out of the classroom. In the 2018-2019 school year, 14 Holy Rosary students qualified for the Duke TIP program in a variety of science programs, which means they scored a National Percentile Rank of 95 percent or higher on the appropriate subtest on their Iowa Assessments. Three of these students received State recognition in science or math due to their participation in this program.

Science Olympiad is offered to students in sixth through eighth grades who want to be challenged and investigate science concepts at a deeper level. The Science Olympiad program was instituted in the 2013-2014 academic year. Students participating in this program have qualified for State competition five of the six years of its existence and have gone on to place in at least one event at State every year.

## **1e. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement**

The social studies program includes the study of history, government, community, and geography. The Academy uses Steck Vaughn: Maps, Globes, Graphs program in addition to the Harcourt Brace series. The social studies curriculum begins in pre-K and kindergarten where students learn about community helpers, symbols of the United States, and voting. Tennessee history is introduced in the intermediate grades and studied more in depth as the students continue through middle school.

Making history come alive for students through first-hand historical experiences is a large part of the social studies curriculum at Holy Rosary. For example, the kindergarten students visit Walden Farms and Travellers Rest, the oldest historic house museum open to the public in Nashville, whose primary mission is history education. The second grade students host a Pioneer Museum at Holy Rosary where students dress up as pioneers and learn how pioneers lived. The second grade students also conduct an Ellis Island family project to trace their family ancestry. The seventh grade students visit the Tennessee State Capitol and Bicentennial Mall.

One unique educational opportunity that is specific to Holy Rosary is when fourth grade students study to become Junior Docents at The Hermitage, the home of President Andrew Jackson, which is located only a few miles from the school. The students study for most of their first quarter, learning about Andrew Jackson's life, his home, and the lives of all who lived during that time period. Then, in October, those students spend a day serving as docents at The Hermitage, teaching all visitors to the mansion and grounds about Andrew Jackson. With The Hermitage being in Holy Rosary's "backyard," this is truly a unique experience that brings history alive and an experience that only Holy Rosary can offer.

## **1f. For secondary schools:**

## **1g. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:**

The pre-K program at Holy Rosary Academy started in 2010 with 12 students. The following year, Holy Rosary added a second pre-K classroom, bringing the total pre-K enrollment to 17 children. Since then, the program has retained a full contingent of students and remains an excellent start to school life at Holy Rosary. The preschool program incorporates early literacy, math, science, and social studies topics. Holy Rosary currently uses Pearson Opening the World of Learning (OWL) and Learning Without Tears: Kickstart to Kindergarten to work on fine motor and early letter formation skills.

With the curriculum created by kindergarten teachers, the pre-K program at Holy Rosary is designed to prepare students for kindergarten in a fun and supportive way. By the end of the year, pre-K students are exposed to sight words, rhyming words, segmenting syllables, recognizing and counting numbers, patterns, shapes, clocks, and early addition and subtraction (with objects). Many of these skills are learned through hands-on activities, songs, and games. In science, students are exposed to concepts such as living and non-living objects, healthy habits and food choices, life cycles of plants and animals, seasons and weather, and solids and liquids. In the social studies program students learn about needs and wants, community helpers, rules and responsibilities of people, symbols of our country, voting and our leaders, experiences in different cultures and holidays, and being kind to others. Additionally, the pre-K curriculum includes significant time spent developing social skills, such as playing with others, listening, following directions, and fine motor skills such as using scissors, proper tripod grip, and writing first and last name.

The concepts introduced in the pre-K program vertically align with the curriculum used in the kindergarten program, leading to a higher success rate and school readiness for these students.

## **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

### **1. Arts (visual and performing)**

Students have many opportunities to develop academically and artistically through the fine arts curriculum, which includes band, choir, art, and music classes. All students, pre-K through eighth grade, meet once a week for music instruction with a full-time certified music teacher who has 39 years of experience in the classroom.

All students learn to play a variety of instruments through hands-on instruction. Recorders are the main focus of third grade through fifth grade; guitar and ukulele for sixth through eighth; and all students experience the mallet and percussion instruments. Guitar and piano lessons are offered after school and in the summer. Middle school students are tested in music theory and performance. The pre-K students sing and play mallets, percussion, and ukulele. The donation of 15 guitars from a local music venue brings the total of classroom guitars to 40, along with 28 ukuleles, a full range of Orff mallet instruments, and assorted African drums and hand percussion instruments. Students have played these instruments at weekly Masses, in seasonal concerts, and at a performance at the historic Ryman Auditorium in Nashville.

All students enjoy a visual arts class each week, and art history is offered to middle school students. Student art is displayed in area libraries, banks, and community centers.

Holy Rosary also has a concert band for students in grades fifth through eighth. In band, 23 students learn to read music, to play an instrument of their choice, and to work collaboratively and effectively with one another to produce beautiful music. The band performs at pep rallies, school concerts, and local community events. Holy Rosary also offers a choir for students third through eighth grade, with 21 students participating.

Artistic enhancement funding enables the school to host local artists and writers to provide enrichment for students through community outreach programs. Many students participate in community art and writing competitions throughout the year, such as the Stones River Women's Club writing contest and the Poverty

Art contest sponsored by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

## 2. Physical Education

Students at all grade levels attend physical education classes. Physical education classes meet between two and five times per week. Physical education focuses on living a healthy life through proper exercise, eating nutritious foods, and practicing healthy habits. The physical education teachers also partner with area high schools to provide supplemental athletic opportunities to Holy Rosary students, such as lacrosse and rugby clinics as well as a bowling field trip that incorporates math concepts as an added learning opportunity.

## 3. Foreign Language - Spanish

Spanish is taught in pre-K through eighth grade. Students in primary grades begin building their foundations in the language and culture through basic vocabulary development, songs, games, and conversation. More formalized instruction begins in fifth grade. Intermediate and middle school students use textbooks and project-based learning to study written and oral language along with the Spanish culture. Intermediate and middle school classes meet twice a week. Eighth grade students meet three times per week. Students are prepared for Advanced Placement coursework upon entering high school.

## 4. Technology/Library/Media classes

Multimedia classes for every grade meet once a week. Classes focus on research skills, internet safety, and digital citizenship. Students in every grade also visit the library at least once a week. The library has a collection of more than 11,000 books and 18 student magazine selections for the students' enjoyment. During the library period, students are instructed in library skills, including care of books, literary genres, and the online catalog. Beginning in fourth grade, students conduct research projects using library materials and the internet, including how to create a bibliography and cite sources, how to paraphrase, summarize, and avoid plagiarism. Middle grade students learn about fact, opinion, and propaganda. As often as possible the teachers and librarian collaborate on teaching projects including Tennessee History, map skills, research papers, and an understanding of interdisciplinary studies.

Students in every grade level participate in operating the school's live broadcast of school news through WHRA, the school's in-house studio. Students collaboratively produce, direct, and anchor the broadcast, providing a unique way for students to apply the essential skills of reading and writing the news. Middle school students practice their technology skills by working digital cameras, lights, and sound equipment. The broadcast is available on a closed YouTube channel for parents to see, and for students to improve their newscasting performance.

## 5. Other curriculum programs

The Catholic faith is central to Holy Rosary's mission. Students attend religion classes daily and Mass at Holy Rosary Church twice weekly. Masses are student-centered, with each grade level contributing to the daily readings, music, and altar serving. Students in all grades create a special liturgy during the school year. Students may sing, perform skits, or recite poetry during the special Mass. The religion curriculum is based on the foundation of the Catholic doctrines, values, and traditions, with sacramental preparation included in the second and eighth grades.

### **3. Academic Supports:**

#### **3a. Students performing below grade level**

Every student at Holy Rosary Academy learns and grows in different ways. To meet each child's needs, the administration and faculty research best practices, use data and assessments, and recognize each student's different learning styles.

Various types of student performance data are measured and evaluated consistently throughout the year to

determine individual student progress. Several faculty members and administrators work together as a team to review procedures for identifying individual student needs. The team developed a guide (STAT Binder) to help teachers identify and implement accommodations and strategies for struggling students.

The faculty is also committed to planning lessons that differentiate based on various learning styles. Faculty and administrators plan meetings with parents and county personnel to write individual learning plans for students and to make the changes necessary for student success. If needed, both parties meet with a representative from Metro Nashville Exceptional Education Services.

Students who perform below grade level often receive extra help outside of the classroom. Early Intervention Program, Title I, and Hermitage Learning Study Skills are a few of the resources available to Holy Rosary students, parents, and faculty. The Title I program is a federally funded program that provides language arts and math tutoring to students who reside in a school district that is zoned for the program. Students who qualify and receive Title I services receive frequent progress reports from their Title I teachers on their growth in the areas of math and reading.

Another program offered at Holy Rosary is the Peer Tutoring program, where an academically stronger student tutors another student who needs help in a specific area but does not qualify for Title I services. The program is offered after school to any student who requests it. Additionally, when the need arises, it is common for teachers to tutor students in math or reading before or after school. For example, the first grade teacher created a kindergarten reading skills group that meets after school to provide support for Exceptional Ed learners who have diagnosed learning disorders.

Holy Rosary also partners with Metro Nashville Public Schools to provide speech and language therapy, and currently serves 18 students who require this support. The number of students requiring additional support has increased during the years; therefore, the school has increased the level of support offered. Holy Rosary also contracts with an occupational therapist who meets with students on a regular basis to provide in-school support.

### **3b. Students performing above grade level**

The administration is committed to recognizing the need for continued growth as the school works toward creating an environment conducive to every child's needs. Holy Rosary utilizes Accelerated Reader and Accelerated Math programs that allow teachers to see what level students are performing throughout the year, and then assign higher or lower reading or math objectives to these students. For students who are currently performing above their current grade, the school offers many opportunities for additional learning. For example, for kindergarten or first grade students who have already mastered sight words, teachers offer words at a higher level. "Challenge" spelling words are given to higher-level spellers.

The middle school teachers re-evaluated the process for Pre-Algebra and Algebra I placement of students in an effort to ensure that each child is challenged and given the opportunity to develop skills that will help them succeed. For example, high-achieving eighth grade students will have the option to be dually enrolled in Geometry at Holy Rosary and one of the local Catholic high schools. This program will enable students to take more advanced classes when they enter high school.

### **3c. Special education**

#### **3d. ELLs, if a special program or intervention is offered**

#### **3e. Other populations (e.g., migrant), if a special program or intervention is offered**

## **PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE**

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### **1. Engaging Students:**

Students and faculty learn and grow together in an environment that is safe and value-oriented. Students know that every teacher will go the extra mile to help them become successful, well-rounded learners, both spiritually and academically. A counselor is on staff to provide additional social and emotional support, if needed.

Holy Rosary also provides its students with a wealth of opportunities outside the classroom setting for students to continue to grow academically, emotionally, and socially. For example, Holy Rosary hosts the Geo-BEE, a geography bee for fifth through eighth graders, and a Battle of the Books, where middle school students read at least 30 books throughout the year from a variety of genres, then participate in a trivia contest competing against other Catholic schools in the diocese. Students also have the opportunity to participate in designing, planting, and caring for a school vegetable and herb garden.

Holy Rosary also hosts a Family Math Night that is similar to Escape Games and scavenger hunts where students of all ages and their parents race around the school solving math problems and winning prizes. The school also provides avenues for students to gain new skills through school programs such as drama camp, several sports camps, band, forensics, chess club, music lessons, scouting activities, and a fall musical.

Holy Rosary believes teaching the values of the Catholic faith while shaping and molding students into global citizens directly contributes to a positive environment where all students feel loved, accepted, and inspired to make change in their community. Therefore, service projects are conducted in each grade. For example, the pre-K students participate in Treats for Troops and Mission Dolly, a blanket drive for sick children. The fifth grade students combine their religious studies with a service project by holding a Catholic liturgy on the road for elderly patients who cannot travel.

Holy Rosary also holds multiple school-wide service opportunities, including canned food drives, writing letters to troops overseas and the elderly, and helping and interacting with the homeless and hungry at Room in the Inn, hosted on Holy Rosary's campus every winter. All of these service opportunities give students a chance to put their faith into action while building character traits that will stay with them throughout their lives. By putting God first, Holy Rosary students naturally demonstrate a social-emotional balance leading to student success both in and out of the classroom.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

Holy Rosary Academy has enhanced its efforts to involve the community and school families in meaningful partnerships. Holy Rosary Academy is a member of the Donelson-Hermitage Chamber of Commerce and the Nashville Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. The school works with several community partners, such as the Knights of Columbus and Wilson Bank and Trust. The local chapter of the Knights of Columbus sponsors the annual school picnic and provides financial support for many school improvements.

Community organizations and members of the Holy Rosary family are frequently invited for guest lectures and special events; for example, Peter Dunlap, software engineer, recently gave a presentation on digital citizenship on campus. During the annual Catholic Schools Week Celebration, community members are invited to participate in various events such as the Volunteer Breakfast and Parents' Day. Grandparents are honored in October with a special Mass, brunch, and visit to the school.

The Home and School Association has continued to grow over the past several years. Administration, faculty, and parents work closely together to plan social events, fundraising projects, and Home and School meetings. The Home and School Association sponsors a Holy Rosary float in the Donelson Christmas Parade, in addition to ice cream socials, movie nights, a Spring Gala and Silent Auction, and other social events during the year. The Home and School Association has played an integral role in raising funds for gym floor repairs, replacing faculty and student computers, purchasing 30 new microscopes for the science

lab, and stocking the art supply closet each year.

Special events are planned throughout the school year. During the month of November, veterans throughout the community visit and speak with students. Each month a specific grade level plans and participates in a special liturgy. Students and teachers work together to plan music, speaking roles, and a special presentation for an all-school Mass. As always, parents, parish members, and community members are invited to attend. A brunch is provided for all families and friends each month. In addition, the school celebrates several national awareness events, such as National Red Ribbon Week and Earth Day.

Faculty and school administration communicate through weekly and bi-weekly homework and grade reports, and through a newly redesigned website. The principal writes a monthly newsletter and records a weekly voice message to communicate news and updates. The Viking Voice twice-annual magazine provides parents and community members with a more in-depth look at school events and programs throughout the year. Parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers and administrators concerning their students' academic and social well-being.

### **3. Creating Professional Culture:**

The administration at Holy Rosary Academy and the Diocese of Nashville provide faculty and staff members with many professional development opportunities throughout the year. The diocese holds several conferences as well as hands-on working sessions. These working sessions provide teachers a forum in which they can discuss and brainstorm current educational topics. The Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese frequently surveys the faculty of diocesan schools for feedback and suggestions when planning workshops.

The administration believes teachers must continually renew and energize themselves in order to provide students with a dynamic learning environment. Therefore, teachers at Holy Rosary are required to attend two professional development sessions per year. These sessions include guest speakers and professional presenters. Topics range from student learning techniques to current health and safety issues to technology training, all to enhance classroom learning.

In addition to these sessions, monthly faculty meetings are also dedicated to professional development. Holy Rosary employs a "train the trainer" model in which teachers share new strategies and resources. For example, a first grade teacher attended a conference on the Orton-Gillingham teaching method in the summer. When she returned, one of the first professional development seminars hosted that year was on what she learned. Other professional development topics included Reading Intervention, Exceptional Educational, and Data Day, which all focused on teaching students who have an undiagnosed learning disability.

To contribute to the well-being of the faculty, the administration at Holy Rosary created a Sunshine Committee, which is a group of teachers who plan morale boosters throughout the year. In the office, there is a "Staff Shout Out" board for faculty members to write positive notes about each other, and a birthday board to recognize birthdays each month. There is also a "Woot-Woot!" cart that travels once a month to each teacher's classroom, filled with festive snacks for them to enjoy, and at least once a quarter, the committee coordinates a potluck or luncheon. These positive actions help teachers feel supported and encouraged throughout the school year.

These best practices, in addition to highly motivated teachers, students, and parents, provide an environment in which every student can succeed.

### **4. School Leadership:**

The leadership team at Holy Rosary Academy includes the parish pastor, the principal, the director of instructional programs and tuition manager, and the admissions director. They meet with the Superintendent of Schools of the Nashville diocese to ensure Holy Rosary remains consistent with diocesan policies and curriculum. The current Holy Rosary leadership team fully embraces the school's mission as an integral

component and driving force behind the success of the school and its students.

The main impetus behind Holy Rosary's success is that the school leadership team sees each student as individuals, unique and unrepeatable. Each student has their own gifts and talents, strengths, and weaknesses. It is the objective of Holy Rosary to identify those gifts, talents, strengths, and weaknesses, so that teachers can challenge each student to grow, to be educated, and to be formed as Christian disciples in the context of a loving, nurturing, and safe environment. This philosophy is clearly evident in the Exceptional Ed Program.

The principal regularly collaborates with the Home and School Association leadership team, which includes parents from across the school. The principal also engages parents in the decision-making process. For example, a committee consisting of the principal, a teacher leader, and several parents reviewed the school safety plan. Their work led to a new, improved plan that addresses student safety concerns.

Together with the Home and School Association, School Advisory Board, Finance Committee, and faculty and staff, the principal is focused on short-term goals of student well-being and achievement, but also the long-term vitality of the school. For example, the principal recently completed a four-year strategic plan that included focus groups with parents and teachers, with the purpose of increasing enrollment, fundraising capabilities, and student and teacher achievement and well-being. He also undertook a new marketing campaign to deliver the school's message to prospective and current families. The principal also launched a new initiative: to create a middle school House system with the goal of strengthening relationships among all Holy Rosary stakeholders. The goal is to give students an opportunity to meet on a regular basis with a small group of peers and a faculty advisor to share concerns, thoughts, or issues, building an environment where all students feel loved and heard.

The principal promotes the development of teacher and student leadership. Teachers serve and chair committees that influence the operation of Holy Rosary and the accreditation process. Student achievement is influenced by the administration's support of teacher leadership.

## **PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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Within the last 10 years, there is one program that truly embodies the school's mission of educating and embracing each child: the Exceptional Ed program.

Exceptional Ed serves students with diagnosed learning disabilities and students who need extra support in and out of the classroom. Although Exceptional Ed is not a special education program, it is made up of teachers with special education degrees and significant experience working with students with learning disabilities. Holy Rosary also contracts with Metro Nashville Public Schools for Title I tutors, speech and language therapists, and occupational therapists who work with students in school. Additionally, faculty members collaborate with private therapists and tutors, provided by families, to ensure students' needs are being met.

When learning/medical disabilities are suspected, teachers work with parents to follow protocol in the Exceptional Ed program. This includes evaluating students, setting goals, and implementing accommodations, such as preferential seating, extra time on tests, color-coding materials, and modified testing methods, all to help with focus. There are accommodation stations in each classroom that include: reading trackers, pencil grips, highlighting tape, sensory fidgets, and cushions.

The school also uses the IXL program for students struggling with specific concepts or ones who need to be pushed further, plus a high/low buddy system, which is a peer tutoring program. In cases where students need additional help in one subject, they are allowed to take the subject with a different grade level. For example, an eighth grade student is receiving math instruction at the sixth grade level to accommodate her needs, while a third grade student is attending a fourth grade math class to challenge his math skills.

Today, the Exceptional Ed program includes five students with dyslexia, two with autism, 10 with ADHD, two with hearing impairments, 16 with speech needs, and five with other learning disabilities. This number is significantly higher than five years ago, which is a positive. Teachers are able to identify more students who need help and can offer support earlier.

This approach is backed by student success rates. A recent graduate with autism has transitioned into the local Catholic high school with ease. A current eighth grade student with global delay, due to being born prematurely, has been at Holy Rosary since pre-K, and with the accommodations he has received, he will transition into high school easily. A current third grade student is hearing impaired, born prematurely and has fine motor concerns. After evaluating his time at Holy Rosary, his teachers recommended that he skip half a grade to place him in a more appropriate academic level, and now he is flourishing.

## PART VII - NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

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1. Non-public school association(s): Catholic

Identify the religious or independent associations, if any, to which the school belongs. Select the primary association first.

2. Does the school have nonprofit, tax-exempt (501(c)(3)) status?      Yes X      No
3. What is the educational cost per student?      \$7436  
(School budget divided by enrollment)
4. What is the average financial aid per student?      \$1070
5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?      3%
6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction?      13%