

U.S. Department of Education
2022 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[] Public or [X] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Saint Paul Catholic School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1755 W. Harrison Boulevard
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Valparaiso State IN Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 46385-7018

County Porter

Telephone (219) 462-3374 Fax (219) 477-1763

Web site/URL https://www.stpaulvalpo.org/ E-mail lhughes@stpaulvalpo.org

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* Dr. Joseph Majchrowicz E-mail jmajchrowicz@dcgary.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Diocese of Gary Tel. (219) 769-9292

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 Thomas Calhoun
(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, leave .blank*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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 2021 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 must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2016 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: 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 or 2021.
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. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s nomination and/or rescind a school’s award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

12. 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.

The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for current school year (2021-2022) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools. . For charter schools: If a charter school is part of the public school system, information should be provided for the public school district. If a charter school is considered its own district or part of a charter district, the information provided should reflect that.)

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. Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not for the district.)

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 in the school as of October 1, 2021 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	12	10	22
K	12	11	23
1	10	18	28
2	11	11	22
3	14	8	22
4	10	12	22
5	12	10	22
6	12	16	28
7	8	12	20
8	13	4	17
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	114	112	226

*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):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 3 % Asian
 - 2 % Black or African American
 - 19 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 2 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 70 % White
 - 4 % 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 2020 - 2021 school year: 5%

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.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	8
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	3
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	11
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	201
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.05
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	5

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

Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1 %
2 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 12 %

Total number students who qualify: 26

8. Students receiving special education services 4 %
 With an IEP or 504: 8 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. All students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504 should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>0</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>2</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>1</u> Developmental Delay | <u>2</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>4</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1

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. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher, CTE teacher.	10
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	5
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.	0

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 23:1

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

Required Information	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2016	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	98%	98%	97%	98%	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 2021.

Post-Secondary Status	
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 No

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

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

At Saint Paul Catholic School, teachers, parents, and students work together to create a safe, caring environment, based on Christian values and service to others that enables students to learn and develop spiritually, academically, emotionally, and physically.

16. Provide a URL link to or text of the school’s nondiscrimination policy.

Saint Paul Catholic School admits students of any race, color, sex, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, ancestry, or sexual orientation in the administration of its education policies, admissions policies, or athletic or other school-administered programs.

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

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Saint Paul Catholic School (SPCS) is a fully accredited Catholic elementary and middle school located at the Western edge of the City of Valparaiso, Indiana. Valparaiso, located in Porter County near the Southern tip of Lake Michigan, is the county seat and is primarily a middle-class community with a 2020 population of 34,253. The location of SPCS makes it an attractive alternative for families residing in other nearby school districts who wish to provide a Catholic education for their children. The school community is mainly composed of dual-income, white-collar, upper-middle class families. SPCS is fortunate to have a strong and viable relationship with Valparaiso University, the Valparaiso Community School System, the YMCA and the Boys and Girls Clubs, which enhance and enrich the academic community of the school.

The school was founded in 1867 and has grown and continued to flourish. Presently, the school houses grades pre-Kindergarten through grade eight. There are twelve full-time, licensed and fully certified teachers on staff, seven instructional aides, an enrichment / remedial teacher, and a fully certified principal. These devoted people work together with the pastor to provide the only Catholic school environment in the Valparaiso area. A dedicated support staff of seven in the office, kitchen, and grounds / building care round out the total picture of SPCS. Teachers, staff, and faculty at SPCS encourage each student and help them to reach their full potential.

Saint Paul teachers and staff are deeply committed to the mission that the values presented in the Gospel are integrated into the daily curriculum. SPCS strives to ensure a balance of faith formation and academic information on all levels. Due to the strong support of committed parents and a dedicated staff, SPCS is able to offer a faith-centered, values-based academic education to two hundred twenty-six students.

SPCS has a reputation for setting high academic standards and fostering strong leadership skills. The school provides a Christian atmosphere in which growth and learning are facilitated for students of all abilities and an environment that stresses quality education. The staff of SPCS is compassionate, caring, and committed to educating the whole person.

In addition to the core curriculum of math, English language arts, social studies, and science; students receive instruction in music, art, physical education, and information technology. Science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) is a part of the academic curriculum at every grade level. Technology is integrated into the curriculum and teachers utilize Chromebooks to improve and enhance the learning of each student. Differentiated instruction is provided within each classroom for the benefit of all students.

SPCS provides a strong academic curriculum along with extracurricular programs. The curriculum has been aligned with Common Core and Indiana State Standards and also includes an emphasis on the Catholic faith. The educational mission of the school is to provide the ten basic elements of a Catholic school: mission, leadership, faith development, message, worship, whole child, faith community, tradition, service, and parental involvement.

SPCS offers many extra-curricular and leadership opportunities for students. Saint Paul offers school choir, chess club, Bricks 4 Kids, Young Rembrandts, Drama Club, Boy and Girl Scouts, Mathletes, Science Olympiad and Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) sports. The highlight for all Saint Paul students is "Family Friday", an innovative program which is designed to foster a family atmosphere among all students and staff. Student "families", composed of one student from each grade level, meet monthly with adult staff mentors and participate in a variety of activities which help students develop appropriate social interactions.

Covid-19 has presented many challenges to SPCS. During the 2020-2021 school year, all students learned in school; remote learning was not an option for anyone. Families who did not want their children to learn in school either found schools who offered a remote option or homeschooled their children. Fortunately, the majority of these families returned to school for the 2021-2022 school year.

Saint Paul teachers have implemented many strategies to facilitate learning and to accommodate students who are out of school because of quarantine or illness due to Covid-19. Kindergarten through third grade

teachers provide lessons to students using Seesaw, an interactive computer platform, which allows students to learn from anywhere. Teachers of students in fourth through eighth grade post all assignments on Google Classroom; this allows absent students to have access to classwork and tests. Screencastify, a screen recorder for Google Chrome, is also used by teachers to record, edit, and share real-time videos for absent students. Teachers meet with absent students via Zoom or Google Meet to provide individualized instruction and to answer questions. Because of these strategies, teachers have not identified learning loss as found in other schools.

Extracurricular activities have been most affected by Covid-19. All extracurricular activities, including CYO sports were cancelled for the 2020-2021 school year. As the 2021-2022 school year progresses, a variety of activities are being restarted with student safety being the first consideration.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

The curriculum at Saint Paul Catholic School is aligned to the Indiana State Academic Standards and the curricular guidelines which are provided by the Diocese of Gary. The Indiana Academic Standards are used as a guide for teachers as they determine the best instructional practices for each content area. Each teacher utilizes a variety of instructional objectives, strategies, resources, and methods to implement in his or her classroom.

Saint Paul Catholic School strives to create a strong, cohesive faculty that works together to reach the common goal of academic excellence. Teachers and administrators communicate effectively on a regular basis; daily morning gatherings are used for quick check-ins, the staff also has monthly faculty meetings, grade level meetings, and yearly diocesan required professional development meetings. The administration and teachers regularly discuss effective teaching practices and techniques as they work together to implement newly adopted materials and textbooks.

The school's curriculum is reviewed and revised yearly when each particular subject area has its state textbook adoption year. Current curriculum guides include scope and sequence charts, learner outcomes for students, and activities and lesson plans that match content areas. The principal maintains curricular records in her office, each teacher has their own curriculum records, and all Indiana State Standards are available online and in written form for parents who wish to stay abreast of this instructional information.

The teachers and faculty of Saint Paul Catholic School are dedicated to providing a safe, caring environment, based on Christian values and service to others that enables students to learn and develop spiritually, academically, emotionally, and physically.

1b. Reading/English language arts curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The kindergarten teacher uses the Orton-Gillingham (OG) approach to teaching reading and phonics. This approach is systematic, sequential, and cumulative. While OG is typically known for individual practice, Saint Paul achieves success in whole group instruction in conjunction with small groups in the enrichment program. Students develop background knowledge, comprehension, robust vocabularies, and critical thinking skills through oral discussions, whole group activities, and weekly quizzes.

Teachers in grades 1-5 use the Catholic Identity Edition of Journeys reading series by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt for their basal reading series. Weekly assessments cover comprehension, phonics, vocabulary, and skills in context. Each end of unit assessment includes reading complex fiction and nonfiction texts, performance tasks, and an assessment of state standards. They also use the Language Arts/Grammar book which supports growth in understanding the English language when reading complex text, writing across multiple disciplines, and orally presenting familiar and new materials.

Students throughout the 5 grades write on a weekly basis to inform, persuade, and entertain on a variety of topics. Teachers work through editing in the younger grades with student conferences, while older grades work on their own editing or use peer editing with teacher guidance. From rough drafts and editing sessions, students move on to final copy and publishing of their work.

The middle school language arts programs focus on cultivating 21st century written and oral communication skills that follow Indiana Academic Standards. Through the use of the Voyages in English grammar and writing program, rule-based grammar instruction provides students with the opportunity to apply their knowledge to their writing. Skills learned include identification and proper usage of the parts of speech, punctuation rules, and sentence mechanics. Weekly genre-based writing instruction provides students with

an opportunity to consider audience, purpose, and media while applying their knowledge and skills to steps of the writing process. Peer collaboration, presentations, and group discussions form important cornerstones of this process. Genres studied include narrative, descriptive, argumentative, persuasive, and research writing. Submissions of written work throughout the writing process provide the opportunity for formative assessments. Final drafts provide the opportunity for summative assessments of writing and grammar skills. Writing and grammar assignments are submitted using MLA format in class or within Google Classroom.

In middle school literature, classes evaluate texts from a variety of genres using Indiana State Standards as a guide. World literature takes the form of short stories, articles, plays, poems, and novels. Not only is text analyzed for what it states, but students also cite textual evidence, including descriptive words, to draw out author mood and tone. Formative assessments in the form of quizzes, comprehension questions, and writing assignments are given. Summative assessments include topic papers and semester exams.

Finally, SadlierOnline vocabulary units offer systematic, grade-level vocabulary instruction for students in grades 3-8. Each Sadlier unit teaches students Greek and Latin root words, connotations and denotations of words, synonyms and antonyms, the use of context to determine the meanings of words, and grade-level word definitions. During each unit, students complete multiple online assignments that provide practice in identification and usage of weekly word lists. Formative assignments provide a check of student knowledge; unit tests provide summative evaluations.

1c. Mathematics curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The mathematics curriculum in grades K-5, McGraw-Hill, was developed for the Indiana Academic Standards. My Math was chosen because it delivers an engaging student experience aligned with focus, coherence, and rigor. The focus is created by narrowing the scope so students have deeper experiences with mathematics. Students stay motivated and engaged with the essential question that is clearly defined in each lesson. Teachers model the skill, work through the skills with the class, then assign individual class work based on the student's needs. Teachers can establish differentiated instruction for each concept with approaching, on level, and beyond level curriculums. This curriculum is coherent by not only linking learning with each chapter, but also across the grades to establish and maintain connections to support student growth and understanding. Key elements focused on for rigor are conceptual learning, application, and procedural skill and fluency. Teachers reinforce conceptual understanding by using the Talk Math component of My Math. This component helps make the students real-world problem solvers. There are also HOT problems with higher level thinking skills, project based learning, and performance tasks. Timed math tests are given daily which allow students to be able to work on skill, fluency, and to be able to apply these skills in the everyday world. Students are able to utilize the math book online with digital resources, hands-on activities, and school to home resources. The math curriculum also utilizes various websites such as IXL, eSpark, Brain Pop and Brain Pop Jr., and Prodigy.

The middle school mathematics curriculum utilizes McGraw Hill as the foundation. In-class daily instruction is based upon rigorous Indiana State Standards and tailored to meet individual student needs. Expectations for all students are set high and are achievable. The emphasis in math is for students to be challenged, engaged, and pointed toward success in middle school and beyond. The classroom focuses on collaboration and that mistakes can lead to greater thought.

Seventh and eighth grade students are working a grade ahead on Pre-Algebra and Algebra 1 accordingly. The frequent use of technology such as graphing calculators helps prepare the students for the rigor of high school. The use of projects and real-world applications of math concepts brings math to life and enables students to connect math to their world. Sixth through eighth grade students utilize Citizen Math software for thought provoking real-world math topics. Often these topics lead to in depth class discussions since they do not necessarily have right or wrong answers that students crave. To challenge advanced students, the school has partnered with the local community college to offer an adaptive diagnostic skill-building program aligned with Indiana State Standards. Additionally, the extra-curricular Math Team hosted by a local university professor is open to all middle schoolers looking to take on the added challenge of math competitions.

Assessments vary from self-assessment by silent classroom polls and timed digital assignments which help drive instruction, to digital and paper quizzes and tests, projects, and final exams.

1d. Science curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Saint Paul Catholic School uses Pearson Interactive Science in elementary grades and McGraw Hill Integrated Science in middle school as a foundation for the science curriculum. Pearson Interactive Science offers an innovative program that makes student learning personal, relevant, and engaging through labs and hands-on activities. At the primary elementary level, science instruction is designed to spark the students interest in science. In upper elementary, students begin a deeper understanding of science concepts and problem solving. Middle school science focuses on college and career readiness through hands-on project based learning with an emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM), problem solving, and real-world connections.

At the primary level, teachers use a variety of tools such as Mystery Doug, Brain Pop Jr., and monthly STEM projects to help spark students' interest in science. Science units are cross-curricular throughout multiple subject areas. For example, the science animal habitat unit is aligned with a Fact Writing unit. Class field trips are planned to lead to real world science learning. For instance, the apple life cycle unit is concluded with a trip to the local apple orchard and the mammal unit is summed up with a trip to a local dairy farm.

Upper elementary lessons are designed to engage students in science inquiry through experiments, STEM activities, and problem-based, hands-on learning. Digital experience plays a part in daily study; students use chromebooks for research, videos, and to help explain scientific concepts. STEM projects are incorporated into reading and math units when applicable. The elementary science program provides a strong foundation to prepare students for middle school.

The middle school science program's rigor, which prepares students for high school and beyond, is designed to provide students with college and career readiness skills. The science classroom is focused on collaboration, cooperation, and innovation. Career connections are incorporated into the topics that are studied, which include life science, physical science, and earth/space science. Major middle school projects include designing wind turbines, mousetrap cars, Rube Goldberg contraptions, and The Great Planetary Debate.

1e. Social studies/history/civic learning curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The Saint Paul elementary school Social Studies curriculum provides students with an understanding of the past, present and future. Kindergarten through fifth grade students use McGraw Hill textbooks designed with the State of Indiana Social Studies standards in mind. The curriculum focuses on communities, citizenship, government, economics, geography, and history. The elementary teachers provide project-based learning, which includes a colony project, creating a totem pole, exploring trading cards, Famous Hoosiers, and region posters. The teachers also utilize Current Events and Scholastic News to help provide extra classroom instruction.

At the middle school level Saint Paul Catholic School follows Indiana State Social Studies Standards. The curriculum includes studying and exploring U.S. History, Eastern Hemisphere, Western Hemisphere, geography, government, economics, citizenship and culture. The Saint Paul middle school teacher utilizes a variety of instructional programs to achieve high standards and while also providing differentiated instruction. Programs such as IXL, CNN-Ten, News Currents and trade books are used to provide support to the materials which are being taught while using the state approved textbook and standards.

Saint Paul Catholic School provides rich experiences for students in the form of classroom projects, guest speakers, Junior Achievement and National Junior Honor Society. These activities help students explore possible careers in government positions, service, civic duty, and the basic human rights of all people.

Community involvement is of utmost importance in the Social Studies curriculum throughout all grade

levels. Students coordinate Food Drives, Angel Trees, Caps for Kids, Relay Recess to help support Cancer Research, Go Pink for Breast Cancer, and Birthright. The students also collect money for animal shelters and the Caring Place, a shelter for battered women. The National Junior Honor Society makes bags for marathons and also puts on a Veteran's Day Program. Saint Paul's outreach is also global. Students have raised money for Living Water, which helps provide wells in India and Africa. The school has also purchased goats and cows to be given to Third World Countries.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

Saint Paul Catholic School pre-K program is relatively new to the school. Saint Paul's pre-K offers a full day program that includes 4 and 5-year-old children. The curriculum is aligned with the Indiana Early Learning Development Foundations Framework. Saint Paul's Pre-K program takes a "learning through play" approach which promotes a child's cognitive, social, emotional and physical development while enhancing the child's mastery of academic concepts and motivation to learn; which in turn creates lifelong learners who will thrive in the 21st century world. In addition to the Early Learning Foundations, the pre-K program offers an opportunity for the children to learn about the Catholic faith and become closer to God.

The pre-K teacher works closely with the kindergarten teacher and collaborates with teachers in first through third grade to ensure a strong foundation that is aligned with the Indiana Standards for early elementary education. The results of such a collaboration has developed an academic program that gives the children the skills they need to be successful, independent learners.

Pre-K students are assessed four times a year using a combination of observational, formative and summative assessments. Assessing the children throughout the year enables the pre-K teacher to make adjustments to the curriculum to differentiate instruction. Differentiating the pre-K curriculum has resulted in approximately 90% of the pre-K students to be ready for kindergarten at the end of the year.

Since March of 2019, the pre-K program has adapted seamlessly to the COVID-19 protocols. In 2019 the school went to virtual learning from March to May. For the school years of 2020 - 2021 and 2021 - 2022 the pre-K implemented the same protocols that were put in place for grades kindergarten through 8. The pre-K program practiced all health measures, such as wearing masks, students using individual supplies, disinfecting all surfaces after each use, washing hands regularly, and maintaining social distances. The pre-K children adapted quickly and without incident.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Students in grades K-8 are guided through a variety of artistic experiences through the fundamentals of drawing, painting, color theory, and art appreciation. The curriculum is designed to increase the students' skill levels. All students are exposed to a wide variety of techniques and media. Creativity and imagination are developed while expanding aesthetic appreciation and cultural sensitivity; thus, stimulating a vital interest in the visual arts.

Music classes are provided in cooperation with the Valparaiso Community School Corporation. Students also have access to participate in band and orchestra by attending classes at a local middle school or the high school. Further, liturgical music is taught at each grade level. During non-Covid times, a school choir leads singing at every student Mass. The school choir is open to all students in grades 1-8 and rehearsals are held after school.

Physical Education classes are based on activity and participation. All children are encouraged to do as much of each activity as they are able. Classes spend time working on loco-motor movements, strength, and flexibility, cardiovascular endurance, and game play. The physical education teacher utilizes National PE Standards. These standards are met through a variety of individual, partner, small group and/or large group

games and activities. The lessons provided are designed to meet the needs for the highly skilled as well as the lesser skilled individuals while simultaneously being challenging, engaging and developmentally appropriate for all.

Students in fourth through eighth grades learn Spanish three days a week. The class is meant to give the children a flavor for the Spanish language and culture in preparation for high school.

Students in grades K-8 attend computer technology classes once or twice a week, depending on their age. The program covers data and information, computing devices, programs, digital citizenship, word processing, and basic keyboarding. Students are engaged by incorporating these skills into fun projects and real life applications. Students create spreadsheets, conduct surveys, draw pictures, and write documents.

Students in preK-5 attend library/media classes once a week. The curriculum focuses on the different types of genres, authors, and illustrators. This overview gives students a good understanding of literature. The goal of the library/media program is to instill a love of reading in students by encouraging them to explore the different types of books and subjects. Additionally, students learn the elements of fiction and nonfiction and they learn about text features and the different categories in the Dewey Decimal System.

The Catholic faith is an integral part of everyday learning at SPCS. Through daily religious instruction, the students learn the history of the Catholic religion, are introduced to the sacraments of the Catholic faith, and are taught to emulate the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. The school's Code of Conduct reflects these beliefs and Christ is used as a model throughout each day. The behavior code reads: "Mindful of the fact that God lives in each one of us, we believe that everyone deserves to be treated in a respectful manner."

Health science is offered to middle school students in grades 6, 7, and 8. The curriculum is designed around the Indiana State Standards for Health and Wellness. Students learn decision-making skills, conflict-resolution skills, and how to avoid unhealthy behaviors. Sixth-grade students complete the D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program in conjunction with the Valparaiso Police Department. This program gives students the skills they need to avoid involvement in drugs, gangs, and violence. By the time students leave eighth grade, they are prepared to lead a healthy lifestyle.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Saint Paul Catholic School utilizes assessment results to evaluate and modify the instruction for each learner. Analysis of formal and informal assessments, such as Dibels, NWEA, and ILEARN, along with teacher observation, help the classroom teacher identify any student who is in need of additional support.

In order to provide academic assistance to students who are performing below grade level or who have been identified as needing remediation, Saint Paul School utilizes an enrichment teacher. The enrichment teacher provides small group and individualized instruction to students who are in kindergarten through fifth grade. The enrichment teacher works with these students on developing their skills in 25 minute blocks 4 times a week.

During literacy enrichment, students read short stories from the Fountas and Pinnell Literacy Series. The Fountas and Pinnell series is designed with rich lessons in guided reading, writing, phonics, spellings, and word study. The enrichment teacher has also been trained in the Orton-Gillingham approach, which teaches students how to decode words into their syllables or phonemes so that they can begin to read words.

The classroom teacher monitors the progress of the students who receive assistance by evaluating their growth in their personal learning objectives. As students improve their skills and their NWEA scores, they graduate from the enrichment program and are no longer pulled out of the classroom for small group instruction.

In addition, each classroom teacher uses data from NWEA assessments to create small learning groupings

within the classroom. The small learning groups are comprised of students that are in need of additional work for the given skill or standard. For example, if the data shows that a small group of students scored low on addition with regrouping, the teacher may set up a "hands on activity" for that specific group of students.

Many SPCS staff members have been trained in Orton-Gillingham through a program offered by Marian University of Indianapolis. This is possible due to the Indiana Department of Education Student Learning Recovery Grant. Through this program, the faculty and staff have been given a comprehensive system of supports and interventions to help learning loss recovery. Because of this course, teachers are able to tutor children that are in need of after school assistance at a free cost to their parents.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

While Saint Paul Catholic School does not have a formal gifted program, it has historically provided a strong academic curriculum which is aligned to and exceeds the requirements of both the Common Core and Indiana State Standards. The school's administration and teachers have high expectations for the achievement of students and they provide a rigorous, faith-based education to all students of all abilities. This challenging curriculum is achieved by providing a variety of teacher driven instructional strategies implemented to meet the diverse needs of the students. Each student is challenged to reach his or her academic potential through a range of inquiry-based activities that encourage higher level thinking and creativity. Curricular materials within math and language arts allow teachers to be able to differentiate instruction for students of all abilities.

Science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) projects in science classes also contribute to the differentiated lessons. Additionally, students who are identified as highly proficient in the classroom are given work that is appropriately challenging. Seventh and eighth grade students are working a grade ahead on Pre-Algebra and Algebra 1 accordingly.

All K-8 students take the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) testing provided through Northwest Education Association (NWEA) in language arts, reading, and mathematics in early fall, winter, and late spring of each school year. Utilizing the NWEA MAP results, other formal and informal assessments, and teacher observation and experience, classroom teachers evaluate the academic progress of each of their students to identify those in need of additional academic challenge and support. Each teacher uses this NWEA data to make small learning groups to provide additional academic rigor that will help each student reach his or her academic potential.

3c. Special education:

Although a Special Education Program is not specifically offered, Saint Paul Catholic School (SPCS) coordinates with Porter County Special Education Services (PCES) to provide a variety of services to students who have been determined to need academic or speech assistance.

SPCS utilizes the Response to Intervention (RTI) strategies to assist students who are not successful in the classroom. Teachers use the three tier system when they analyze student growth and identify when an individual student is performing well-below grade level and needs additional support in order to succeed in the classroom. During this process, teachers work with parents to identify students who need to be evaluated by PCES to determine whether consultation services or a service plan is needed by the student.

Once a student is identified as meeting the criteria for a specific learning disability or issue, SPCS works with the local public school system who provides services through a 504 or Individual Service Plan (ISP).

3d. English Language Learners, if a special program or intervention is offered:

A special program or intervention is not offered or needed.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

At Saint Paul Catholic School, the teachers and staff strive to promote an atmosphere built on principles of Christ's teachings. Inherent in these principles is the idea that all people should treat each other with Christian respect and love at all times. Teachers, parents, and students work together to create a safe, caring environment, based on Catholic values and service to others, which enables students to learn and develop spiritually, academically, emotionally, and physically. All school programs at Saint Paul are designed to promote Christ-like behavior between students. Respect and dignity for others is a hallmark of an education at Saint Paul school.

Saint Paul school has developed a rigorous educational program focused on "best practices" in instructional strategies. Additionally, Saint Paul's educational program focuses on high teacher and parent expectations, a seven point grading scale that is higher than other neighboring schools and a strong emphasis on academic achievement.

Teachers and staff continuously work to engage and motivate students. Students become engaged in the school because the staff members and teachers are committed to creating a sense of family and community during the school day. Students are welcomed to school every day by the principal with a smile and a personal greeting as they enter the building. This greeting helps each student develop a sense of belonging and helps each of them to feel a part of the greater school community. As the students walk down the hall and enter their classroom, they are again greeted by their teacher and any other staff member that they see along the way. Another key in developing a sense of community happens because of the daily announcements. Each day begins with the principal's morning announcements where students are welcomed back to school, birthdays are acknowledged, special events are listed, and the morning prayer, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the school's Character Pledge are recited. Students end each day with afternoon announcements and prayer led by the school secretary.

The teachers promote social and emotional learning (SEL) and growth through religion class and through the use of Friendly, a school-wide SEL program. Friendly is designed to change school culture by offering lessons that provide social and emotional learning lessons to address a variety of student behaviors, reduce stress, equip students with healthy relationship skills, and improve their focus and academic performance.

The focus on Christ-like behavior as a foundational basis throughout the school creates a positive learning environment, which in turn creates a successful school.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Saint Paul Catholic School recognizes parents as the primary educators of their children and encourages them to become deeply involved in the school community. Parents are kept informed, especially through the app Remind utilized by most classroom teachers, the weekly principal's newsletter the Panther Post, and daily communications from classroom teachers as needed. Parents are afforded the opportunity to support their children's learning through classroom and school participation.

One of the most vital forces in the everyday functioning of Saint Paul school is the parent volunteer program. Parents give countless hours of their time and talent to help with the cafeteria, library, field trips, and other special projects to make the school a productive learning environment for the benefit of all children. Only because of the continued interest and generosity of parents and Saint Paul parishioners who support the dedicated, hard-working staff, can the administration and staff provide the best education for the students according to the high goals that have always been maintained by the school.

Saint Paul Catholic school strives to provide a positive school climate between staff, students, and families. Staff members meet each morning to "touch base" and discuss any important items. There are morning and afternoon announcements for students to provide important information. Parents are sent a weekly

newsletter from the principal and other informational emails for fundraisers or other school events are sent by the school office. The school also maintains a website and utilizes social media for community and parent communication.

In partnership with the Valparaiso Community School Corporation, Saint Paul Catholic School offers a hot lunch program, bus service, speech service, music, band, and orchestra. At the end of fourth grade, students are introduced to orchestra instruments. Those interested can choose an instrument and take summer classes. In Fall of fifth grade, these students go to the high school two mornings a week for instructional classes. Students who are interested in band begin the program at the end of fifth grade and go to a local middle school to participate in the band program.

The School Advisory Council supports the school by creating school-wide fundraising events such as the Ice Cream Social, Oktoberfest, Trunk or Treat, and Breakfast with Santa.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Saint Paul Catholic School's professional culture is driven by the commitment of the teachers, staff, and principal to the promotion of the growth and development of each student's faith and their academic achievement. The majority of this cohesive staff has been working together for over five years. The consistency, stability and experience of the staff contributes to the positive professional and school culture and is also responsible for the trusting, family environment that is felt by the children, families, and staff at the school.

The principal, along with the teachers, continuously evaluates current classroom strategies and practices to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum. Using this information, they plan for a variety of professional development opportunities that provide the knowledge that allows them to modify, design, and revise current programs to promote the highest student growth in learning and achievement for Saint Paul students. The yearly professional development goal of the Saint Paul faculty is to enhance each teachers' curricular knowledge base, to enrich their understanding of current teaching methods, and to review and revise their teaching practices in order to maximize each student's learning and academic achievement.

Teachers utilize educational best practices as identified by their participation in individually selected professional development activities. They also review the information provided to all teachers by the Indiana Department of Education and within updated Indiana State Standards. The ongoing yearly focus on professional development encourages the Saint Paul staff to re-evaluate their curriculum and instructional plans as they learn new and/or different information regarding these educational best practices.

While the diocese determines diocesan-wide faith-based programs and professional development, individual professional development is focused on the personal professional goals and interests of each teacher. Each teacher is able to request individualized professional development opportunities and workshops utilizing Title II funds available from the Valparaiso Community School district.

The principal has developed practices which establishes a school culture where teachers feel valued and supported. She maintains an open-door policy which continues to build trust with the staff. Teachers are consulted in decision making, particularly when decisions are made regarding their personal professional development and academic or faith-based areas that the staff would like to see developed or improved. Faculty meetings are designed to promote staff unity and collaboration.

4. School Leadership:

Leadership at Saint Paul Catholic School is based on the tenets of servant leadership which is sensitive to the needs of others and focuses on their growth and well-being. The principal is approachable and relatable which creates an environment that builds relationships with others.

This form of effective leadership by the school principal, who is committed to the Catholic school, is collaborative in nature, reflects a shared vision, open communication, and concerted action by the principal,

pastor, and the parish community to evangelize the school community.

The principal plays a central role in the daily carrying out of the school's mission. This is accomplished by creating a safe, caring environment, based on Christian values and service to others, that enables students to learn and develop spiritually, academically, emotionally and physically. She offers shared leadership by valuing the input of the pastor, teachers, and parents.

The principal is the instructional leader of the school. She has the responsibility for identifying and ensuring that the school is following state and diocesan policies; those relating to health, curriculum, educational methods, state standards, and policies and then sharing them with the teachers, staff and parents. The principal meets monthly with the Superintendent of Schools and other diocesan principals to ensure that best practices are followed.

The pastor has ultimate responsibility for the school. As such, he is the liaison between the parish and the school. The principal and the pastor work together so that the pastor can stay informed of current problems, issues, and happenings in the school. The pastor offers support to the teachers and parents by meeting with them as needed.

Parents are a necessary part of the leadership team at Saint Paul. Parents are recognized as the primary educators of the child and are thus deeply involved in the school. Saint Paul has a very involved School Advisory Council which is composed of the pastor, principal, and 10 volunteer parent members. This council acts in an advisory role to the pastor and principal as policies are made. Additionally, parents are kept informed, especially through the web site, and are afforded opportunities to support their children's learning at home and at school. Saint Paul School is proud of the level of parental involvement; most of the school families participate in some kind of volunteer work.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Saint Paul School is a Catholic, Christian family, founded in God's love. Crucial to the development of students at Saint Paul is a culture of discipleship focused on reverence for the dignity of each person. Development of Christ-like character traits, social skills, and manners lead students to becoming true disciples of Christ who act in love and are respectful of themselves and all they meet. Saint Paul Catholic School is dedicated to partnering with parents to teach these Christ-like character traits, social skills, and manners. These character traits are taught through example and direct instruction. Appropriate social interaction is addressed constantly at Saint Paul.

Saint Paul Catholic School sets high expectations for appropriate behavior of its students, including treating all students with equity. Emphasis is placed on discipleship, helping students to recognize the voice of God, understanding the message, and acting freely without external motivation. Growing in discipleship encourages students to make life-giving choices to demonstrate respect and dignity for all, to build community, and to accept responsibility for words and actions fostering self-discipline and self-esteem. The school fulfills a key component of its mission when parents and teachers partner to develop this moral compass that guides students with Christ as their model. Saint Paul Catholic School believes that a strong character is essential to a student's development. The Character Pledge is recited every morning as a school and is as follows:

"Because I believe that we are all God's children, I shall try to treat everyone with politeness and kindness, doing my best to work and play fairly and honestly. I know that what I say and do shows respect for myself, so I will try to do what is right and accept responsibility for my choices and behavior."

Social Studies and Religion curriculum materials naturally lend themselves to opportunities for teachers and students to recognize, acknowledge, and explore cultural differences. Saint Paul School also offers project based activities with culminating events like fairs, presentations, and performances which highlight and appreciate the cultural differences within the school community. Service learning projects at all grade levels are conducted throughout the year. These service learning projects provide the chance for students to take part in experiential opportunities that allow them to learn about real world conditions. Students develop

skills that are learned through their community service projects while they also provide community partners the opportunity address their needs. These projects allow SPCS students to learn to value the importance of helping others, both young and old.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

While the academic success of Saint Paul students is well established in the Northwest Indiana region, it is the deep care for the social and emotional learning of each student that sets Saint Paul Catholic School (SPCS), students, administration, and teachers apart from other schools. From the unique Family Friday concept, to daily Religion coursework; each Saint Paul student is taught in an environment where they know they are valued as individuals and as contributors to their school community. Saint Paul staff members diligently work to help each child reach his or her academic potential.

Unlike pre-packaged SEL curriculum found at other schools that focuses primarily on “self”, the students at SPCS are encouraged to look outward and consider how they can contribute their unique talents to their community and beyond. It is the Family Friday program at SPCS which has been the most influential to the school’s success.

The Family Friday program is central to the social and emotional learning at SPCS. One student from every grade level meets to form a group, or family. These “families” meet monthly for Friday Mass and for “family” activities later in the school day. The highest grade student (usually an eighth grader) facilitates the organization of the planned activity and leads the younger students, under the supervision of a staff member “mentor”. The Family Friday program is designed to foster a family atmosphere among all SPCS students and staff, and is based on Christ’s words: “Whatever you do to the least of these, my brothers, you do unto Me.” The Family Friday pillar of treating everyone with respect can be found in the SPCS code of conduct and includes the following: respect others and yourself, be honest, remember that we are all God’s children; find peaceful solutions; be polite and kind to others; always do your best; play fair and cooperate. By participating in the Family Friday program, students are able to put into practice the code of conduct, thereby creating the foundation of SPCS’s success.

Monthly group activities include prayer services, themed events and service projects. This initiative fosters leadership and mentoring skills; cooperation; and cross-grade-level friendships; and most importantly, it is fun for the students.

PART VII - NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

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? \$6941
(School budget divided by enrollment)
4. What is the average financial aid per student? \$1073
5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 49%
6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 97%

PART VIII – NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL ASSESSMENT RESULTS

FOR NORM-REFERENCED TESTS

Non-public schools must report norm-referenced test (NRT) results in reading and mathematics for students tested in grades 3 and higher in the most recent administration of the test within the most recently completed school year (2019-2020)¹. Each school must obtain grade level summary reports from the test publisher for students tested in reading and mathematics for each of these grades.

These reports must include:

1. the number of students tested;
2. the average student scale score or the national percentile equivalent of the average scale score in reading and mathematics **for all students in each tested grade; and**
3. the average student scale score or the national percentile equivalent of the average scale score in reading and mathematics **for each sufficiently large subgroup² in each tested grade.**

Please make notations on these reports to explain results that represent fewer than 95 percent of the students enrolled at the time of testing (e.g., the number of students who took alternative assessments³).

A copy of these reports (in a PDF file) must be uploaded through the National Blue Ribbons Schools Portal.

Also, one hard copy of these reports must be submitted by mail to CAPE with two hard copies of this application.

¹ Because of school closings due to COVID-19, schools may use test results obtained in the fall or spring of 2019 or the fall of 2020.

² Possible subgroups are those identified in Items 4, 6, 7, and 8 in Part II of this application (racial/ethnic groups, ELL students, students eligible for free or reduced meals, and students receiving special education services). A sufficiently large subgroup is one that represents at least 10 percent of the school enrollment as reported in these items.

³ Alternate assessments are used to evaluate the performance of students who are unable to participate in a school's norm-referenced test (NRT) even with accommodations. These assessments are based on the grade-level content covered by the NRT, but at reduced depth, breadth, and complexity. (adapted from National Center on Educational Outcomes)