

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2014 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. Valerie French

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

Official School Name Norwalk Catholic Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 31 Milan Avenue

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

City Norwalk State OH Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 44857-1727

County Huron State School Code Number\* 053769

Telephone 419-668-6091 Fax 419-668-5584

Web site/URL http://norwalkcatholicschool.org/ E-mail vfrench@ncsmail.org

Facebook Page stpaulhighschool-norwalkcatholicschool  
Twitter Handle \_\_\_\_\_ Google+ \_\_\_\_\_

YouTube/URL \_\_\_\_\_ Blog \_\_\_\_\_ Other Social Media Link \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\*Mr. Christopher Knight, N/A

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

E-mail: cknight@toledodiocese.org

Other)

District Name Norwalk Catholic School Tel. 419-668-6091

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Dr. Wayne Babcanec, N/A

(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 that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## **PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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**Include this page in the school’s application as page 2.**

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, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made its Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) or Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state’s AMOs or AYP requirements in the 2013-2014 school year and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2008 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, or 2013.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
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. 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.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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All data are the most recent year available.

**DISTRICT** (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - Middle/Junior high schools
  - High schools
  - K-12 schools
- TOTAL

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
  - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
  - Suburban
  - Small city or town in a rural area
  - Rural
3.  Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.
4. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
<b>PreK</b>	0	0	0
<b>K</b>	0	0	0
<b>1</b>	22	19	41
<b>2</b>	26	23	49
<b>3</b>	22	19	41
<b>4</b>	29	29	58
<b>5</b>	30	25	55
<b>6</b>	21	15	36
<b>7</b>	0	0	0
<b>8</b>	0	0	0
<b>9</b>	0	0	0
<b>10</b>	0	0	0
<b>11</b>	0	0	0
<b>12</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	150	130	280

5. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 0 % Asian
  - 0 % Black or African American
  - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 95 % White
  - 3 % 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.)

6. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2012 - 2013 year: 2%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the school year	6
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the 2012-2013 school year	0
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	6
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1	275
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.022
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

7. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %  
0 Total number ELL  
 Number of non-English languages represented: 0  
 Specify non-English languages:
8. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 15 %  
 Total number students who qualify: 42

If this method is not an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

9. Students receiving special education services: 6 %  
18 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

- |                                |                                                |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <u>2</u> Autism                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness              | <u>3</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness        | <u>4</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>6</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment    | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</u> Mental Retardation    | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>3</u> Developmentally Delayed               |

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of personnel in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers	12
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	6
Paraprofessionals	1
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 13:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Daily student attendance	96%	97%	97%	96%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools)**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2013

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

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

Yes                      No X

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

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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The motto of Norwalk Catholic Elementary School is, “We Live To Serve.” The principal of the school shouts out the first two words of the motto, “We Live..” at anytime. The students immediately respond, “...To Serve!” This fun reminder encapsulates the underlying truth that students are first servants of Christ and this is demonstrated through service to others. Students at Norwalk Catholic see parents, grandparents and community members serving every day as volunteers in the lunchroom, recess monitors, tutors, chaperones, landscapers, fundraisers, repairmen, coaches and working with the very active PTO. The school culture intentionally reflects the respect shared among the students, teachers, parents, community, alumni, each other and foremost for their creator.

Commitment to excellence and respect for the individual child is the essence of the school. The importance of encouraging collaboration, creativity and critical thought combined with the ability to communicate morally just solutions is at the forefront of our instructional planning. Teachers recognize each student’s individual giftedness and work to help each student reach their personal best. It is the expectation that graduates will attend our local Catholic high school and matriculate to quality universities. Students excel academically and teachers consistently strive to incorporate proven best practice methods of instruction. Norwalk Catholic students routinely advance to become the leaders in their high school and in the communities they serve as adults. The mission statement of the school embraces three ideals: to develop disciples of Christ, promote academic excellence and maintain a respectful environment.

Meager beginnings in the late 1800’s give true testimony to the priorities of area families and businesses when they built the first Catholic schools in the area. Today both historical Catholic elementary schools, St. Paul Elementary and St. Mary Elementary, have consolidated to operate under one umbrella as Norwalk Catholic Elementary School. This reorganization occurred in 2006 and resulted in a more efficient school operation while remaining true to the vision and mission of past ancestors by providing a faith based, rigorous academic program.

Norwalk Catholic enjoys a healthy enrollment of 280 students in grades 1-6. Students travel from nine different school districts, some from 35 miles away, to attend the school. The school is governed by a President and Board comprised of parents and local community members. It is bracketed by the Norwalk Catholic Early Childhood Center (preschool through kindergarten) and the Norwalk Catholic Junior High and St. Paul High School (grades 7-12). Each of these schools operates under the direction of their own building administrator.

The elementary school includes two buildings which house 15 classrooms, a gymnasium, a computer lab, a library, auditorium, cafeteria and chapel. The classrooms are equipped with SMART board technology and have individual student hand held technology available on mobile carts. The approved curriculum of the Diocese of Toledo and the State of Ohio provides our 19 teachers the program of study for Norwalk Catholic. Additionally, the principal works with one volunteer to also provide the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program for grades 1-3.

The active involvement of all shareholders demonstrates the persevering attitude of these families even in difficult economic times. Unemployment in our county reached 17% during 2009 and our families needed resources to be able to enroll their children in our school. Even today, 20% of the student population receives tuition assistance. In reality, all students are subsidized since tuition only pays one half of the actual cost to educate. This can only be accomplished through scholarships, parish contributions and financial gifts from dedicated supporters. Norwalk Catholic remains committed to providing a Catholic education to any family that desires it regardless of financial or academic ability. Following the proud tradition of our previous generations, we live to serve the needs of each and every student.

Recent awards and accomplishments reflecting the work described above include:

People to People International Exchange: three students have attended the World Leadership Forum in Washington D.C. over the past five years. One student went on to attend the international conference in Quebec in 2009.

State History Fair Awards: three sixth grade students earned State Awards in 2013, twelve students in fifth grade advanced to state competition in 2013.

God, Flag and Country Speech Contest: one district winner in 2010, two district winners in 2011, one National winner in 2012, one state winner in 2013.

1st in State for Handwriting: 2009 and 2013

Art Awards: Barnes Wendling Art Contest winners 2009 through 2013

SAE International Science Partnership: awarded a full program to promote physics in fifth grade

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Program: international program for religious instruction using the Montessori model created by Sophia Cavalletti led by one trained staff member and one volunteer

Upstanders Program: The principal made a presentation on this program at Ohio Catholic Educators Convention in 2011. This student led group assists in curtailing any bully type behavior in the school.

Student Ambassadors Program: This is a group of students trained to assist in development projects for the school.

Summer Reading Program winners: 2008 through 2013



## **PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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### **1. Assessment Results:**

a) Students at Norwalk Catholic Elementary School take the Terra Nova Test, Third Edition in the spring of their fifth grade year. This is a nationally norm-referenced test and results show Norwalk Catholic fifth grade scores to be well above the criteria listed for the “Blue Ribbon” application. Students in grade one through grade three are assessed using the Aims Web reading assessment. These scores also indicate that by grade three the students at Norwalk Catholic are score significantly higher in fluency and comprehension compared to the scores of students at the same grade level across the United States. Both of these assessments are used to inform and guide instructional planning and are shared with all stakeholders.

The fifth grade students take the Terra Nova Test, Third Edition in the spring each year. In April 2013, students attained a 75.5 percentile on the reading test, 8.5 points above the 67 percentile cutoff score noted on the “Blue Ribbon” application. Norwalk Catholic fifth grade students also reached an 86.5 percentile on the math portion of the Terra Nova Test, which is 17.5 points above the cut score of the 69 percentile for math on the “Blue Ribbon” application.

Overall, scores on the Terra Nova Test remain strong in all areas. Math scores have been routinely higher than scores in reading. The 2012 math scores reached the 88th percentile which set the record for the school as the highest level of success. When the faculty dissected the reading scores it was found that while measurable improvement was evident in the reading areas related to verbal reasoning (words and context) there is a need to strengthen student performance in the areas of sequencing and analogies. This would result in stronger scores in all areas of the test. The Terra Nova Test is only given to the fifth grade class.

b) Students at Norwalk Catholic have made significant improvement on the Terra Nova Test over the past five years. Each year the students are given the challenge to do as well or to try to do even better than the previous year. Students take the assessment seriously and give their very best effort.

Many factors contribute to the high test scores and the academic success enjoyed by the students. This year the faculty devoted a large part of the fall professional development day to writing individual learning goals for each student in the areas of reading and math. Teachers met in small groups to review the assessment data for each grade level and to determine the reachable target for each student on these summative assessments.

Learning goals were shared with the student and parents at the annual fall parent/teacher conferences. The student and parent agreed to the goal as defined by the teacher and offered suggestions for support. Students will meet with the teacher individually again after assessing their progress toward reaching the documented goal in the winter and again in the spring. It is the expectation of all stakeholders that the students will reach their full potential and obtain their goals. Test scores validate this process and offer baseline data to analyze and guide all to improve each year with each student.

The faculty at Norwalk Catholic Elementary School believes each student should reach their personal best. The school serves all ability levels and strives to see each student as an individual endowed with personal gifts as well as individual areas of challenge. The task is to help each student cultivate the gift while overcoming challenges.

### **2. Using Assessment Results:**

Thorough examination of the Terra Nova Test results indicated an overall need to concentrate on improving vocabulary and discerning the main idea in fiction and non-fiction reading samples. The faculty of Norwalk Catholic Elementary School developed goals for the school and for individual classes in the reading content area. Efforts were made to include all content area teachers to drive the development of reading skills across the curriculum. These efforts have proven worthwhile as we now see the same movement within the new Common Core English Language Arts standards. They have also proven successful as our students have improved their scores in reading on all standardized tests.

Assessment results in 2009 indicated a need to provide more challenging work for students performing above grade level. The faculty studied advanced placement and gifted programs offered in other area schools. The faculty designed a three-tiered program for our fourth, fifth and sixth grade students using the same content with three delivery strategies to meet the needs of each learning style. The proposal was approved by the Governing Board and was implemented with some reorganization of staff and hiring of one additional academic tutor.

Assessment data is used to develop the tiered program. The groups are fluid in nature allowing students to move between groups as needed. One student may be above grade level in math and attend the advanced group but reads below grade level and may benefit from extra attention for reading. The groups are ever changing depending on student need, content focus and project design. This strategy has been widely accepted by our community and allows the faculty to inspire learning at all levels.

Further study of standardized data has driven the faculty at Norwalk Catholic to investigate multi-sensory reading strategies. Recently, the increased number of students identified with special educational needs in the school population has resulted in the study of the Wilson Reading program and to incorporate some of the research based teaching strategies recommended by the program. Use of these specific techniques has proven beneficial for all students.

### **3. Sharing Lessons Learned:**

Student performance is communicated in several ways to all members of the community and other schools in our area and diocese. Beginning with the expected parent/teacher conferences each year and quarterly report cards, to events planned by the Norwalk Catholic School Advancement and Admissions Office, the accomplishments of the school are shared with all stakeholders.

The Advancement and Admissions Office develops a yearly plan of publications and events which share school successes and invite community members to join in the mission and vision of the school. Two examples of these events are the President Breakfasts hosted several times throughout the year and the Business and Professional Breakfast hosted in the fall. The president and principal of the school share test results, enrollment trends, service projects, and student displays at these early morning meetings. Food is served by the Student Ambassadors and musical selections are performed by students involved in band and choir. The students create a video showing pupils at work or engaged in school activities. Over 300 people attend these events each year. Time is taken to award local businesses which have been especially supportive over the years with framed student artwork at the Business and Professional Breakfast.

The school publishes a yearly calendar with an annual report included and a school magazine four times a year. These publications are mailed to all alumni, school supporters and current families enrolled in the school. Articles in these publications and weekly articles in the local newspaper and church bulletins allow many opportunities for communication about the engaging programs offered at Norwalk Catholic Elementary. Additionally, the school maintains a web page with classroom teacher pages linked to it. The side bar on the web page keeps a running calendar of upcoming events.

In the event the school would be honored with the “Blue Ribbon School of Excellence” award, Norwalk Catholic Elementary would proudly display this mark of distinction in all areas of the communication plan and share this news with other professional organizations throughout the Norwalk community and the Diocese of Toledo.

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

The history of Catholic education in Norwalk is one teeming with sacrifice on the part of faith-filled families across generations. The commitment, dedication and generosity of parishioners, parents, alumni, friends and the business community built and still maintain the Norwalk Catholic Elementary School. The school faculty, administration and the Advancement and Admissions Office work together to engage all members of the community in the mission and vision of the school.

Further school success is found in partnering with the families and community through active involvement. Some of the many ways community and parents become involved are through participation in the Governing Board, PTO, playground monitors, special event coordinators, classroom parents, volunteer coaching, cafeteria helpers, or by aiding the classroom teacher with Accelerated Reader quizzes. The PTO is a vibrant group that has provided necessary funding for a new playground, technology, and recently \$10,000 for professional development needs of the faculty.

Even more exciting are the partnerships developed with the members of the Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce to provide inquiry based science projects for students. For instance, the sixth grade partners with NASA Plum Brook to conduct science experiments which involve students in the preparations needed for space travel. Student built rockets are taken to NASA and released in the air chamber of the space station simulator. Students communicate with adults working at NASA through the use of technology.

The fifth grade partners with Janesville Acoustics SAE International World of Motion Project. Students work in cooperative teams to build a balloon powered machine, design a logo and prepare a presentation to be given in front of a panel of Chamber of Commerce members. Student projects are awarded prizes for design and performance by the owners of the Summit Motor Raceway Park of Norwalk.

Students in fourth grade partner with The Veggie U Institute located in Milan, Ohio to research a unit on soils and plants. Students in first grade work with the local agricultural industry to provide a unit on animal life complete with a classroom incubator and baby chicks hatched in the classroom from the egg.

Norwalk Catholic Elementary School is fortunate to have the former superintendent of the local city school now serving as the current president and the former mayor of the city of Norwalk serving as the Advancement and Admissions Office director. Their expertise in leadership and business lead the school in positive growth.

One of the best communicators of success is the verbal testimony of parents as they circulate in work and social arenas. Norwalk Catholic Elementary completed a survey in 2011 and in the spring of 2013 asking parents for views on academic programs offered by the school, the environment of the school, school safety, the respect of students, respect for teachers and administrators and the support the school offers to families. Ninety-nine percent of the parents indicated they agree or strongly agree with all school policies and feel both welcomed and respected in the school.

## **PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Curriculum:**

The goal of the Norwalk Catholic Elementary School is to provide an education which allows students to reach their personal potential focusing on the full development of the mind, body and spirit. The curriculum balances the current Common Core and Ohio Revised Standards with the responsibility to the course of study required by the Diocese of Toledo. Thus, students are engaged in a clearly articulated, rigorous curriculum aligned with relevant standards, 21st Century skills and the gospel values implemented through effective instruction.

The Diocese of Toledo has developed seven benchmarks which the staff applies in all areas of instruction. These include forming: a devout disciple who gives witness to God through work and deed, a critical thinker who makes responsible decisions using an informed conscience, an effective communicator, a lifelong learner, a collaborative contributor, a loving family member and an engaged participant. Thus, graduates are expected to become tomorrow's civic leaders and to make responsible decisions promoting that which is good in the modern world and creatively counter that which is not.

Religious values and practices are embedded in every subject area. Religion is also taught as a separately scheduled class in the daily curriculum with a comprehensive course of study developed by the Diocese of Toledo. Teachers are appropriately credentialed in religious education as well as licensed for their individual teaching position through the Ohio Department of Education.

Recent shifts in the Language Arts curriculum have called for reading more non-fiction texts, using evidence from texts to prove individual arguments, and to use more complex text to better prepare for college and future careers. The teachers at Norwalk Catholic have attended professional development seminars over the past five years to prepare for these shifts. The faculty works as a whole to engage students in reading and writing across curricular areas. A specific plan for literacy is being used to help students read for purpose and to glean key concepts from the readings. Underlining key words and circling the question are practices used by all teachers. Students are subsequently required to use the key words to answer the question and to check sentence structure, punctuation and spelling before handing in any assignment. This same structure is used in reading, math, social studies, science, religion and all special areas of instruction.

The study of fine arts plays an important role in our curriculum. These subjects are viewed as natural extensions of our learning and offer avenues for creative thinking and problem solving. Students share their talent in the arts with various community groups. The choir includes 56 students in grades 3 through 6. These singers tour and entertain at area functions with songs and smiles. Visual art samples are displayed at the local Chamber of Commerce office and are used as gifts to our most supportive business partners. Our physical education teacher recently published a book titled, *Making Life an Adventure Even With Kids*. The book gives important safety tips parents need if they take their children hiking, rafting or rock climbing.

The curriculum at Norwalk Catholic Elementary includes 45 minutes per week for all grades in the instruction of the Spanish language. The foreign language program began with a local grant and has now become a part of our routine school budget. Instructional methods are age appropriate using video, music, role playing, cultural topics and texts to develop oral, visual, dance and written communication. Hispanic parents visit the school and present on various topics. A celebration for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe occurs in December which includes a reenactment of the story of Juan Diego, dance and a large feast in the school gymnasium. An ever growing population of Hispanic and Latino families has impacted the enrollment and culture of the school. The school has developed a plan to increase the number of Hispanic and Latino students with the help of current patriarchs of the community.

Technology is constantly evaluated and updated to stay current with today's needs yet remain responsibly efficient with the resources available. Norwalk Catholic has invested in a technology coordinator to keep school systems running smoothly and to make suggestions for improvements. Students have access to individual classroom computers, handheld devices, a computer lab, SMART board technology and

educational software. Recently, a wireless system has been installed to allow wireless tablets for classroom use. Technology is responsibly integrated throughout the curriculum and has proven to be an exceptional tool for student learning as we seek ways to differentiate instruction for all ability levels.

## **2. Reading/English:**

a) Students in the primary grades at Norwalk Catholic Elementary develop foundational reading fluency and comprehension skills using the Daily Five Café reading program developed by Gail Boushey and Joan Mosher. This approach was chosen because it allows pupils to move through five activities during each reading lesson while practicing foundations of reading. The five activities are reading to self using a PVC pipe, reading in pairs, listening to recorded readings, writing or drawing a book report, and reading in small groups with the teacher. The students practice with the teacher for several weeks at the beginning of the year to increase the ability to concentrate and complete tasks without disrupting others. It is encouraging to visit the classroom while students are in the midst of these activities and to observe students working in separate areas, working together, drawing and listening all at the same time yet in a quietly respectful manner.

Students in grades 4, 5 and 6 use leveled readers to compliment the basal reading series. Differentiation is made in assignments and discussion to allow students to progress at an individually challenging pace. Literature circles involve the students in group discussion and collaborative projects.

Students at all levels take Accelerated Reader quizzes on the books read on hand held devices called the Neo2. Students may take a quiz during any free time during the day and earn points for comprehension. Rewards are given as students reach different point levels. One of the most popular rewards is lunch out with the principal once a student has reached 100 points. Students are also allowed to write their name on the wall of the library at that time.

The teachers write a learning target goal in the area of reading for each student in the class each year. Formative assessments are used to track progress made toward reaching the goal. Teachers communicate the goal to the parents early in the year to gain support from home. Students take a more active role in learning as progress is made and documented.

Three shifts in the reading and language arts curriculum are currently being made. First, students will read more non-fiction selections across all content areas. Second, students will read more carefully to understand the author's purpose. Finally, career and technical texts require more complex understanding thus the curriculum reflects a spiral of complexity as students move through the grades to prepare for success in college and careers.

Mention must also be made of the literacy plan used at Norwalk Catholic Elementary. All teachers use the same vocabulary and deliberate practice as they assist students in reading and writing for success. Students must underline key words in the text and circle the question being asked. Students must use the key words and repeat the question when writing an answer. All answers must be written in complete sentences using correct punctuation. Sentence structure is proofread upon completion of the writing and improvements made for the final draft. A rubric is provided to the student before the writing assignment is given to communicate clearly all expectations for the work. This plan is used by teachers in language arts as well as all other subjects. The teachers worked collaboratively to design the plan and implement it with fidelity.

## **3. Mathematics:**

The Mathematics curriculum follows the five basic organizational strands designed by the National Common Core standards promoted by the Ohio Department of Education. These are number and number sense, operations, geometry and measurement, and data analysis and probability. The goals for the math program at Norwalk Catholic Elementary School include the idea that math can and should make sense, it has meaning and is understood as a discipline with order, structure and numerous relationships, and it can be applied in real life for every day problem solving.

Teachers understand that math knowledge is not passively received. Students construct new math knowledge

through participation in math activities. Some of the activities are cooperative dialogue, manipulation of materials, discovering patterns, generating different solutions to one problem. Students are expected to be able to explain the answer reached and to demonstrate the process used to obtain mathematical answers. Dedicated staff, intervention teams and volunteers work together to provide differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all learners.

Students in the primary grades use the Saxon math program. This program develops a strong foundation in mathematics through the use of daily drills, exploration of patterns, discovery of relationships in numbers and distinguishing between defining attributes, such as shape, versus non defining attributes such as, color.

Students in the upper grade levels of the elementary explore and review new math concepts using a curriculum titled Simple Solutions. Students are constantly reviewing all math concepts throughout the year. Students may be asked to do multi-digit division, measure distance, compute volume and do simple addition all during the same assignment. Life experiences will require the skill to use many mathematical computations to solve a single problem. The aforementioned practice will prepare the students well for this.

One example of the real life connections made in math for students is the Accounting Day enrichment program in the fifth grade classrooms. Local certified public accountants visit the fifth grade class to engage students in an accounting game called Fetch. Students work in teams to get the pet to the doghouse while keeping a positive balance on the ledger sheets. Simple accounting practices are taught while the students have fun and collaborate in decision making.

Assessments in math are completed using computer programs, paper and pencil tests, SMART Board technology, Neo2 immediate response systems, and individual white boards. Students with a particular interest in mathematics may participate in an extra-curricular program call Math Counts. These students meet during the lunch hour and compete against other schools in mathematical problem solving.

#### **4. Additional Curriculum Area:**

Norwalk Catholic Elementary made a commitment to teach the Spanish language to all grades eight years ago. The principal wrote a grant request to a local business who had expressed an interest in promoting global connections for the students. The grant provided initial funds to hire an instructor, purchase materials and to develop the Spanish language curriculum. The curriculum has evolved as students have moved through the program with ever increasing levels of difficulty while vocabulary use has improved. The program includes the study of the Spanish language and the culture of Spanish, Latino and Hispanic people. This has resulted in a greater respect for people of diverse cultural backgrounds.

The mission statement for the school requires academic rigor. The study of a foreign language at an early age exercises the brain in different ways allowing it to develop more fully. Much like learning to read music or to read cursive writing, the brain understands that language can have different sounds and appearances.

The ability to offer the study of a foreign language at the elementary level sets a high standard for the school. Funding is now included in the normal operating budget. Materials have been gathered and made by staff, by Hispanic and Latino families and by the students. The knowledge gained at the elementary level has prompted the high school to offer a more advanced Spanish program.

Members of the Hispanic families attend the school and contribute to the Spanish program with foods and cultural celebrations. The most favorite is the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. A group visits the school to perform the special dance, play the drums and gourds, and to sing. A reenactment of the Juan Diego story is held in one of the supporting parishes on the weekend. Many students and families attend this event. The same parish offers a Spanish mass each Sunday and students often attend to practice the language learned in class.

## **5. Instructional Methods:**

Teachers at Norwalk Catholic plan and deliver effective instruction that advances the learning of each individual student. This begins with the alignment of instructional goals with the Diocese of Toledo academic standards which closely follow the Common Core and the State of Ohio Revised standards.

Teachers use pre-assessment data and information about the individual student's needs and performance to develop the appropriate learning plan for them. Target goals are written for each student in the areas of reading and mathematics. Differentiated strategies are used to help the student reach their goals by the end of the year. The goals are clearly communicated to the student and to the parents.

Teachers meet regularly in small professional learning communities to evaluate instructional processes and to prepare future learning opportunities that will allow for review, reflection and varied assessment options to demonstrate mastery.

One example of this entire process is the History Fair unit. Students in the fourth grade randomly select the name of a famous Ohioan and research this person. Students prepare a presentation board which may include a technology screen, a reference page listing at least two resources, a costume to wear while presenting and an object that would represent the Ohioan. Students present an oral report impersonating the famous character in front of their classmates and teachers. Grading rubrics and the timeline are communicated clearly. Parents are invited to attend an evening review and may view all of the student displays. This has become a favorite project for the fourth grade class with much excitement surrounding presentation day.

The fifth and sixth grade students participate in the state and national History Fair competitions. The unit requires students to organize research, analyze data and prepare a process paper. Students are involved in discovery, self-directed learning. Teachers set timelines and encourage critical thinking through challenging questions as students work within the theme for the year. Each year a representative from the Ohio Historical Society visits and demonstrates the difference between primary and secondary sources. Students are encouraged to visit geographical sites related to their topic, people that would provide a primary source and to use credible internet resources. The librarian meets with each class to demonstrate how to find reliable internet sources and research. The language arts teacher works with the students to develop their process paper, which is a requirement of the national competition. Students use the computer lab to complete their assignment with many students recording clips of specific moments in history that support their project and can be used during the judging. The school has experienced much success with the History Fair competition. Eighteen students qualified for district competition in the sixth grade last year with three of these going on to state level competition. Twelve fifth grade students qualified for state competition. One of these students received the medal for Most Creative and one received a medal for Project Most Related to the Theme. The Social Studies teachers use the theme as the essential question for the unit and promote excitement within the community each year as they recruit area business and professional people to help judge the local competition.

## **6. Professional Development:**

Professional development for Norwalk Catholic involves all personnel from the cafeteria workers to the administration and is linked to the school's continuous improvement plan. The school is fortunate to have a supportive PTO that has donated more than \$10,000 for professional development use over the past two years. Teachers also write grant requests during the summer and fall. These grants have helped to support innovative curriculum projects.

The in-services recently attended by the Norwalk Catholic staff have supported the school goal to improve reading scores especially in the area of sequencing and analogies. Continuous and purposeful professional development opportunities keep the teachers inspired with current practice and energized as new strategies are implemented for improved student learning.

Norwalk Catholic teachers have benefitted from in-service with Dr. Bill Daggott, MAX Teaching, Dr. Tim

Rasinski and Dr. Sue Szachowicz. The classrooms are using strategies such as pre-reading guides, formatted note taking, guided reading strategies, word ladders, and have developed a literacy plan for writing across the curriculum.

The faculty and staff have studied the Bishop's document on social justice especially in regard to respect for one another while they worked on the second school improvement goal, which is respect for others. Frank DeLallo, author and counselor from the Diocese of Toledo made a presentation as well as, Dr. Mike (Good Choice, Poor Choice, My Choice- program) and Jim Besenius. The principal attended a seminar with Dr. JoAnne Freiberg and organized the anti-bullying student group known as The Upstanders using research from that seminar as well as strategies learned from Jim Besenius. In this program, students are trained to stand up for any student they see being bullied rather than just be a bystander. Students act out different scenarios in role plays and practice non-threatening yet confident body language. The students become the eyes and ears in the locker room, playground, cafeteria and bus room. The principal gave a presentation at the Ohio Catholic Educators Association conference on The Upstanders program in Columbus in October, 2011.

## **7. School Leadership**

The chief administrative officer is the principal at Norwalk Catholic Elementary School. The primary role of the school administration is to guide instructional improvement and promote the personal best of teachers and students. As an educational leader the principal establishes a clear sense that the purpose of the school is learning. The principal creates an atmosphere which encourages professional growth and development striving to keep updated on current research and best practices.

This year the principal outlined a plan for literacy across the curriculum using the recommendations of Dr. Sue Szachowicz in her fall 2013 in-service. The principal scheduled time for the teachers to meet during the school day, covering afternoon classes to allow the teachers opportunity to adjust the plan for their particular age group. This has resulted in uniform directions and consistency of instructional delivery. Student work has improved even in the short time this plan has been in place.

The principal is an ex-officio member of the Governing Board. The school administrative team also includes the president, principals from the two other buildings, a business manager, the director of the Advancement and Admissions Office, and the school chaplain. The administrative team meets twice a month. The principal attends and gives a monthly report to the administrative team and also to the PTO. The principal maintains a good rapport with the supporting pastors and pastoral teams.

The principal models instructional practice by direct involvement with student groups. Some of these groups are the God, Flag and Country Speech Program, Academic Challenge, The Upstanders Anti-Bullying group, Handwriting Contests, Anti-Drug Poster contests, and Accelerated Reading rewards. The principal also plans retreats and the end of year recognition assemblies.

The principal is a member of the National Catholic Educational Association, the Ohio Catholic Education Association, the Education Committee of the Huron County Chamber of Commerce, St. Paul Church Parish Council, Diocese of Toledo Rural Life Board, served on the Diocese of Toledo Committee to rewrite the Teacher Evaluation Tool, and served on the OCEA Planning Committee for the 2010 Conference.

The principal views every student as a child of God and a person who has been gifted by God.



## PART VI - NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

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The purpose of this addendum is to obtain additional information from non-public schools as noted below.

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 are the 2013-2014 tuition rates, by grade? (Do not include room, board, or fees.)

### 2013-2014 Tuition

Grade	Amount
K	\$0
1	\$2955
2	\$2955
3	\$2955
4	\$2955
5	\$2955
6	\$2955
7	\$0
8	\$0
9	\$0
10	\$0
11	\$0
12	\$0

4. What is the educational cost per student?      \$4691  
(School budget divided by enrollment)
5. What is the average financial aid per student?      \$1736
6. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?      38%
7. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction?      20%

## PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

### REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Math</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>Terra Nova, Third Edition</u>
<b>Grade:</b> <u>5</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>2013</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>CTB McGraw/Hill</u>	<b>Scores are reported here as:</b> <u>Percentiles</u>

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Apr	May	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	86.5	88	77.8	73.7	63
Number of students tested	34	43	48	48	37
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Other 1</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. Other 2</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Other 3</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

#### NOTES:

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Reading/ELA</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>Reading</u>
<b>Grade:</b> <u>5</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>2013</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>CTB McGraw/Hill</u>	<b>Scores are reported here as:</b> <u>Percentiles</u>

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Apr	May	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	75.5	61	74.5	66.7	67
Number of students tested	34	43	48	48	37
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Other 1</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. Other 2</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Other 3</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

**NOTES:**