

U.S. Department of Education
2023 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. Therese Majewski
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Queen Of Peace Catholic Academy
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 10900 SW 24th Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Gainesville State FL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 32607-1207

County Alachua

Telephone (352) 332-8808 Fax (352) 448-4560

Web site/URL https://www.qopacademy.org E-mail etmajewski@qopacademy.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.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Deacon Scott Conway E-mail superintendent@dosaf1.com
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Diocese of Saint Augustine Tel. (904) 262-3200

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.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson President Robert Walpole
(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.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

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 2023 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 2018 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2022.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 or 2022.
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 the current school year (2022-2023) 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):
- 0 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
0 Middle/Junior high schools
0 High schools
0 K-12 schools
- 0 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, 2022 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 Students
PreK	39
K	45
1	52
2	52
3	52
4	47
5	51
6	47
7	44
8	41
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	470

*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
 - 7 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 25 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 60 % White
 - 7 % 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 2021 - 2022 school year: 3%

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, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	7
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	5
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	12
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	452
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.03
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

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

Spanish, Portugese, Vietnamese, Mandarin

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 with an IEP: 13 %
Total number of students served 62

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 should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

<u>7</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>1</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>2</u> Developmental Delay	<u>24</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>12</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>15</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. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 0 %
Total number of students served: 0

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 2

11. 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	7
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	22
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.	17
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

12. 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 12:1

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

Required Information	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018
Daily student attendance	94%	94%	94%	94%	94%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

14. **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 2022.

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%

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

Yes X No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2011

16. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

At Queen of Peace Catholic Academy, we learn the gospel message, live as disciples of Jesus and grow in knowledge as we build the kingdom of God.

17. Provide a URL link to the school's nondiscrimination policy.

<https://www.qopacademy.org/prospective-students>

18. **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

On Friday, March 18, 2020, Queen of Peace Catholic Academy got notification from the Diocese that we would not be opening until further notice due to Covid. Administration gathered over the weekend and an immediate plan was put in place. On Monday, the 22nd, the entire staff joined together on Google Classroom to discuss the plan and how to implement it. iPads were distributed out to families without technology, and a tech team assisted everyone in troubleshooting. Another team was put together to assist the teachers in preparation of materials and to be utilized as class monitors on line. On Tuesday, March 22, students were asked to join their homerooms via Google Classroom. The students arrived in full uniform and proceeded to follow their normal class schedules. Classes included all core and special classes. Aftercare offered social programs such as drawing classes, baking lessons, pet parties, etc. in an effort to maintain a strong community environment. Our Guidance Counselor and Learning Resource Team were available to students at any time needed. This dedication from staff, administration, students and families is what we consider to be the best narrative of who we are as a school community...committed, supportive, creative and dedicated to educating children in a safe and supportive environment that energizes and engages our students to achieve academically while being socially aware and confident.

In 2011, Queen of Peace Catholic Academy was awarded the National Blue Ribbon for Academic Excellence. Being a recognized Blue Ribbon school made us a household name in our community. The distinction was an instrumental piece in our marketing materials, and we now had a waiting list for students to attend QPCA. But, being a Blue Ribbon School was so much more than just a great marketing opportunity...it was a collective achievement that gave us a sense of pride and accomplishment. The recognition motivated all of us at QPCA to want to be better and achieve more.

One of the key strategies that we attribute to our success is the building of relationships with our students. In 2017-2018 our Guidance Department became a site host for the University of Florida Department of Counseling which greatly benefits our school by having interns on campus working under our Guidance Counselor's tutelage. In Spring 2020, we implemented the Friendly SEL curriculum which teaches the five-core competencies of social-emotional learning. In 2022, QPCA implemented Responsibility-Centered Discipline. Our goal is to empower students to take ownership for their own behaviors in which students will understand the benefits of forming good behavior habits and learn emotional self-control.

Unique to QPCA is our dedication to the Arts. In the 2014-2015, the Fine Arts Building was built (art, music and band), and has allowed for a greater opportunity for exploration of the arts. The band program has expanded to include a beginning, intermediate, concert, symphonic and liturgy band. Our music program begins with PreK and follows them through to fourth grade where they learn to read music, tinker with different instruments and perform in concert, not only in English, but Chinese and Spanish. Our choir program, which begins in 5th grade, gives us the opportunity to invest in our community by performing in different community venues. The art program has also grown to include an Art Independent Study that allows our advanced art students to study beyond the diocesan curriculum.

During this same year, the Media Center was transformed into the iCreate Center. The new space provided areas for reading and research, and areas for collaboration. The Center was equipped with MacBook laptops, iPads and Robotics for student use. QPCA sent an inaugural Robotics team to the First Lego League competition, and has since replaced First Lego with Vex Robots for use and competition.

In 2015, our middle school House System was created. It began with middle school, but soon expanded to include the entire school. The Houses create numerous events throughout the year that are service and community driven. The House System has proven to be a great way to create community, school spirit, responsibility, and respect.

In Spring of 2021, we began the process to become a S.T.R.E.A.M. Certified School and appointed a S.T.R.E.A.M. program coordinator to guide us in obtaining the certification and developing the program. In 2022, we became a Project Lead the Way (PLTW) school that includes areas such as computer science, engineering, and biomedical science by engaging students in hands-on activities and projects, in which they

learn to solve real-world challenges. We also introduced Vex Robots to compliment our Robotics Program and Team.

This is just a small snapshot of who we are, what we do, and our commitment to our students, community and reputation as a National Blue Ribbon School for Academic Excellence.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

The Reading/English language arts curriculum at QPCA focuses on the core areas of literature, writing, grammar, vocabulary, and spelling. The curriculum at each grade level is developed to meet the objectives mandated by the Diocese of St. Augustine. Both the IntoReading series used in our elementary school and the IntoLiterature series used in our middle school expose students to a broad variety of literary and informational texts. Reading skills learned include the ability to draw upon a variety of comprehension skills (generate and respond to questions, make predictions, compare texts, etc.). Students respond to a variety of literature and distinguish between structural features of the text and the literary terms or elements such as theme, plot, setting, and characters. In middle school, students analyze various genres of literature and participate in novel studies. Students draw connections to Catholic Social Teaching and how it connects to the themes of the literature studied. Students' skills are assessed weekly and biweekly using multiple strategies such as IXL for Language Arts, weekly vocabulary and grammar testing, reading fluency and standardized testing through Terra Nova.

Our writing program consists of a Writer's Workshop in grades K-5 that compliments the IntoReading series curriculum. Students build their writing skills each year as they learn more about the keys to successful writing. Our students compose pieces that are both creative and research--based. This curriculum is fully integrated with our Catholic faith. We provide students with a curriculum that is rigorous and rich in literature, oral and written language, grammar, writing, vocabulary, informational literature, and multimedia/technology.

English Language Arts (ELA) in Middle School manifests a deep focus on fictional and non-fictional literary texts, spoken and written vocabulary, the proper use of grammar, and the writing process. Throughout the year, the students work on improving their comprehension and vocabulary, which include, but are not limited to essays, biographies, memoirs, short stories, and poems. Students also participate in at least two novel studies where they have the opportunity to analyze and connect to the characters, setting, and plot. Vocabulary is presented through in-class assignments and activities as well as through online entities like vocabulary.com.

The writing process is also thoroughly taught in each Middle School ELA class. Writing is a cross-curriculum subject that students are immersed in no matter what class they attend. In--depth research, key word outlines, and MLA format are just a glimpse of what writing skills our middle school students put into the papers they produce. Students participate in writing narratives, poetry, expository and persuasive essays, and research papers. Each student learns how to use literary devices, powerful vocabulary, personal anecdotes, and real world examples to enhance their writing. Grammar is practiced daily and is enriched through an online program called IXL.

Students have the opportunity to be involved in essay and poetry contests throughout the year to display and showcase their original work. Each class also participates in the Scripp's National Spelling Bee to develop public speaking skills and confidence.

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

Our instructional approach to mathematics curriculum includes both the Gradual Release Model for classroom instruction, as well as "Student Discovery" and group projects. In our "I-Do, We-Do, You-Do" approach, the teacher will lead the lesson by working through examples for the students to follow along as the teacher demonstrates the strategies used to work through a certain mathematical concept (I-Do), followed by a few examples where the students and teacher work together to solve similar problems (We-Do), and concludes with the the students working independently to assure individual understanding of the concept (You-Do).

We also utilize “Student Discovery” where a problem is presented to the class, and they are asked to use the tools they have to discover a formula or approach that will work to solve the problem. Then they are asked to test their formula or approach giving different variations on the original problem.

Group projects are often utilized at the end of a unit to allow the students to see how the concepts they learned can be used in various “real world” situations utilizing a variety of hands-on projects.

Throughout each unit, the students will complete a cycle of formative assessments, with each assessment chunking specific concepts together in order to allow the students and teacher to determine individual strengths and weaknesses as well as overall areas that need remediation and/or further scaffolding prior to moving on further into the unit. Once the areas that need either remediation or further scaffolding are identified, the teacher will either choose to differentiate based on student skill levels or remediate with the class using either alternative instruction methods or simply correcting an erroneous technique or misunderstanding.

Our teachers also consistently utilize the learning platform IXL.com to diagnose and provide individual guidance for our students. We require class-wide IXL Diagnostics to be performed quarterly in order to track student growth as well as identify any and all areas where students may require more differentiation. Our Math Department Chair will sit with each math team, (Kindergarten-2nd grade, 3rd-5th grade, and middle school) to review the data and help to formulate plans to address the areas of both under-performing as well as those who may need to be further challenged. With this platform, each student is provided with a unique differentiated plan to work on the specific areas they need.

Summative assessments are given at the end of each unit and continue to contain material from previous units, thus providing the teacher with a truly summative analysis of the students’ complete understanding of all skills presented at a given grade level. The teacher then provides extra support in the way of either office hours (for middle school) or math centers (for elementary) so that any areas that continue to need attention can be addressed on a one-to-one approach. The teacher will record which types of problems are the most commonly missed as well as which are causing individual students the most confusion.

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

QPCA's Science curriculum is developed in accordance with the Diocese of St. Augustine and Florida's Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS). Science is about observing, describing and thinking about the natural world and cultivating a love for the sciences. Science instruction in grades Pre-K to 8th grade is delivered in a variety of formats, using differentiated strategies and real world resources. Comprehensive Science integrates the different fields of science in each grade in order to provide a full range of Life Science, Chemistry and Earth Science curriculum by the end of 8th grade. Students are engaged in the learning through hands-on projects, group work, and 21st century technology. Units of study are scaffolded in a way to assess students both formatively and summatively throughout the unit. A Science Fair from PreK to 5th grade encourages self-learning which includes writing, logical thinking, grammar, math, statistics, data analysis and public speaking. The students in 6th-8th grades apply their knowledge and skills to learning how to write comprehensive lab reports as well as the skills to calibrate and troubleshoot, interpret information, and present the resulting data. All middle school students have multiple opportunities every week to explore science labs. This prepares our students for the high school level where they are expected to research, collect, and to prepare data for science labs.

The students are monitored for growth through the use of class assessments and the Terra Nova. The administrators and teachers meet annually to analyze the standardized test scores by grade level and as a school. These data charts allow for school wide planning in improving student growth.

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

Social Studies is the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote involvement in civic activities. The Elementary Social Studies curriculum of the Diocese of Saint Augustine seeks to create an

awareness of our diverse American nation and the interdependent world. This curriculum encourages the use of concepts and skills in understanding historical, economic, geographical, social, political and cultural events within the framework of Catholic moral principles. The content areas are woven throughout the guide with cognitive, interpersonal, and participative skills. Students are encouraged to develop the life-long ability to make informed and reasoned decisions and to become reflective thinkers. As enlightened citizens with Catholic values, students will become active participants in the promotion of peace and justice in our country and the world. The ultimate aim of the curriculum is to enable students to learn about the past and to better understand the present in order to anticipate and prepare for the future.

Middle School Social Studies curriculum standards:

6th grade focus is on World History, Geography, Economics, and Civics and Government.

7th grade focus is on Civics and Government, Geography, and Economics.

8th grade focus is on American History, Geography, and Civics and Government.

Instructional planning includes both short-term and long-term goals. Planning objective goals use measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-based criteria. The subject matter used relates to the curriculum standards. Instructional planning includes an explanation of the progression of the lesson and how to evaluate students' understanding and knowledge of the subject presented.

Instruction is provided through different types of mediums, lectures, discussions, project-based learning, critical thinking skills, application to real-world scenarios, and S.T.R.E.A.M. activities that help students make connections between what happened in the past and today's social and economic conditions. The focus is on understanding present-day issues and how they relate to the past.

Assessments are based on students' knowledge of facts, themes, and ideas and their ability to analyze, synthesize and evaluate historical evidence. Students must be able to examine issues in the past and present and make informed decisions and assess their work accordingly. Both analytical and holistic rubrics are used as scoring criteria, communicating to students the assessment goals and what constitutes excellence.

1e. For schools that serve grades 7-12:

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

Big Day for Pre-Kindergarten, published by Scholastic, is the curriculum we have adopted for our PreSchool Program. This kindergarten readiness program supports learning experiences and provides materials that reinforce our students' social-emotional, academic, and physical development. The curriculum is organized into eight thematic units. Each unit includes weekly and daily lessons with whole-group learning activities, small group instruction, and learning centers. It provides sequences of learning that gradually build children's knowledge and skills through purposeful play, teacher guided instruction, and hands-on experiences. This program allows teachers to individualize learning experiences based on the student's strengths and needs.

The curriculum includes, but is not limited to, teaching the students a wide range of strategies and resources to support parent and family engagement. In addition to using Big Day for PreK, our 4 year old students attend Media Research, Music and P.E., and take both Chinese and Spanish. Beginning in Kindergarten, our students are introduced to a formal Art Class that continues through 8th grade. S.T.R.E.A.M. (science, technology, religion, engineering, art, math) and Project Lead the Way are also a part of our early education curriculum that follows all students through 8th grade.

The teachers of our early childhood program from PreK to 3rd meet quarterly to discuss strategies to plan for vertical alignment through the grade levels. Using data driven evaluations on the student development

and progress, the teachers engage in cross-curricular collaboration to build and share knowledge on the best practices for success. Our Resource Team is often included in the PLC meetings and assists in interpreting results and discussing research-based practices for our PreK students. They provide one-on-one intervention for those students needing supplemental instruction in reading and math.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

At QPCA, 100 percent of students are enrolled in the Arts programs where they have the opportunity to express emotions, cultivate creativity, and gain confidence through musical performance and visual artwork. The Arts programs incorporate project-based learning and are aligned with state and diocesan standards, and key principles from S.T.R.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) are applied. When students learn about musical theory and composition or visual perspective and light, they also learn how science, engineering, and mathematics were used to invent the techniques and technology behind the art they make. In the Performing Arts program, students have the opportunity to participate in liturgical choir and band performances in weekly student-led school Mass. Choral students also perform locally as part of community outreach, and band students represent the school in district performance opportunities and assessments. Through the Visual Arts program, students also have the opportunity to share their artwork with the local community and submit their work in Diocesan competitions. Student artwork is proudly displayed throughout campus, and all Academy students, Pre-Kindergarten through 8th grade, perform in the annual Spring and Christmas concerts as part of a choir or band.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

PreK students attend P.E. class once a week. Kindergarten through 8th grade students attend twice each week. All students from Pre-Kindergarten through 8th grade learn about the health and proper care of the body through our P.E. curriculum, science, faith, playground recess, and visiting guest dental offices. Nutrition is included in this process and is supplemented by information posted throughout the cafeteria from our contracted hot lunch provider. Fresh fruits and vegetables are offered and encouraged with every meal purchased. QPCA offers a garden club to our middle school students which teaches the process of growing vegetables, the importance of fresh produce in the diet, and community service through donations of produce to a local charity. In the Spring of 2023, our elementary students will have the same opportunity to plant, grow and harvest vegetables in the new garden beds built by our middle school S.T.R.E.A.M. students. S.T.R.E.A.M. and middle school science offer hands-on labs through interactive group activity highlighting how the body works on a cellular level. The health clinic is staffed by a full time RN who provides care, training, screening, flu vaccinations, and education to our students, staff, and families as needed.

2c. Foreign language(s), if offered (if not offered, leave blank)

QPCA teaches students both Mandarin Chinese and Spanish to all students from Pre-Kindergarten to 5th grade. Upon entering 6th grade, the students choose one of the languages to focus on, and if ready, will take Spanish or Chinese online for high school credit during their 8th grade year. Our strong belief in appreciation of other cultures is reinforced in our Language programs. Our program focuses on the traditions, religions, arts and history as well as the use of the formal language and writing skills. The PreK through 5th grade students have opportunities to showcase their language skills during the Christmas and Spring Concert in which they perform in both languages. In middle school, our students have an opportunity to showcase and practice their Mandarin skills by skyping with different schools in China. These opportunities give our students real time, authentic interactions with peers that, like them, are in a classroom setting which brings the culture to life.

Both language classrooms celebrate numerous holidays and events such as the Chinese New Year with

student made dumplings, or the Day of the Dead with student made dishes from different Spanish speaking regions that are shared among the class.

2d. Technology/library/media

The Media Specialist maintains a diverse and current media collection (electronic and print) and facilitates student and staff use in order to address the educational needs of our learners. Pre-Kindergarten through 5th grade learn library etiquette, caring for and appreciating books as well as listening skills, while cultivating a love of reading. All students are permitted to take out books and are taught the Dewey Decimal system. Media Research lessons are taught in our media center weekly. Students learn how fiction and non-fiction books are categorized and shelved, about authors and various genres, periodicals and information sources, research papers, and book reports. They learn the joy of the printed word, reading and being read to, and are exposed to poetry, folk tales, fairy tales, biographies, autobiographies, and mysteries. Our technology curriculum for grades Pre-Kindergarten through eighth grade is integrated into our students' entire educational experience. This curriculum includes but is not limited to keyboarding, spreadsheets, using Publisher, multimedia presentations, web page design, Internet research, writing/editing booklets, and use of curriculum based software and interactive programs either on an iPad or MacBook Pro. The curriculum has been expanded to include coding programs at all levels.

2e. Any other interesting or innovative curriculum programs you would like to share

QPCA offers S.T.R.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) to all students in grades Pre-Kindergarten to 8th grade. The S.T.R.E.A.M. program is a hands-on approach to exploring the real world through the integration of Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics. Students use the Engineering Design Process to solve real-world challenges relating to the benchmarks learned in class. The Academy has adopted the Project Lead The Way (PLTW) program in all grade levels. Through thematic modules, PLTW offers scaffolding hands-on activities, projects, and problems relating to the real world. Students experience integrated learning that blends computer science, engineering, biomedical science, and other foundational disciplines.

Learning is enhanced with the use of 21st century learning. The school has a 1:1 iPad program for all students in 1st-8th grade. Our early childhood grades use a variety of educational programs to enhance the learning experience such as BrainPop, IXL and Osmo. Along with many educational functions on their iPads, students in grades 2-5 incorporate the use of robotics and computer science with Dash Robotics and MakeyMakey to learn coding and problem solving. All middle school students learn robotics and programming in their Robotics class using Vex Robotics.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Individual student performance is closely monitored so that teachers can quickly identify students who are struggling to perform on grade level. The administration, guidance counselor, and Resource Team leader work with classroom teachers and parents to identify students who are performing below grade level, evaluate their needs, and provide appropriate, targeted interventions. Students are provided interventions that are appropriate to their individual needs based on data from classroom work and assessments, standardized testing (if applicable), behavior observation, psycho-educational testing, and other diagnostic tests.

Students performing below grade level are referred to the Resource Team leader for further diagnostic assessments. Reading assessments include the CORE Phoneme Deletion and Phonological Segmentation Tests, the CORE Phonics and Decoding Surveys, the CORE High-Frequency Word Survey, the San Diego Quick Assessment of Reading Ability, the MASR-I Reading Fluency Tests, the Test of Word Reading Efficiency 2, and the Test of Written Spelling 5.

Students that fall within 20-25% work with a member of the Resource Team in lieu of foreign language

classes. For K-4th grade, these Reading Support interventions occur one hour per week, generally in two 30-minute sessions. Fifth graders meet for Reading Support 1.5 hours per week in two 45-minute sessions. Interventions are based on the Orton-Gillingham approach to literacy instruction, which provides direct, explicit, multi-sensory literacy instruction in order to improve reading, writing, and spelling. Additionally, the Resource Team pushes into K-5th grade classrooms to assist teachers in providing small group instruction in all subjects. The Resource Team also provides remedial math instruction by pushing into classrooms during math periods to provide additional support for students in 2nd-8th grade.

Programs used include the following;

- Seeing Stars® Program: Symbol Imagery for Phonological and Orthographic Processing in Reading and Spelling,
- Nancibell® Visualizing and Verbalizing®: Language Comprehension and Thinking,
- Wilson Reading System®, and
- Barton Reading and Spelling System. • Lindamood Phoneme Sequencing® Program for Reading, Spelling and Speech,

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Many students at QPCA perform above grade level, and our curriculum and student expectations reflect this. In all grades, differentiated instruction, cooperative learning, extension activities, cross-curricular projects, and rich discussion are used to extend learning for all students, but are especially used to challenge students. A member of the Resource Team provides weekly math enrichment small group sessions for high math performers in 1st-3rd grades.

Other classes and extracurricular activities that are particularly designed to engage gifted students include;

- Project Lead the Way Launch, a S.T.R.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts, and Math) curriculum for grades K-8,
- Project Lead the Way Gateway, a S.T.R.E.A.M. curriculum for 6-8th graders,
- MU Alpha Theta, a competitive math team for advanced math students in 6-8th grade,
- Catholic Math League, a Catholic math competition in which each middle school math class competes,
- Robotics Team for 6-8th graders,
- Chess Club for Pre-Kindergarten-8th graders,
- The National Junior Honor Society, and
- The Amazing Shake, an exciting live competition in which 6-8th grade students learn about professional skills for success from community leaders.

3c. Students with disabilities:

The Resource Team provides the same literacy services for students with learning disabilities that those performing below grade level receive. Instruction is based on the Orton-Gillingham approach to teaching reading, writing, and spelling that particularly helps students with dyslexia and attention deficit. Students meet with a member of the Resource Team for 30-45 minutes twice a week, in lieu of foreign language

instruction.

The Guidance Counselor and Resource Team leader (Reading Specialist) meet with classroom teachers and parents on a regular basis to discuss student progress, provide suggestions and resources for working with the student in the classroom and at home, guide parents through the process of psycho-educational testing to determine a diagnosis, and set up an accommodation plan to promote academic success.

Efforts are also made to ensure that the physical environment is suitable for each student with both learning and physical disabilities.

3d. English Language Learners:

QPCA provides English language lessons for English Language Learners on an individual basis by the Resource Team. Referrals are made by teachers, and the goal is to provide intense and targeted instruction in speaking, reading, and writing in English so that students can perform on grade level as soon as possible. Lessons are offered to PreK-5th graders in lieu of Chinese and Spanish instruction, meeting 30-45 minutes twice a week.

English language instruction centers on using proper grammar and developing vocabulary. Lessons are designed for individual students targeting areas in which students struggle, including articles, determiners, prepositions, conjunctions, nouns, pronouns, plural/singular, action verbs and auxiliary verbs, verb tenses for both regular and irregular verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Vocabulary instruction is determined by the needs of each individual student and includes social vocabulary, general academic vocabulary, and specific subject matter vocabulary.

Reading and spelling instruction along with pacing is targeted to each student's need. Materials used to teach reading and spelling come from the following programs:

- Seeing Stars® Program: Symbol Imagery for Phonological and Orthographic Processing in Reading and Spelling (SI),
- Nancibell® Visualizing and Verbalizing®: Language Comprehension and Thinking (V/V),
- Wilson Reading System® (WRS), and
- Barton Reading and Spelling System. • Lindamood Phoneme Sequencing® Program for Reading, Spelling and Speech (LiPS®),

3e. Other populations, if a special program or intervention is offered:

In addition to providing remediation for students struggling in reading and math, enrichment for students who excel academically, and English language instruction, the Resource Team also works with the Guidance Counselor to provide support for students in PK-8th grade whose ability to function in the classroom is impeded by severe speech articulation and language deficits, very poor executive functioning skills, autism, or general social/emotional difficulties.

The support setting depends on each student's needs. Students with severe speech articulation or language deficits tend to benefit from small group remedial reading and spelling sessions that take place in lieu of foreign language classes.

Some students with autism or general social/emotional difficulties may benefit from a small group setting, but much of the time they need individual attention. If possible, a member of the Resource Team provides this support in place of foreign language classes, as well as "push-in" support in the classroom for an hour one to two times per week.

The Resource Team also provides support for students whose poor executive functioning skills impede their ability to keep up with the workload, meeting with students several times a week to review grades and missing assignments and develop short term plans for completing classwork and homework. Support is designed to foster relationships and teach habits that will strengthen executive functioning.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Queen of Peace Catholic Academy is committed to providing students with a positive environment where students are engaged, motivated, and supported in their academic and social and emotional growth. Our philosophy states that QPCA “strives toward superior academic excellence where the needs of the child are enveloped in developmentally appropriate practices.” The faculty and staff have high expectations of all students, motivating them to adhere to our Standards of Excellence and Code of Conduct. We work collaboratively to ensure that our students are prepared for high school and the future while developing a solid foundation in their relationship with God.

Student engagement is evident in the classroom, our S.T.R.E.A.M. program, and their service to the community. Students in grades K-8 utilize our 1:1 iPad program to engage in curriculum and foster a strong understanding of digital citizenship. QPCA faculty and staff work to create a welcoming classroom environment where students can develop a growth mindset. Project-based learning and S.T.R.E.A.M activities are notable strengths where students can learn to problem solve. Professional development, curriculum planning, and instructional practices have centered on a growth mindset. Religion courses and the SEL curriculum Friendly are recognizable strengths in building healthy relationships among students.

Beyond the classroom, students are engaged in Liturgy and Prayer Services as lectors, singers, musicians, ushers, and altar servers. These long-standing rituals foster both leadership and community. All students participate in various service opportunities to support our Gainesville community. Examples of service include collecting canned goods to support Catholic Charities and growing and harvesting fresh vegetables in our school garden to give to St. Francis House.

Each month students are recognized for their successes at a monthly award ceremony. In grades Pre-Kindergarten to 3rd grade, students are selected as Star Students each week, and Grades 4-8 recognize students monthly as Super Saints. In addition, they are recognized for being Up-standers (a good citizenship recognition award), and for their achievements in either the fine arts or athletics. Quarterly, students are also recognized for their academic successes with honor roll certificates.

In 2016, our school wide House System was implemented to enhance our collaborative culture. 6th-8th grade students are sorted into a house when they enter middle school. Elementary classes become honorary house members, and all teachers serve as house parents. The initiative was developed to allow all students to build relationships across grade levels that were focused on service to each other and the community.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Queen of Peace Catholic Academy affirms parents as the primary educators of their child(ren). We partner with parents by giving them the tools needed to keep them informed of their child’s academic success. By keeping an open line of communication through RenWeb (a portal to their child’s grades, assignments, missing work, and ongoing communication), weekly updates by the Principal, teacher updates, Facebook, and Google Drive, our parents have a window into their students daily activities which contributes to a positive social climate that supports student learning.

This year we initiated our first ever Parent Support Organization (PSO). The PSO was established by a group of parents who wanted to do more than volunteer in the classroom, on campus, or to be homeroom parents. They wanted an opportunity to create community involvement on and off campus. They have also provided gifts of appreciation for the teachers, staff and administration.

Community partnerships are of the utmost importance. Through our partnerships, we are able to support the greater community by giving students an opportunity to solve local problems by helping those in need. We work hand in hand with Catholic Charities by organizing canned food, peanut butter, and pajama drives. Our choir performs at senior living communities and our NJHS organizes a fundraiser for charitable

organizations so they can enjoy a little Christmas cheer. Our middle school Garden Club provides fresh produce to St. Francis House to help feed the homeless.

In addition, QPCA establishes local business partnerships through The Amazing Shake, a national competition held in Atlanta, GA. To prepare our students for Nationals, we host our own Shake, a five day competition. This competition rallies leaders and role models in the school's community to teach students about professional skills for success. For the first two rounds, local business leaders are brought in to judge our students on their ability to interact in a professional manner in a variety of social situations, taking into consideration eye contact, articulation, confidence, and a good handshake. For Round 3, the top 20 students visit the courthouse to defend an amendment. Round 4 is a power lunch at the Chamber of Commerce where each student has 3 minutes with each member. Round 5 is a visit to TV 20 to discuss real news versus fake news. The competition ends with a five person debate with our winner going to the National Amazing Shake to compete in Atlanta.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

To best serve their students, the administration recognizes the importance of providing the faculty and staff with opportunities for both professional and spiritual growth. The professional development program at Queen of Peace Catholic Academy focuses on opportunities for the faculty and staff to learn both individually and as a group. The administration reviews the teachers' professional goals established at the beginning of the school year to determine what type of professional development to plan for throughout the year. In reviewing these professional goals, trends for growth help to determine the professional development for the group as well as the focus of the professional learning communities. Teacher collaboration in planning and implementation has been at the forefront of all professional development. Throughout the year, teachers participate in school-wide professional development focused on mental health, curriculum implementation, behavior management, and technological tools to support student growth and engagement. The spiritual development for our faculty and staff consists of retreats during preplanning, after Christmas break, and the end of the year. The priests and the sisters of our parish meet frequently with our teachers, lead prayer at the start of faculty meetings, host book studies, and are present at school wide events. The result of both the professional and spiritual development are teachers who are infusing their academic knowledge and Catholic identity into their lesson plans and classroom management.

In addition to school-wide professional development, the teachers at QPCA have opportunities to individualize their professional growth through a purchased online program, The Master Teacher, which offers over 196 courses related to topics that include technology, behavior, instruction, engagement, and classroom management. Additionally, individualized online course training is provided to our teachers to support the behavior program, Responsibility Centered Discipline. Teachers are also encouraged to attend professional development of their choosing related to their subject area that is paid for by either the school or Title funds. Examples of training teachers have attended include foreign language, music and band, and technology conferences. The professional development at Queen of Peace requires both individual commitment and active participation.

Looking back, the administration was diligent in supporting teachers during the transition to a hybrid model of education due to the Covid pandemic. Extensive training in Google Education apps was immediately initiated to support teachers. Administrative teams were put together to assist the teachers in preparation of materials, utilizing new communicative platforms like Google Meet, and to help monitor classes meeting online.

4. School Leadership:

In the 2021-2022 school year, QPCA experienced a new leadership team and style. Our current principal exhibits a transformational leadership style by considering what is best for individual teachers, providing professional development that helps them to grow spiritually and professionally, and motivating others by modeling the behaviors that she is asking of her teachers. During the school's most recent accreditation, interviews were conducted with teachers, students, and parents. One validated strength noted by the visiting team was that the principal showed dedication, leadership, and a desire for success.

Both the principal and assistant principal work to each other's strengths to support the school's culture by having a deep understanding of mission and Catholic identity. Together they collaborate on all aspects of the day-to-day requirements of running QPCA as well as the fulfillment of Diocesan student/teacher performance guidelines. They collaborate to enhance the work environment, support instructional planning, and oversee faculty and staff committees. Their leadership positions include interactions with students, teachers, other administrators, board members, and parents. The assistant principal assists the principal in developing school schedules, behavior management plans, planning for staff development, curriculum, educational textbooks and materials. Together they design the master schedule, assist with faculty and provide direct supervision of school sponsored activities. The A.P. serves as the principal in the principal's absence.

The Dean of Students partners with the principal and assistant principal to promote a positive culture where students feel safe and supported to learn. The school uses Responsibility Centered Discipline in correlation with the school's Standards of Excellence to establish a code of conduct that fosters a healthy school culture that reflects both the mission and core values. RCD focuses on a more individualized approach to coaching students to manage their behavior and working towards a solution.

Our guidance department is made up of a full-time guidance counselor, who is a certified mental health counselor, and two interns. QPCA is also a Site Host for the University of Florida Department of Counseling which benefits our school by having interns on campus working under our Guidance Counselor's tutelage. With the support of the guidance department, our teachers implement the Friendly SEL curriculum which teaches the five-core competencies of social-emotional learning (SEL) to students in Kindergarten through 8th grade. Teaching friendship skills helps students manage their emotions, improve their ability to set and achieve positive goals, show empathy for others, maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Queen of Peace Catholic Academy strives to foster a strong community centered on supporting the individual needs of all its members. We accept Florida state scholarships and offer financial assistance so that families wanting a Catholic education for their student have access to the school. All QPCA students receive a quality education from state certified teachers and have equal access to resources and programs. Each month, students are recognized for their academic achievements, their good character in modeling the school's mission, and their unique talents.

Since the Spring of 2019, Queen of Peace Catholic Academy has administered the TerraNova-Complete Battery achievement tests, created by Data Recognition Corporation (DRC), to measure student progress toward National Standards as a part of the comprehensive Diocese of St. Augustine assessment program. With information collected in the classroom during the year, along with the results from TerraNova, teachers get a clearer view of student progression of growth, achievement, and instructional practices. Prior to the TerraNova, the school and Diocese used the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. After reviewing classroom results from the testing, teachers are asked to complete a reflection tool that will help them analyze the data by identifying the class mean NCE for each subject, reflect if it is an accurate depiction of class performance based on classroom observations, and identify outlying students and factors that might have impacted their performance. The administration then reviews the reflection forms and overall data to determine needs regarding curriculum planning and improvements in instruction. In recent years, the reading coach has added to her team to address COVID related losses.

One of the validated strengths recognized by the FCC visiting team was the excellent job done by teachers, with the support of the school counselor, regarding behavior plans, classroom management, accommodations and support plans, conflict mediation programs, and mental health. Having the accreditation team validate the systems put in place to support students was beneficial for the administration in knowing that what was being done was effective. Teachers frequently meet with parents and the school counselor to ensure students are being supported not only academically, but also socially and emotionally.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

The one practice that is instrumental to our success is our deep commitment to our faith. It is the foundation on which we build our strong sense of community, supporting one another, fostering kindness, mutual respect, and empathy towards all members of the QPCA community. At Queen of Peace Catholic Academy, both staff and students like to say that we live our faith throughout the day creating a vibrant, safe environment that is conducive to teaching, learning, social justice, and community.

The entire QPCA community starts and ends each day with prayer. Together we attend an all school mass from Pre-Kindergarten to 8th grade, pray before meals, and begin and end each class period with prayer. Prayer encourages all of us to focus on good citizenship. Prayer instills a sense of right and wrong that leads to increased tolerance, less bullying, and comfort in times of difficulty. Staff and students join together on the first Monday of each month for a Prayer Service in which a spiritual focus is presented and discussed. Together we incorporate this focus into our day and build upon it through the month with lessons and good deeds.

As Catholic educators, we integrate successful programs that give our students the best opportunity to learn and grow. We know that our students' success depends on our collaboration as educators, teachers, pastors, parents, and school leaders. Together we have created a rich curriculum with innovative classes, after-school activities, an early childhood academic program, an advanced curriculum, and a unique campus setting that includes both a vegetable garden and a butterfly garden that serve as outdoor classrooms.

We have worked diligently to create a school that is a faithful environment for students. This environment helps our students to focus on their academic goals and is a place where mutual respect is emphasized and modeled, and where our students like to say that their successes are because they live their faith throughout the day.

We are humbled by the knowledge that our students will move on to translate their spirituality, skills and scholarship into actions that we hope will someday transform the world.

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? \$9060
(School budget divided by enrollment)
4. What is the average financial aid per student? \$7584
5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to 2%
scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?
6. What percentage of the student body receives 33%
scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction?

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 (2021-2022)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)