

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. Carolyn Sears
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

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

School Mailing Address 6802 Buffalo Speedway
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Houston State TX Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 77025-1405

County Harris

Telephone (713) 666-2345 Fax (713) 663-3562

Web site/URL https://www.saintvincentschool.org E-mail csears@svdp-edu.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. Debra Haney Ed.D. E-mail dhaney@archgh.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston Tel. (713) 741-8704

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 Mr. Ben Fraker
(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	19	15	34
K	19	27	46
1	28	25	53
2	26	28	54
3	26	28	54
4	23	29	52
5	28	27	55
6	25	28	53
7	22	31	53
8	27	23	50
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	243	261	504

*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
 - 8.3 % Asian
 - 4.3 % Black or African American
 - 24.2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 54 % White
 - 9.2 % 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: 13%

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	32
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	31
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	63
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	504
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.13
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	13

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 16 %

With an IEP or 504: 81 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>55</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>45</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>16</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</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: 16

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	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher, CTE teacher.	24
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	11
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.	6

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 21:1

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	97%	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. 2016

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

It is the mission of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School to develop students to their fullest potential in an environment permeated with Gospel values.

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

The Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston admit all students to the rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to the student body. They shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its admission, loan, athletic, or scholarship programs. St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School adheres to the policies stipulated by the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

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 Vincent de Paul Catholic School (SVdP) of Houston, Texas is a 2016 National Blue Ribbon School. This recognition filled our Pre-K-8th grade community with pride. From a small school in four temporary army barracks established to serve the local Catholic community in 1943, to the current SVdP that serves 504 students from 36 zip codes, the long, rich history of providing spiritual development and academic excellence continues today. Parents are confident that their student(s) will build a solid academic and moral foundation in the SVdP environment. This confidence is evident in that most students who enroll at the Pre-Kindergarten level remain and graduate.

Since 2016, SVdP has dedicated itself to living up to the Blue Ribbon name. Using the momentum generated by the 2016 Blue Ribbon award, SVdP embarked on a capital campaign for a new education building. Five years later, funding has been raised and construction started on this building that will house the primary and middle school students. In 2018 SVdP accepted the challenge to become STEM certified, and after a year long process became the first school in Houston and the first Catholic school in the nation to earn the National Certificate for STEM Excellence (NCSE) Campus Certification through NISE (National Institute for STEM Education). Recently, SVdP began use of a newly completed STEM lab designed to serve all grade levels. The STEM lab is led by a dedicated STEM teacher. As an Archdiocesan SYNERGY school, SVdP maximized resources by converting STEM space for use as Maker Space during open lab. These multi-grade/multi-subject, student-oriented activities support our goal to transition from STEM to STREAM, enhancing student learning and fostering innovation across all subject areas. SVdP has hired a part-time dedicated literacy consultant who further collaborates with the STEM lab teacher to enhance the STREAM curricular strands and ensure that all activities are planned and executed.

The population of SVdP is co-educational and academically diverse: 61% of 3rd-6th graders qualify for the DeBusk Enrichment Center for Academically Talented Students (DECATS), a program for the academically able offered throughout the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, while 16% of the total population (a figure consistent over the last 10 years) have diagnosed learning disabilities. Differentiated instruction is used to address this academic diversity and provide for individual student needs. Methods such as small group instruction, cooperative learning, and cross-curricular projects are embedded in the instructional model. A variety of assessment methods are used to monitor student progress and drive instructional planning. A whole group, multi-tiered instructional model evolves as students progress to the upper grades.

SVdP is committed to developing all children to their fullest potential. In following our belief that every student can learn, at-risk students are identified by teachers or parents at all grade levels, tracked, and assisted by the Student Study Team (SST). The SST, consisting of the principal, assistant principal, academic dean, counselor, and nurse, meets bi-weekly to evaluate the behavioral, academic, social-emotional and/or health needs of students. The team writes a Plan for Success that may include in-house support or an outside referral.

Challenges occur throughout life, but in March of 2020 a challenge reached all schools in the nation: COVID. Government mandated stay-at-home orders were issued, and in reaction all SVdP faculty immediately participated in training for a new way of providing instruction. Teachers honed their technology skills and learned how to implement Google Classroom, Zoom, and other platforms depending on grade level. Students and parents in turn adapted to this new way of learning, and SVdP completed the 2019-2020 school year via virtual instruction. The following year (2020-2021) was challenging, yet also successful. Fall of 2020 saw SVdP offer families two means of education during the first semester. One choice was on-campus learning with multiple safety measures in place, including: air purifiers in every room, masks required, continuous daily cleaning services, sanitation of all school areas each night, social distancing, daily temperature screening, a no-visitor policy which remained in place during the year, plexiglass dividers for every desk and table, regularly scheduled handwashing, and daily required COVID screening for students, faculty, and staff. Another option, virtual learning, was offered to those parents not comfortable sending their students to on-campus learning. Pre-K-8th grade teachers live streamed their classes to those students at home. In January 2021, all students returned to on-campus learning with safety measures in place. The challenge of successfully educating children during a pandemic had been met by all

stakeholders. Evidence of this success can be seen in our students' standardized testing results (IOWA Assessments Spring of 2021) as well as their performance in the classroom. There is no evidence of a COVID slide for students of SVdP.

As can be seen from the above, SVdP remains a reliable name in Houston Catholic education and a proud Blue Ribbon School.

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 academic program at SVdP includes a research-based curriculum, and data-driven instruction, which aligns with the state standards for Texas public schools. Students of all abilities are expected to think critically and analytically, always striving to stretch beyond the scope of past performance. Creative thinking and innovation are encouraged so that students learn to recognize that problems may have more than one solution. SVdP educates the whole child using a variety of instructional methods to reach all abilities and modalities. Foundational skills are noted in each teacher's lessons as curriculum objectives; mastery of these objectives are tracked and recorded weekly. The curriculum is vertically aligned in each subject area which ensures a sequential acquisition of skills.

Gospel values are at the center of the academic program at SVdP. Integration of these values is evident throughout the school and present in all subject areas and all school activities. All teachers are required to participate in a Catechist formation program which ensures that students are taught by knowledgeable teachers committed to a gospel message that is pervasive in the school-wide curriculum. ⁽¹⁾_(SEP)

Students are challenged by advanced academic subjects designed to prepare them to become Catholic leaders of tomorrow. The rigorous content is also taught on a foundation of moral principles and ethical action which is directly related to our strong Catholic identity. It is this Catholic identity that is the very purpose of our existence and drives all decision making in the community of SVdP Catholic School. Our students are taught that the pursuit of knowledge without moral values to guide one's actions is a futile endeavor and contrary to life's purpose. We feel confident that this commitment to excellence with integrity makes our graduates special and ready to embrace the challenges of a world that often blurs the distinction between right and wrong.

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

The science of reading contains five essential components: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. SVdP has followed this structured literacy approach for many decades, resulting in students who consistently demonstrate strong reading and writing skills.

Teachers in the Reading/Language Arts program successfully use a spiraling curriculum to review and reinforce acquired skills while new skills are simultaneously being introduced. Pre-Kindergarten-2nd grade students use SuperKids, a reading program designed with the young child in mind. A phonemic awareness program, written by Michael Heggerty, was introduced in 2021-2022 in grades PreK-2nd to explicitly teach and reinforce letter/sound connections. Recent research shows that these phonemic exercises are essential for proficient word recognition and decoding. Overlapping the SuperKids curriculum is the SRA Imagine-It (2nd-5th grade) program that includes a student anthology offering a wide range of fiction, non-fiction, poems, articles and magazines. Teachers supplement the student anthology with award winning novels, and students receive instruction in comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, writing, grammar, spelling, usage and mechanics. Early intervention is key to reading success. Differentiated instruction for students in grades K through 2nd who score below the 50th percentile on the IOWA Assessment, attend a small group pull-out program with a Reading Skills teacher. SVdP also provides a full-time librarian and has recently funded a part time literacy consultant who partners with the classroom teachers to support strong literacy skills. Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, Pre-K-8th students participate in the Writers In The Schools program and create their own writing portfolios under the guidance of professional writers who visit every other week. Since 2015, SVdP teachers in grades 2nd-8th have participated in writing cohorts to improve their own writing skills and in turn enhance their instructional strategies.

In collaboration with Writers In The Schools, students are led through the steps of the writing process

creating multiple drafts and revisions along the way. Middle school students learn to write persuasive, expository, narrative, compare/contrast and descriptive essays, and even publish their works in school literary journals. Recognizing the interactive relationship of the reading-writing connection, SVdP faculty teaches both disciplines concurrently.

Middle School reading instruction involves a variety of literary selections and a graduated use of increasingly complex texts. Explicit instruction in text structure and analysis enables middle school students to become critical readers and thinkers. With special attention paid to non-fiction Articles of the Week (www.kellygallagher.org) and works from a variety of genres, students practice annotation while developing an increasing understanding of the author's craft and purpose. Middle School students participate in an online vocabulary learning platform designed to improve reading comprehension and word learning skills. Vocabulary.com is a comprehensive tool for vocabulary learning delivered in a gaming format that motivates students to participate. Monthly national and state championships are awarded for word mastery and SVdP has been a top scoring school for 6 consecutive years. SVdP administration credits this adaptive vocabulary learning tool with our consistently high verbal scores on IOWA Assessments and Catholic high school entrance exams.

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

The Mathematics curriculum begins in Pre-Kindergarten where students learn patterning, reasoning, spatial sense, and number sense. Using concrete objects and manipulatives further enhances their understanding. As students progress through grades Pre-K-4th, the spiraling curriculum (Saxon) enables them to progress from concrete to abstract concepts. Students learn place value, operations and computations, algebraic reasoning, geometry and measurement as they describe mathematical relationships and apply mathematics to everyday life. Through repetition and practice they solidify basic skills as these become the foundation upon which higher mathematical understanding relies. In 5th grade, students begin to use the McGraw-Hill Math program that will continue throughout their Middle School experience. Adaptive online resources such as Khan Academy, IXL Learning, and Mathletics supplement the core program at all grade levels, and provide the practice and necessary means for ongoing formative assessment vital to a robust mathematics program. These online resources, together with teacher-made assessments aid in teacher planning and instruction.

Middle school math students are heterogeneously grouped in 6th and 7th grade. Students in 6th grade cover such topics as proportionality, ratios, rates, rational numbers and absolute value. Pre-Algebra is taught to all 7th graders, while Algebra I is the curriculum for 8th grade. Accelerated Algebra students in 8th grade are identified by performance in the PreAlgebra class, a placement test, and IOWA scores, and grades, and are placed in a classroom that moves at a quicker pace. All middle school students benefit from the adaptive technology provided by online resources named above.

All of our SVdP math teachers are trained through the Rice University School Mathematics Project (RUSMP) whose original mission was “to promote the nature, beauty, and importance of mathematics and to create a better understanding of effective teaching of mathematics”. This mission has been expanded into a model that is inclusive of supporting science, engineering and the arts as they apply to mathematics. SVdP finds this progressive approach to be in agreement with our own goal to reach an interdisciplinary collaboration in teacher planning and instruction. Our first step has been to create and fill a new STEM faculty position for the 21-22 school year, with a lab for students to engage in exploratory learning. With Rice University’s commitment to teacher development, SVdP sends teachers both new and experienced to refresh and renew skills during the summer sessions. Rice University is a welcome resource to the STEM teaching community.

Though the pandemic posed issues for instruction in all subjects, none created the panic that mathematics did in our learners with math anxiety. Dedicated teachers became creative and quickly launched online synchronous learning platforms (ZOOM) as well as asynchronous resources to support and reassure students that help would be available when needed. Using pre-recorded videos (Flipgrid) and other online means, teachers communicated daily with students through Google classroom. These efforts, along with the efforts of our hard-working parents, resulted in IOWA scores that showed no COVID dip but rather held steady. SVdP can truly say our parents are partners in their children’s education.

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

The Science program uses a comprehensive curriculum designed for building inquiry. SVdP's science program is aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), STEM, and the Next Generation Science Framework (NGSF) and contains student-centered options. Real world challenges are provided through hands-on lab activities that help develop important critical thinking skills. Students learn science concepts and vocabulary in the four disciplinary core bands of physical sciences, life sciences, earth and space sciences, and engineering design as they build inquiry, STEM, and 21st century skills. Lab reports, group projects and research reports are examples of various assessments used, as obtaining, evaluating and communicating information are important components in this question driven method. While the TEKS, NGSF, and STEM standards do overlap, it is the NGSF framework that seeks to instill a scientific way of thinking in every student citizen, to be mindful of the natural world and how humanity affects it. Most importantly, students learn the responsibility that comes with scientific knowledge as stewards of God's creation.

In spring 2021, funding was acquired to create a STEM lab and hire a STEM teacher. The lab was intended for use by all students. SVdP successfully began using the lab in Fall 2021. Equipped with digital microscope systems the lab provides a 21st century space devoted to innovation and creation. The lab is staffed by a STEM teacher three days per week, and available for use by all grade levels on the other two days for the MakerSpace open lab. These open lab times permit teachers of all grade levels and subjects to use the space for personalized learning opportunities. While STEM specific curriculum is the focus three days per week, it is these cross curricular, multi-grade and subject activities that support our STREAM goal of connecting knowledge from various disciplines.

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

The Social Studies curriculum is designed to engage and motivate students with content that is relevant to students' lives. Whether they are recreating historical events through dramatic reenactments, or participating in a problem-based learning mock trial with the Houston Bar Association, SVdP students experience social studies as a dynamic subject. A primary goal of the curriculum is to challenge students to consider diverse points of view while fostering global learning. As part of SVdP's strong Catholic identity, differences are celebrated, not merely tolerated. SVdP Religion Department's service projects often provide valuable cross curricular links to social studies units of community and citizenship. Students are encouraged to look critically at the current news media and the often diverse opinions they publish; that is, news vs. news commentary. Teachers partner with SVdP library services to teach the importance of researching sources of information (both print and online) and the process used to determine authenticity. SVdP Library Services offer period literature or nonfiction supplements of primary and secondary sources to enrich teacher units of study. Teachers provide students with the opportunity to visit local, state, and national venues that reinforce the objectives of the social studies curriculum. Our First Lady of Texas, Cecilia Abbott (herself a former Catholic school principal) met and visited with our 7th grade students on our most recent trip to the State Capitol. Our 8th grade class traditionally visits Washington, D.C. every February and has twice been to the White House. Curriculum aligned projects that emphasize research and writing skills are required when students return. COVID made it impossible for in-person visits to these venues during the most recent two years; however, teachers worked to make it possible for students to experience virtual visits. We are looking forward to resuming the field trips in the near future.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

The Early Childhood Program at St. Vincent de Paul consists of Pre-Kindergarten (4-year-olds). In a warm and nurturing classroom environment, and where the business of children is play, students practice important skills that are the foundation for success in elementary school. The full day program focuses on readiness skills in core curriculum areas (math, reading, science, social studies and religion) to develop the

whole child academically, physically, and socially-emotionally. SVdP added two programs for Pre-K students to enhance early literacy development: a phonemic awareness daily warmup to promote a strong phonics foundation and a storytelling program to develop pre-writing skills. Pre-K students participate in a variety of ancillary activities (Art, PE, Spanish, Library, Computer and Music).

The core curriculum is vertically aligned to promote optimum success as children progress to the elementary grades. The Pre-Kindergarten program establishes a strong foundation for reading readiness and number sense skills that leads to the majority of students scoring at or above grade level when entering first grade. Children not attending Pre-Kindergarten at SVdP have shown that they require additional academic support when entering Kindergarten.

Nowhere was COVID's impact more keenly seen than in the hindered social skills of our youngest children. Because of this demonstrated need, our school counselor visits the Pre-Kindergarten classes regularly to provide needed social skills and emotional regulation lessons. Truly, the pandemic presented challenges we had not previously encountered, but we found that it was much easier to address the academic needs of our students virtually than their social-emotional needs. By August of 2020, it was a relief to be able to gather together again and reestablish our community. With the pandemic far from over, parents, staff and faculty all committed to careful adherence to strict COVID protocols in order to remain open for in-person instruction and needed socialization.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Non-core subjects are particularly meaningful to our students because they offer opportunities to demonstrate individual talents and skills not always evident in core curriculum subjects.

The Fine Arts program at SVdP humanizes the curriculum and provides venues for artistic expression that enables students to develop a greater sense of self-worth. This program elevates the learning experience of all students and enhances and supports the essential skills of the core curriculum.

The pandemic impacted our Performing Arts (Music, Band, Drumline, Voice and Bell Choirs) program but did not completely eliminate it. Everything from weekly liturgies to the annual Spring Musical is enhanced when the multiple talents of our students are center stage. Our Visual Arts program helps students learn the basic principles of design within a developmental mixed media program that fosters a global appreciation of all types of art. Both the Performing and Visual Arts activities support the core curriculum as they improve perceptual skills, stimulate creative expression, and develop critical judgment skills while fostering a deeper appreciation for the arts.

SVdP promotes a healthy lifestyle and respect for the human body so that all students will become responsible stewards of God's creation. All students attend PE between two to four times per week. Teachers recognize the importance of playtime and provide recess for students in Pre-Kindergarten through 5th grade. As part of the focus on fitness, good nutrition is emphasized throughout the school and a wide array of after school activities are offered. Of particular note is our Fitness and Conditioning after school program which boasts an enrollment of 100. Students of all abilities participate in a non-competitive workout atmosphere.

A large part of the student body participates in SVdP football, volleyball, basketball, track, soccer, cross country, baseball, softball, and cheerleading, and these were sorely missed during the pandemic.

Technology is fully integrated into the classrooms across all grade levels, and was critical in supporting instruction during the national COVID shutdown in spring and fall of 2020. Every classroom is equipped with ActivPanels, allowing students to actively engage in lessons. The majority of classrooms have hover cams, while the middle school math classroom has a podium hovercam pilot. Teachers integrate multimedia graphics, digitized books, and a variety of different learning applications that include adaptive technology to support differentiated instruction. Because of COVID our technology strategic plan was expedited to facilitate virtual learning. Every student second grade through middle school now has a school issued Chromebook.

Spanish is taught to all students Pre-Kindergarten through eighth grade. Students learn through games, songs, and rhymes in the lower grades, while oral presentations, vocabulary, and grammar lessons are required for older students. Students Pre-K-5th grade receive at least twice weekly Spanish instruction, and Middle School students participate in 45-minute classes five days per week. Spanish classes continued in an online format during COVID.

The guidance counselor provides once-per-week guidance lessons to all grade levels Pre-K-8th grade, and offers one-on-one counseling to those students and their families facing personal crises, including those related to COVID.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

SVdP teachers use a variety of strategies to differentiate instruction; whether in content, process or product, student learning styles are considered during teacher planning. Some examples include: project-based learning, cooperative learning, gamification, task choice cards, both small and whole group instruction, and learning centers. Formative and summative assessments in the classroom are designed to effectively measure student learning. These may be in the form of oral reports, performance tasks, exhibits, demonstrations or teacher created tests. A variety of instructional strategies and assessments help teachers better meet the varied learning needs of their students.

The assistant principal tracks the academic progress of all students. Intervention for a student performing below grade level begins with a report from the classroom teacher. This information helps the assistant principal determine if a student should be referred to the SST (Student Study Team). This trusted advisory team composed of the principal, assistant principal, academic dean, counselor, and nurse, shares confidential, pertinent information concerning at-risk students. This multidisciplinary approach supports students who may be in crisis due to social, emotional, physical or psychological issues that have adversely affected grades or student behavior. If a situation requires, the students and parents would meet with the team to jointly develop a personalized plan for improvement. Depending on the circumstances and severity of the need, the plan might include in-house measures: after school study hall, peer tutoring, HAM (a lunchtime homework catchup period), or before or after school tutoring by classroom teachers. SVdP also maintains a list of outside, private tutors, vetted and endorsed by the administration, who have demonstrated success working with SVdP students. Standardized testing and grades occasionally reveal a pattern that might suggest an underlying cause for concern, and our academic dean assists parents with both public and private resources when outside referrals are necessary.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

All teachers at SVdP received training in Gifted and Talented (GT) curriculum and instruction during a three year rollout featuring questioning strategies, rigor and relevance, and depth and complexity. SVdP mainstreams the GT population and students receive enrichment within the general classroom setting (with the exception of Algebra students who must qualify for the advanced class). All SVdP lesson plan templates contain areas where teachers can note enrichment strategies through depth and complexity icons; there are also areas for teachers to document questioning strategies. Each classroom is equipped with a GT binder for reference purposes. Every classroom has a large classroom library with a range of selections that vary in student interest and reading level. All Pre-K-8th grade students participate in WITS (Writers in the Schools) creative writing lessons.

The SVdP STEM lab opened in Fall 2021, where Tuesday-Thursday students in grades Pre-K-8th participate in hands-on enrichment activities designed to stimulate critical thinking and problem solving skills. Monday and Friday are Open Lab days in the STEM Lab where students are free to explore, design or build in MakerSpace activities that encourage innovation and support our STREAM goals.

Throughout the school year students participate in different reading activities sponsored by the library, such

as the Caldecott Club, a two year reading enrichment program for 1st and 2nd grade students, the Lectio Program for 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students, and more rigorous reading lists such as The Coretta Scott King Awards in 6th, 7th and 8th grade. Participants complete assignments and projects related to the selections read and compete for end of year award recognition.

Finally, students who qualify for the DECATS program take summer enrichment classes offered by the Archdiocese of Galveston Houston. Likewise, SVdP offers on campus Summer Enrichment for 6th-8th students in Math, Reading and English.

3c. Special education:

While SVdP is a private school and not obligated to provide special education services to our students, our Catholic identity drives our decision-making. Students with suspected learning differences are referred to the SVdP academic dean. At that point a decision is made whether to pursue public district testing or testing through private means. With the parents' permission, the academic dean follows the student's progress through either the public or private route, receives the results of the testing, guides the parents in determining the path for remediation, writes the Catholic Accommodation Plan, and submits the plan to the teachers for implementation in the classroom. SVdP accommodates but does not modify the curriculum, therefore all students with learning challenges are mainstreamed at SVdP.

Following the philosophy that every student can learn and being true to our mission statement "to develop students to their fullest potential", SVdP has devoted resources for teacher training to meet the needs of students diagnosed with specific learning challenges.

Teachers have been trained in special education topics pertaining to academics. Sessions included working with students with dyslexia and using multisensory techniques to strengthen pre-writing skills. Title II professional development funds are used to educate teachers in the

Orton-Gillingham approach, a multisensory phonics technique for remedial reading instruction.

SVdP employs a full-time guidance counselor licensed in the state of Texas who is also a certified art therapist. Professional development provided by this counselor includes presentations on the CASEL Framework covering social awareness, self-awareness/executive functioning, self-regulation, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Other presentation topics include recognizing suicidal ideation and warning signs, and teacher management of difficult behaviors in the classroom.

Further professional development needs have been identified, and the SVdP in-service plan includes topics such as dyscalculia, hearing impairments, attention deficit disorder, and any other needs that may arise.

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

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

The mission of SVdP is to develop students to their fullest potential in an environment permeated with Gospel values. In a culture of caring and community, students earn Tiger Pride recognition for performing good deeds and acts of servant leadership.. Our rigorous curriculum also supports a college and career readiness path, along with enrichment such as Career Fair arranged by professionals from our community and parent population.

The Zoom virtual classroom is the most significant adaptation made during the COVID closures. All teachers Pre-K-8th grade live streamed lessons to students who remained at home in Spring and Fall 2020. The streaming schedule mirrored a normal school day, with brain breaks, a lunch period, and a P.E. period. These live, online classes focused on interactions with students, which allowed teachers to assess student progress and engagement. Google Classroom became the portal for all assignments, announcements or necessary instructional links and all students in Grades 2nd-8th were assigned Chromebooks.

Zoom and Google Classroom were vital during the stay-at-home order in spring 2020. In fall 2020 when SVdP offered both on-campus and virtual learning to the students, the majority of our families (85%) chose to return to campus. What we knew to be true theoretically was suddenly happening in real time. Parents recognized the benefit of on-campus education to support the emotional and social needs of their children. As educators we know that in addition to academics, no less important are the skills that help children manage emotions, make decisions, and resolve conflicts. These are impossible to do during a Zoom class. It was important to acknowledge the power of relationship and that our students needed to get back to the daily rhythm of school and belonging. SVdP counselors and teachers remained in contact via telephone and email with families required to quarantine due to COVID, or students attending school via Zoom. School counselors provided extra online resources as a proactive measure. The check-in with each family proved invaluable, especially for those students considered high risk academically and/or socially.

The combined efforts of the SVdP teachers, students, and parents is evident in our academically strong students. SVdP students in all grade levels saw no “COVID slide” as measured by the IOWA Assessments results of spring 2021, and 100% of 8th graders in the class of 2021 were accepted to their first choice of college preparatory Catholic high schools and area magnet schools.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Personal interaction between SVdP and families is crucial to the student’s positive school experience. When a family first enters SVdP they are greeted with a new family breakfast to introduce them to the community and to establish mentoring relationships. Information relevant to the school and its operation is provided. All parents also meet with faculty and staff on Parent Information Nights held during the first week of school. These events are designed to establish a strong home and school partnership to better ensure student success.

A positive relationship with area high schools is important, as teachers and administrators request news and updates from area high schools regarding SVdP graduates. These reports, in addition to local newspaper articles and anecdotal remarks from parents sharing the accomplishments of their children, show that SVdP graduates assume leadership roles and continue to be mentioned prominently as honor roll students, National Merit finalists, and scholarship winners in their respective high schools. SVdP's reputation for excellence has resulted in full enrollment over the past 35 years, and an increasing demand for admission across the grade levels. This is especially impressive following the recent/current COVID pandemic.

The sense of caring, cooperation, and belonging to the SVdP community was also evident after the flooding brought by Hurricane Harvey in 2017. The community came together in an unprecedented effort to repair the damage to the physical plant of the school, but more importantly, to reach out to the families, faculty, and staff who were affected by this catastrophic event. Impressively, within six weeks students returned to

their classrooms and resumed their regular daily schedule.

SVdP enjoys the privilege of partnering with area businesses/organizations. “Family Nights” at local restaurants help build community and provide financial support, as a portion of the restaurant’s proceeds are donated to SVdP. Various underwriters for the SVdP Gala are invaluable, as this event helps fund building renovations and other classroom needs. Local businesses also provide matching gifts to the school’s Annual Fund, our largest single fundraising event. Other connection-building events include the annual Book Fair, which is held in partnership with Barnes & Noble and Brazos Bookstore, and a football instruction camp hosted by the NFL Houston Texans for SVdP students. The head coach of the Texans returned at the end of the year to serve as guest speaker at the school awards ceremony. Community partnerships truly are a vital component of SVdP School.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Given the staffing shortages that every school is experiencing across the nation, SVdP School’s teacher retention rate is remarkable. Approximately 90% of our teachers returned to our school for the 2021-2022 school year. This is due in no small part to the efforts of the administration, School Board, and Parent Teacher Organization, who made teachers feel valued and appreciated by cooking meals for teachers, providing monthly faculty breakfasts, celebrating monthly teacher birthdays, delivering Christmas gifts, writing periodic handwritten notes of gratitude, and giving other tokens of appreciation. Most importantly, SVdP administration provided PPE, equipment and sanitizing services to insure a safe and healthy environment for everyone. The school administration surprised everyone with a substantial end of the year teacher bonus.

Professional development is key to teachers’ ability to provide the best education possible to all students. Money is allocated in the operational school budget for professional development for every teacher and all teacher requests are considered; SVdP wants teachers to be confident in their craft. Especially important is the mentoring and coaching of first year teachers so as to support and retain them.

Some examples of opportunities for teachers include the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) convention; the Rice University School Mathematics Project; Writers In The School (WITS); Texas Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance; STEM certification training through National Institute of STEM Education (NISE); coaching and mentoring services through Catapult Learning; and the Texas Computer Education Association (TCEA) Convention & Exposition.

SVdP provides in-house professional development as well. This year a STEM faculty position was established to mentor and train teachers in STEM strategies. The SVdP technology department provides training in areas of G Suite for Education and Zoom video streaming. During the quarantine mandate of March 2020, our technology department worked quickly to provide teachers with online learning tools for their students. Faculty needing assistance were paired immediately with staff members who could train them, and the tech department provided step by step instructional videos on the server for 24/7 access. Our school was providing instruction virtually within a few days of the lockdown.

Recognizing that teachers were overwhelmed with adapting to COVID (the protocol of the classroom, the risk of exposure, the responsibility to educate their young students in synchronous and asynchronous formats), the administration streamlined school operating procedures and minimized teacher duties wherever possible to reduce the stress levels of those already going above and beyond.

4. School Leadership:

All academic, spiritual, and administrative initiatives emerge from and support the mission of the school. Students graduate from SVdP with a strong foundation in faith, morals and academics that allow them to succeed in high school and beyond. School leadership is driven by a desire to maintain and enhance this already strong reputation of SVdP School.

of the parish. The pastor and principal have formed a partnership for making decisions in the best interest of the school, and the SVdP School Board serves in an advisory capacity by recommending policy and helping to identify SVdP's educational needs and aspirations. The principal and assistant principal carry out their daily leadership duties motivated by a desire to reach these goals.

The principal is the spiritual, financial, organizational, educational, and managerial leader who is ultimately responsible to the pastor. The principal is the face of the school and sets the overall spiritual tone focussing on Gospel values. The principal provides expertise in demonstrating and sharing an understanding of child development and learning styles, while supervising current teachers and hiring new ones who will deliver quality instruction; evaluating programs and student progress; ensuring the school provides a safe and welcoming environment; leading marketing efforts of the school; creating the school budget while seeking financial resources beyond the parish; providing regular updates regarding the school's progress to parents; and planning, documenting, and maintaining records.

The assistant principal carries out duties assigned by the principal that include tracking student discipline and attendance, collecting lesson plans, monitoring student grades, performing regular classroom walk-throughs, and serving as the leader of the school in the principal's absence. The academic dean assists the principal in all curricular matters. The role entails baseline assessments, assisting special needs students, serving as the liaison between SVdP and Houston Independent School District and overseeing the process for referrals and diagnostic testing.

Faculty members assume leadership positions as club sponsors or coaches for our athletic or academic teams. We encourage student participation in these extracurricular activities, as participation has been positively associated with school success indicators according to the National Center for Education Statistics. Faculty members serve as chairs of each grade level department. As team leaders they facilitate communication between the administration and their respective grade levels, and help to maintain a daily, steady focus on student achievement.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

As part of the universal church, SVdP is a school for all parishioners. Financial assistance/scholarships are available for students in need to help make an SVdP education accessible.

Students at SVdP are exposed to social justice issues on the local, national, and global levels. Students' cultural experiences while in the SVdP environment help them to develop an understanding, appreciation, and acceptance of others.

In Literature class students read novels with multicultural issues of language, race, or poverty. Science and Social Studies classes address topics concerning equitable use of resources or contributing to the common good. Daily Religion classes and once-per-week guidance lessons include a focus on current events with moral and ethical implications. With an emphasis on respect for all of God's creation, students learn acceptance, especially for those who may be different from them. Administration is keenly aware of SVdP's demographics and the need for all students to feel valued, accepted, and heard.

The Cabrini Festival, which focuses each year on a different country, provides valuable multicultural experiences for students. Other presentations have included: Dia de los Muertos; Las Posadas (Christmas); Cinco de Mayo; and the annual Black History Month celebration. SVdP proudly supports a partner school located in Guayaquil, Ecuador. Our students write letters, donate uniforms, school supplies and books, and offer spiritual support to our SVdP sister school. The goal of this partnership is to support the poverty-stricken community in Guayaquil by providing resources to improve the quality of education, community healthcare, and nutritional programs. Most recently, SVdP families contributed medical supplies to the Guayaquil mission to mitigate the spread of COVID in that area.

SVdP responds swiftly to needs of the less fortunate in the local community. Recently, two very different events generated an immediate outpouring of support from our families with ties to those affected. In September, hurricanes ravaged the Louisiana coast and SVdP welcomed families who were evacuated from NBR 2022

Baton Rouge. Later, when the Houston area became a resettlement location for Afghans, SVdP held a school-wide food drive for these refugees with food specific to their dietary needs. A particular point of pride is the fact that SVdP is the single largest supporter of the Christian Community Service Center (CCSC), a coalition of 39 multi-denominational churches united in service to assist families less fortunate. In Fall 2021, SVdP's Thanksgiving food drive filled 53 vehicles with non-perishable food for families served by the CCSC.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School recognizes the importance of academic and assessment related practices as a part of the school's success. However, SVdP promotes a vital socio-emotional culture that builds resilience and instills hope. Children learn best in a comfortable, nurturing environment where they feel safe, secure, and valued. It is this philosophy that establishes a firm foundation that supports academic success and also develops a strong sense of social justice empowering them to live the Gospel values throughout their lives. Despite the restrictions of COVID, students still participated in service projects that reinforced their social responsibility to their school, parish, surrounding community, and fellow students around the globe.

The faculty and staff of SVdP acknowledge a student's effort rather than inherent intelligence. Developing a strong work ethic has proven to be the defining factor in individual success, regardless of ability. All children deserve a school that challenges them to develop as life-long learners with self respect, self confidence, and self discipline.

SVdP allocates funding necessary to employ a multidisciplinary team known as the Student Study Team (SST) who meet regularly. The team includes administrators with degrees in counseling, an LPC counselor, a registered nurse, and an academic dean who facilitate the identification and support of students with individual learning differences and socio-emotional needs as well as health related issues impacting school performance. The faculty includes experienced teachers who are trained in managing grief and loss, special needs, and exceptional behaviors. These teachers collaborate with other teachers to provide support and affect a positive outcome for students in need. This team strategy promotes empathy toward others, builds resilience, and enables students to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

The school community, in conjunction with philanthropic individuals, community resources, and various parent organizations, provides a solid support system for SVdP families in crisis. Regardless of the magnitude of the situation, SVdP families quickly respond with an outpouring of community support. This has been a hallmark of SVdP for many decades.

The strong Catholic identity of SVdP is reflected in the spiritual foundation that is woven throughout all aspects of the school. This spiritual component provides solid morals and values that are directly tied to the philosophy of providing social and emotional support to the student body. It is our faith that provides the strength to persevere even during times of difficulty, such as Hurricane Harvey (2017) and COVID (2020-present).

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? \$10550
(School budget divided by enrollment)

4. What is the average financial aid per student? \$3056

5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 0%

6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 4%

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)