

**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 Mrs. Anne Phoenix

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

Official School Name St. Joseph Catholic School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 221 Park Place

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

City Libertyville      State IL      Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 60048-2241

County Lake

Telephone (847) 362-0730      Fax (847) 362-8130

Web site/URL http://www.sjscatholic.org      E-mail aphoenix@sjslibertyville.org

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

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

Name of Superintendent\*Dr. Jim Rigg      E-mail jrigg@archchicago.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Archdiocese of Chicago      Tel. (312) 534-5254

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 Dr. Lori Ventura  
(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	22	23	45
K	19	13	32
1	18	26	44
2	28	14	42
3	23	25	48
4	23	15	38
5	21	26	47
6	31	23	54
7	29	23	52
8	23	30	53
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	237	218	455

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 4 % Asian
  - 1 % Black or African American
  - 5 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 83 % White
  - 7 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2015 – 2016 school year: 4%

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	19
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	1
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	20
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	455
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.044
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	4

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: 1 %  
4 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>0</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>3</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>39</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>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 3
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	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	20
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	10
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	7
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 23:1
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	99%	98%	99%	97%	98%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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	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 X No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2009

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

We are called to educate our students in mind, body and spirit by providing an academically challenging curriculum, nurtured by our Catholic environment.

## PART III – SUMMARY

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St. Joseph School, a parochial school within the Archdiocese of Chicago, is located in Libertyville, Illinois, an economically advantaged northern suburb of Chicago. At the center of St. Joseph School is the mission: “At St. Joseph School, we are called to educate our students in mind, body and spirit. Students are engaged in an academically challenging environment, nurtured by a faith-filled community and empowered through worship and service to build the Kingdom of God.” This mission drives the school’s current Long Range Strategic Plan, and together, these tools serve as the guiding force for decision making within the school.

Founded in 1926, St. Joseph School is celebrating its 90th year of educating students in mind, body and spirit. Originally staffed by the Sisters of Mercy, the school educates 455 students from preschool through grade 8. 83 percent of the student population is white; 7 percent is two or more races; 5 percent is Hispanic or Latino; 4 percent is Asian, and 1 percent is black or African American. 88 percent of the student body is Catholic, and the remaining 12 percent identifies as a different religion or as no religious affiliation. Though St. Joseph School is not culturally diverse, the Catholic faith encourages opportunities for students and staff to accept, embrace and celebrate the cultural and religious differences of all staff and students.

St. Joseph School has educated thousands of students, many of whom are second and third generation families. Traditions such as Grandparents’ Day, Godparents’ Day, the Christmas Program, the Sock Hop, Mass in the Park, and the Rosary Balloon Launch enhance the school community and provide parents the opportunity to interact with teachers, staff and students throughout the year. These traditions foster school spirit, support Catholic identity, build community and accountability among one another, and honor the school’s rich history.

St. Joseph School provides two classrooms each for preschool through grade 8. The commitment to staffing the school with the necessary support personnel to meet the growing needs of diverse learners is a priority. Two full- time resource teachers, a part- time occupational therapist, and two part- time speech pathologists support students in all grade levels. Additionally, the school employs a full- time counselor and nurse. In the early elementary grades, instructional aides support preschool, kindergarten, and first grade students. An instructional aide also works with the middle school students in math and science. All but two classroom teachers are practicing Catholics, and 100 percent of the religion teachers are either certified Catechists or are actively completing the requirements to become a certified Catechist. All core academic teachers hold a professional educator license; and 61 percent of the staff holds advanced degrees. Teachers and support staff are driven to meet the needs of the diverse learners at St. Joseph School.

As a recipient of the National Blue Ribbon School award in 2009, St. Joseph School was recognized as an institution that challenges students at a very high level. Additionally, in 2015, St. Joseph School, in conjunction with the Archdiocese of Chicago's Office of Catholic Schools, received AdvancED accreditation. Although St. Joseph School received the 2009 National Blue Ribbon School award and accreditation through AdvancED, school staff and administration operate with the mindset of continuous improvement. Shortly after the 2009 award, staff recognized the need for all middle school subject area teachers to hold a professional certificate or license in their relevant subject area as opposed to just a general teaching certificate. 100 percent of the middle school teachers hold a license in their respective area of specialty. An additional upgrade to the school program since the 2009 National Blue Ribbon School award is the use of technology as a tool to fully realize curricular objectives. The Chromebook ratio is 1:1 in grades four through eight, and the school has increased technology access in preschool through grade three with classroom iPads at a 2:1 ratio. With the increased technology, the use of online formative assessments was integrated into the program to better allow teachers to monitor progress on a more frequent basis and to adjust instruction as needed. Since the 2009 award, St. Joseph School also added an additional resource teacher at the kindergarten through fourth grade level. With the addition of the resource staff member, St. Joseph School now has two resource teachers who work with students from kindergarten through eighth grade. A new STEM class was also added to the students’ schedule, and the school is in the process of planning and implementing a full STEM lab within the school. St. Joseph School proved to be a National Blue Ribbon School in 2009 and has continued to grow in its commitment to continuous improvement.

## PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Core Curriculum:

St. Joseph School provides a welcoming, nurturing environment that serves as the backdrop for a holistic approach to education. The core curriculum includes mathematics, science, reading/English language arts, and social studies. All curriculum objectives are aligned with either state (Common Core State Standards), regional (Archdiocese of Chicago), or local (St. Joseph School) standards thereby creating a “Core and More” approach to curriculum content providing multiple opportunities for students to develop college and career readiness skills, with the ultimate goal of students being engaged citizens within the community.

The reading/English language arts curriculum stresses literacy reflected in the emphasis on phonics, reading, writing, listening, speaking and language skills. The curriculum is guided by the above mentioned standards and lays a foundation in decoding and phonemic awareness skills at the primary level while gradually and consistently building comprehension and critical thinking skills as students progress throughout the grades. Through multiple text sources, students are able to build knowledge through balanced content-rich texts that require them to ground their thinking in evidence from the text. The curriculum also focuses on developing a deep understanding and proficiency of language skills within students. Students learn how to approach language as a matter of craft so they can communicate clearly and powerfully. These skills are applied to the rigorous preschool through eighth grade writing program, using common language and approaches while fully integrating into all curricular areas.

The mathematics curriculum emphasizes application, problem solving, conceptual understanding of math and mastery of basic mathematical computation. Critical thinking and construction of math understanding are integral parts of the total program. The curriculum provides a solid foundation for all students with thorough preparation for the challenging courses they will face in high school. The mathematics program also allows for many 8th grade students to complete a rigorous, high school level Algebra 1 course. Teachers differentiate for all levels of learners and offer appropriately challenging objectives for students who need added assistance as well as the highly advanced mathematical learner. The objectives are aligned to all relevant standards: Common Core State Standards, Archdiocese of Chicago and local, St. Joseph School standards that were developed by the mathematics professional learning team. This allows students to acquire important fundamental skills while developing higher-level, complex problem solving skills necessary to solve real- life multiple step problems with many variables.

The science curriculum requires students to use and understand the scientific method through gathering data, analyzing results and reaching conclusions within the three major branches in science: physical, life and earth. The science program develops the students’ love and understanding of science through engaging in primary sources of nonfiction, scientific reading. As students approach the end of their middle school science career, the science curriculum opens up for students to expand their knowledge at a deeper level within each branch. Students are able to further their understanding through group discussion, investigations and both online and student simulations. Students are taught to think scientifically and to apply concepts to the information presented and the real world. As teachers complete the transition to full alignment of the Next Generation Science Standards, the science professional learning team and all teachers have placed a greater emphasis on incorporating math, technology and engineering into the science curriculum through STEM opportunities.

The social studies curriculum is designed to create a relative and meaningful understanding of the world and the people who helped shape it. This is accomplished by focusing on six distinct strands: history, geography, economics, culture, government and civics. Children learn history at many levels, including local, state, United States, and world, incorporating the economic, cultural and civil influences of citizenship of each time period and place. While students do learn historical facts that have shaped history, the real focus requires a deeper dive into the lessons that history teaches. An integrated approach to social studies and English language arts is accomplished through the teachers in both professional learning teams working closely together, guided by Common Core State Standards, ensuring the most meaningful learning opportunities for the students.

St. Joseph School offers preschool and follows the Illinois Early Learning Development Standards and the Archdiocesan Standards for Early Childhood. Teachers and staff believe that children learn best when concepts are relevant and meaningful and children are having fun. For these reasons, play is an integral component of the program. The preschool program emphasizes kindergarten readiness in language arts, math, science, social studies and technology. The preschool literacy program, which is consistent with the literacy program in kindergarten through fifth grade, focuses on pre-reading literacy skills through rhyme, poetry, and recognizing the relationships between letters and sounds. Preschool teachers meet with the elementary teachers to discuss early childhood literacy and math standards, as well as best practices within literacy and math, ensuring readiness and an optimal transition from preschool to kindergarten.

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

The faculty of St. Joseph School supports parents in their role of educating children in the Catholic faith by providing curriculum that focuses on Catholic doctrine and by integrating shared faith experiences in an environment that weaves Christian virtues, values and moral development within academic studies and co-curricular achievements. Daily religion classes for all students, which take place at all grade levels, increase students' understanding through the study of the Bible, the history of the Catholic Church, liturgy, sacraments and the religious heritages of all people.

All students attend music class once a week throughout the year. It is designed to be a music appreciation course that teaches students about melody, harmony, notation, texture, style, rhythm and form. Students explore the basics of music as well as compose, analyze, sing, and perform on classroom instruments. Students are exposed to various genres of music from around the world.

Additionally, all students attend art class weekly and learn basic knowledge of art materials, how to use them, and they learn skills such as shading, design, and sculpting. Children are introduced to art history and are exposed to a variety of artists. Emphasis on creativity and providing experiences in various art media are essential.

The physical education curriculum at St. Joseph School encompasses a wide variety of activities while maintaining a strong emphasis on lifelong physical fitness and Christian sportsmanship at all grade levels. The basic knowledge of a variety of sports is embedded in each student to encourage long-lasting involvement which, in turn, will contribute to students' ongoing physical fitness. The Presidential Physical Fitness Testing is administered, and components of physical fitness are also incorporated into weekly fitness days. Faith, sportsmanship, and fair play concepts serve as the cornerstone in all that students do.

The health education curriculum encompasses a wide variety of topics that address Archdiocesan and state standards while ensuring that faith is the foundation upon which all topics begin and conclude. At 7th and 8th grade levels, health education is an independent class, but in preschool through sixth grades, health education is woven into the religion and science classes daily.

St. Joseph School is in compliance with the program's foreign language requirements. Students in grade five receive Spanish instruction two days a week, while students in grades six through eight receive Spanish instruction three days each week. The scope is a typical Spanish I curriculum found in middle and high schools, focusing on vocabulary acquisition and essential grammar skills for verbal and written communication. Students collaborate with each other to master objectives in class and use technology outside of class to practice individually and to differentiate depending upon the need.

The St. Joseph media center program, comprised of two distinct, but intertwined classes, 'Media' and 'Lit & Lib' (Literature & Library), is an integral component of the preschool through grade 5 curriculum. 'Media' focuses on digital literacy, keyboarding and curriculum integrated projects which develop student skills using programs such as Microsoft and Google applications. 'Lit & Lib' centers on library and researching skills in addition to exposing students to a wide selection of literature, authors and illustrators. The media center also offers state sponsored reading clubs for grades first through eighth as well as school-wide programs that encourage students to read for enjoyment. The media center strives to assist students, staff and

parents while promoting, enhancing and supporting the education offered by St. Joseph School.

The 1:1 computing program in grades fourth through eighth, and the 2:1 iPad program in preschool through third grades, provide opportunities to engage students in acquiring digital literacy and citizenship skills within the context of the instructional day. It is a priority that students are equipped with digital literacy and citizenship skills in accordance with the Digital Literacy and Citizenship Curriculum from Common Sense Media.

St. Joseph School recognizes the need for students to build a strong foundation in science, technology, engineering and math, and for that reason, a coding class has been introduced to students this year. The goal of the coding class is to introduce basic concepts of engineering and robotics using the Sphero SPRK edition robotic ball. Students learn the basics of coding fused with math skills such as percentages, geometry, and patterns.

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

Instructional methods at St. Joseph School are varied based on subject matter, learning outcomes, learning styles, and student needs. The goal of college and career readiness calls the teaching staff of St. Joseph School to utilize a variety of methods as students engage in activities that are challenging and authentic. All subject areas emphasize multiple approaches to learning: hands-on, small group, large group discussions, partner projects, inquiry-based, student and/or teacher directed and indoor/outdoor lessons.

The St. Joseph School's Student Support Team (SST) is composed of the assistant principal, school counselor, two resource teachers, a speech pathologist, a speech and language specialist from the local public district, and the school nurse. The team coordinates with the regular classroom teachers to meet the needs of students exhibiting academic, social/emotional, speech/language and other health concerns. Additionally, the team coordinates with the regular classroom teacher to meet the needs of students who are performing above grade level or who have already mastered learning objectives for a given unit.

Students are assessed, qualified and serviced through Response to Intervention (RTI), Individual Service Plan (ISP), or a 504 plan. Instructional methods and interventions are developed to meet the individual needs of each student, and the use of various techniques enrich the student's progress to improve a skill or to master an objective. Instructional interventions include, but are not limited to, push in/pull out assistance, differentiated materials and instruction, alternative assessments, preview/review of material as well as specific programs such as Read Naturally or Hear Builder. Push-in/pull-out time allows teachers to work in conjunction with one another to assist students with study skills, reading strategies, organizational skills, scaffolding assignments, and using multiple sensory instruction and technology to further reach learning outcomes. Teachers also use graphic organizers to help chunk assignments into more manageable tasks.

Additionally, teachers meet with the Student Support Team as a vehicle to discuss opportunities to differentiate instruction for students excelling in areas. The team reviews student achievement data and makes recommendations to move higher performing students to the next level. These students work with the classroom teacher and with the resource staff on differentiated activities related to classroom objectives. The school utilizes online resources or 'flipped classrooms' to help differentiate instruction as needed. Grade level formative assessments are used to monitor progress.

The SST and classroom teachers meet twice weekly to discuss progress toward student goals and benchmark assessment data to determine the necessary support needed for increasing student achievement. St. Joseph School administers the ACT Aspire to all students in grades 3 through 8 in April each year. Additionally, beginning this year, the ACT Aspire Interim assessments are administered three times yearly to measure the academic progress of each student in reading and math and to help teachers make adjustments to their instruction based on student performance. The Fountas and Pinnell literacy assessment is also administered to all students in kindergarten through fifth grade throughout the year to monitor students' literacy skills and to make adjustments to instruction. These assessments, as well as common, grade level assessments, offer teachers insights into the progress students are making in each subject area.

Teachers and administrators work together to analyze student data. Much of this analysis is completed in subject area professional learning team meetings where teachers look for trends over time in each subject area. Further data analysis of local assessments occurs at weekly grade level meetings to measure student progress toward goals. After analyzing the test results, teachers share alignment analysis results with colleagues in order to identify curriculum strengths and weaknesses revealed in the test results. The goal of the data analysis is to strengthen the academic program and discuss ways in which teachers can better support students in their learning.

Although the ACT Aspire data analysis identified a continuum of performance beyond the state and national standards in all areas, St. Joseph School operates with the mindset of continuous improvement. A thorough analysis of ACT Aspire assessment data has resulted in curriculum improvements in English language arts as well as in science. The data also pointed to necessary professional development, specifically, in writing, and the need for additional resources to better meet the standards to which the staff are held accountable.

The communication of assessment data is important for all shareholders. School articles are published explaining how to read and interpret data and its implications. Teachers also make themselves available for conferences so that parents may inquire about their child's progress and how to best support them at home. Ongoing access to Power School, along with trimester report cards and parent/teacher conferences, allow parents to be informed of their child's progress. Additionally, school data is published in the parish weekly bulletin and on the school's website allowing all current and potential families, as well as supporters within the parish community, to understand the performance level of the students at St. Joseph School.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

St. Joseph School believes that in order for students to succeed, they must be engaged, motivated, and surrounded in a positive school culture. In a recent parent survey, parents indicated one of the top three reasons for choosing St. Joseph School was because of the community. At St. Joseph School, opportunities are provided for parents, students, and staff to work together to build community while getting to know one another. The "Prayer Partner" program is instrumental in building relationships and emotional connections among students across all grade levels. Each preschool through eighth grade student is paired with another student as a "prayer partner", and these prayer partners sit together at Mass. The older students teach the younger students how to participate in the mass, and they also meet several times throughout the year to work on projects, pray and socialize together. These opportunities give younger students role models and provide older students an opportunity to mentor others and build their leadership skills. Prayer partners form a Christian community that integrates the whole school.

The call to love is visible through many programs established by the school counselor. Rainbows, a group for students who have experienced loss, meets monthly to build relationships after the loss of a loved one. Friendship Circle is offered to early elementary students to help them build positive friendships within the school. The Peer Mentoring program and the many student council opportunities allow for students to expand their friendships outside their immediate social circle.

Students may also join a number of extra-curricular activities that complement academics, arts, sports and social justice. Math Team, book clubs, fitness club, band, art club, drama club, service club and choir club are just a few of the clubs offered to the students at St. Joseph School. There is also a full extra-curricular athletic program for students interested in volleyball, soccer, basketball, track and field, cross country and cheerleading.

Teachers are also supported and encouraged. They participate in professional learning teams within their subject area or grade level, and each teacher has responsibilities to further advance the mission of St. Joseph School. The school uses the "train the trainer" model and recognizes the professional contributions that staff members make at their grade level or within their subject area. On a routine basis, the parent association plans fun surprises for faculty and students. Additionally, faculty and staff engage in monthly social outings in order to further build and foster relationships. These programs enhance community, which in turn, foster a positive environment for students, staff and parents.

Another way that teachers build community is through professional book studies. This year, the staff is reading *The Leader in Me* (Covey, 2008). The book study program is leading to common language and goals, as well as a common way of interacting with students, preschool through eighth grade. The staff looks forward to the positive benefits to the school's climate and culture that the book study will bring to the students and staff of St. Joseph School.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

A vibrant and engaged community is vital to the success of the students at St. Joseph School. The school engages families and the community in numerous ways, and it is recognized by all within the St. Joseph School community that this partnership is imperative as the staff works with parents to educate students in mind, body and spirit. The four cornerstones of how the mission of the school is lived is "We are called to Grow, Live Our Catholic Faith, Serve and Love," and by partnering with families and communities, students recognize their adult role models living the mission of St. Joseph School.

To engage parents and families, the St. Joseph School Parent Association (SJSPA) sponsors over 40 events throughout the school year, most of which are run by volunteers. Within a three year period, there has been an increase in the parent volunteerism rate from 63% to 84%. All family members are encouraged to volunteer, including grandparents and older siblings. With 84% of families volunteering in some capacity,

St. Joseph School has become much more of a community than in previous years. A fair, streamlined, and easily accessible system for signing up to volunteer as also been created. The participation of volunteers enhances the students' educational experiences, and it provides opportunities for parents to build community by getting to know faculty, staff and other school families.

As a school, parents are also engaged in formal surveys in order for staff to receive feedback regarding the various components of the St. Joseph School experience. These surveys are done annually, and the topic varies slightly from year to year while always returning to the same topic within the cycle to measure growth in all areas. While surveys do not drive every decision, they do influence some of what is done because parent feedback is an important component of the culture at St. Joseph School. Parents know that their ideas are important as decisions are made to further the education of all students.

Students, faculty, staff, and parents answer the call to serve through integrated, school wide and grade level service projects as a core component of our program. Collecting food pantry donations, making lunches for PADS (Providing Advocacy, Dignity and Shelter), a homeless shelter in Libertyville, supporting Orphans of the Storm, and packing meals for Feed My Starving Children are just a few of the many organizations that the community of St. Joseph School partners with each year. "Sister schools" in Peru and Tanzania are also supported by the students of St. Joseph School. An abundance of service opportunities allow students and families to reach out to the local and international communities to share their gifts and grow spiritually and intellectually thereby becoming engaged members of the greater community.

St. Joseph School offers a variety of leadership and service opportunities that build community. The Student Council brings new ideas and events to the student body, the Safety Patrol ensures the safe and friendly arrival and dismissal of students, and the Morning Prayer and Announcement Teams lead the students, faculty and staff in prayer daily. Older students mentor children in lower grades and attend weekly Mass together. Students also grow their leadership skills through altar serving at daily mass as well as at weddings and funerals, leading the congregation as a cantor, and by proclaiming the Word during mass. A nurturing staff, enthusiastic student body and involved parent community combine to create an environment where children thrive and develop an intellectual curiosity to love and serve others in gratitude.

Partnering with community leaders is essential in furthering the mission of St. Joseph School. The school has worked with universities to provide student teacher opportunities, and local business experts are invited into the school for presentations as guest speakers. Additionally, a partnership with the Lake County Sheriff's Department in adopting and naming canine unit dogs has been created to build community relationships. Students witness their community members, teachers, and parents making a difference.

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

Each year, the school calendar includes at least eight days of professional development for all staff. The agendas for these in-service days are driven by the mandates from the Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools, St. Joseph School's curricular goals, the analysis of assessment data, the Long Range Strategic Plan and teacher feedback. Staff looks for trends over time in data as a call to action for professional development. Furthermore, St. Joseph School staff works in professional learning teams by subject area to establish professional development needs. In addition to the Archdiocesan mandated math and reading professional development, the Archdiocese also requires two religious in-service days each year. Teachers also participate in book clubs with staff members centered on goals that are outlined in the Long Range Strategic Plan.

Based on the St. Joseph School assessment data, the school partnered with Gretchen Courtney & Associates, a group of literacy specialists, to bring school-wide, professional development to all staff, including administration, in writing. The decision to partner with Gretchen Courtney & Associates was driven by the ACT Aspire data, local grade-level assessments, and by the teachers' call to strengthen the writing program offered at St. Joseph School. This professional development, which began last year, is planned to continue through next year.

Another area that was identified as an area for professional development was in the delivery of reading instruction as it pertains to both whole group and small group instruction. St. Joseph School has incorporated CCSS aligned resources and partnered with a literacy coach who works with teachers to build each teacher's instructional strategies. Additionally, teachers observe one another's literacy instruction to help build teacher capacity. The partnership between administrators, the literacy coach and the teachers helps deepen staffs' ability to better meet the individual needs of each student.

Additionally, teachers are being developed in the use of formative assessments to help guide instruction. Members of the school's leadership team were trained in Data Wise at Harvard's Graduate School of Education during the summer of 2017. This training was followed by a semester course of Data Wise in Action which guided the leadership team through the implementation of using data to make decisions to drive instruction. This has been most valuable to all staff, and in turn, has increased student achievement as evidenced on common, grade-level, formative assessments. Being educated in using data from formative assessments has helped staff further meet the needs of students by differentiating the opportunities presented to them.

All professional development opportunities offered at St. Joseph School directly support teachers, support staff and administration in their role to better deliver instruction in order to increase student achievement and to prepare students for college and careers.

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

Leadership at St. Joseph School has undergone changes since the 2009 National Blue Ribbon School award, and much has been learned during this process. St. Joseph School is in its third year with the current principal. The principal was a teacher in the school for four years prior to moving to administration, and that perspective is valuable and meaningful and serves as a guiding principle of developing the leader within each member of the St. Joseph School community. The assistant principal has been in that position for six years. The two administrators are able to provide varied and historical insights into important elements influencing the school's climate, culture, tradition and areas in need of improvement.

The leadership within the school has created positive momentum allowing St. Joseph School to evolve into an even stronger institution. School administrators are the instructional leaders of the school, and their philosophies support the development of many other leaders within the school's community. With the oversight of the principal, a leadership team was created which allows for collaboration as new ideas or initiatives are considered. Administration, teachers, the school counselor, and support staff serve on the school's leadership team. Teachers are also recommended to join the Archdiocesan Leadership Academy which is a program that builds professional capacity of teachers in their teaching craft and leadership skills. Additionally, under the direction of the principal, staff are appointed as committee leads as they move the school forward implementing best practices in education. Teachers also take on leadership roles within professional learning teams with responsibilities for furthering the mission. Risk taking, such as piloting new programs which are supported by data and research, is highly encouraged by the leadership team.

Both the assistant principal and the principal share the role of staff evaluations, walk-throughs, providing consistent feedback, and mentoring staff. This is accomplished by administration being in the classrooms, discussing progress toward goals, and looking at the strengths and opportunities of growth for each staff member. Additionally, a goal of the current administration has been to increase communication to all shareholders, both internally and externally through a variety of sources, with greater frequency and improved content. The school now features a weekly article in the parish bulletin highlighting events, traditions, announcements, initiatives or data regarding student achievement. A monthly newsletter is distributed electronically to all shareholders to discuss relevant issues, such as how to interpret data, updates on long-term planning and programs that are being brought to the school. Each May, a formal review of the Long Range Strategic Plan is hosted with members from the school and parish community. Finally, weekly emails, each Thursday, also remind families of important community events and other housekeeping tasks taking place within the next week.

The principal and leadership team also value transparent and open communication between and among all

members of the community which has also impacted the content of the above mentioned communications. Social media, such as Facebook, has been another tool that has helped spread news of school events. Another source of support within the communication plan is the Director of Admissions who assists with all marketing and promotional communication. Since beginning the new communication platform, shareholders have been better informed of relevant issues impacting the families of St. Joseph School as evidenced in recent stakeholder surveys. This stability and consistency provides a great foundation for advancing the mission of St. Joseph School.

## PART VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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St. Joseph School believes there is one main driver in the success of the school: creating a positive school culture and climate. A positive school culture and climate provides the environment for students and staff to reach their fullest potential. The staff of St. Joseph School firmly believes that once a student or staff member knows they are valued, loved, and wanted, they will work hard to continually improve: socially, emotionally, academically, spiritually, and behaviorally. Led by the leadership team and school counselor, opportunities to build community are woven throughout the day so that students recognize their importance.

## PART VII – NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

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

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

2. Does the school have nonprofit, tax-exempt (501(c)(3)) status?      Yes X      No

3. What is the educational cost per student?      \$6550  
(School budget divided by enrollment)

4. What is the average financial aid per student?      \$2300

5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?      2%

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

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

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**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math

**Test:** ACT Aspire

**Grade:** 3

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2015

**Publisher:** ACT Aspire

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

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	417
Number of students tested	35
Percent of total students tested	100
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:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math  
**Edition/Publication Year:** 2015

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

**Grade:** 4  
**Scores are reported here as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	419
Number of students tested	47
Percent of total students tested	100
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:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math  
**Edition/Publication Year:** 2015

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

**Grade:** 5  
**Scores are reported here as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	421
Number of students tested	51
Percent of total students tested	100
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:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math  
**Edition/Publication Year:** 2015

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

**Grade:** 6  
**Scores are reported here as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	425
Number of students tested	48
Percent of total students tested	100
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:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math  
**Edition/Publication Year:** 2015

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

**Grade:** 7  
**Scores are reported here as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	427
Number of students tested	54
Percent of total students tested	98
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:** Due to a concussion, one student in the seventh grade did not take the ACT Aspire math assessment in April of 2016.

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math  
**Edition/Publication Year:** 2015

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

**Grade:** 8  
**Scores are reported here as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	429
Number of students tested	51
Percent of total students tested	98
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:** Due to eye surgery, one student in the eighth grade did not take the ACT Aspire math summative assessment in April of 2016.

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Reading/ELA  
**Edition/Publication Year:** 2015

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

**Grade:** 3  
**Scores are reported here as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	418
Number of students tested	35
Percent of total students tested	100
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:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Reading/ELA  
**Edition/Publication Year:** 2015

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

**Grade:** 4  
**Scores are reported here as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	419
Number of students tested	47
Percent of total students tested	100
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:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Reading/ELA  
**Edition/Publication Year:** 2015

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

**Grade:** 5  
**Scores are reported here as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	421
Number of students tested	51
Percent of total students tested	100
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:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Reading/ELA  
**Edition/Publication Year:** 2015

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

**Grade:** 6  
**Scores are reported here as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	423
Number of students tested	48
Percent of total students tested	100
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:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Reading/ELA  
**Edition/Publication Year:** 2015

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

**Grade:** 7  
**Scores are reported here as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	425
Number of students tested	55
Percent of total students tested	100
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:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Reading/ELA  
**Edition/Publication Year:** 2015

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

**Grade:** 8  
**Scores are reported here as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	428
Number of students tested	52
Percent of total students tested	100
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:**