

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 2018 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 2012 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: 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, or 2017.
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 (2017-2018) 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
 - Rural or small city/town
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2017 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	86	83	169
10	88	106	194
11	74	88	162
12 or higher	79	82	161
Total Students	327	359	686

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 3 % Asian
 - 2 % Black or African American
 - 0 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 92 % White
 - 3 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2016 – 2017 school year: 1%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain.

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	2
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	8
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	10
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	691
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1

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: 4 %
 Total number students who qualify: 26

8. Students receiving special education services: 2 %
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>2</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>4</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>2</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 12

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	5
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	44
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	7
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	0
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	6

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 16:1

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

Required Information	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2012	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

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 2017.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	161
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	95%
Enrolled in a community college	5%
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.

Like Mary, who gave Christ to the world, Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin School educates leaders who transform the world, as Jesus did, by living the truth in love.

PART III – SUMMARY

“I am surrounded by professionals who care to make the school a better place and students better people.”
—Teacher comment from Workplace Dynamics engagement survey

Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin (NDCL) is a college-preparatory school that educates 686 young women and men to be leaders who transform the world. Sponsored by the Sisters of Notre Dame, NDCL draws students from more than 40 schools in six counties. Students generally come from middle-class families, with 51% receiving tuition assistance.

NDCL traces its history to the founding of all-girls Notre Dame Academy in Cleveland in 1878. The academy educated generations of women in its original location until 1963, when it moved to rural Munson Township, about 30 miles east of Cleveland. In 1988, the academy affiliated with the alumni association of Cathedral Latin School, an all-boys school that closed in 1979. This affiliation resurrected the legacy of Cathedral Latin and united it with the educational tradition of Notre Dame Academy to form Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin School.

The school’s educational program reflects and advances its five core values: justice, respect, integrity, community, and excellence. These values are more than lofty words that appear on promotional publications and websites. As a practical way to live out these values, NDCL works hard so that every student will “Belong, Believe, and Become.” Given its many feeder schools, NDCL intentionally focuses on building a school community where every student belongs. A student-led new student transition program connects newcomers with peers, who introduce them to school culture and accompany them in planned activities throughout the year. Other community-building initiatives include spiritual and service retreats sponsored by Campus Ministry and individual and group guidance activities offered by the Counseling Department. Students also have access to a 24/7 helpline that enables them to get nearly immediate assistance for simple questions (“What’s tomorrow’s special schedule?”) and serious concerns (“I’m worried about a friend who seems depressed”). The principal even personally delivers birthday cards to every student and staff member. These relational approaches foster a community characterized by caring and collaboration, not coercion and compliance. The sense of belonging encourages engagement, commitment, and achievement: More than 75% of students participate in 74 organizations and teams, the retention rate is 97%, and student academic performance is at its highest level in school history.

The core values of integrity and respect shape relationships with students and staff. The school community begins with the fundamental belief that students and staff are good and desire to do good. Policies and procedures focus on bringing out the best in everyone, not merely controlling the worst someone might do. This approach reflects NDCL’s mission to educate leaders. A fundamental quality of a good leader is the skill to make good decisions. NDCL empowers students to participate in many decisions affecting school life, including choosing how they use their daily unscheduled time; initiating and leading food, clothing, and fundraising drives for local agencies; and shaping and celebrating community by directing—with almost no adult direction—a live, school-wide daily TV broadcast. In the classroom and beyond, adults strategically step aside so that students grow more confident in their own leadership abilities. This belief in the capability of students leads administrators and teachers to seek student input through focus groups, electronic surveys, and a sincere open-door policy. Teachers developed the “Factors Influencing Learning Survey” that they administer each semester to gather student feedback on instructional strategies and practices that help and hinder learning.

The entire educational program challenges and supports students to pursue excellence and promote justice as they become the women and men God calls them to be. A rigorous college-preparatory curriculum features 124 courses, including nine dual-credit college courses. Through a highly developed network of professional learning communities, teachers collaborate to design, implement, and assess teaching and learning. The Academic Success Center provides all students with daily access to academic coaches who provide support in nearly every content area.

To be true to the school’s mission, NDCL’s pursuit of excellence and transformational leadership must have

an impact beyond the school's rather isolated rural campus. NDCL intentionally engages students in creating a more just world. The aim is not simply counting volunteer hours but building meaningful relationships over time. Every student meets one-on-one with the campus ministers to develop a personal service impact plan that aligns the student's talents and interests with the common good. Students have tutored refugees from Myanmar; prepared and shared meals at hunger centers, Ronald McDonald House, and a local hospice; worked side-by-side with residents to rehabilitate homes locally and in rural West Virginia; shared activities with the elderly in a healthcare facility; led a summer camp for Native Americans in North Dakota; and assisted developmentally disabled orphans in Jamaica. Through relationships like these, NDCL realizes its mission "to educate leaders who transform the world as Jesus did."

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin offers a college-preparatory curriculum for all students that requires a minimum of 26 credits distributed as follows: four units of English, Theology, and Mathematics; three units of Social Studies and Science; two units of the same world language; one credit in Fine Arts and Technology; one-half credit in Speech, Health, and Physical Education; and two and one-half credits in electives.

The curriculum is a living blueprint for teaching and learning, not some file sitting on a shelf or hidden on a computer disk. Working in academic departments and professional learning communities, teachers continually assess and revise the curriculum to enhance student learning.

The English Department offers a four-year sequence of courses designed to help students explore, refine, and express their thinking through reading and writing. Students learn to explain and analyze fiction and nonfiction texts thoroughly so that they can create and share meaning through effective research, frequent writing, authentic discussions, and original projects and presentations. The department's faculty includes a literacy specialist who facilitates teachers' acquisition and deployment of research-based literacy strategies, especially those related to college-ready reading and writing. The department sponsors a popular summer reading program that engages all students and staff. ACT scores in English and Reading are at all-time highs.

After years of lagging student performance on assessments such as the ACT, the Mathematics Department has transformed student achievement. Department members immersed themselves in performance data, state standards, ACT College Readiness Benchmarks, and other resources to review and refocus the curriculum. The department is no longer satisfied with students just "taking math." Instead, teachers challenge and support students to think mathematically. Teachers make extensive use of technology, especially in courses employing the flipped mastery approach. Recognizing that many students lack confidence with their mathematical ability, teachers consistently make themselves available for individual help before school, at lunchtime, and after school. Results include the highest ACT Math scores in school history and the first-place award in this year's mathematics competition of the Cleveland Clinic's prestigious Expressions Program.

Science education engages and challenges students with an inquiry-based, problem-solving approach to natural phenomena. Because so many NDCL students intend to pursue medical, scientific, or engineering coursework in college, the department has adopted the interdisciplinary and applied learning principles of STEM education. Students learn practical ways of applying their scientific knowledge by participating in the Believe in Ohio STEM Commercialization Competition and by working with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to maintain the Lake Erie shore. A medical doctor co-teaches and serves as a consultant to an innovative STEM Biomedical Studies course in which students analyze actual patient case studies to develop differential diagnoses. They present and defend their diagnoses to dozens of visiting medical professionals during each semester's Biomedical Symposium. Many students also elect popular courses in astronomy, forensics, and physics. The Science Department also boasts school-record ACT scores.

In their social studies courses, students learn the significant themes, patterns, persons, and events that have influenced and continue to shape history and government in this country and throughout the world. All students take World History, U. S. History, and U. S. Government, but many also choose electives such as Middle East Issues and East Asian Studies. Because social studies learning ought to model and foster active participation in the civic community, teachers use active learning strategies such as simulations, analysis of authentic documents, discussions, debates, and research to engage students with content. Students also participate in local government meetings and interact with elected officials. Local judges and attorneys work with NDCL's mock trial team, which this year represented the entire State of Ohio at the national championship. Teachers encourage students to exercise their rights as citizens by advocating for change through petition and lawful demonstration in Cleveland, Columbus, and Washington, DC.

The school also promotes civic engagement and service learning through personally developed service learning plans that challenge students to share their talents and explore their interests in ways that benefit the common good. These plans, which require a minimum of 20 hours of community engagement annually, emphasize working directly with others in need so that students grow in their appreciation of the complex rights and responsibilities involved in building a more just society. Students report on this learning through a reflection project.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin has a strong tradition of excellence in the visual and performing arts. While all students complete one credit in the arts, many choose additional credits from the department's 23 courses, including stage band, advanced music theory, theatre, three levels of ceramics, traditional and digital photography, and AP Studio Art. The department has successfully increased the number of students willing to discover their musical talent through a "gateway" course in ukulele. A separate building houses four art studios, gallery space, and faculty offices. Evidence of student achievement includes numerous awards in the Lake and Geauga County Regional Art Show, the Governor's Art Show, the Ovations Musical Awards Program, and the Cleveland Clinic's Expressions Program. Each year students receive lucrative scholarships from art schools across the country.

Although Ohio permits schools to waive the physical education requirement for students who participate in athletics and band, NDCL chooses to retain this important requirement as part of its systematic effort to promote student health and wellness. All students complete two courses in physical education and one course in health. Additionally, about 25% of students select nutrition, cooking, and healthy lifestyle electives offered by the Family and Consumer Science Department. The emphasis in all of these courses is lifetime health and fitness. A licensed health aide leads a new wellness program to educate students on a wide range of wellness topics, including nutrition, stress management, sleep habits, exercise, and injury prevention and rehabilitation.

Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin School is in compliance with the BRS program's foreign language requirements. All students must successfully complete two credits in one foreign language; 66% elect to take three or four credits. The curriculum includes a dual-credit course in advanced Spanish. The department seeks authentic ways for students to practice their language skills. Teachers and students visit local Spanish-speaking communities, participate in college language courses at Cleveland State University, and teach mini-lessons to elementary school students. Teachers use the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Assessment of Performance Toward Proficiency to gauge students' fluency. Data from this assessment also enables teachers to adjust the curriculum and fine-tune instruction and interventions.

To help students master technology as a tool for work and learning, NDCL requires all students to complete one credit (two courses) in technology. Courses include Computer Programming with C++, Advanced Computer Programming with C++, 3D Animation, Digital Design, Multimedia, Creative Computer Art, and Digital Publishing. Rather than teaching technology in an isolated way disconnected from real life, teachers promote the direct, practical integration of technological knowledge and skill with students' lives, especially their academic work.

All students explore the beliefs, teaching, practices, and history of the Roman Catholic Church through four required courses in Theology. In the words of Pope Francis, these courses and the school's entire spiritual formation program seek to help students realize that "with Jesus, life becomes richer and that with him it is easier to find meaning in everything." Students actively explore how faith meaningfully relates to personal and global experiences and questions. In particular, they focus on the role of Catholic social teaching in creating a more just world by respecting and promoting the dignity of all persons.

The school's STEM focus includes a popular Engineering Principles course. Taught by an engineer-turned-teacher, this course challenges students to apply math and science skills and use creative thinking and problem-solving strategies to solve real world engineering-based problems. Students visit and consult with engineers in the field to experience how theory and classroom learning influences professional practice.

Because many students aspire to business careers, NDCL offers courses in Accounting, Introduction to Business, and Business in the 21st Century. Business students apply their learning by helping to manage a school-based branch of the Cardinal Community Credit Union. They also participate in the Believe in Ohio STEM Entrepreneurship Program, sponsored by the Ohio Academy of Science. Students develop sophisticated business plans for products they create using STEM learning principles. Business professionals from the Believe in Ohio program regularly visit campus to provide guidance and constructive criticism in the planning process. Another group of about 50 professionals conduct mock job interviews and share their experience during the school's annual Career Week.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

NDCL uses an alternating-day (A/B) block schedule. Each day includes four 80-minute classes. Students take four classes on one day and then take another four on the following day. This model is similar to the schedules students will experience in college. Indeed, alumni regularly comment that NDCL's alternating-day block schedule made their transition to college life much more successful.

The 80-minute block classes give teachers the opportunity to use a variety of active learning strategies every day. Indeed, an 80-minute lecture would be death-dealing for teacher and students! Instead, if a visitor were to walk down an NDCL corridor and peer into classrooms, he or she would observe students actively participating in Socratic seminars and discussions, working in pairs or small groups, practicing skills with immediate teacher feedback, researching using laptops or tablets, presenting information to their peers, silently reading and annotating texts, and completing formative assessments using mobile devices.

Three years ago the school adopted the Blackboard learning management system to consolidate and focus what had become a confusing and unwieldy hodge-podge of teacher websites and similar resources. Now all teachers and students use Blackboard as an everyday tool of teaching and learning. The system makes it possible for teachers to share engaging content, to provide real-time formative assessment of learning, and to design learning experiences that encourage students to collaborate with each other. The system provides the platform for blended learning in all academic disciplines. As an added benefit, the Blackboard system provides students with exactly the same type of online learning experiences they will encounter as university students.

The school employs a well-developed response-to-intervention (RTI) model to improve the knowledge and skills of students with documented learning needs and those who fall behind expected levels of progress. Two licensed intervention specialists work directly with students and teachers to differentiate learning to meet student needs. About 20 students meet with an intervention specialist as part of their course schedule. Another 60 students receive regular but less formal support from academic coaches.

Honors, Advanced Placement, and dual-credit courses provide appropriate challenges for students who excel academically. The school also uses a flexible-credit option to enable students to design their own learning plans for academic credit. For example, a student who serves as the statistician for the Athletic Program designed a sophisticated plan to guide and demonstrate his statistical knowledge and skills.

Six academic coaches—all highly qualified and successful retired educators—are available in the Academic Success Center during the school day as well as before and after school to assist all students. The center, which is modeled after similar programs in colleges and universities, seeks to support and enhance the learning of all students, not only those with academic difficulties. A visitor to the center would see the academic coaches sitting side-by-side with students to review and provide feedback on writing assignments, practice math problem-solving skills, reinforce foreign language learning through writing and conversation, refine science lab reports, and more. Highly successful students and those who struggle take advantage of this important learning resource.

Because first-year college students regularly cite time management as a critical challenge to their academic success and stress management, last year NDCL introduced the Enhanced Learning Block (ELB) option. Essentially, the ELB enables students to choose one unassigned 80-minute block in their eight-block

schedules. With some initial adult guidance, students learn to make good choices about how and where they will use this personal time: to meet with an academic coach, to participate in wellness activities, to complete course assignments, to meet with school counselors, to visit the chapel, or to lend a hand to outreach activities sponsored by Campus Ministry.

Assessment is the critical driver of the ongoing improvement and success of the academic program. Teachers meet weekly in professional learning communities to skillfully use results of classroom-based assessments to monitor student progress and to modify instructional approaches. Blackboard and GradeCam provide easy access to this performance data so that teachers can devote their time to the implications of data, not simply gathering it. Teachers also rely on data gathered from these assessments administered to entire grade levels: Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (incoming students), the PSAT 8/9 (9th graders), Pre-ACT (10th graders), PSAT (11th graders), ACT, SAT, and AP (11th and 12th graders).

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

NDCL leverages its optimal enrollment size to create a school climate of connection, challenge, and support that engages and motivates students. With 686 students, the school is large enough to offer 124 courses and 74 co-curricular activities but small enough so that every student is known and can find his or her own niche.

Students count on the school community to be interested in them and to care for them. Students share significant events in their lives through the “Powerhouse of Prayer.” Whether it’s worry about a grandparent in hospice or joy about the birth of a sibling, students ask the Principal to entrust these situations to the community’s prayerful support. The Principal uses broadcast text messages and daily TV announcements to bring these needs to the community’s attention. Students also use the “Concern Connection” website to anonymously alert administrators about peers who may be at risk.

This bedrock of concern provides a solid foundation to challenge students to stretch and grow. Teachers set challenging learning goals and build appropriate scaffolding to insure that these goals are attainable. The school schedule frees nearly all teachers from non-academic supervisions to make them available to help students before school, at lunchtime, and after school. The school continuously celebrates student achievement through displays, announcements, assemblies, and social media.

Teachers developed and follow consistent academic policies for calculating grades, determining grading categories, accepting late work, and granting extra credit. This consistency motivates students and supports teachers.

Because teachers are the essential element of NDCL’s positive climate, the school values and supports them by encouraging and cultivating their leadership. Teachers have been leaders of every positive change in the educational program and policies for the past decade. Rather than concentrate school decision-making in the hands of administrators or only select educators, the school employs a very effective task force model to review school practices and climate, to research possible solutions and enhancements, and to develop implementation plans. All teachers are welcome and encouraged to participate in task forces.

These task forces focus on significant educational issues, not organizational minutia. Task forces have succeeded in creating a new daily schedule to maximize learning time and provide flexible learning options, developing a comprehensive teacher evaluation program, adopting a learning management system, and revamping the grading scale and academic policies. It would be unthinkable for any major change to occur at NDCL without teacher leadership.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

NDCL engages families and community through timely and effective two-way communication. The school takes advantage of multiple means to share student progress, school events and plans, and information about topics such as college admission and financial aid.

Parents and students access student grades online. More than 2,000 recipients receive a weekly e-newsletter. Broadcast text and voice messages alert families to more urgent information. A quarterly magazine and regular news releases keep alumni and the public informed of the school’s programs and progress.

But genuine communication involves more than just telling the school’s story. NDCL engages in genuine dialogue a wide range of constituencies. Parents, of course, are key constituents. The school invites parent input through group meetings, surveys and polls, and one-on-one conversations. Online technology allows administrators to gather parental ideas and perceptions quickly. For example, the weekly e-newsletter always includes numerous links that enable parents to easily ask questions, offer perceptions, and seek

additional information. The recent search for the school's next president relied on parent input collected through online surveys and town hall meetings. The school expects all staff to respond to parent inquiries within 24 hours.

The school eagerly seeks partnerships with civic organizations that provide authentic, real-world contexts for NDCL's educational program. Twenty-six NDCL students have been awarded prestigious internships from the Cleveland Clinic. In recognition of this achievement, the Clinic has named NDCL one of its "Banner Schools." Students have also secured internships with Geauga Growth Partnership and the American Society of Metals.

NDCL partners with 12-15 colleges and universities each August for "App Fest," an innovative program developed by the Counseling Department to give seniors a head start on the college admission process. Admission representatives meet with students individually and in small groups to share strategic information about the application process. They also conduct mock admissions interviews and provide candid, constructive feedback on students' application essays.

In 2015, the Ohio Board of Regents awarded NDCL a \$50,000 grant that enabled the school to include more than 500 teachers from 16 elementary schools in the Teachscape professional development program. The school also sponsors curriculum articulation meetings with middle school teachers to align academic expectations between middle school and high school.

In recent years the school has also built partnerships with a number of civic organizations, including Leadership Geauga County, Leadership Lake County, Cardinal Community Credit Union, Geauga Food Pantry, Rescue Village, and Refugee Response.

3. Professional Development:

NDCL has taken three very deliberate steps to promote personalized, job-embedded professional learning for teachers. First, the school added a full-time director of professional learning to work with a team of educators to collaboratively plan, deliver, and evaluate learning experiences for the faculty. The team frequently taps the expertise of colleagues within the building to share relevant educational research and to showcase instructional and assessment strategies. Second, the school adjusted its daily schedule and annual calendar to carve out common time for professional learning and collaboration. An additional six full days have been devoted to professional learning. Academic departments and professional learning communities are now able to meet at least weekly during the school day. Many choose to collaborate more often. And third, the school has greatly increased funding available for teachers' professional learning beyond the campus.

To encourage teachers to build their capacity with the Blackboard learning management system, members of the professional learning team designed the creative "Blackboard Black Belt" program. Modeled after the skill-progression tiers of karate, this program enables teachers to earn different belt colors as they advance from novice to master users. Sophisticated online training modules developed by the team conveniently allow teachers to choose when, where, and how quickly they learn the skills. Belt ceremonies have become a fun part of faculty meetings.

To provide financial assistance for teachers who seek graduate degrees, the school recently initiated the Graduate Education Assistance Program. This program pays the tuition for graduate degrees aligned with the school's priorities as expressed in the strategic plan, especially degrees that qualify teachers to teach dual-credit courses through Ohio's College Credit Plus Program. The school also funds workshops, conferences, and similar professional learning experiences. Whenever possible, the school prefers to send groups of teachers to conferences because of the synergy created by sharing learning experiences. For example, three years ago 15 teachers attended the ASCD annual conference in Los Angeles.

NDCL also encourages and funds teachers' efforts to contribute to the education profession by presenting at professional conferences. In the past two years alone, individuals and teams of teachers have been selected to present at the conferences and conventions of these professional organizations: ASCD, National

Catholic Educational Association (NCEA), the National Conference for the Social Studies, the Ohio Council of Teachers of Language Arts, the Ohio Educational Library Media Association, and the Sisters of Notre Dame International Education Summit.

4. School Leadership:

Collaboration and clarity characterize the leadership model of Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin School. By actively engaging many talented persons and clearly specifying their leadership roles, the school successfully advances its mission to educate leaders who transform the world.

The Board of Directors develops and monitors progress on the strategic plan, sets policy, and maintains fiscal oversight of NDCL and Notre Dame Elementary School, which together serve 1,250 students from pre-kindergarten to grade 12. Board members include 25 highly talented women and men with demonstrated expertise in areas of board responsibility. The board meets quarterly. Much of the board's work, however, occurs between meetings in a well-developed system of committees that include board members and 15 other dedicated professionals.

Lines of responsibility and authority are clearly delineated in the Code of Regulations as well as in the job descriptions for each leadership role. Careful board member selection, focused orientation, and strong leadership from the chairperson insure that board members do not stray from their responsibilities and wander into operational matters.

As the chief executive officer of the school, the President's primary areas of responsibility include Catholic identity and mission, implementation of the educational vision and mission of the Sisters of Notre Dame, board leadership, strategic planning, fiscal management, alumni affairs, marketing and admissions, public representation, fundraising, and all advancement efforts.

The Principal is responsible for academic and student affairs, student services, athletics and other co-curriculars, admission and withdrawal decisions, campus ministry, technology, and faculty and staff. The Principal collaborates with assistant principals, directors, department chairpersons, and teachers to keep the school's daily operations focused on teaching and learning. A strong culture of careful planning and organization insures the effective use of time and other resources.

The hard work of board members, committee members, and the President complements and supports the Principal, assistant principals, directors, and teachers to concentrate on the school's core mission of education. One key indicator of the success of this approach is the tenure of senior leaders. The President completed 10 years of service before retiring this year, and the Principal is in his 12th year at the school.

Ultimately, the most important measure of the leadership model's success is achievement of the school's college-preparatory mission: Academic performance is at an all-time high, members of the Class of 2017 were accepted by 126 colleges and universities nationwide, and graduates earned nearly \$16 million in scholarships and grants.

PART VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

A highly developed network of professional learning communities (PLCs) is the one practice that has been most instrumental to Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin’s success. Our PLCs empower, challenge, and support teachers in their invaluable role as architects of each student's learning. Collectively, the PLCs have built a school culture of engagement, constructive critique, and innovation that has been the catalyst for student achievement gains.

Teachers of the same or similar subjects work together in PLCs characterized by collaboration, a focus on learning, and an orientation to results. Teachers and administrators revamped the daily schedule and the academic calendar to increase the time available for PLC teams to work together. Nearly every week in the school year includes dedicated PLC time. The school also devoted an additional six days on the school calendar for professional learning and collaboration.

Teachers use this precious time to design and revise curricula, especially in relation to the school’s college-preparatory mission. They create course “blueprints” to identify and correct gaps and overlaps in the educational program. They also tightly align curricula with state standards and college readiness benchmarks. After studying best practices of assessment design, they create appropriately challenging assessments of learning, which they then use to determine the degree to which students master the target content and skills. Poring over these assessment results, they make data-driven decisions about how to respond when students do not meet learning targets. In this effort, they continuously revisit and revise instructional strategies. Their shared aim is always the same: to insure that all students learn at high levels by building supports for learning and removing roadblocks to success.

The PLC strategy has fueled steady improvement in academic achievement, with students posting the highest ACT scores in school history in 2017. In recent years NDCL’s mean ACT scores have increased 11% in English, 8% in Mathematics, 7% in Reading, and 6% in Science. These gains are 3-10 times the statewide increases in mean ACT scores for the same time period.

Given its college-preparatory mission, NDCL emphasizes students’ achievement of the college readiness benchmarks of the ACT and the Ohio Board of Regents. Since the adoption of professional learning communities, student attainment of these benchmarks has significantly improved. The number of students achieving all four ACT benchmarks has increased 22%. The number reaching the Science benchmark has increased 26%, Mathematics 19%, Reading 8%, and English 5%.

These student performance gains validate and inspire the hard work of teachers in their professional learning communities. Most importantly, they reflect fulfillment of the school’s mission to prepare students for success in college and life.

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? \$12200
(School budget divided by enrollment)

4. What is the average financial aid per student? \$3900

5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 20%

6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 51%

PART VIII – ASSESSMENT RESULTS FOR NORM-REFERENCED TESTS

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math

Test: ACT Mathematics

Grade: 12

Edition/Publication Year: 2017

Publisher: ACT

Scores are reported here as: Scaled scores

School Year	2016-2017
Testing month	Jun
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	25
Number of students tested	153
Percent of total students tested	95
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
Edition/Publication Year: 2017

Test: ACT Reading
Publisher: ACT

Grade: 12
Scores are reported here as: Scaled scores

School Year	2016-2017
Testing month	Jun
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	25
Number of students tested	153
Percent of total students tested	95
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: