

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. Susan Splendido

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

Official School Name Christ Our King-Stella Maris School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1183 Russell Drive

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

City Mount Pleasant

State SC

Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 29464-4057

County Charleston

Telephone (843) 884-4721

Fax (843) 936-6875

Web site/URL <https://www.coksm.org/>

E-mail ssplendido@coksm.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* Mr. William Ryan E-mail wryan@charlestdiocese.org

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

District Name The Roman Catholic Diocese of Charleston Tel. (843) 261-0497

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mrs. Jennifer Vannatta

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

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

Date _____

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

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

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, leave blank.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 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	58
1	53
2	61
3	61
4	67
5	59
6	73
7	84
8	93
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	648

*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
 - 1.4 % Asian
 - 0.3 % Black or African American
 - 5 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 90.6 % White
 - 2.7 % 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	12
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	6
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	18
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	622
(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, German, Vietnamese, Portuguese, Swedish

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: 0 %
Total number of students served 0

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>3</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>1</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>0</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>1</u> Developmental Delay	<u>65</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>11</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>2</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: 13 %
Total number of students served: 83

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

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	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	42
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.	10
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 10:1

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	96%	95%	94%	95%	95%
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. 2009

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

Our mission is to serve the East Cooper Catholic community by providing an outstanding Catholic education for students in pre-kindergarten through grade eight in the parishes of Christ Our King, Stella Maris, St. Clare of Assisi, and St. Benedict. Based on the teachings of Jesus, the school strives to inspire the whole child by promoting an educational philosophy characterized by charity, respect, and outreach. Through strong programs in academics, fine arts, stewardship, and athletics, both staff and students are challenged to fully explore their talents, to equip themselves with the necessary knowledge to interact with the complex world around them, and to lead active faith-filled lives as disciples of Christ.

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

https://www.coksm.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=1223617&type=d&pREC_ID=1458434

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

Christ Our King-Stella Maris School (COKSM) is located in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina. Mount Pleasant is a rapidly growing suburb located across the Cooper River from Charleston, South Carolina. Christ Our King-Stella Maris School was opened in 1950 on Sullivan's Island. The school grew rapidly and within three years, construction for a larger building began on the Christ Our King campus in Mount Pleasant. The school was staffed by the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy. The seventy-two-year-old school now serves four local parishes: Christ Our King, Stella Maris, St. Benedict, and St. Clare. Christ Our King-Stella Maris is part of the Diocese of Charleston, SC and is the largest Catholic elementary school in South Carolina currently serving approximately 648 students. The social-economic makeup of the school is middle to upper class families. The school's diversity is reflective of the Mount Pleasant Catholic community. The Diocese of Charleston, SC and COKSM are accredited through Cognia.

Christ Our King-Stella Maris was awarded the Blue Ribbon in 2009; however, many positive and impactful changes have taken place since 2009 to transform the school into the school it is today. In 2013 the pastors adopted a President/Principal administrative model. The president's focus is finances and marketing, while the principal's focus is instruction and curriculum. Both administrators are highly invested in relationship building and communication. The team is hands-on and involved with pastors, teachers, students, and parents on a daily basis. Both are involved with the day-to-day operations of the school. In addition, in 2022-2023, three assistant principals were added to the leadership model.

Christ Our King-Stella Maris is very proud of its Catholic identity. Students understand and live their faiths and are well aware of their responsibilities to give back to the community through service. Through the school motto, "Live, Love, Learn," students are often reminded to "Do the Right Thing" as it is the goal that all students experience success emotionally, spiritually, and academically.

To promote a culture of respect and dignity, administration added a faith based Social Emotional program to the 2022-23 curriculum. All faculty members ensure that COKSM is naturally incorporating the language of the virtues throughout the day. Short lessons on the virtues are taught in religion and guidance classes. Time is also allotted in language arts class to provide journaling/writing about the virtue of the week. Students who have demonstrated virtuous behavior are recognized and celebrated at our weekly school assemblies. The names of these students are also posted in our weekly newsletter. In addition, professional development opportunities are provided for teachers so that all faculty become adept in incorporating the virtues in their lessons and classroom management strategies.

Academic improvements over the past eight years include updated math, language arts, religion, and science curriculums. Teachers have engaged in professional development centered on instructional methodology, formative and summative assessment, and differentiation practices. To ensure academic success for all students, in 2015 COKSM began a Student Support Program to serve students with learning differences. Currently, three resource teachers serve approximately eighty students (K-8) through both push-in and pull-out programs, and provide professional development to colleagues. In addition to the Resource Program, content area teachers offer daily extra help to all students during lunch and after school.

In 2016 the school initiated a Reading Intervention Program for students in 4K through grade four. The reading intervention team works with teachers to identify language deficiencies in students in the early academic years. The goal is to provide intervention to struggling students as early as 4K to allow for greater success in the primary years. This process also enables the resource teachers to identify students who have true learning differences as opposed to gaps; once a child has been identified, the resource teachers work with parents to begin the process of formal evaluation.

The Christ Our King-Stella Maris mission statement clearly states that COKSM strives to educate the whole child. Individual student talents and gifts are often celebrated. COKSM offers a wide array of extracurricular activities. These include a nationally recognized student choir, a nationally recognized dance team, Math Club, archery, year-round basketball, fine arts, club sports, Crusaders for Christ Club (for middle school girls), Gentleman's Club (for eighth grade boys), Junior Beta Club, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, intramurals,

and more.

Christ Our King-Stella Maris is a vibrant school community with a strong sense of family. Parents are highly involved not only with their children's education, but with the school community itself. The school's Home and School Association (HSA) is very active and is extremely successful in raising funds to support the school. The HSA is also very supportive of teachers, providing monthly acts of kindness as well as seasonal gifts of gratitude. The HSA provides opportunities for parental involvement, resulting in a high level of volunteerism. COKSM students are happy and confident, and the faculty works well as a team. School issues are dealt with fairly and thoughtfully with the goal of always doing the best for the students.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

Christ Our King-Stella Maris' reading curriculum is standards based and instruction is differentiated. Primary teachers focus on recognition of sight words, word families, phonemic awareness, direct and explicit phonics instruction, and more. Much emphasis is placed on the acquisition of sight words and rapid decoding of phonemes. Principles of Orton-Gillingham are infused throughout reading and writing instruction in order to support multisensory learning.

Kindergarten through grade four reading teachers use reading benchmarks, sight word inventories, running records, Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), and Developmental Reading Assessments (DRA) to assess reading levels. These assessments are administered several times a year to monitor progress and re-adjust targeted intervention groups. Screening measures allow for the alignment of the district reading standards and differentiation while tracking college readiness benchmarks. Classroom libraries contain leveled books using the Fountas and Pinnell leveling system to correlate with DRA reading assessments.

Reading instruction in grades five through eight provides students with opportunities for modeled, shared, guided, and independent reading across a range of genres and complexity in both fiction and nonfiction texts. Word work is built into reading instruction to help students build vocabulary and understand the relationships of words and their meanings. Students in grades four through eight study Greek and Latin Roots. Curriculum choices support "Live, Love, Learn" as COKSM strives to ensure that students have an understanding of the world around them as they recognize their responsibility for being positive members of the community and society.

In 2022 COKSM implemented the Writing Workshop framework grades 4K through eight to provide continuity throughout the school and to ensure a standards based curriculum that builds vertically and horizontally. Teachers are able to effectively meet the needs of all learners and build an engaging writing culture in their classrooms. Students learn to plan, organize, draft, revise, edit, and publish various pieces of work through modeled, guided, and independent writing. In all grade levels, students write across the curriculum as content area teachers support student inquiry through reading and writing instruction. This includes the research process and presentation skills. Students format their writing in MLA style to create consistency in writing and to prepare for the rigors of high school and beyond.

Publishing parties are held after the completion of writing units. Student writing is celebrated and published at each grade level. Writing units and assessments include narrative, informative, persuasive, creative, and poetry.

A new English grammar curriculum has been added to the 2022-2023 school year. Instruction focuses on grade level grammar skills and punctuation. Grammar is also emphasized and taught through authentic writing and direct instruction.

Teachers employ both formative and summative assessments to measure mastery. Formative assessments include quizzes, exit tickets, conferring, journaling, on-demands, and self-assessments. Summative assessments include projects, presentations, and published writing pieces.

Language arts teachers collaborate in quarterly Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to review standards, instructional strategies, student work, and MAP data. This provides instructional continuity and pacing throughout the curriculum to help drive instruction. The middle school language arts teachers use a backwards design approach to create unit and lesson plans that align with the standards based learning goals.

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

Christ Our King-Stella Maris takes an evidence based approach to math instruction. Following Diocesan curriculum standards, the goal is to foster a positive growth mindset with a focus on conceptual understanding, allowing students to develop deeper and applicable knowledge of mathematical concepts. Emphasis is placed on mastery of fundamental skills and development of critical thinking abilities. Based on the philosophy that exposure and practice yield beneficial results, daily math instruction is a priority at COKSM. The teachers use a variety of support materials to differentiate and enhance instruction. Supplemental materials include interactive software programs that provide real-time data, manipulatives that address kinesthetic learning, and procedural practice focusing on math facts. This includes applications that relate to real life experience.

Differentiated practices are used for instruction as teachers use a variety of groupings for math instruction. Whole class instruction is used to review, introduce, and clarify information. Teachers also individualize instruction by creating ability and mixed-ability groups for reinforcement activities and to support new content. This grouping allows teachers an opportunity to provide remediation and extension when needed. Additionally, groupings are used for exploratory activities and project based learning in which students are tasked with formulating hypotheses, summarizing information, and communicating shared ideas.

Teachers use a variety of formative and summative assessment tools. Formative assessments include personal white boards, exit tickets, and quizzes. Summative assessments include projects, chapter tests, midterms, and final exams (middle school).

Teachers offer extra help during lunch and after school to ensure content mastery. Students may join a Math Club, in which they work together as a team and compete against other schools in mathematical competitions.

Transitioning from elementary into middle school provides opportunity for content differentiation. Using multiple data points, including standardized test scores, grade point averages, and teacher recommendations, students are placed in one of two tiered level courses, advanced or general. Courses offered for students in grades six through eight range from traditional standards based math to Honors Geometry. Upon graduating from grade eight, students have the ability to earn Algebra I, Algebra II, and Honors Geometry high school credit that is transferable to local private/Catholic and public high schools.

Twice a year, math teachers meet for a horizontal and vertical review of math standards. During this time, teachers review standards, pacing, scope, and sequence. During monthly team meetings, teachers compare student performance/mastery and review MAP data. Teachers identify curriculum strengths and weaknesses, as well as student needs. The teachers then make needed adjustments to pacing and content to ensure the proper scaffolding is in place that leads to comprehensive learning from grade to grade. Testing results help to paint a picture of instructional gaps and help guide instructional planning.

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

Using a standards based approach, Christ Our King-Stella Maris intentionally works to help students develop a scientific understanding of the world around them. Starting in 4K, students interact with scientific content through experimentation and experiential learning. The content is scaffolded and spiraled from the basics of observation and discovery in grade 4K into more complex reasoning and understanding by grade eight. Middle school teachers use a backwards by design approach to drive instruction and to make sure that all students are armed with the proper scientific skills necessary for high school and beyond.

Science classrooms are equipped with hands-on technology to enhance instruction and increase student engagement. Supplemental software programs, online laboratory simulations, and data analysis tools are available for all students. Classrooms are furnished with appropriate tools and supplies for carrying out scientific investigations, and the middle school has a modern science lab. Field trips help students understand science in the world around them.

Science courses focus on development of scientific thinking, reasoning, and application. Lower grades (K-5) utilize hands-on and project based group learning that include investigations, explorations, data collection,

and analysis. Students work together as scientists to review problems and develop plausible solutions. Middle school grades (6-8) build upon foundational skills to evaluate and interpret science. Grade six studies earth science, grade seven studies biology, and grade eight focuses on chemistry/physics. Formative assessments include quizzes, mini-labs, and projects, while summative assessments consist of chapter tests and labs. Whole class projects, such as Outdoor Education, Vegetable Garden Project, and Nutritional Awareness, are incorporated as culminating assessments.

Teachers utilize common plan times to review curriculum, student performance, and learning goals. This collaborative planning ensures that teachers are following the scope and sequence of the science curriculum from year-to-year for a comprehensive understanding of scientific thinking.

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

Social studies instruction is an inquiry based curriculum structured on Diocesan standards. Teachers employ various strategies to activate prior knowledge as students engage in class discussions designed to foster critical thinking skills.

Teachers are committed to making social studies “come alive.” With a focus on applicable understanding of history, teachers utilize real-world scenarios that provoke student interest and engagement. Making history “come alive” means students are active participants in their own learning. Field trips support this active learning.

Active learning also means students are not always stationed at desks. Using technology, students take field trips and interact with virtual simulations. Students are taught the importance of communicating across differences, debating strategies, and respectfully responding to the world around them. The Stock Market Challenge is an integral part of the fourth grade curriculum. It allows students an opportunity to virtually purchase stocks, and to trade and sell their stocks as they develop a true understanding of the market and its impact on the economy and community.

Teachers collaborate in cross-curricular teaching, helping students make connections across the curriculum. Novels and nonfiction text are used to support content related themes. Focus is given to not only comprehension of nonfiction writing pieces, but also to creating appropriate writing responses to nonfiction text. Students are taught to move from claim to text evidence, then from text evidence to reasoning. Middle school students complete an annual research project presented in MLA format. Formative assessments include quizzes, exit tickets, and journal writing. Summative assessments are projects, essays, and chapter tests.

Teachers meet twice a year in vertical and horizontal review. Teams meet monthly to plan single and multi-grade level activities and events. COKSM values the importance of innovative instruction and supports teachers in the collaborative efforts to provide enrichment opportunities to all students.

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

Christ Our King-Stella Maris School provides a rigorous academic curriculum. Students in grades seven and eight are able to place into Algebra I and II, Honors Geometry, and Spanish I to earn high school credits.

Seventh grade students are immersed in a personal inquiry project where they explore and identify unique interests and related careers. The students choose one career to research in depth, which includes information about the career, the best preparatory colleges, and an interview with a professional within the field. A paper and presentation are created to inform their findings to their peers.

Eighth grade students participate in a semester-long service project that allows them to be actively involved with the community, and to bring about a positive change in the world around them. Students learn collaboration and negotiation skills. They present their projects and outcomes at the school’s annual spring Art Walk.

Students with grade point averages of 93% or above are invited to become a member of National Junior Beta Club. Leadership positions are available for all students through the eighth grade Advisory Team (advisory to the school president) and the Peer Buddy Program (available through the school counseling department). These opportunities teach students essential leadership skills.

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

Christ Our King-Stella Maris School offers a pre-kindergarten program (4K) to students who have turned four by September 1st. This program is a half day program with an after-school option. This program fosters a learning environment that nurtures the whole student socially, emotionally, and academically. Core curriculum includes language arts, religion, math, handwriting, and science. Enrichment courses include Spanish, music, art, P.E., and library. The students begin the day with prayer, calendar, and weather. The daily morning block includes language arts and math. Centers, free play, recess, and enrichments are incorporated into the morning. After-school students eat lunch, play outside, nap, and enjoy arts and crafts.

COKSM follows Charleston County School District's state curriculum standards. To ensure that students are prepared for Christ Our King-Stella Maris' kindergarten, the 4K and K teachers meet quarterly to discuss instructional pace, student progress, achievements, and challenges. Progress reports are issued by semester. The progress reports are standards based reports that are heavily influenced by kindergarten readiness expectations per kindergarten teachers and kindergarten curriculum.

Christ Our King-Stella Maris' 4K students are well-prepared to enter kindergarten and the following primary grades. Identification of students struggling with sight word recognition, comprehension, and phonics begins in 4K. Identified students work with the reading intervention teacher in an effort to strengthen areas of concern before the children move into kindergarten. COKSM seeks to support children as early as possible to close learning gaps. Through this process of early identification, resource teachers and classroom teachers are able to provide academic support to children who may later be referred for academic evaluations.

The 4K program is an integral part of the school community. The students are included in all school activities, and are greatly loved by their older peers.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

Students participate in weekly art classes. They work with a variety of mediums including pencil, paints, clay, and more. Students study art techniques by researching famous works; these techniques are used as mentor text/pieces for student application. Each year, the HSA hosts a spring Art Walk. Student work is displayed throughout the school for families to view. Middle school students may choose to have an extra weekly art class on a quarterly basis.

COKSM has a very strong music department. Students are introduced to the process of reading music in first grade. This builds vertically throughout the elementary grades. Middle school students may choose to have an extra weekly music class on a quarterly basis. The music department offers students the opportunity to explore gifts and talents in singing and dancing. Students may begin singing in the school choir in third grade. The choir sings at school liturgies, weekend liturgies, and school functions such as the annual Veterans' Day Celebration, Grandparents' Day, Christmas Pageant, and Lenten Passion Play. All students are invited to perform in the annual talent show. All middle school students are invited to participate in the spring musical, and may join the more advanced choir, Harmonia. Harmonia competes on the national level and at the annual Charleston Spoleto Arts Festival.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Students in grades 4K through four have physical education (P.E.) once a week; these classes focus on increasing agility and body awareness, strengthening core, arms, and legs, and improving cardiovascular endurance. This is done through team activities such as basketball and soccer. The students also participate in games like “Noodle Tag,” “Sharks and Minnows,” “Mr. Turkey,” etc.

Grades five through eight students have P.E. once a week, and many have a second P.E. class on a rotating quarterly basis. All students take a Fitnessgram Assessment at the beginning of the year to measure and improve cardiovascular endurance and muscular endurance throughout the school year. Objectives for middle school P.E. include developing the skills and knowledge to maintain healthy and active lifestyles, teaching students to combine strategy and skills for participation in team sports, and helping children improve both their verbal and nonverbal skills to effectively communicate with teammates. Students who have double P.E. create their own workout plans and lead the class in chosen exercises. These workout plans can be HIIT, interval training, flexibility training, and sports related training. All students participate annually in Jump Rope for Heart.

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

Students in grades 4K through five have Spanish once a week. 4K and K Spanish are music based and consist of the introduction of culture, vowels, numbers, colors, and the basic family unit. By fourth grade, students understand and apply sentence structure and use of verbs, while fifth graders work to improve reading fluency, comprehension, and correct use of basic grammar.

Middle school students have daily Spanish instruction. Objectives include an understanding of the culture, identifying countries and capitals where Spanish is spoken, understanding subject/verb agreement, and the use of appropriate greetings outside of class. Students also learn to recite prayers in Spanish. The eighth grade Spanish class is a high school course (Spanish I) and students receive high school credit for completion of Spanish I. More than half of the eighth grade students move into Spanish II as high school freshmen.

2d. Technology/library/media

The students in grades K through five attend technology once a week. The focus of tech class is to teach the students how to use the desktop, Chromebook, and iPad as tools. Students are taught coding, keyboarding, and presentation skills. Coding is introduced in kindergarten; all students are taught basic functioning skills, and how to create, edit and collaborate in Google Docs. Fourth and fifth grade students learn how to create, animate, and present using Google Slides as well as how to properly research information. All classes learn internet safety and the significance of leaving a digital footprint. Sixth through eighth grade students attend a writing lab in place of a weekly technology class.

Students in grades 4K through five have library class once a week. The students are exposed to study skills as well as all forms of fiction and nonfiction text. Local authors visit once a quarter for “Book Talks.” Nimitz, a therapeutic “Library Dog,” visits weekly to support children dealing with anxiety and stress. Additionally, the librarians organize a national reading month which is celebrated by the whole school.

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

To provide students in grades six through eight with additional opportunity for language development, a weekly writing lab class was created. This hybrid class embeds technology and writing skills into the curriculum. The writing lab supports inquiry based learning, peer-to-peer collaboration, cyber safety responsibility, and interaction with web-based and Google applications. Incorporating these apps into instruction helps students learn the technology needed for success in the 21st century and makes the writing process much more interactive and authentic for students.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Christ Our King-Stella Maris is committed to student success. Performance of struggling students is addressed through both the Resource Program and the Reading Intervention program. The Resource Program is designed to meet the academic needs of students with mild learning differences. This program is unique to COKSM and makes this school distinct from other neighboring private/Catholic schools. In addition to Resource support, COKSM has a Testing Center that offers test taking support to qualified students.

The chair of the Resource Department is a certified special education teacher. The team consists of three teachers who provide services to students in grades 4K through eight. One teacher is dedicated to lower school, while the other works with middle school. The third resource teacher supports math instruction.

A Student Academic Plan (SAP) is created from academic evaluations; the SAP determines the level of services a child receives. Students receive services through push-in and pull-out interventions. Students in grades six through eight who require more in-depth services go to the Learning Lab daily in lieu of Spanish classes.

The COKSM Reading Intervention team provides support for 4K through grade four. Students are assessed at the beginning of the year to determine reading levels, comprehension skills, sight-word recognition, and fluency rates. Grouping allows for small group instruction and intervention. Reading groups are fluid as students are re-evaluated several times a year.

Assessment instruments include DIBELS, DRA, running records, a literary support and intervention tool (LEXIA), math support that meets the needs of higher and lower level students (ALEKS), and the standardized testing instrument (MAP). Students are assessed quarterly and progress is tracked, allowing teachers to see student progress. Since the inception of the Reading and Resource programs, the data has shown that students who have received intervention and support from an early age have made great academic gains.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Christ Our King-Stella Maris School does not have a Gifted and Talented Program; however, the school offers a rigorous academic curriculum. Middle school math is the only content area that is tiered. Students must meet designated criteria of grade point averages (GPA), standardized test scores, and teacher recommendations in order to qualify for advanced math placement. Algebra I, Algebra II, and Honors Geometry credits are accepted at local public and private/Catholic high schools. All eighth grade students take Spanish I, a high school credit course, also accepted at local public and private/Catholic schools.

The Diocese of Charleston follows a seven point grading scale. Students have the opportunity to achieve academic “Honors” or “High Honors” each quarter. To earn “Honors” students must have a GPA of 89.5% to 94.99%. “High Honors” are awarded to students who have a GPA of 95% to 100%.

Each school year, approximately forty-five percent of sixth through eighth grade students achieve “High Honors” on a quarterly basis, while approximately thirty percent of sixth through eighth grade students earn “Honors” on a quarterly basis.

Christ Our King-Stella Maris students who consistently achieve “High Honors” and “Honors” are usually placed into “Honor” level classes in high school.

3c. Students with disabilities:

Christ Our King-Stella Maris School does not have a “Special Education” program. The COKSM Resource Program is not able to offer an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Currently the Resource Program supports students with moderate learning needs. Once a student is diagnosed, the Resource team creates a Student Academic Plan (SAP) which lists the academic accommodations the school is able to provide the student.

Please see section VI for more description of the school's Resource department.

3d. English Language Learners:

Currently Christ Our King-Stella Maris School does not have any English Language Learners in need of support services.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

The Christ Our King-Stella Maris environment is one that promotes Catholic faith, strong communication, high parent engagement, positive behavior, and academic achievement. COKSM is proud of the engaging culture and the strong family community it has created.

Students are encouraged to be proud of their gifts and talents and to use them well. The Christ Our King-Stella Maris parent population is highly invested in the school and their children's success. In addition to the academic support offered to students, COKSM offers a large variety of extracurriculars such as drama, choir, dance, cheer, basketball, archery, football, baseball, volleyball, soccer, Legos, Boy Scouts, and Girl Scouts. Middle school students participate in National Junior Beta Club, Math Club, and Religion Clubs. Seventh and eighth grade students have the opportunity to participate in the local Catholic high school sports teams. Student achievements (from both inside and outside of school) are recognized during morning announcements, at Wednesday assemblies, in the school newsletter, and through social media. Honor assemblies are held quarterly to recognize both academic and extracurricular achievements.

Christ Our King-Stella Maris' school motto is "Live, Love, Learn." Students are encouraged to "Live as Jesus Did, Love as Jesus Did, and Learn as Jesus Would." Based on this motto, teachers follow a positive behavior plan that enables the students to learn and grow from mistakes. Through positive peer-to-peer interaction and adult modeling, students learn to respect themselves, others, and property. Christ-like behavior is recognized on Wednesdays in the form of "Shout-Outs" as individual students and teachers are acknowledged for acting virtuously.

Guidance counselors work with students weekly, supporting the faith based Social Emotional Learning (SEL) program and promoting positive behavior. One counselor is dedicated to lower school, while the other counselor is dedicated to middle school. Instructional topics include anti-bullying, child safety, inclusion, and drug awareness. The counselors work in tandem with resource teachers, providing professional development to faculty and supporting teachers with student behavior issues.

Administration and faculty understand the responsibility of preparing students for high school, College and Career Readiness, and for ensuring that students understand that they will be stewards of their community. Students know the saying, "Do it not because someone is watching, but because it is the right thing to do."

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Christ Our King-Stella Maris School has served generations of Mount Pleasant families. Many of our teachers and two of our parish priests attended COKSM. Although Mount Pleasant has greatly increased in size, the small town "family feeling" is still very present within the school community. Pictures of the generational span line the hallways and the front hallway houses hundreds of trophies representing years of sportsmanship. COKSM is proud of its history.

Christ Our King-Stella Maris School is blessed to have a very active Home and School Association (HSA). The HSA is in constant communication with both school administration and families. News is shared weekly via a newsletter. Information is posted on the HSA website and through social media. COKSM parents have many opportunities to become involved in both small and large ways. Small ways include recess duty, room parents, Friday ice cream sales, classroom volunteers, and more. Large volunteerism includes coaching, serving as an HSA board member, on the School Advisory Board, or at the annual Bazaar, Christmas Tree Lot, Gala, or Golf Tournament.

In addition to the opportunities listed above, Christ Our King-Stella Maris parents have the ability to become a "school sponsor." Sponsorship is done annually, and it includes advertising for the family business throughout the school year, admission to all school events, HSA tee shirts, yearbooks, field trips, and more.

In an effort to build community among school families, the HSA holds quarterly gatherings such as the fall parent social, a Christmas family evening on the school field, and social hours at nearby restaurants. Other community building activities include celebrating Catholic Schools' Week, book fairs, the annual Father-Daughter Dance, Field Day, and May Crowning.

Christ Our King-Stella Maris strives to build relationships within the community. The school hosts monthly outreach projects for local charities. In addition, eighth grade students complete a semester-long community service project. The school also has a vibrant basketball program and annually hosts community involved tournaments. The daily lunch program uses local restaurants, and quarterly, the HSA holds a family "Spirit Night" at a local restaurant.

Christ Our King-Stella Maris has a fully functioning School Advisory Board. The board consists of the pastors from each supporting parish, president, principal, HSA president, and members from each of the supporting parishes. This board, which meets every other month, serves in an advisory capacity to the pastors.

To keep the lines of communication open with all stakeholders and per the accreditation policy, Christ Our King-Stella Maris sends an annual survey to stakeholders soliciting feedback. Survey results are shared and used to drive the COKSM school strategic plan.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Christ Our King-Stella Maris believes that faculty communication and interaction is vital for success. Administration recognizes that the COKSM faculty are the heart and soul of the school. COKSM teachers are committed to academic excellence and student success. Great effort is made to show faculty and staff that they are appreciated and supported by administration. The COKSM administration is readily available to support teachers with student, parent, and personal issues. The administration team believes in collaboration and often seeks feedback from teachers before decision-making. Faculty leaders support administration by organizing schedules and teacher duties, offering professional development at faculty meetings, and mentoring new teachers.

Faculty meetings are held on Mondays. These Monday meetings provide professional development, spiritual, and emotional support. Additional professional development days are offered throughout the school year. In addition to the professional development opportunities, teachers work as teams and in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Leadership opportunities are available to teachers within the PLCs. The PLCs are team related and specific to the content area.

In-house professional development needs are determined by the school's strategic plan. Teacher observations, teacher discussions, and curriculum changes also help to determine professional development needs.

Recent professional development has focused on math methodology, analyzing MAP data, classroom management, writing instruction strategies, identifying academic needs, differentiation, and varied assessments.

Annual Diocesan professional development is offered each August and focuses on application of standards, varied assessment, and instructional methodology. Each March the Diocese holds a conference day which all teachers in the Diocese attend. In addition, at the start of the 2022-2023 school year, the Diocese established teacher professional development "cohorts" that meet three times a year via Zoom. Where applicable, teachers may use Title II funding to support professional development workshops/courses.

The Christ Our King-Stella Maris Home and School Association is wonderfully supportive of the faculty and staff. Appreciation comes in the form of monetary gifts, monthly treats in the faculty room, birthday recognitions, as well as Christmas and Teacher Appreciation recognition.

At the beginning of the school year, teachers are able to contribute to a fund that supports a local charity. In

return, the teachers and staff have a spirit shirt and jeans day on the last Friday of each month. The first Monday of each month, the entire staff comes together to pray and celebrate achievements and accomplishments at the “full” faculty meeting.

4. School Leadership:

Christ Our King-Stella Maris School adopted the President/Principal Administrative model in 2012. The roles of president and principal are clearly defined. The president’s responsibilities are financial management, fundraising, marketing, athletics, human resources, and building management. The principal’s responsibilities include faculty and staff supervision, instruction, and student/parent concerns. Both president and principal are responsible for communication, spiritual development, community building, educating the whole child, and preparing students for the rigors of high school.

The president and principal are a close administrative team; both are hands-on and highly visible. The administrative team is present throughout the day, allowing for accessibility to the school community. Decision-making is shared; school conflict is addressed as a team.

At the start of the 2022-2023 school year, administration incorporated a secondary level of leadership, creating three vice principal positions. These positions include Curriculum Coordinator of Language Arts, Coordinator of Religious Education, and Coordinator of School Planning and Scheduling. The vice principals meet monthly with the principal for strategic planning, evaluation of programs, and to discuss successes and concerns. They provide professional development for teachers and work closely with teachers to support instruction. The vice principals participate in a monthly Diocesan Leadership Program.

The administration works closely with the Diocese to ensure that the school is aligned with Diocesan Accreditation. Administration meets monthly with the accreditation team (school stakeholders) to review and update the school’s strategic plan. Results from the annual fall survey drive improvement and changes for this strategic plan.

The administrative team works together to ensure student success, including funding and hiring of additional faculty to support curriculum, while ensuring that programs support student learning. The team works to foster positive relationships within and outside the school community. This is done through extracurricular offerings, student services, and forming partnerships with local businesses.

Academic curriculum needs are identified through analysis of summative assessment data and continuous review of the strategic plan. The first impactful need addressed by the new administrative team in 2015 was to create a Resource Program to support struggling students. Once this need was identified, the president created a budget that allowed for the hiring of a resource teacher. As the program grew, the budget was adjusted to hire additional resource teachers and a reading intervention specialist. The success of the Student Support Program has resulted in improved student performance and an increase in enrollment.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Christ Our King-Stella Maris School strives to recognize and celebrate the talents and gifts of students, faculty, and staff. This includes celebrating the diversity within the school. Faculty and staff understand that they have an obligation to make sure that students recognize and respect the many differences in the world. This obligation aligns to the motto “Live, Love, Learn.” COKSM students understand that we are all God’s children.

Social studies, religion, English language arts, and Spanish instruction are designed to develop student awareness of cultural differences. Through research, class discussion, fiction and nonfiction text, students explore how cultural differences affect current events. Classroom opportunities foster the understanding that COKSM students have an obligation to be positive members of the community while promoting equality for all.

The “Live, Love, and Learn” motto fosters respect for one another within the school environment. Students

are reminded daily to respect one another, themselves, and the school property. These are guiding ideals within the school community. Signage reminding students to “Live, Love, Learn” and to “Respect Self, Others, and Property” are prominent throughout the school. Teachers are expected to live by the same values and to be positive role models for students at all times.

In addition to content area discussions of cultural differences, Christ Our King-Stella Maris has a faith based Social Emotional Program which is taught to all 4K through eighth grade students. The COKSM guidance counselors work with students weekly presenting lessons on bullying, cultural diversity, appropriate use of social media, equity, and reinforcing the necessity for respect for others. Students participate in an anti-bully program during the month of October with the hopes that the message carries on throughout the year. The school counselors offer an annual “Kindness Campaign” to promote treating others with kindness.

Acceptance of all people and good sportsmanship is part of the Christ Our King-Stella Maris athletic code. This applies to both in school and out of school activities. The COKSM students are taught that when wearing the school uniform and/or jersey, they are representing the school and all that it stands for.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

The academic strategy that has impacted COKSM more than any other program, policy, or curriculum addition has been the implementation of the Student Support Program in the form of a Resource Program (grades 4K-8) and a Reading Intervention Program (grades 4K-4).

Administration recognized the need to hire a resource teacher in 2015 because of the lack of any type of learning support for students with learning differences. Administration felt that with support from a resource teacher, all learners could be successful in the traditional classroom setting.

As the program developed, the resource teacher expanded her role by assisting teachers with understanding and identifying learning differences in the classrooms. Identified students receive a Student Academic Plan (SAP). The SAP outlines accommodations a student with learning differences receives in the classroom. As parents in the community learned of the Resource Program, the school enrollment increased. As a result, a second resource teacher was hired. Eventually, a third resource teacher was added to support math instruction.

A Testing Center was then created to support students who are allotted extended testing time in a structured environment. The Testing Center also supports classroom teachers in the administering of assessments.

As the Resource Department grew, administration saw the need for a Reading Intervention Program to focus on remediation for students in grades 4K through four. By providing intervention to students as early as 4K, the reading interventionist strengthens basic literacy skills, decreases learning gaps, and limits the number of academic evaluations related to reading impairments. Research based assessment tools such as DRA, DIBELS, and running records are administered quarterly to track student progress. The Reading Intervention team works with students to remediate phonemic awareness, phonetics, sight word knowledge, fluency, and comprehension skills.

Student progress is tracked and measured through the reading assessments and MAP Growth standardized testing scores. Comparisons of COKSM scores to the South Carolina College and Career Readiness Benchmarks indicate continued student progress throughout the grades. Students in all grades consistently score above both the district and national MAP means.

Christ Our King-Stella Maris is proud that the addition of academic support has been a strategy that has promoted overall student success in grades 4K through eight. The administrative team is proud that COKSM is filled with not only diverse learners, but is a school community filled with happy, positive, faith-filled families and faculty.

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? \$8019
(School budget divided by enrollment)
4. What is the average financial aid per student? \$1126
5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 12%
6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 88%

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)