

***U.S. Department of Education***  
***2023 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program***

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[ ] Public or [X] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mrs. Elizabeth Veneziale

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

Official School Name Saint Philip Neri School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3015 Chestnut Street

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Lafayette Hill

State PA

Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 19444-2048

County Montgomery

Telephone (610) 828-3082

Fax (610) 828-0930

Web site/URL http://www.spnschool.org

E-mail veneziale@spnschool.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. Andrew McLaughlin

E-

mail amclaughlin@archphila.org

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Tel. (215) 587-3585

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 Reverend George Szparagowski

(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**

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

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 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

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**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	29
K	59
1	59
2	55
3	48
4	53
5	60
6	53
7	55
8	40
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	511

\*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
  - 0.4 % Asian
  - 0.6 % Black or African American
  - 4 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 93 % White
  - 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 2021 - 2022 school year: ≤1%

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	0
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	3
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	3
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	498
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	<.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	<1

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

N/A

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 3 %

Total number students who qualify: 15

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 1 %  
Total number of students served 5

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>0</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>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>4</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. 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: 11

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	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	20
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	6
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	3
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	5

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 26:1

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	95%	97%	98%	96%	96%
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. 2016

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

Saint Philip Neri School incorporates a challenging and intellectual curriculum based on our Catholic faith. We aim to develop the whole child, meeting the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of each. Our emphasis on respect for self and others, service to our community, and personal responsibility, helps our students grow as individuals, become productive citizens in a global society, and live the Catholic faith.

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

Saint Philip Neri School is operated under the auspices of the Catholic Bishop of Philadelphia, in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. All schools in the Archdiocese admit students of any race, color, sex, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students in these schools. Saint Philip Neri School will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national or ethnic origin in the administration of educational policies, loan programs, athletic, or other school-administered programs.

Saint Philip Neri School endeavors to accommodate students with special needs, as the school's resources and capabilities reasonably permit.

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

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A Middle States accredited and Archdiocesan School of Distinguished Instruction located in suburban Philadelphia, Saint Philip Neri School takes pride in its commitment to providing a faith-centered educational experience, while meeting the unique spiritual, academic, emotional, physical, and social needs of each child. A strong partnership between parents and teachers lays the foundation for students to achieve their best both within the classroom and beyond. The school community embodies the values of honesty, compassion, mercy, peace, justice, and equality, recognizing that these traits are essential for developing strong and empathetic leaders in today's ever-changing world. Throughout the years, the student population has grown to include numerous generations from the same families, creating a special sense of belonging to a place that is truly "home." New members are warmly welcomed, becoming an integral part of the Saint Philip Neri School family. Saint Philip Neri School is a school rich in tradition, anchored in the Catholic faith, with a family-centered environment at its heart.

Students at Saint Philip Neri School are encouraged and challenged to reach their full potential in all areas. The school recognizes that learning takes place both inside and outside of the classroom, and strives to provide opportunities to grow spiritually, academically, emotionally, physically, and socially. With faith at the core of Saint Philip Neri School, students deepen their spiritual growth via faith-focused traditions and spiritual gatherings. Utilizing a curriculum following the Archdiocese of Philadelphia's academic standards, students engage in hands-on, student-driven, and progressive learning experiences. By creating an atmosphere where students are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning, students are motivated to do their best and celebrate efforts. In addition to traditional approaches to learning, creative and innovative approaches ensure that all unique learning styles are met. Students frequently collaborate with grade-level peers, as well as participate in learning activities with their prayer partners. These special opportunities to partner together allow older students to mentor younger peers. Students steer the direction of their inquiry, while sharing their discoveries, research, knowledge, and talents with peers. Saint Philip Neri School also provides memorable cross-curricular, school-wide learning experiences including One Book One School, National STEM Day, Earth Day, Read Across SPN Week, Reading Olympics, and Living History Museum, as well as educational assemblies and author visits. Social and emotional needs are met through programs that cultivate a sense of inclusion and celebrate diversity. Students connect through platforms such as Student Council and Peer Mediators. Within these programs, students take on leadership roles, problem solve, and develop interpersonal skills. Extracurricular activities in the arts, music, community service, academics, and sports all contribute to the formation of the whole child. Students are also supported academically, socially, and emotionally via Montgomery County Intermediate Unit services, as faculty continuously monitor student progress and offer appropriate support referrals. Guided by faculty and parents, students are inspired to embrace their unique talents and reach their full potential, making Saint Philip Neri School a place where all can feel successful.

Saint Philip Neri School embraces the strong connection amongst families, the school, and the greater community. This sense of connection and unity is what truly sets the school apart and is the defining characteristic upon which everything else builds. This collaboration encourages students to become involved, think of others, and gain an appreciation for helping those less fortunate. Various service projects and charitable fundraisers allow students to live out the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy. Recognizing that Saint Philip Neri students are part of the larger global community, the school supports students in these acts of service and compassion, which foster an innate sense of service to others. Additionally, Saint Philip Neri School families join together throughout the year at special events to help encourage a sense of faith, camaraderie, and fellowship. Catholic Schools Week is a pinnacle event at Saint Philip Neri School, celebrating Catholic education and all that it encompasses. Other activities and events planned by the Home and School Association, the Spirit Committee, and Student Council provide additional opportunities for promoting teamwork and school spirit, while reinforcing the core belief that Saint Philip Neri School is truly one family.

The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program sets a standard of excellence for all schools striving for the highest level of achievement. As a 2016 National Blue Ribbon School recipient, Saint Philip Neri School prides itself on maintaining that standard of excellence. A thriving student enrollment, consistent exemplary



academics, and positive community reputation all validate this distinction. Intensive professional development and learning opportunities inspire faculty to remain at the forefront of new technology and innovation, eager to share ideas with colleagues and students. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Saint Philip Neri School never wavered in providing for the spiritual, academic, and emotional needs of its students. This success is attributed to the commitment of the faculty and staff, parents, and students to maintain a positive, nurturing, and stable learning environment during uncertain times. Anchored in faith in the pursuit of academic excellence, Saint Philip Neri School strives to continue to uphold the National Blue Ribbon standards.

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

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

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

The curriculum presented is based on the Archdiocese of Philadelphia English Language Arts Curriculum in accordance with the Common Core Standards that integrate Reading, Writing, and Grammar, as well as Speaking and Listening. The teaching methods utilized in Grades K – 8 support differentiated and cross-curricular, high quality instructional practices. The ELA curriculum centers around targeted reading, writing, phonics and phonemic awareness instruction, fluency, and vocabulary development, spiraling these skills as students progress through the grade levels. In kindergarten – Grade 3, students gain foundational literacy skills through all-encompassing, daily classroom activities grounded in the science of reading and ELA standards. Kindergarten – Grade 3 students utilize trade books by favorite authors and Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Journeys comprehensive reading program, as well as structured phonics instruction daily. In Grades 4 – 8, students are exposed to a variety of instructional materials including Scholastic Storyworks in Grades 4 – 5 and Scholastic Scope in Grades 6 – 7, both comprehensive literacy programs designed to support ELA standards with challenging authentic texts in a variety of genres. Additionally, anthologies, trade books, and online materials are incorporated into classroom activities in Grades 4 – 8. Through rigorous instructional content and tools, students are given the foundations to develop their reading and writing skills in the classroom and beyond.

Students learn how to think and analyze through performance-based assignments. Students gain the skills and knowledge to become inquisitive readers and writers by analyzing literature. As concepts become more complex, emphasis is placed on assimilation of ideas, critical thinking, and comprehension. Through guided readings, literature circles, and trade books, students explore various literary genres and engage in active dialogue about what they have read and discovered. Encouraged by their peers, students interpret and infer, make connections, and build vocabulary. Students in all grades receive grammar instruction through Loyola Press Voyages in English to ensure a spiral curriculum presentation. Writing skills are acquired, enhanced, and applied using the full writing process. Weekly instruction in library skills, as well as technology, enhance the application of skills presented in English Language Arts classes. Students learn how to produce and distribute quality writing using twenty-first century technology to produce, publish, and share writing products. Students conduct cross-curricular, short research projects and participate in a range of collaborative discussions and presentations. Students are assessed using formative, summative, project-based, and informal observations. Those needing extra support receive small group instruction with a reading specialist through the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit (MCIU). Advanced students find additional opportunities to excel through programs such as Reading Olympics and The William Jeanes Library annual book writing challenge, in which young authors submit their work for possible permanent inclusion in the community library. Schoolwide programs, such as “One Book, One School,” “Read Across SPN Week,” and author visits provide opportunities for students to gain exposure to new genres and authors, while fostering a literacy-centered school community.

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

Saint Philip Neri School follows a mathematics program that aligns with both Pennsylvania Common Core Standards and the guidelines outlined by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. The curriculum, mainly supported by Sadlier-Oxford’s Progress in Mathematics, is divided into ten levels of instruction beginning with kindergarten and extending to Algebra I. Students explore algebra, geometry, measurement, number sense, data analysis, graphing, and computation with a focus on problem solving, math reasoning, accuracy, and modeling. Each grade level builds upon previously learned content while also introducing new material. This reinforcement of skills provides the alignment of curriculum and horizontal growth, while the spiraling of skill levels promotes vertical growth.

With the exception of Honors Math, students are heterogeneously grouped for mathematics instruction. Teachers utilize supplemental resources including Simple Math Solutions (daily maintenance), along with

various manipulatives and reteaching/enrichment activities to differentiate instruction. Additionally, the curriculum includes technology components that support instruction. IXL, a comprehensive Pre-K – Grade 12 math program, provides targeted practical experience and reinforcement of skills. Curriculum is communicated through the learning platform Google Classroom, and Promethean Boards provide an interactive display to further enhance student performance and engagement.

The Honors Math Program, a differentiated accelerated instruction for students in Grades 4 – 8, extends the math curriculum to cover high school Algebra I. Students must meet eligibility requirements including, but not limited to, qualifying standardized test scores and end-of-year minimum grade point averages in both math and reading. Those that meet these eligibility requirements are expected to perform at a level of satisfactory performance and participation, as well as an effort level indicative of the quality of work. Instruction is given at a faster pace with a more in-depth focus on and exploration of specific topics. This program provides an emphasis on both linear and quadratic equations, functional reasoning, and solving systems of equations.

The Montgomery County Intermediate Unit provides small group instruction for students who need additional support in math utilizing resources such as TouchMath, IXL, Xtra Math, and Nearpod. These students receive remediation for 30 minutes, 2 times per week. These services are provided for students in kindergarten – Grade 6. The Montgomery County Intermediate Unit remediation instructor pushes in for small group instruction in kindergarten, while students in Grades 1 – 6 are pulled out for small group instruction.

All growth is validated through both formative and summative assessments that correspond with curriculum content. These include quizzes, tests, exit tickets, and interactive programs that give students an opportunity to demonstrate and communicate their mastering of math content. Teachers are provided with clarification of student understanding, as well as knowledge of when to reteach and/or enrich. Dialogue between teacher and student stands as one of the best indicators of comprehension and can be used to initiate further instruction. All students in Grades 3 – 7 take the Terra Nova Standardized Test which evaluates mathematical reasoning and math skills.

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

The Terra Nova Standardized Test is given annually to students in Grades 3 – 7. These scores and data are used to drive instruction and instructional pace. Saint Philip Neri's science curriculum follows the Next Generation Science Standards(NGSS) and builds on students' natural curiosity and previous knowledge. Students in Pre-K – Grade 5 are introduced to each of the three main branches of science: earth, life, and physical science. Grade 6 focuses on earth science and Grades 7 – 8 on life science.

Pre-K – Grade 5 science lessons begin with phenomena that spark classroom conversations followed by hands-on activities to reinforce key concepts. Students in these grade levels utilize various online learning platforms and print resources such as IXL, Generation Genius, McGraw Hill iScience, and Science Spin to complement instruction. Grades 6 – 8 participate in traditional inquiry-based learning using Promethean Panels. A Promethean Panel is an interactive whiteboard with built-in software which enhances instruction by utilizing its digital features to teach scientific principles in a fun and hands-on way. Traditional instruction is followed by hands-on laboratory experiences that strengthen the students' understanding. A science lab provides teachers a space to better guide students in opportunities to question, research,

hypothesize, experiment, analyze, and communicate. Several local resources are utilized to aid in instruction: the Schuylkill Valley Nature Center, the Penn State Embryology Program, Bloom in STEM, and the “Challenger Learning Center” by the Montgomery County Community College. Students' participation in these local resources helps support the acquisition of additional background knowledge of the sciences.

Through the utilization of the NGSS, curriculum pacing is planned for each grade level. Formal assessments begin in Grade 3. Students in Grades 3 – 8 are evaluated through standards-based assessments, project-based learning, and hands-on laboratory work. The Terra Nova, a Standardized Norm-Referenced Achievement

Test, is given annually to students in Grades 3 – 7. These scores and data are used to drive instruction and instructional pace.

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

The social studies curriculum equips students with the knowledge and understanding of the past that provides a strong foundation for interpreting the present and planning for the future. Teachers across the grade levels use a variety of resources to present and explore this information such as interactive textbooks, Scholastic News, and online resources. Grades 1 – 3 begin exploring communities and geography skills to gain awareness of the world around them through hands-on activities and projects. Grade 4 students develop a better understanding of Pennsylvania's formation through the study of its geography, history, farming, industry, and government. Grades 5 – 6 use geography features and concepts to encompass the study of the continents in the Eastern and Western Hemisphere. Grades 7 – 8 explore United States History from the beginning of the Ice Age to the end of World War II. Topics covered in each grade level are integrated through lessons and assignments in the special subject areas to further enhance learning and comprehension.

Students gain a better understanding of topics covered in each grade level with different learning models. Hands-on learning and field trips can be attended both synchronously and asynchronously to engage the students, and technology with Google Classroom brings lessons to life at school and home. Additionally, Discovery Education makes real world connections, allowing students to attain and strengthen individual academic success, as well as helping students foster cultural appreciation and evolve into global citizens. As a capstone activity of the social studies program, Grade 8 brings history to life for the school community through the creation of a Living History Museum that pays tribute to historical figures from across the globe.

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

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

The Pre-Kindergarten is a full-day or half-day option program at St. Philip Neri which follows the guidelines of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, aligning with the PA Learning Standards for Early Childhood Education.

Through the Frog Street Pre-K program – a research-based program built on the latest findings in neuroscience, math, literacy, and language acquisition – children experience class meetings, small and whole group instruction, and concrete hands-on activities. These activities include fine motor skills; listening skills; social interactions; and prewriting, reading, and math skills. Frog Street offers the opportunity to build foundational skills to support the acquisition of higher-level skills, preparing children for future learning.

Developmentally appropriate experiences are offered weekly in religion, Spanish, art, music, library, technology, and physical education. Students experience being part of a community by participating in school wide fundraisers, meeting with their prayer partners, and attending special school liturgies. All of these experiences aim to contribute to the child's spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development.

The Early Childhood program at the St. Philip Neri School challenges the students and provides them with the skills that they need to succeed at the elementary level. The foundational skills taught in math, language and literacy, religion, Spanish, art, music, and technology are further developed as students progress through elementary school. At the closing of the Pre-K program, students have acquired the important skills and knowledge that will continue throughout the students' kindergarten year and beyond.

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

## **2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)**

The fine arts program strives to provide students with a meaningful experience that expands beyond the classroom to become part of their everyday lives. The music curriculum broadens general knowledge of basic music skills and music theory. In a newly renovated music classroom with an upright piano, students experience music through movement, singing, improvising, and performing. Students gain hands-on experience through multiple instruments including handbells, small percussion instruments, and bucket drums. The school choir supports school and parish events by providing music for the reception of Sacraments, Sunday masses, and weekly children's liturgies.

The art curriculum introduces and develops skills while incorporating elements of art and principles of design using a variety of media. In the newly renovated space, students are able to widen their scope of creativity and build artistic confidence as they create a portfolio of work informed by the work of the chosen artist of the year. These portfolios may be submitted for contests and scholarships. Students gain knowledge of various artists and art movements through art history lessons as well. Additionally, students are offered fine art enrichment opportunities through the Children's Choir, the string and band ensembles, the annual school musical, and the Christmas show.

## **2b. Physical education/health/nutrition**

Physical Education is a critical component in the quest to educate the whole child: mind, body and spirit. The curriculum provides a well-balanced program that teaches fundamental skills of movement, games and sports, dance, team building, and cooperative activities for Pre-K – Grade 8. Students are given many opportunities to appreciate the importance of keeping their body active and healthy. Students participate yearly in the Saint Philip Neri Fitness Challenge, which enables them to evaluate their performance and compare their scores to their previous accomplishments, as well as compare their percentiles to national standards. The new Promethean Panels provide a wide variety of exercise warm-ups and are a marvelous tool to show students how other athletes and teams work together in a particular activity. Students are also given a pedometer to track their levels of performance during the class, enabling them to track step counts as well as evaluate how long they had a moderate to vigorous workout. Jump ropes, hula hoops, balloons, bean bags, and balls all teach students that exercise can be fun. Students look forward to gym class because they know they will learn something new, have fun, and get exercise.

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

The Saint Philip Neri School Spanish language program builds basic proficiency within an incremental curriculum balancing speaking, listening, reading, and writing in the Spanish language. In the weekly ungraded class for Pre-K – Grade 3, students work to pronounce and read basic Spanish vocabulary in thematic units. Students are also given the opportunity to improve listening and speaking in the target language through songs, TPR (Total Physical Response), video clips, handouts, powerpoints, and Promethean Panel activities. Grades 4 – 8 have Spanish as a weekly graded special. In class, students focus more intently on communicative activities with specific tasks, guided writing pieces, communicative activities, cooperative practice, and listening comprehension. Grades 4 – 8 use the VOCES digital textbook along with posted vocabulary lists, class activities via Chromebooks, and supplementary materials to familiarize themselves with the key grammatical aspects of basic Spanish. Additionally, Grades 7 – 8 students revisit previously mastered vocabulary and grammar and are exposed to next-level grammatical concepts in leveled Spanish chapter books. At every level of the program, students also come to understand, respect, and appreciate the various aspects of Hispanic culture.

## **2d. Technology/library/media**

Saint Philip Neri School's library and technology programs are student-centered, aimed at equipping students with skills to use beyond the classroom. The technology program uses a list of competencies provided by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia to educate students on the Google Workspace, with a focus on

presentation, research, and design skills. It introduces students to coding, using online programs and various devices. The program encourages students to be good digital citizens. All students and teachers have access to Chromebooks, with Grades 1 – 8 having 1:1 Chromebook use. Each room is equipped with a Promethean Board to promote technology use throughout the school. The Saint Philip Neri library program aims to extend reading and research experiences in all curriculum areas through teacher collaboration. Students learn to evaluate sources for reliability and comprehensiveness. Students understand the organization of the library and are able to access information in print and online. Reading for pleasure is highly encouraged and celebrated with students participating in weekly book selections, talks, and

read-alouds to generate interest. Special literacy events such as an annual author visit, schoolwide book swap, book character dress up day, and Scholastic Book Fairs promote a culture of reading across all grades.

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

**3. Academic Supports**

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

At Saint Philip Neri School, students who are performing below grade level are given the opportunity to experience a variety of teaching approaches. Teachers cater their instruction to the specific developmental needs of each student by providing hands-on experiences, adopting a comprehensive approach to learning, and using cooperative learning techniques. Teachers use differentiated instruction to address the range of student abilities and learning styles. Methods such as centers, hands-on activities, and small group instruction are used to accommodate and tailor instruction.

Learning is also facilitated through the use of technology as a means of improving individual skills. Students have the opportunity to bridge learning gaps by receiving more intensive intervention in programs such as IXL, a computer program that uses analytics and diagnostic tools to personalize the instruction to the individual student. Teachers use the data in the diagnostic tools and help plan a course of action for intervention. Students can be placed in varying levels with activities to meet their needs.

Remediation services in reading and mathematics are provided by the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit (MCIU). Following a teacher's or administrator's recommendation, the MCIU performs screening to determine the student's needs and begins a plan of action. Parents give permission for their child to be seen by specialists on a regular basis throughout the year. Teachers work in partnership with the MCIU support team and design lessons to direct the student's needs. Specialists are also provided in the areas of speech, language, and counseling.

On the occasion a student is not showing signs of improvement, a formal evaluation can be requested for psycho-educational testing. The psychologist performs a more in-depth evaluation and a meeting with the parents, administrator, teacher, and psychologist reviews recommendations. Modifications and accommodations are put in place for the student's needs.

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

The Honors Math program, an accelerated program of enriched mathematics studies, is available to students performing above grade level and meeting the Archdiocese of Philadelphia's requirements. Students in the Honors Math program are identified using the scores from the Terra Nova Third Edition Complete Battery in conjunction with their report card grades. Students are admitted to the program starting in Grade 4. The curriculum emphasizes application, problem-solving skills, and a conceptual understanding of math, while incorporating basic mathematical computation. Critical thinking and construction of math understanding are integral parts of the total program. At the conclusion of Grade 8, students will have completed the Algebra I curriculum.

Students who perform above grade level can utilize the online computer program IXL to enhance and supplement their learning. This program challenges students with more rigorous, critical thinking activities. Teachers are able to analyze data from diagnostic tests and place students into their appropriate grade levels for skill development. As skills are completed, students are able to proceed at their own pace. Since IXL's program includes all subject areas, students can be challenged based on their specific needs and may proceed to skills in subsequent grade levels.

Additionally, teachers have access to a wide range of resources in their teacher's manual, which are designed to enrich the learning experience for those above average students.

Students in Grades 5 – 8 are able to qualify to receive an Honors Commendation. Students with a grade of 90 in all subject areas are eligible to receive first honors. Students with a grade of 85 in all subjects receive second honors. For both commendations, students must also earn a 3 or 4 on the rubric scale in Personal & Social Growth, Effort & Study Skills, and all special subject areas on their report cards.

### **3c. Students with disabilities:**

It is Saint Philip Neri's mission to serve students with disabilities and to provide them with a variety of learning supports to meet their individual needs. Our staff creates a suitable environment with an emphasis on academic, social, and emotional growth to match each student's specific needs. The Montgomery County Intermediate Unit Equitable Participation is a support service to non-public schools that has students identified through Child Find. Child Find is a process that involves identifying school-aged students enrolled in non-public schools by their parents to determine whether they require special education because of disabilities. Equitable Participation Service Plans describe what services the Intermediate Unit will provide to a child with a disability enrolled in a private school and designated to receive direct services. These plans include the location of such services, as well as any transportation required.

Students affected with hearing loss can be provided with audiological technology from the Equitable Participation Lending Library. Students who have vision loss receive individual and classroom guidance for adaptations and modifications to materials.

Students with deficits in fine motor skills or sensory concerns have access to equipment and materials in the Occupational Therapy Lending Library. Observations are made of students who require specific equipment or who have poor gross motor skills, as well as ideas for individual and classroom support.

All areas of Saint Philip Neri School are handicap accessible since the facility is equipped with wheelchair ramps, a wheelchair lift, and an elevator.

Finally, a variety of presentations and professional developments are hosted for teachers on topics related to special education, including classroom management, positive behavior support, and specific disability information.

### **3d. English Language Learners:**

Saint Philip Neri School does not have any English Language Learners at this time.

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

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

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

Saint Philip Neri School provides an atmosphere that is rooted in faith, providing a loving and educational environment for students where they are valued and supported. The Saint Philip Neri School community works together to foster the academic development of each child, preparing them for the future. In this faith-filled community, teachers instill the values stated in the school's mission statement including respect for self and others, along with service to the community. Helping students grow socially and emotionally as individuals; become responsible, productive citizens in a global society; and live the Catholic faith are ideals held dear by the Saint Philip Neri School family.

Saint Philip Neri School focuses on high academic achievement and offers a multitude of opportunities for student growth. Students in Pre-K – Grade 8 participate daily in academic content areas and weekly in special areas such as physical education, Spanish, technology, art, library, and music. Additional musical opportunities include Choir, Instrumental Band, and Strings. Blossom in STEM is an after-school program for Grades 6 – 8 girls designed to empower girls to explore their interests, build confidence, and envision future opportunities in STEM. Preparations for secondary education begin in Grade 7 and continue through Grade 8 as students are given the opportunity to enroll in a high school placement test course to prepare them to take the entrance exams. Grade 8 students are allotted time to shadow various high schools, complete applications, and in some cases interview at schools. The Saint Philip Neri School staff works together to develop every facet of the student so each can graduate with a strong academic foundation to build upon in secondary school and beyond.

Students at Saint Philip Neri School are afforded the opportunity to participate in numerous activities that promote their social development. Students in all grade levels are matched with prayer partners that allow them to connect with their faith as they interact with children of different age groups. They work together on different events such as the All Saints Day celebration and Living Stations. Social clubs and teams such as Girls on the Run, Drama Club, Jazz Stars, and numerous sports teams allow students to explore their talents and try new activities.

The emotional needs of Saint Philip Neri students are supported through a variety of extracurricular activities. Student Council provides leadership opportunities that uphold school rules and values, foster good citizenship, and provide a positive example to their peers. Peer mediators are Grade 4 students who participate in training to help their peers solve problems and resolve conflict in a meaningful way. Additionally, students are invited to participate in the liturgy as altar servers for daily mass, funerals, and weddings within the parish.

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

Saint Philip Neri School prides itself on strong partnerships with families and the greater community. These collaborations cultivate well-rounded individuals and provide an enjoyable learning experience. The engagement with the school families, opportunities for community outreach, local community partnerships, and non-profit donors serve as the fundamental strengths leading to student success and school improvement.

The Home and School Association coordinates several events throughout the year bringing students and families together, promoting school spirit, and generating revenue that directly impacts students. The child-centered activities include the Fall Festival, the Bingo Night, the Father Daughter Dance, and the Mother Son Phillies Game. Adult socials include the Trivia Night, the Golf Outing, the Baggo Tournament, and the Auction. These events invite school families, as well as members of the community, to come together and get to know each other while providing fundraising opportunities for school improvements and enhancements.

Saint Philip Neri School participates in seasonal, schoolwide service projects such as the Fill-A-Bus



Thanksgiving initiative to collect goods to benefit a neighboring food bank, and the Giving Tree gift drive where the school adopts a neighboring inner-city school community whose families have urgent financial needs. Through monthly “Tag Days,” families donate thousands of dollars to benefit local causes. Two popular annual activities include the Turkey Trot and Teacher Pie in the Face fundraisers that foster school pride. In November 2022, Saint Philip Neri School participated in its first Giving Tuesday for #igivecatholic. Funds were raised to update technology and assist with tuition. These events, along with everyday classroom happenings, are promoted through social media platforms, weekly newsletters from the principal, and the school website. Teachers also maintain individual webpages that contain pertinent information.

Saint Philip Neri School partners with local businesses such as Holods to support each other. Monthly “Dine and Donate” events provide opportunities to give back to surrounding small businesses. Grants bestowed through non-profit organizations including, but not limited to, the Connelly Foundation and the Knights of Columbus, provide funding for enhanced student experiences and eighth grade awards to honor distinguished students. In addition, the Saint Philip Neri SCRIP program provides financial incentives and tuition discounts.

The Covid-19 pandemic brought challenges to Saint Philip Neri School. The teachers, staff, and administration rallied to continue to provide an excellent education for all students. Teachers quickly adapted to educational needs and technological advancements while keeping student safety as the highest priority. Though many neighboring schools closed their doors, Saint Philip Neri School remained open.

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

Faith is the heart of Saint Philip Neri School. Images of our Catholic culture, as well as formal and informal practices, are a part of daily interactions. Daily prayer and weekly worship as a community of faith strengthen the foundation of spiritual life for staff, faculty, and students.

Teachers are financially supported through the parish via funds that are used for materials and books that are not purchased through state funding. Teachers are allotted a stipend each year for grade/subject specific content area materials. The Home and School Association contributes to the overall budget of the school through fundraisers. An example of the direct support offered by the Home and School is teachers being able to request funds for classroom books to enhance the curriculum. New water refill stations have also been placed in the building as a result of the fundraising efforts.

Integrity and growth priorities drive the school’s professional development program. In the Spring of 2020 when schools were closed as a result of the Covid pandemic, Saint Philip Neri School immediately provided instruction for staff, parents, and students in moving to a virtual learning platform that was secure and user friendly. The community used Screencastify, Google Classroom, Google Meet, and Zoom to connect effectively among administration, teachers, parents, and students. The collaboration of teachers in getting programs active quickly has resulted in less loss of learning among Saint Philip Neri students than that of reported losses nationwide. Once back in the classroom, teachers collaborated to ensure that skills not introduced during virtual learning would be covered in the current curriculum at each grade level.

Workshops offered by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit (MCIU) are frequently attended by teachers. All first year teachers participate in the Pennsylvania Induction Program. Annually, teachers participate in a technology workshop in August. This year the teachers received training for the Promethean Boards which were obtained through a government grant: Emergency Assistance to Non-public Schools.

At Saint Philip Neri School, teachers are empowered to be a part of the decision-making process through engaging in an open door policy by the administration, as well as by participating as subject coordinators and committee members. Teachers are encouraged by both the administration and the Office of Education to attend professional development opportunities.

development is offered several times a year in areas in which the administration and faculty determine a need. In house, teachers have also used contract time to meet in order to strengthen professional goals or clarify practical implementation.

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

The Administration of Saint Philip Neri School is composed of the pastor of the parish and the principal of the school. The pastor is the primary spiritual and financial leader, while the principal is the academic administrator and supervisor of the faculty and students. Their collaboration creates a Christ-centered and cooperative environment for the community.

The administration and faculty are committed to the Mission Statement: “Saint Philip Neri School incorporates a challenging and intellectual curriculum based on our Catholic faith. We aim to develop the whole child, meeting the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of each. Our emphasis on respect for self and others, service to our community, and personal responsibility, helps our students grow as individuals, become productive citizens in a global society, and live the Catholic faith. Students achieve individual academic potential in a safe and supportive environment, through the use of diverse and creative instructional techniques.” - Saint Philip Neri School Mission Statement

The pastor has an active presence in the school community. Weekly Mass is attended by grades one through eight, with Pre-K and kindergarten students joining for special occasion masses. The pastor is involved in direct instruction with students in religious content. He interacts with the students by attending school functions, distributing report cards, and visiting classrooms.

The principal ensures a safe environment for the staff and students, defines school policies, and supervises the academic and social direction of the school. When the need arose for the faculty to be trained in Basic Life Support practices and Cardio-Pulmonary resuscitation, the principal arranged for all staff to participate in this training. The principal supports the integration of new programs and technology. Weekly newsletter communication to parents, face-to-face meetings, and phone calls provide a connection with parents.

Faculty members serve in leadership roles as subject coordinators, activity moderators, committee members and chairs, and coordinators for additional activities and special events as they arise. Faculty members are actively involved in promoting the school through social media and presence at functions, as well as assisting in the implementation of policies. As role models, teachers put faith into action by planning Liturgies, serving as Extraordinary Ministers, and attending activities outside of contract time. Students are encouraged to be of service within the parish and school community, and extend kindness, compassion, and service to others worldwide. Each Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, the Home and School, faculty, and students are invited to participate in a day of service which benefits a local organization. Tag days, food collection, and Advent gifts are additional ways that the Saint Philip Neri school community reaches out to the world around them.

#### **5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:**

Each school year begins with students and faculty signing the Memorandum of Understanding from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia that acknowledges the responsibility to respect the diversity of others. This universal respect is the basis of the Catholic faith and Catholic education. Saint Philip Neri School is geographically and economically diverse. Drawing over twenty-five percent of the student population from outside of the parish boundaries, the student body represents Northwest Philadelphia and its surrounding suburbs. To meet the varied economic needs of our children, a Scholarship Fund has been established to aid families unable to afford tuition and school fees; the Saint Philip Neri Substitute Cash Redeem in Person (SCRIP) Program provides tuition credit; the Uniform Closet and Uniform Exchange Program helps offset school clothing costs; and as-need donations to families experiencing hardships are made. In addition, in 2022, the Nutritional Development Services (NDS) under the auspices of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, began to provide free meals to all students.

the Catholic faith that all are welcome. In August, Pre-K and kindergarten teachers host a Playground Night to enable families to interact with their new classmates and teachers. Each fall a New Parent Orientation is held to acclimate incoming families to the school community. Annually, Back to School Nights for all grades are held to foster a positive relationship between families and teachers to work as a team, positioning students for success. The SPN Social Media Committee connects all stakeholders with the Saint Philip Neri School community through daily postings on Facebook and Instagram. Several modes of communication exist to keep families informed of policies, activities, upcoming needs, and student progress.

Saint Philip Neri School addresses the current social and cultural events in a twofold manner, both inside and outside the classroom. Within each classroom, teachers expose students to different cultures and address world events through the prism of Scholastic News, Storyworks, and Scope in conjunction with the teachings of the Catholic faith. Response to broader community needs are met through schoolwide service projects, including but not limited to interacting with the residents of Sunrise Senior Living, Fill-A-Bus food collection to support a local food bank, and the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service.

The academic, socio-emotional, and tangible supports provided to the school community help to meet the unique needs of each child. Teachers are able to refer students to the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit (MCIU) for reading and math intervention, counseling services, and speech services. Conflict resolution and interpersonal skills are developed within the classroom and through programs such as Peer Mediators and DeBugging.

## **PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE**

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The key to success at Saint Philip Neri School is a dedicated faculty focused on the education and development of the whole student. Through collaboration and professional development, the teachers devote themselves to learning new instructional methods and integrating them into the classroom. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the faculty adapted to abrupt educational changes and provided students with a seamless transition to online learning through Screencastify and Google Workspace. Post pandemic, teachers continue to close the learning gaps, restructuring lessons according to student needs and challenging students with rigorous curriculum.

Teachers consistently differentiate instruction to meet the needs of Saint Philip Neri School students. Teachers develop academic, socio-emotional, and behavioral strategies to challenge and support students. If needed, accommodation and modification plans are implemented in the classroom with the assistance of the MCIU specialists. These strategies are shared among all relevant faculty.

The faculty are pivotal communicators, connecting the school community to its stakeholders. Through classroom websites, emails, and social media, teachers consistently inform and update families about the happenings within the school. The OptionC and Google Classroom Learning Management Systems enable teachers to disseminate pertinent information on a regular basis. Teachers conference with families formally two times during the school year and in a timely manner as the need arises.

The unwavering dedication of the faculty drives the faith-based mission of Saint Philip Neri School. The faculty continues to uphold the practice of long-standing traditions which connect and build the entire parish community. Weekly liturgies, daily prayer, and prayer partners across grade levels enhance the personal relationship of each student with God. The reenactment of the Holy Rosary, the Stations of the Cross, and the Christmas Nativity share the faith experience with the parish at large. Faculty and staff-directed religious retreats increase student understanding and appreciation of upcoming sacraments.

As stated in the school mission, Saint Philip Neri School faculty emphasize the respect for self and others, service to the community, and personal responsibility, helping students grow as individuals, become productive citizens in a global society, and live the Catholic faith.

## PART VII - NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

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

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

2. Does the school have nonprofit, tax-exempt (501(c)(3)) status?      Yes X      No
3. What is the educational cost per student?      \$0  
(School budget divided by enrollment)
4. What is the average financial aid per student?      \$0
5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?      19%
6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction?      100%

## PART VIII – NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL ASSESSMENT RESULTS

### FOR NORM-REFERENCED TESTS

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*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)<sup>1</sup>. 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 subgroup<sup>2</sup> 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 assessments<sup>3</sup>).

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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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)