

U.S. Department of Education
2017 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[] Public or [X] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. Joel Anthony Castillo EDS

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

Official School Name The Academy of Our Lady Of Peace

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 99 South Street

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

City New Providence State NJ Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 07974-1989

County Union

Telephone (908) 464-8657 Fax (908) 464-3377

Web site/URL http://www.theacademyolp.org E-mail principal@theacademyolp.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. Margaret Dames E-mail Damesmar@rcan.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Archdiocese of Newark Tel. (973) 497-4264

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. David Janazzo
(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

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

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	20	28	48
K	9	16	25
1	6	6	12
2	7	5	12
3	7	8	15
4	7	5	12
5	8	4	12
6	5	13	18
7	1	7	8
8	7	4	11
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	77	96	173

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 15 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 13 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 65 % White
 - 6 % 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: 3%

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	3
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	2
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	5
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	193
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.026
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
None

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 4 %
Total number students who qualify: 7

8. Students receiving special education services: 9 %
15 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>3</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>9</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>3</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:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	3
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	19
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	2
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	2
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 9:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	98%	98%	98%	98%	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.

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

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.

The school establishes an academic and spiritual foundation. Students prepare to face the challenges of the future by building on their faith and team work.

PART III – SUMMARY

The Academy of Our Lady of Peace is a Middle States accredited Roman Catholic elementary school located in New Providence, NJ. The Academy, under the auspices of the Archdiocese of Newark serves students from pre-kindergarten through grade eight. The Academy is committed to providing the students with the highest quality of educational excellence in a Christ-centered environment.

The Academy strives to establish an academically and spiritually strong foundation. Teachers focus on student creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration. Student success is reinforced with opportunities to augment their faith, work in teams, and model positive behaviors within their environment.

The Academy was founded in 1954 as Our Lady of Peace School under Father Doherty, the pastor of Our Lady of Peace parish. In early 2008, the school was designated an Academy by the Archdiocese. Instructional excellence combined with sustained outstanding student performance on standardized tests both nationally and within the Archdiocese were among the many factors sighted by the Archdiocese in granting the school with Academy status. In addition, the school offers classes that go beyond the core education, such as Latin for the upper grades. This is something that allows the Academy to stand out among its fellow Catholic schools.

A strong Catholic identity permeates the school. A spirit of faith, respect and joy are evident among the student body. In addition to religious instruction, students model Christian values through cooperative activities, liturgical celebrations, sacramental participation, and service outreach. An active parent organization lends support to the school community. Throughout the years, the school has instituted traditions that have strengthened the community. Eighth grade students are given the privilege of leading the Living Stations during Lent, and May Crowning is a tradition anticipated with excitement every year. The students enjoy the Halloween parade to the Manor Care facility that enables them to connect with the older citizens in the community.

The Academy adheres to an arduous curriculum, which meets state regulations. The Academy engages in an ongoing process of self-evaluation, certification, and accreditation of both teachers and programs. The school received accreditation from Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools in 2006 and re-accreditation in 2013.

Academy students come from many surrounding towns including Berkeley Heights, Summit, Mountainside, North Plainfield, and Gillette. Due to this diversity, students come into the school with different cultural experiences. With regard to socioeconomic considerations, 4% of the school population qualifies for free or reduced-price meals.

While the Academy maintains a steady enrollment, the New Providence public schools rank in the top 5% of schools in the state, making it difficult to convince parents that the alternative of a Catholic education is an advantageous one. With continued marketing and branding the school's goal is always to increase enrollment.

The Academy's administration and faculty, 10 of whom hold advanced degrees, collaborate in fostering a nurturing and academically rigorous environment. Students are led by a team of educators who are state certified and passionate in developing the whole child. Teachers foster a cooperative environment in which students are recognized for their diverse abilities. Teachers also participate in professional development activities (Professional Learning Communities or PLC's) where they collaborate on their students' educational goals. These PLC's strengthen their collegial partnership, and refresh their personal methods of instruction.

The Academy is a vibrant community that offers advanced STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math) education. By providing tools, such as Sphero robots, a 3D-printer, iPads, Lego Mindstorms, and hydroponics programs, students experience activities that develop critical thinking and problem solving skills. The Academy Panther Power Robotics team consists of 3rd through 8th grade students. In 2014, the

team competed at a national level at the First Lego League competition in California and placed 2nd for their innovative solution. The teachers encourage group work because it enables students to learn to respect one another's ideas and cooperate with each other to reach goals and meet challenges.

The Academy also provides many after school activities that foster friendship outside the classroom, creating a cohesive environment whereby older students take on leadership roles. Whether it's a team sport or club, students develop strong ties to their community and a strong sense of school spirit permeates throughout these activities. Students are also given opportunities throughout the school year to help others in need. Donating food, school supplies, and Christmas gifts to those less fortunate are some of the ways Academy students live their faith. This is an important aspect of the Catholic mission, and one we hope students take with them as they move on to the next phase of their education.

The Academy is honored to graduate students to top secondary institutions. The Academy alumni continue to support and value their alma mater, as graduates have come back to teach and/or send their children to continue their legacy of Catholic education. The Academy's leadership is committed to continue the support and guidance necessary to provide an excellent, Christ-centered education for future generations of learners.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

The Academy of Our Lady of Peace follows the New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards across all subject areas and adheres to the curriculum guidelines set forth by the Newark Archdiocese. The Academy faculty and administration are committed to providing an excellent Catholic education for all students.

Language Arts

The Language Arts curriculum for Early Childhood focuses on oral, listening, and written communication skills. Kindergarten students use a literacy program that builds on sight words and patterning, developed in preschool. In addition, Grades 1 to 4 also focus on students' study skills, and reading and writing proficiencies. Teachers work together so that strengths and weaknesses are identified and addressed as students move from grade to grade.

Middle School Language Arts curriculum for Grades 5 to 8 is an integrated structure that combines components of spelling, vocabulary, grammar, literature, reading concepts, and writing in a number of theme-based units. Using culturally relevant words as a base, students cycle through a two-week period encompassing two to three grammar periods, two to three writing periods, and three to four literature periods in which reading concepts are also reinforced. Literature books are chosen based on relevance to a particular class, as well as their religious and cultural significance. An advanced Language Arts course is also offered for eighth graders who qualify.

Mathematics

In the Preschool to Grade 4 programs, mathematical skills are developed through the use of manipulatives, discovery, and problem solving. Students are encouraged to think mathematically rather than simply memorize mathematical facts.

The Middle School math program has a strong emphasis on problem solving strategies. In particular students are encouraged to first understand the given problem, make a plan, solve, reflect and look back. A strong emphasis is put on real-world problems and critical thinking skills. Through questioning techniques, higher order thinking is encouraged. The Academy has a "two different philosophies" approach....one philosophy is that mathematics is taught in a linear manner, while the other takes a spiral review; the Academy combines the two. Students develop an understanding of why they are learning certain concepts, allowing them to better understand problem solving, and apply previously learned material to new concepts. Academy students in 7th grade attend a Pre-Algebra course and continue onto Algebra in 8th grade.

Science

Students at all grade levels are taught science by exploring their own environment and being provided materials, manipulatives, and support to help them formulate questions during their explorations. Students are engaged through hands-on lab experiments, STEAM activities, and educational video clips. Students in Kindergarten to grade 4 meet for an additional period each week with the Middle School Science teacher for hands-on experimentation to enhance their science education and build a strong foundation. The Academy also has a hydroponics tower in the lower grades where students grow fruits and vegetables indoors without direct sunlight or soil. Opportunities like these further develop students' logical thinking and scientific inquiry.

Middle School students are also engaged in many hands-on scientific lessons that foster cooperative learning and collaboration as they seek to make observations and find answers. Other core areas like writing and math are continuously integrated in science lessons as well as an understanding about the diversity of God's creation and the respect and responsibilities mankind should show for our world. The middle school has its own hydroponics garden, and the students also care for several animals in the science lab.

Social Studies

Academy students focus on history, map and globe skills, and community in their Social Studies curriculum.

Even the youngest students explore the lives and accomplishments of famous people in history to form an appreciation for the relevance of history in our everyday lives.

The Middle School Social Studies curriculum also gives the students the opportunity to gain the knowledge, skills, and values to be active participants in their school, community, state, nation and the world. This is accomplished through civics discussions and current events lessons where students can express their understanding of, and opinions on issues that will help them understand their rights and obligations.

The students are motivated to appreciate and seek more knowledge of topics presented in the Social Studies curriculum through lecture and class discussions. Lessons are infused with STEAM activities, map skills, debates, and reading and writing skills in order to pique their interest, curiosity, and passion in matters related to communities and social issues.

Preschool

Learning takes place through whole group instruction and group time. Each classroom has a unique approach to learning based on the experiences, strengths, and interests of each student as well as their development level. Preschoolers learn best from teacher-facilitated hands-on activities.

The core curriculum focus for the Academy's preschool students is on literacy, mathematics, social studies, science, social skills, religion, and handwriting. These core subjects are reinforced in the special subjects such as art, Spanish and technology which the students attend on a weekly basis.

The Academy's preschoolers continue their success in kindergarten to Grade 3 because they have the necessary foundational skills. The standardized testing for grades 2 and 3 ensure that all standards are being met. The teachers in the early grades also consult on students' strengths and weaknesses so that each student will be able to achieve their personal best as they move forward.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Academy students attend classes in art, music, physical education, Spanish, Latin and technology. Special subject teachers coordinate with core subject teachers to reinforce the core material, and to further develop students' social and listening skills and character formation. Students attend these special classes for the entire school year. The Academy also provides preschool to grade 4 students with time to explore the library and learn important library and research skills with weekly visits.

Students in the three-year-old program through grade 8 attend a weekly art class. Students are motivated to express themselves visually and creatively through artistic thought and action, while they build a foundation on the elements of art, art history, design principals and art appreciation. Middle School students in grades 5 to 8 are required to complete a monthly sketchbook assignment that includes a well-developed, grammatically correct descriptive paragraph about their drawing, thereby further developing their language arts skills. By integrating classroom activities and fostering creative thinking, students develop an awareness of aesthetic values and build on their own self esteem.

Weekly music classes are attended by PK-3 through grade 8 students. Students acquire foundational skills through singing, listening, repetition, memorization, reading of lyrics, discussion of lyrical and/or musical content, textbook material, performance, and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) activities. In-class assessments are used to monitor behavioral, musical, and educational growth. These same techniques are used to identify gifted students. Gifted students are given the opportunity to have limited creative input, more engaging material, and performances to explore. Students take part in two evening concerts each year and other assemblies where students can showcase their musical abilities.

The physical education program begins with the three-year-old's and continues through eighth grade. Students attend one period a week from Pre-K through grade 4 and then increase to twice a week when students reach grade 5. Students learn acceptable demonstrations of sportsmanship, respect for others' abilities including one's own, and how to use creative, critical and logical thinking when given physical education activities to perform. Teamwork, fair play and cooperation are essential skills taught at every grade level. Students also learn healthy habits to incorporate in their everyday lives to increase overall

fitness and well-being.

The Academy of Our Lady of Peace is in compliance with the program's foreign language requirements. Spanish classes begin in the three-year-old preschool program and continue through eighth grade starting with instruction once a week in Pre-K through grade 4 and increasing to three periods a week in grades 5 to 8. The instruction and activities are adapted to every level and student. The Early Childhood Program (Preschool to Kindergarten) and 1st to 4th grade students learn Spanish vocabulary through songs, games, puzzles, flashcards, videos and storybooks. In grades 5 to 8 instruction focuses on grammar and vocabulary, as well as the use of Spanish in real life situations in terms of listening, reading, and writing, with a special emphasis on speaking. At the same time, the culture, celebrations, and different traditions of the Spanish speaking countries are explored.

An introduction to Latin is taught one period a week to seventh and eighth grade students. Emphasis is placed on comparing English grammatical structures with those in Latin. Some aspects of Roman culture are also studied, such as Roman clothes, housing and mythology. Games and songs help to keep the class lively and hold the students' interest.

Students in the four-year-old program through grade 8 attend a weekly class in technology skills and have access to technology tools throughout the entire school day. Formal instruction adheres to a recently adopted curriculum map developed by the technology teachers and the Director of Instructional Technology for the Archdiocese of Newark. The development of basic typing and mouse skills begins with the youngest students, and then office products like word processing, spreadsheets, and multi-media presentations are introduced in grades 3 and 4 and further developed in middle school. Kindergarten through grade 8 students participate in coding throughout the year, and the upper grade students study computer architecture, terminology, internet safety, ethical communication, and search mechanisms. Middle school students report on current events in technology to integrate writing in the curriculum. Creativity, innovation, problem solving and collaboration are also developed with 3D design and printing and the use of robots and STEAM activities. The technology curriculum is designed to prepare Academy students for their high school careers and give them the tools they need to succeed in the 21st century.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

The Academy of Our Lady of Peace is committed to high quality educational instruction using a variety of methods and assessments to ensure that the quality is maintained and improved where needed. The educational program reflects an integrated approach to the students' social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development. The faculty reviews and implements the New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards as well as the Archdiocesan Curriculum Guidelines in order to keep the school's competitive edge in the local educational market. Academy teachers have been involved in re-writing and re-defining the curricula for math and language arts at an archdiocesan level, and so they are intimately acquainted with the requirements and standards for academic excellence. In the 2016-2017 school year, Academy teachers will participate in the group that evaluates and revises the science curriculum guidelines for the Archdiocese.

The faculty experiment with, and utilize, a variety of group learning techniques (e.g., individual, small group, partner work, mentoring with older students, etc.) Teachers ensure that their lessons in all content areas reflect a depth of rigor that includes fluency, conceptual understanding, and application of the subject. Differentiated instruction is key in determining the best path for a student's academic success. Such an instructional method allows the faculty to make necessary adjustments to their teaching styles to best benefit the student body. Students are continually challenged to not only recall information but to increase their ability to apply their knowledge in real life situations.

The Academy systematically collects and rigorously analyzes data from the yearly Terra Nova scores as well as school created assessments as a means of evaluating the educational program as a whole. The data provides evidence of the individual learning and growth of each student, as well as providing the faculty an opportunity to place data driven instruction into action. The Terra Nova tests, administered to students in grades 2 through 8 in March of each year, provide teachers with the ability to enhance their curricula, and to identify potential problem areas with regard to issues such as retention. Students with significant gaps

between their anticipated score and their actual score are recommended for evaluation by the school study team for additional help. The Academy offers services to help students both in improving academics and increasing skills that will help them academically, such as study and organizational skills. Faculty members also offer appropriate classroom and time management techniques to aid students in the classroom setting. Differentiated instruction and additional teaching methods that reach the students through auditory, visual, or kinesthetic means also help increase students' academic achievement.

Assessments of student work are done continually and include informal and formal assessments. The types of informal assessments used are running records, written work, journals, self-evaluation, daily participation, observations and rubrics. The formal assessments include the Terra Nova tests, chapter and unit tests, and oral and written tests.

The knowledge a student achieves is also measured both formatively and summarily as they learn. Students will be assessed throughout the education process as teachers measure their progress and understanding both as they are building the skills and identifying the skills as being learned. Each teacher, in their specific subject area, is encouraged to explore many alternative methods of assessment. Some assessments are carried out across the subject areas. Assessments remain, above all, age appropriate and testing is not meant to be gratuitous. Within the classroom, assessments are used to gauge whether or not a skill has been mastered, and whether the students are able to move onto the next stage of instruction. It is also a way of further developing differentiation in that, if a student is identified as having difficulties with a concept that the rest of the class has mastered, that teacher is able to provide one-on-one instruction to close the gap. On the other end of the spectrum, students who master the skills quickly can be assigned additional work to challenge them even further.

Teachers are also able to use the technology tools and online applications available in the classroom, such as Kahoot.com and Socrative.com to make quick assessments that provide immediate feedback on student understanding.

It is the aim of the Academy to provide an education that academically exceeds the schools operating in the surrounding areas. With the small class sizes, the opportunities provided for multi-layered instruction methods, and the extra supplemental aids, the teachers are able to challenge the students to look beyond the necessary, and to strive for the exceptional.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

The environment at The Academy of Our Lady of Peace is one that the students can thrive in. While strong academic foundations and advancements are encouraged and developed, the atmosphere is one in which the students feel comfortable in their own academic endeavors. Using methods such as differentiated instruction allows each one of the students to develop confidence in their abilities. This confidence enables the students to feel comfortable in their classrooms, which is one of the most important ingredients for their academic success. A variety of technology such as computers, Smartboards, and iPads are used to engage and motivate students to take control of their education. Students are also encouraged to share their individual ideas and knowledge in the way that best allows them to express it. For example, this could be through writing, building a website, preparing a multi-media presentation or using oral communication.

The Academy is a school that prides itself on fostering appropriate relationships between the students, the students and teachers, and the teachers and parents. Allowing the students to see such positive relationships between the teachers and their parents helps them to feel more comfortable developing their own student-teacher relationships. This allows teachers to work closely with the students on a trusted and appropriate social level. By feeling as if they have another supportive adult to turn to, emotional needs can be supported and addressed.

The teachers at the Academy are provided with a variety of resources to enhance their professional development, their emotional well-being, and their connection to the community. With a relatively small faculty of twenty-two people, the Academy teachers provide guidance and support to one another. This teamwork is evident to the community at-large. New teachers are given a mentor who guides them through their first year and provides instruction as to how the Academy functions. The administration provides a variety of professional development options that enable the teachers to learn new skills, new methods of instruction, and varied methods of communication. The professional development occurs not only within the school, but also within the community of the Archdiocese of Newark. Speakers have been engaged to instruct teachers in a variety of media, with the emphasis being on STEM and STEAM instruction in the 2016-2017 school year. Teachers are highly valued at the Academy, and throughout the school year events are held in their honor to thank them for their efforts and dedication to Catholic education.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Academy parents and teachers communicate continuously to ensure that students are happy, secure and thriving in their environment. During the 2015-2016 school year, the Middle School teachers began using the web-based EDMODO system to communicate with students and parents. EDMODO is a way for teachers to post assignments online, and for parents to be aware of what is occurring in the everyday lives of their children. Teachers provide updates as to what is going on in the classrooms so parents can initiate discussions with their children at home. The lower school uses Shutterfly share sites as a communication method. Teachers post pictures and journal entries allowing the parents to connect and share their children's daily educational experiences.

The Middle School also uses the online POWERSCHOOL system, which allows parents to access their children's grades at any time. Teachers can add comments to further help parents understand the academic achievement of their children and alert them to any issues that need attention, including any discipline issues that arise. Progress reports, parent-teacher conferences, phone conversations, and comments on report cards are also ways the student's progress is continuously reported to his or her parents. The faculty understands that parental involvement in a child's education provides the child with the best opportunity for success.

The Academy also guides and helps the students choose and prepare for acceptance into the high school of their choice. High school representatives are invited each year to discuss their schools with Academy students, providing a better and more complete understanding of their academic and social options as they

continue their education.

The school, parish and community-at-large are kept up to date and encouraged to know what the students are accomplishing at The Academy. Through social media and news articles, the achievements of the students can clearly be seen. The students also work in the community as a way to give back, such as planting flowers, donating needed items, taking part in Mass and liturgies, and visiting the local nursing home residents.

Parents always have the opportunity to be involved in school life. Some activities include: lunch duty, guest birthday readers, Christmas luncheon, school assemblies, field day, walk-a-thon and coaching/mentoring team sports and clubs. Parents are often invited to visit classrooms for various educational lectures related to their career path. Parents and community members also teach after-school enrichment classes at The Academy. Visits from the township fire department, local dentist, Seeing Eye organization, to name a few, enrich the student experience.

3. Professional Development:

The Academy offers regular professional development opportunities. During monthly meetings, teachers discuss relevant issues that need attention. Inter-school meetings are organized with other Catholic schools. Guest speakers instruct faculty in a variety of educational aspects. These meetings include brainstorming about assessments, curriculum development, and STEAM initiatives. Academy faculty participated on curriculum development teams in the Archdiocese, which provided opportunities to enhance skills, and learn new methodologies. Individual faculty members have the opportunity to undergo subject-specific workshops. Language Arts teachers regularly attend Rutgers Reading Workshops, which are intensive seminars focusing on language development, enhancing writing skills, and utilizing methods to aid the special population.

During the last three years, STEAM integration has been the focus of professional development. The training has led to a high level of STEAM education. A variety of inter-disciplinary projects have been initiated, including a solar car team. The Middle School's club period is used for investigating scientific and technological ways to implement the United Nations sustainable goals. Recent workshops were centered on weaving math, science and engineering. Faculty will be delving further into the technology aspect of STEAM.

The Academy's goal of improving knowledge and use of technology tools and processes will honor our school's definition of student achievement: "a positive and faith-filled attitude and confidence toward education with the motivation, knowledge and skills to become critical thinkers and life-long learners."

To support this goal, administration places value on a rich technological environment and providing for ongoing, quality professional development. Teachers will guide their students in digital age coursework, serving as role models for positive digital citizenship.

Professional development offered through university, business and government channels will continue. Opportunities organized through the Archdiocese will be essential to teacher improvement. Teachers participate in online learning and continue to collaborate with the Academy's technology coordinator for training. Continued outreach to Steven's Institute of Technology and Seton Hall University for STEAM training will be pursued. Past workshops with these institutions began our path to STEAM integration.

This plan will continue to be fully supported by the administration. Specific funding will be allocated and the administration will assure that technological infrastructure is prepared and maintained for extended use by teachers and students. Time and energies needed for professional development within and beyond the school schedule will be honored.

Observation and practice will be indicators of teacher growth in the productive use of technology. Teachers will provide empirical data regarding greater student engagement and achievement. Overall functionality of technology will benefit teachers, students, and stakeholders in the school community.

4. School Leadership:

The Academy school leadership team includes the parish pastor, principal, School Advisory Board, faculty and staff. Part of the role of the principal and pastor's involvement in the school is to implement religious education guidelines issued by the Catechetical Office of the Archdiocese of Newark. The principal projects a collaborative leadership style by coordinating the effort of teachers, students, and parents in promoting a community of faith and learning.

The purpose of the School Advisory Board is to work in partnership with the pastor and principal to enable The Academy to pursue the mission of a Catholic school by providing a broad curriculum that ensures academic excellence within a Christ-centered environment where all students realize their God-given potential. The Board members provide strategic advice to the principal and pastor identifying opportunities for growth and improvement, and to foster an open line of communication and an effective working relationship with all stakeholders. The relationship is one of information sharing and common planning for the benefit of the school. Additionally, the Board consults in the areas of development, planning, marketing, finance and building and grounds. Recommendations of the School Advisory Board do not become policy unless approved by the principal in consultation with the pastor. The Board does not have authority over the day-to-day management of the school.

There are between nine and twelve members on the Advisory Board, consisting of the pastor, principal, President of the Home and School Association (parent association), alumni parents and members from the local community.

The Academy's Student Council, consisting of Middle School students, allows leadership to extend to the student body. Council members exist as liaisons between the student population and the principal, voicing student concerns. The members of the council take on many leadership roles, and are valued as peer mediators, role models and ambassadors of the Academy.

The principal involves the pastor, school coordinators, and faculty in planning and decision making. Members of the faculty are given the opportunity to chair meetings, empowering them to develop their own leadership skills. The pastor's presence in the school reinforces the Catholic values which provide the foundation for The Academy's continued vigor within the community. As the pastor leads the school community in liturgical celebrations his dedication to the success of The Academy is evident. The faculty develops and maintains the school's academic and religious nature through daily instruction and prayers, preparing assignments using project based learning models. The Academy's faith community is maintained through participation in programs such as "Christmas Box", food drives, and other charitable endeavors.

PART VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The Academy's faculty has developed student achievement targets in order to provide continuous academic success across all grades. With regular intra-school consultation and communication, the faculty identified particular programs that required restructuring or enhancement.

PART VII – NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

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

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

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

3. What is the educational cost per student? \$9062
(School budget divided by enrollment)

4. What is the average financial aid per student? \$1500

5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 3%

6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 17%

PART VIII – ASSESSMENT RESULTS FOR NORM-REFERENCED TESTS

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math

Test: Terra Nova 3rd Edition

Grade: 3

Edition/Publication Year: 2012

Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	83
Number of students tested	13
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math

Test: Terra Nova 3rd Edition

Grade: 4

Edition/Publication Year: 2012

Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	87
Number of students tested	16
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math

Test: Terra Nova 3rd Edition

Grade: 5

Edition/Publication Year: 2012

Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	85
Number of students tested	17
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math

Test: Terra Nova 3rd Edition

Grade: 6

Edition/Publication Year: 2012

Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	82
Number of students tested	12
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math

Test: Terra Nova 3rd Edition

Grade: 7

Edition/Publication Year: 2012

Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	89
Number of students tested	14
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math

Test: Terra Nova 3rd Edition

Grade: 8

Edition/Publication Year: 2012

Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	91
Number of students tested	11
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Reading/ELA

Test: Terra Nova 3rd Edition

Grade: 3

Edition/Publication Year: 2012

Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	68
Number of students tested	13
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Reading/ELA

Test: Terra Nova 3rd Edition

Grade: 4

Edition/Publication Year: 2012

Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	87
Number of students tested	16
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Reading/ELA

Test: Terra Nova 3rd Edition

Grade: 5

Edition/Publication Year: 2012

Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	85
Number of students tested	17
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Reading/ELA

Test: Terra Nova 3rd Edition

Grade: 6

Edition/Publication Year: 2012

Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	86
Number of students tested	12
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Reading/ELA

Test: Terra Nova 3rd Edition

Grade: 7

Edition/Publication Year: 2012

Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	80
Number of students tested	14
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Reading/ELA

Test: Terra Nova 3rd Edition

Grade: 8

Edition/Publication Year: 2012

Publisher: CTB McGraw-Hill

Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	89
Number of students tested	11
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES: