

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2017 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 Mr. Matt Hannan

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

Official School Name Santa Fe Christian Upper School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 838 Academy Drive

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

City Solana Beach      State CA      Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 92075-2034

County San Diego

Telephone (858) 755-8900      Fax (858) 755-2480

Web site/URL http://www.sfcs.net      E-mail mhannan@sfcs.net

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\*Dr. Tom Bennett      E-mail tbennett@sfcs.net  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Santa Fe Christian School District      Tel. (858) 755-8900

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board  
President/Chairperson Mr. Brandon Black  
(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, write N/A in the space.*

## PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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1. 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. 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. 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 and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2017 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.
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 2011 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: 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016.
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 has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.
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.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2016-2017) unless otherwise stated.

**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 students as of October 1, 2016 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	58	51	109
10	57	47	104
11	63	46	109
12 or higher	60	64	124
<b>Total Students</b>	238	208	446

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 4 % Asian
  - 1 % Black or African American
  - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 87 % White
  - 5 % 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 2015 – 2016 school year: 2%

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, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	2
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	6
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	8
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	433
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.018
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 0 %  
 Total number students who qualify: 0

8. Students receiving special education services: 12 %  
54 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

<u>2</u> Autism	<u>4</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>1</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>45</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>1</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 9
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	3
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	32
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	3
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	0
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

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 14:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	98%	98%	97%	96%	97%
High school graduation rate	98%	100%	94%	98%	97%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**  
Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2016.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	96
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	96%
Enrolled in a community college	4%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.  
Yes  No   
If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

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

To partner with Christian parents within a Bible-based community in order to disciple students to embrace biblical truth, strive for academic excellence, and model Christ-like leadership to influence their homes, churches and communities for Christ.

## PART III – SUMMARY

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Santa Fe Christian Upper School is a dynamic learning community which takes seriously its charge to "prepare the Christian leaders of tomorrow." Located in North County San Diego in the city of Solana Beach, SFC serves families from all areas of the county. There are 446 students in the Upper School for the current academic year. Over the past decade, the enrollment of the school has increased by nearly 100 students. Each grade level has approximately 110 students--large enough to offer multiple programs and opportunities yet small enough to develop relationships with each student. Nearly 25% of families who attend SFC receive need-based financial assistance and the school commits over \$1 million annually to maintain accessibility.

SFC will celebrate its 40th Anniversary in 2017. The campus originally served as a high-end hotel before becoming a military academy. In 1977, Christian Unified purchased the property and in 1983 looked to close the school when a group of committed parents stepped in to buy the property and reopen it as Santa Fe Christian Schools. The school is a non-denominational, independent Christian school with nearly 100 churches represented within our community. There is an elected Board of Directors responsible for the hiring and management of its sole employee, the Head of Schools. An Upper School Principal, Assistant Principal, Athletic Director, and Co-ASB Directors round out the leadership of the school.

Over the past five years, significant focus has been placed on the development of being an excellent Christian school, with both parts of the equation receiving equal attention and support. The Upper School seeks excellence in all of our academic and co-curricular programs while maintaining a laser-focus on the spiritual development of each student. This tension of being excellent in both areas has provided opportunities for growth and change in our programs, faculty, staff and curricular offerings. Specifically, in addition to the 12 AP courses already offered, AP Chemistry, AP Principles of Computer Science, and AP Physics recently opened; additional math sequences have been developed which emphasize conceptual problem-solving, real-world applications and provide entry into the American Invitational Mathematics Competition; retreats have been established, developed and funded at each grade level; additional support for our chapel program has been provided through the hiring of additional staff and increased resources; and an online/seminar hybrid Bible course for 11th grade students opened in 2016. Further, over \$100,000 has been deployed for faculty professional development including subject-specific national conference attendance and in-service days focused on building and sustaining Professional Learning Communities.

The Upper School has piloted and implemented adjustments to the daily schedule in order to best meet the needs of the students. The school switches to a "block" schedule of 90-minute periods during 4-day weeks and has implemented a 50-minute daily extended support period dubbed "Power Hour" (influenced by National Association of Secondary School Principal research and Jane Ellsperman). Block schedule occurs approximately one week per month and provides extended classroom time for labs, in-depth conversations, project-based learning, and a heightened focus on fewer subjects each day. Power Hour provides students with opportunities to connect with teachers, engage in school activities, receive assistance and guidance on assignments, and develop time management skills. Students and faculty are encouraged to take risks, try new methods, ask big questions, and truly engage in learning. A safe climate of continual improvement where people are unafraid to fail has been firmly established and, as such, curriculum evolves, offerings expand, faculty members grow, and students succeed at the highest levels.

It is critical to the mission of SFC to develop leadership in students. Two distinctive programs which help students fully develop as individuals are athletics and global mission trips. The SFC athletic program has instituted leadership development seminars and programs for grades 9-12. All 9th grade students, "beginning leaders," participate during the school day through their PE and Health courses; grades 10-11 participate in meetings before and after school as "emerging leaders"; and grade 12 students are "established leaders", having gone through the entire training program. Over 85% of students participate in a school-sponsored sport and the intentional leadership development program ensures students fully develop their leadership potential.

Furthermore, international mission trips provide students with powerful, hands-on experiences to mature

emotionally, socially and culturally within a global setting. Students are placed in new cultures and experience moments which push them out of their comfort zones and broaden their worldview. Without question, student's lives are changed as a result of these experiences. SFC provides 9-15 international trips each year and nearly 90% of all students will participate by the time they graduate.

The Santa Fe Christian Upper School is a dynamic learning community whose best days appear to still lie ahead.

## PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Core Curriculum:

Santa Fe Christian Upper School is dedicated to preparing the Christian leaders of tomorrow by building faith, expanding minds, and enriching the lives of our students with a rigorous academic and co-curricular program. SFC's curriculum is highly structured, carefully sequenced, and reviewed each semester to reflect national and global standards and best practices in teaching and learning. In conjunction with the academic counseling department, students choose from College Preparatory (CP), Honors, and Advanced Placement (AP) courses to build a high school transcript which positions them for acceptance to their target colleges. Graduates fulfill requirements which exceed the University of California a-g standards for college admissions. SFC graduates are increasingly well-prepared for college as evidenced by the ACT data on college readiness. Over the past five years, SFC's percentage of students who met college readiness benchmarks in all four core subjects rose from 50% to 67%, while the percentage of SFC students who took the ACT grew from 70% to 92%. It is notable that subcategory college readiness scores are 80% (Science), 82% (Mathematics and Reading) and 98% (English) respectively. This increased achievement occurred in the context of a 16% increase in enrollment.

#### English

The English curriculum focuses on broadening the learning strategies and writing abilities developed in middle school, aiming specifically to teach students to be effective communicators and critical thinkers. Attention is given to various modes of communication including reading, writing, speaking, listening, and critical thinking. SFC's program places an emphasis on nonfiction texts and the connections that students can make with these texts. While literature provides content for specific units, the focus in the upper grades is analysis, author's intent, rhetorical and literary strategies. Writing includes poetry, speeches, journals, research papers and AP-style timed writing. Skill development includes listening and speaking, as well as the foundations of grammar and writing for various purposes.

#### Mathematics

The mathematics curriculum uses high-level cognitive problems to develop critical thinking and reasoning skills, improve problem-solving abilities, and support students in making connections in the mathematics content. Curriculum is designed to ensure students will have the fundamental skills, conceptual understanding, and problem-solving abilities to be successful in further mathematical studies at the college level. Upon completion of Algebra I and Geometry, students progress to CP or Honors Geometry, Pre-calculus and Calculus. Advanced and highly motivated students select from AP Calculus (AB or BC), AP Statistics, and Advanced Math Theory and Proof. This course explores advanced mathematics topics such as Complex Variables, Linear Algebra, Combinatorics, Mathematical Induction, and Number Theory. Students compete in the American Mathematics Competitions (AMC) and can qualify for the American Invitational Mathematics Exam.

#### Science

SFC's science curriculum deepens the student's understanding and appreciation of God's creation and prepares them to be successful in college and university science coursework. Students prepare for junior and senior level courses by completing high school Biology (CP, Honors) and Chemistry (CP, Honors) prior to branching into science courses of their choice. SFC provides a wide-range of options, enabling students to take courses aligned with their passions. SFC offers CP courses (Physics, Anatomy/Physiology, Ecology/Oceanography, and Intro to Engineering) to further develop a solid foundation in the sciences and AP courses to challenge high-level students. Students may elect to take AP Biology, AP Chemistry, AP Computer Science Principles, and AP Physics C:Mechanics. Through lab-based inquiry, students gain a better understanding of the scientific method as they gather, analyze, and display data to articulate clear and concise conclusions. SFC introduced AP Computer Science Principles and AP Physics C:Mechanics in 2016-2017.

#### Social Studies/History

The social studies curriculum equips students to develop a working knowledge of historical concepts,



events, people, and movements in order to engage and impact the world around them. SFC focuses on encouraging historical literacy, informed citizenship and respect and appreciation for other cultures both past and present. Students critically evaluate historical concepts and events, engage in dialogue regarding both local and global trends, and connect singular events into a larger global story with empathy and responsibility. AP course offerings include World History, United States History and Government.

## Bible

The Bible curriculum instructs students in the historic Christian faith while placing an emphasis on moving students toward a closer relationship with Christ. Courses impart greater knowledge of the Bible, equip students to understand and defend their beliefs, and disciple them to grow in their faith. 9th and 10th graders take yearlong courses in Old and New Testament Studies. In the 11th grade, students choose one of the following: Comparative Religions & Life of Christ, or Junior Bible Seminar. The Junior Bible Seminar is a blend of online learning and Socratic dialogue which focuses on the theology of culture, exploring contemporary issues in the Christian faith, the book of James, and supports students as they grapple with discovering God's will for their life. The SFC Bible curriculum culminates with a full-year course devoted to Apologetics and Christian Ethics in the 12th grade.

## 2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Santa Fe Christian Upper School is distinguished by the quality and variety of the course offerings in world language, the visual, performing, and practical arts, PE and Health, and technology. Each course systematically integrates a biblical worldview.

The world language curriculum cultivates curiosity and fosters participation in global communities through effective communication in Spanish or French. Students develop an active interest and appreciation of other cultures as they engage with the target language through reading, writing, speaking and listening. As they make connections and participate with multilingual communities at home and abroad, students develop creativity, empathy, perspective and compassion. Students take their world language learning outside of the classroom setting using technology to connect with students in other countries. Five levels of language courses are offered, from Spanish/French I through AP Spanish/French Language and Culture. Skills are established in interpretive, interpersonal and presentation communication with an emphasis on authentic learning. The school is in compliance with the foreign language requirement for the National Blue Ribbon Schools program; every graduate completes two or more years of World Language.

Students choose from a wide selection of traditional art, vocal, dramatic or instrumental music, or practical art courses to fulfill the two-year visual, performing and practical arts requirement. The curriculum in these courses begin with fundamental elements of the discipline and advance to college level studies. The use of professional state-of-the-art video/audio equipment and software prepares students for professional work and further studies, either in industry or college and university. Visual and performing art students engage with the community by performing locally for annual Veteran's Day events, participating in various chalk and art festivals, performing at music festivals, and providing special performances for local seniors.

The curriculum in SFC's art courses (Art I, Advanced Art, AP Studio Art-Drawing Portfolio, AP Studio Art – 2D Design) includes the fundamental elements of art, the principles of design, and major artists and their work. Advanced courses focus on the quality in the student's work, concentration on a particular visual interest or problem, and breadth of experience in the formal, technical, and expressive means of the artist. The curriculum incorporates writing assignments to enhance critical analysis skills and sharpen student's opinions and observations about specific artists and their work.

The band and choral (Concert Choir and Chamber Chorale) curriculum develops musicians through an emphasis on note and rhythm reading, good tone and technique, and learning and performing a variety of music from different periods and styles. The curriculum incorporates elements of jazz, playing by ear or sight singing, improvisation in a variety of styles, and performing as a member of a larger ensemble.

The drama curriculum includes instruction on the history of the theatre, basic theater terminology, stage blocking, vocal projection, understanding of the script, basic acting skills, technical aspects of the theater,

and the structure and business of live and film acting.

Broadcast Production curriculum emphasizes improving students' visual arts and communication skills for media. Activities include live productions, commercials, interviews, documentaries, sports announcing, debates, scripting, storyboarding, editing, 3-D titling and graphics, digital switching, time and resource management and use of video/audio equipment and software.

Graphic Design students use Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator while learning the basics of graphic design and visual problem solving.

Introduction to Film Study introduces students to the basics of film analysis. Students analyze the elements of art and principles of design of film.

The Media Arts course explores cinematic film theories and the production processes for filmmaking, providing a strong foundation in Post Production applications for media-related projects.

The Chapel Development curriculum develops student skills in planning, coordinating and executing SFCS' Upper School Student Chapel. Students choose either the Musician Track or the Technician Track.

In Introduction to Engineering, students identify and explore the essentials of engineering, are exposed to different engineering fields, and develop essential computer software skills such as using CAD software and 3-D printing.

Yearbook students learn to use Adobe Indesign and Adobe Photoshop and develop design, photographic, and writing skills to create a visual image and authentic representation of the SFC school year.

### **3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:**

SFC Upper School is committed to meeting the needs of all students, challenging each student appropriately, and supporting each student's academic success through application of a variety of instructional methods. Teachers utilize a range of assessments to guide learning and inform instruction, implementing appropriate interventions when needed. Interventions include individual and small group support during Power Hour, alternate assignments or assessments, repeat assessments following remediation, preferential seating, and student-specific accommodations as indicated.

To meet the needs of advanced students and those seeking additional challenges, SFC has added new AP and STEAM-related courses and co-curricular opportunities to the solid foundation of College Prep and Honors courses. In 2016, 50% of students took an AP course and achieved an overall passage rate of 80%. The Math and Robotics clubs have been established and are growing. Six years ago, the math club had five members, ten students took the AMC, and no students scored above 80. Today, over thirty students attend the math club, sixty students are taking the AMC and eight students score a 90 or above on the AMC 12. The Robotics club will participate in the FIRST Robotics competition in the spring.

SFC has approached professional development in several ways, including exposing teachers to current best practices and effective instructional approaches and supporting teachers in adopting innovative and creative approaches. Dedicated time is set aside for focused work in Professional Learning Communities, support is provided for teachers to attend national teaching conferences in specific content areas, and teachers are encouraged to participate in CUE and Educational Technology conferences. These efforts were made possible by specific addition of Strategic Plan funds.

The results have been exciting: teachers have flipped classes and incorporated both project-based and problem-based learning while employing a wide variety of technology to make connections and enhance global learning. Exploratory and constructive learning has increased, classrooms are more student-centered, and student engagement has grown significantly. Teachers facilitate learning through effective questioning strategies and by providing direction for further exploration and study. As students progress in mastery of technological tools, fewer instructional minutes are spent giving directions; rather, students spend class time

wrestling with important concepts, struggling to make meaningful connections and finding solutions to complex, real-world problems. Students are highly invested in learning.

Believing significant learning occurs when students have hands-on practice and real-world exposure, SFC partners with a variety of community-based organizations. Specific examples of these teaching and learning strategies include the following: experiencing hands-on training of surgical techniques with cadavers at a local biotechnology company, learning from engineers about careers in biotechnology, observing how the concepts learned in Science and Engineering courses are being used in research laboratories to advance medical and biotech research, gifted math students participating in the UCSD math circle, and professional artists and musicians sharing career and learning experiences with students. World language students apply knowledge by connecting with peers around the world in vibrant and meaningful ways through Skype, blogs, shared writing projects, video, community service, and face-to-face and online discussions.

Course assessments have shifted as the instructional methods have changed. Teachers assess student progress through creative projects, debates, discussions, presentations and performance-based tasks, as well as through traditional quizzes or tests. Beginning of unit assessments are used to determine prior understanding and knowledge; instruction is then shifted to meet the needs of the students. Formative assessments are more frequent and used to provide information to the student to direct effort and focus. Upper level students participate in both group (oral) and individual (written) critiques of completed work to demonstrate thorough knowledge of assignment objectives and understanding of content intricacies.

In addition to classroom interventions teachers initiate as appropriate for individuals or groups of students, SFC has a well-respected and highly-successful Academic Support Program (ASP) that provides services for students with learning differences. The ASP requires a current psycho-educational diagnostic evaluation, generates an individualized classroom accommodation report, and works with faculty to ensure ASP students receive appropriate accommodations. The ASP curriculum equips students with study tools to become successful, confident, and independent thinkers and learners. These tools include focused intervention, tutoring, strategic study skills instruction, and academic support during Study Skills Class (an elective option during the regular school day).

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

SFC engages and motivates students through varied instructional approaches, relevant course offerings, opportunities for authentic learning experiences, and genuine relationships. Faculty work in collaborative professional learning communities to discuss teaching and learning on a regular basis. In small groups, teachers explore topics including flipped lessons, problem-based inquiry, assessment strategies, and use of technology to increase engagement in the classroom. As a result, students experience thoughtful, relevant lessons in their courses and are pushed to explore subjects through critical thinking and in-depth analysis.

Further, the school provides programmatic opportunities for students to pursue their passions and engage in the global community. For example, a partnership with NUVasive, a local biomedical company, provides an annual field trip for Anatomy students to learn about spinal fusion and practice a real medical procedure on an actual cadaver. Students learn about the multiple facets of the biomedical field including product development, engineering, marketing, product implementation and surgical training--truly, a real-world and hands-on learning experience for the students. From robotics to publishing, from athletics to speech and debate, and from chapel to mission trips, students are encouraged and motivated to be engaged in the community of the school and embrace the opportunity to learn and grow every step of the way.

The critical piece to motivating students lies in the relationships built with teachers. Students are known by their teachers and are encouraged to develop their personal gifts and talents. Using the High School Survey of Student Engagement on a regular basis allows the school to track student connectedness to the school and to adults on campus. The data provides the school with a unique glimpse into the successes and areas of improvement in regard to student engagement and sense of belonging.

Student engagement, however, cannot happen outside of a healthy environment for faculty and staff. As such, teachers are invested in, respected, provided professional growth opportunities, and given freedom to be content experts in their classrooms. Teachers feel valued and supported which translates into the excellent work they do with students. Specific examples include: the parent service-team organization regularly seeks ways to appreciate and thank our faculty and staff; the HR department provides meals during in-service days and an annual health fair; and additional time off is granted to faculty who supervise grade-level retreats and mission trips. A positive climate on campus is critical to student engagement and the support of the faculty and staff is the foundation for this to happen.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

At the heart of the SFC mission is to "partner with Christian parents." In the Upper School, work is specifically done to engage parents through service opportunities, grade-level meetings, frequent and consistent communication, and through events on campus. Parents are invited to be part of this community and relationships are built on an individual level to ensure they are invested in their student's success.

Groups for moms and dads (The Women & Men of SFC) exist to make connections and build parent community; parents serve as members of the Board of Directors and on several board committees; the administration hosts grade-level specific coffees and meetings to answer questions and establish trust; weekly emails are provided to share important news and events on campus, and parents are provided an annual survey where they can give specific feedback to help the school improve; new families are connected to a returning family prior to the start of school to help welcome and provide useful information; faculty and administrative presence at nearly every event (theatre, music, drama, art galleries, athletics) provides an open, approachable atmosphere where all stakeholders can connect.

College counselors work individually with families and students to track progress and ensure graduation requirements are fulfilled. Relationships between families and counselors are developed over four years and provide an excellent foundation and resource for parents and students alike. When it is time for college applications, it is often the college counselor letter of recommendation which is most insightful and has the

most impact.

SFC works hard to establish positive relationships and partner with local businesses on a regular basis. The student body leadership provides monthly event calendars to neighborhood residents to let them know when the campus will be busy. Also, traffic flow patterns and neighborhood safety are points of collaboration between the school and the City of Solana Beach. Partnerships with local businesses for our in-service days and our culminating 12th grade event, "Senior Business Week," are sought after and developed. During Senior Business Week senior students create and run a full business for one week to raise funds for the senior gift; they enter into agreements with local businesses to supply products and services. Each year, over 30 different vendors partner with SFC students to help them experience hands-on, real-world learning. The City of Solana Beach recently commended the school for the positive relationship and desire to connect our students to the neighborhood around them.

### **3. Professional Development:**

Teachers are the school's greatest strength and asset; they provide the "living" curriculum for students and create an environment of support, caring, respect, and success. It is essential, therefore, to invest fully in their growth and development as educators and to ensure their pedagogical skills are of the highest level. Time is built into the schedule for professional growth on multiple fronts: weekly meetings, monthly in-service days, and pre and post year in-service days are used specifically for collaboration and professional development activities. Professional learning communities have been established around teacher effectiveness and strategies. Using a cross-curricular and grade-level approach, teachers research best practices, hold collaborative discussions, implement new ideas and techniques, and evaluate their effectiveness. There is truly an atmosphere of support for new ideas and a mindset toward excellence. Teachers are unafraid to experiment and fail as they model their own learning for our students.

In addition, subject-specific national conferences are attended by entire departments. In April 2016, the Mathematics Department traveled to San Francisco for the National Council for the Teachers of Mathematics conference. In 2015, the Social Studies Department traveled to Seattle for their national conference. Attendance at such events is encouraged and supported as teachers are exposed to new thinking and ideas which they in turn bring back to the campus and further engage their colleagues. AP teachers are provided with additional College Board training and support on a 3-year rotation. In year 1, teachers attend a week-long College Board institute; in years 2 and 3, teachers attend a one-day refresher seminar.

The administration believes faculty members are professionals and content experts in their field who should be empowered to own their personal growth. As such, the goal of the administration is to provide and protect time and resources to support all faculty members on an annual basis without micromanagement or interference. The focus of the administration is to be informed, provide guidance and allow faculty to become the best teachers they can be. The result of this approach can be seen in deeper learning for students, higher levels of engagement in classrooms, exemplary scores on standardized tests, and a positive culture which has been recognized and certified as a "Best Christian Workplace" for the past five years in a row.

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

Students and their success in all aspects of their lives (academic, social and spiritual) are at the core of the leadership philosophy and decisions throughout the SFC organization. The leadership of the school believes in providing the best possible programs and experiences for student growth and maturity. Income from tuition covers 100% of expenses, including repair and replacement costs. As a result, fund raising efforts target strategic initiatives which significantly advance the school including academic programs, professional development, facility improvements and expansion, technology advancements, and increasing the financial aid program to provide access to Christian education.

A strong organizational and functional structure is in place ensuring that Santa Fe Christian Schools operates consistently, legally, and ethically; and, furthermore, that it continues to prepare Christian leaders

who are well-equipped to make an impact for Christ. The Board of Directors provides regular reports to the community as well as access to Strategic Planning information, Bylaws, Policies and Procedures, Mission and Vision statements, General Session of Board meeting minutes, and any other gathered data and input pertaining to the needs and practices of the community. Currently, the Board has four Advisory Committees that provide advice and expertise in the areas of finance, development, spiritual life, and facilities. Each Advisory Committee meets at least quarterly, is chaired by at least one Board member, is staffed by a member of the Executive Team, and is comprised of 15-20 experts from within the community.

An Executive Team, consisting of the Head of Schools, Division Principals, and CFO was established in 2015. As the school prepares to enter into a significant capital campaign, the Head of Schools delegates additional roles and responsibilities to the Executive Team to ensure day to day success as he focuses on vision and future development of the school. It is important to note that each of the three division Principals serve as "Head" of their own school as they have oversight of curriculum, faculty and instruction, as well as maintain and manage their individual school's budget.

A Leadership Cabinet consists of the Head of Schools, three Division Principals and Assistant Principals (Lower School, Middle School, Upper School), the CFO, and the Directors of Pre-School, Admissions, Development, Athletics, Facilities, Human Resources and Technology. All regularly interact with the Board of Directors and have a role in partnering with the governing body to ensure all stakeholders and community members are acknowledged and upheld in accordance to policies and procedures. The Leadership Cabinet collaborates regularly through strategic planning, all-campus funding initiatives, and departmental goals.

## PART VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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The practice of empowerment has most influenced the growth and success of the SFC Upper School. The Principal has been empowered to run the school; the faculty have been empowered to own their curriculum and push their teaching; the staff have been empowered to solve problems and truly support others; students have been empowered to explore courses, ask questions, invest in their own learning, and develop their leadership.

## PART VII – NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

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

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?      \$16714  
(School budget divided by enrollment)

4. What is the average financial aid per student?      \$7019

5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?      13%

6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction?      22%



**PART VIII – ASSESSMENT RESULTS FOR NORM-REFERENCED TESTS**

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**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math

**Test:** ACT

**Grade:** 12

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2016

**Publisher:** ACT

**Scores are reported here as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Aug
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	26
Number of students tested	88
Percent of total students tested	92
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	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:** Data reported from official ACT Profile Report & College Readiness Letter dated August 24, 2016. Santa Fe Christian School ACT Code: 052741

\*Although 12% of student population falls within demographic item #8, less than 10 students from the demographic took the ACT and are, therefore, not reported as a subgroup.

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Reading/ELA  
**Edition/Publication Year:** 2016

**Test:** ACT  
**Publisher:** ACT

**Grade:** 12  
**Scores are reported here as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Aug
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	27.7
Number of students tested	88
Percent of total students tested	92
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	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:** Data reported from official ACT Profile Report & College Readiness Letter, August 24, 2016. Santa Fe Christian School ACT Code: 052741.

\*Although 12% of student population falls within demographic item #8, less than 10 students from the demographic took the ACT and are, therefore, not reported as a subgroup.