



## PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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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.

1. 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, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2019 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.
3. 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.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2013 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, or 2018.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2018-2019) unless otherwise stated.

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

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 0 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 0 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 0 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, 2018 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
<b>PreK</b>	29	41	70
<b>K</b>	18	21	39
<b>1</b>	19	17	36
<b>2</b>	16	17	33
<b>3</b>	18	17	35
<b>4</b>	18	15	33
<b>5</b>	23	18	41
<b>6</b>	26	22	48
<b>7</b>	22	19	41
<b>8</b>	11	20	31
<b>9</b>	0	0	0
<b>10</b>	0	0	0
<b>11</b>	0	0	0
<b>12 or higher</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	200	207	407

\*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 5 % Asian
  - 7 % Black or African American
  - 48 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 34 % White
  - 5 % Two or more races
- 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2017 – 2018 school year: 4%

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.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	11
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	4
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	15
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	413
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.04
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	4

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas): Spanish, Creole, Dutch, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Italian, Korean, Malayalam, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, and Yoruba.

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 10 %  
 Total number students who qualify: 39

8. Students receiving special education services: 6 %  
25 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>1</u> Autism                  | <u>18</u> Multiple Disabilities                |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>1</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>0</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>2</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>2</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>2</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 7

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

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	3
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	29
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	8
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	9
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 14:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Daily student attendance	95%	96%	96%	95%	96%
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 2018.

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

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

Yes  No

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.

Weston Christian Academy is a covenant and classical school that partners with the home and church to foster excellence in each student while developing spiritual leaders who are fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

## PART III – SUMMARY

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Diversity strengthens a community. It empowers a school. We at Weston Christian Academy believe that to be so. Why? We experience it in the every day. Forty-eight percent of our students are Hispanic. Seven percent are African-American. Five percent are biracial. Five percent are Asian-American. One percent are Native American. Thirty-four percent are non-Hispanic white. A majority of our students are bilingual with most speaking Spanish as well as English; but eavesdrop on a Weston Christian Academy home and one may hear Creole, Dutch, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Italian, Korean, Malayalam, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, or Yoruba. The differences do not create tension. We are blessed with a cohesive, collaborative culture of students, teachers, and families in community who embrace the faith-based values and classically-directed educational approach that frequently reaps results beyond the academic. This covenantal strength binds the school in an authentic partnership with families who commit to share with the school's sense of purpose for each child.

Founded in 1995, Weston Christian Academy is a K3 through 8th grade Christian, classical school with 407 beautiful children and twenty-nine faculty. The class student-teacher ratio is 14:1. Our mission is to partner with the home and church to foster excellence in each student while developing spiritual leaders who are fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ. In recent years, we have reached the milestone of 100% enrollment growth. Academic progress in the spirit of excellence marks another historic milestone: the number of eligible students who have scored in the top 95th percentile or higher in critical thinking portions of national standardized testing increased from 23% to 55% of the student population. School national norm averages for mathematics and reading were 94th percentile respectively.

Key strategies in curriculum, whole and small group instruction as well as differentiated learning opportunities span from individual educational plans to accelerated classes. Our enrichment center assists this process assuring that students with various needs are appropriately challenged. No child gets lost here.

The curriculum is classically inspired with Latin, rhetoric, logic, and Socratic exercises to stimulate student engagement, but it is far from stagnant and dusty. STEM-based instruction through the Institute for Mathematics and Computer Science and bountiful cloud-based, interactive curricula accessed by school-issued Chromebooks for each 3rd through 8th grade student encourage engagement. The blend of technology with the traditional propels the learning environment past the typical stereotypes associated with classical education. Science classes pique curiosity and inquiry with a dedicated elementary science teacher in a dedicated elementary science lab/classroom. This is true of the middle school science program as well. Fine arts provide orchestra, band, and chorus led by professionals highly esteemed in the greater Miami music community. The school has one of the few full elementary orchestras in the country. Visual arts inspire with attention to the Classical Masters. Spanish and Latin are required in the elementary grades, and students have the opportunity of completing two years of high school level Spanish or Latin by 8th grade. The objectives are absolute, correct fluency in Spanish and capable reading and translation in Latin. Visitors are taken aback when they hear 4th graders parsing a Latin word or 8th graders translating Cicero. Biblical studies address the spiritual dynamic, values, and character formation. Biblical literacy provides an understanding of inferences and imagery frequently assumed in classical art and literature. This benefits our students in future advanced placement and university level classes. These academic studies blend with strong co-curricular efforts that nurture a sensitive heart towards the sick, the hurting, the marginalized, and the poor in a genuine spirit of grace and humility.

The overwhelming parental involvement contributes to school success. Parents (not just a handful) assist teachers on academic field trips, help coach students in mathematics, and volunteer in drama, music, and sports. Some may think parents on campus an annoyance. We find they are the glue that holds community to purpose. Our formal faculty surveys indicate that support from both families and administration contribute to an environment that is affirming and positive. This support means fewer student discipline issues as we strive together in unified spirit and laser-focused purpose that encourages academic, social, emotional, cultural, physical, and spiritual maturation. Kindness and respect saturate the school culture, and visitors comment on the positive impression they get when stepping foot on campus. Actually, the comments to this effect are constant.

We are not a perfect school. We have misses, but we strive to implement improvement in the nooks and crannies of our everyday instruction. Our families can speak to the teachers' love for students and their passionate conviction that every child can learn. They speak to the teachers' expertise, character, and integrity. They comment on the emotional and physical safeness of the school environment or on the challenges that stretch students beyond self-imposed boundaries. They give us high marks for academic excellence, technological integration, and ample resources to help each student. These school qualities cultivate a true family-school partnership that forges a willingness to embrace high academic expectations, significantly impacts the student in all facets of development, and leads others outside of our community to ask, "What is your secret?"

### **1. Core Curriculum:**

#### **1a. Reading/English language arts:**

Language arts stresses robust literacy in reading and writing using teacher-directed instruction; Socratic methodology blended with inquiry-based learning; differentiated instruction; and collaborative technology using white boards, interactive curriculum, and instructional software. Reading instruction begins in K4 with phonics instruction and continues into K5. The elementary uses selected anthologies, novels, and narratives with an emphasis on classical selections. Instruction progresses from simple sentence structure to advanced composition. K5 through 5th grade language arts grammar is anchored by a classical curriculum designed for frequent teacher-student interaction. The elementary grades use a teacher-directed spelling mastery curriculum blending the phonemic, morphemic, and whole-word approaches. In the spirit of the classical trivium dialectic stage, the 6th through 8th grade instruction begins a gradual shift into higher-order thinking where students are encouraged to critically analyze—beginning with the question “Why?” Student challenges are drawn out in Socratic dialogue. This level is centered on classical novels and poetry. Middle school students write essays and critically respond to readings weekly. Required logic and rhetoric classes fine-tune student thinking, speaking, and writing.

The Renaissance Star Reading assessment is administered at the beginning of each year to students in 1st through 5th grades providing a baseline for each student's reading ability and then administered quarterly to monitor progress. The Star Early Literacy is administered at the beginning and end of K4 and K5 to identify any concerns as students move to the next grade level. Accelerated Reader monitors individual student reading progress throughout the year. Progress is assessed in the TerraNova 3, the Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing, and the Gray Oral Reading Test, 5th Edition (GORT 5). Data from these assessments measure reading rate, accuracy, fluency, and comprehension for individual students and grade levels. Intervention is initiated when, for example, the GORT 5 Oral Reading Quotient is below the 90 index score. Using the data, differentiated learning in the classroom is provided with small reading groups and by setting Accelerated Reading goals for individual students. Additional intervention is provided through the school's Academic Enrichment and Support Center (AESC) and the school reading specialist.

#### **1b. Mathematics:**

Weston Christian Academy selects limited standards and objectives which are incorporated into the school's mapping curriculum software program. The number of standards is downsized to promote a deeper level of understanding. Elementary mathematics uses a pedagogical approach that emphasizes problem solving. The school's instructional mindset for elementary mathematics includes the following: 1) reduction of objectives allowing for the teaching of fewer concepts but at greater depth and 2) pictorial presentations where the student can visualize the process and patterns. This method is augmented by traditional mental mathematics facts instruction with families heavily partnering as volunteers in preparation for an enjoyable annual spring match, The Math Marathon, where students are challenged to demonstrate grade-level mastery. Mathematics is primarily teacher-directed, whole-class instruction; the benefit of smaller class sizes allows for significant student engagement. Differentiated instruction becomes more pronounced in middle elementary as the program branches into three tiers of instruction in 3rd and 4th grades: interventive individual/small group instruction, grade level instruction, and one year above grade-level instruction. Fifth grade mathematics branches yet again with interventive individual/small group instruction, middle school preparatory, advanced (one grade-level higher), and accelerated (two grade-levels higher) instruction.

Middle school transitions to an interactive, spiraling curriculum with four levels: interventive individual/small group instruction, high school preparatory, advanced, and accelerated. The upper tiers include high school credit courses Algebra I, Algebra I Honors, and Geometry Honors. Students who are required to take the state End of Course Exams for public high schools have a 100% pass rate, with a majority testing in the upper percentiles.

The school uses the TerraNova 3, the InView aptitude test, and the Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement to track individual students, to measure class performance, to make instructional adjustments, and to place students into an appropriate level of instruction. In a seven-year tracking process of classes, the school has experienced practically significant and/or statistically significant gains with school norms in mathematics above the 90th percentile.

### **1c. Science:**

The school emphasizes both STEM and science literacy. The curriculum's format encourages inquiry while providing digital, interactive capabilities. Chromebooks for each student in 1st through 8th grades deliver powerful integrated, interactive learning opportunities. With two dedicated science laboratory/classrooms, opportunities for hands-on experimentation and projects are readily available. The curricular platform also provides audio, virtual labs, and digital text as well as hard copy text. Leveled readers and audio options for text reading allow for differentiated instruction. Observing the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), the K5 through 5th grade science is spiraling, covering the nature of science and STEM, life science, earth science, and physical science.

The middle school division uses the NGSS standards providing a sixth grade inquiry-based introduction to biological science covering the scientific method, measurement, laboratory apparatus and usage, lab safety, cell biology, genetics, botany, classification and human anatomy. Seventh grade's earth science course investigates geology, oceanography, meteorology, and astronomy. Eighth grade's high school physical science course has objectives centered on matter, the periodic table, chemical reactions, nuclear reactions, forces/interactions, energy, and wave properties, electricity, electromagnetic radiation, and information technologies.

Partnering with the Institute for Mathematics and Computer Science (IMACS), students build critical thinking, logic, and reasoning skills in a program developed by IMACS's scientists, mathematicians, and engineers. Robotics merges IT, science, and mathematics for preschool through the eighth grade in a hands-on learning environment. Science field trips include a two-day directed opportunity in the Florida Keys to observe and study coral reef ecology, a wetlands ecology tour of the Everglades, and guided river expeditions to identify fossil types. The elementary laboratory has a 65-gallon marine aquarium that mirrors local coral life. Guest science educators and engineers coach student experimentation on a designated science day and judge science projects. The nationally normed TerraNova 3 science subtest and classroom assessments are used to analyze student and school performance, adjusting instruction as needed.

### **1d. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement**

History curriculum operates on standards synthesized from the Core Knowledge Foundation and the National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies with the objective of building literacy in a content-rich history curriculum covering prehistory to modern times. Student outcomes are reflected in the following: 1) fundamental knowledge of world geography and its influences on the development of civilization, 2) historical literacy regarding the major world cultures and people groups, 3) knowledge of the geopolitical landscape of American history, major events, and key documents, and 4) historical and chronological understanding of major world history events.

Again, the school incorporates an interactive software curriculum system for history that promotes student engagement. Socratic instruction becomes more prevalent in the upper grades. Faith-based principles are integrated into discussion/debate at the middle school level on issues of human rights, justice, war, government, economics, and stewardship. K5 through 3rd grade explores a rudimentary foundation in a spiraling approach covering major topics and identifications in geography, chronological placement, basic understanding of key world events, and essential understanding of cultures and religions. Fourth grade deals specifically with the history and geography of Florida while 5th grade explores U.S. history and geography. Middle school does a comprehensive study of world history over a two-year study period (6th and 7th grades), and 8th grade returns to a deeper study of U.S. history. The middle school history classes provide a full-bodied foundation of literacy in history for high school preparatory studies and beyond.

Teacher-directed instruction is joined with differentiated learning through online leveled readers, available audio readings of the history text, and individual or small group instruction through our Academic Enrichment and Support Center. Student progress is measured in weekly and quarterly teacher assessments along with an annual nationally normed assessment.

**1e. For secondary schools:**

**1f. For schools that offer preschool for three- and four-year old students:**

The preschool (K3, K4) core curriculum subjects are language arts, mathematics, Bible, and social studies. Special area subjects are science, Spanish, art, music, and physical education. The objectives include the development of cognitive, fine motor, and social/emotional skills. Literacy objectives incorporate read-aloud activities, phonics skills introduction, letter-sound relationships, and sight word recognition. Students are reading in K4. Mathematic activities begin with number recognition and sequencing, allowing students to explore patterns, make numerical comparisons, and understand simple addition by using concrete objects. Preschool is a teacher-directed, enjoyable learning environment rich in narratives and small group instruction. Each classroom has a full-time teacher assistant. The national standardized total score average in K5 is 93rd percentile (spring 2018) indicating student readiness established at the preschool level.

**2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

**1. The Arts**

WCA students enjoy a wealth of visual art instruction and opportunities for creative expression during their preschool, elementary, and middle school experience as they explore color, texture, shape, form, pattern, and symmetry. Students learn the classical works of the masters, what makes timeless masterpieces significant, and the artistic styles popular in different world cultures. Students also become familiar with pencil, charcoal, acrylic, tempera, oil, and watercolor mediums.

Within a creative ambiance of encouragement towards excellence, students explore music in classes and performances from preschool through middle school. Guided by exceptional music faculty assisted by musical specialist coaches, elementary students are required to take two years of class instruction on a string, brass, woodwind or percussion instrument and participate in the school's band or orchestra. Small group and one-on-one coaching heavily supplement whole-class instruction. The school has one of the few full elementary orchestras in the country. In the middle school years, students continue instruction and participate in a middle school symphonic band or orchestra; they may elect to take chorus as an option.

**2. Physical Education**

Physical Education uses a curriculum created by the athletic director for K5 through 8th grade. Students learn and practice basic locomotor skills, non-manipulative skills, space awareness, age-appropriate exercises, basic sports play, nutrition, and health. Sportsmanship is centric in curricular and co-curricular as evidenced by the middle school sports program receiving the Florida High School Athletic Association's first place award for sportsmanship three years in a row.

**3. Foreign Languages**

The Latin program begins in the 3rd grade based upon Standards for Classical Education and The Classical World Languages Standards of Florida. Latin is heavily Socratic in instruction. Students learn to read, interpret, write, and translate Latin. Students may earn high school credits in Latin I and Latin II. They prepare for the National Latin Examination with approximately twenty countries participating. A majority of our students tested above the international level, and 100% of the students in the 8th grade Latin class received an honor award from cum laude to summa cum laude (spring 2018).

Spanish instruction is required from preschool through the 5th grade. Middle school students have the option of taking either Spanish or Latin for three years. Spanish courses are divided into native and non-native speakers to accommodate specific learning needs. Two high school courses – Spanish I and II – are part of

the curriculum. Middle school students sit for the National Spanish Exam. Scores are used to assess student improvement and school performance.

#### 4. Technology

Technology is an integral learning experience across the curriculum with electronic, instructional support platforms (Revision Assistant, EduCreation, Google Classroom, Khan Academy, Learn360, Mathletics, McGraw Hill Networks, Pearson Digits, Read Theory, Science Fusion, Think Central). All 3rd through 8th grade students have a school-issued Chromebook. The media center uses Follet Destiny as a management center and houses twenty additional Chromebooks so students may access Accelerated Reader and the online catalog Destiny Quest. Students engage in interactive, digital curriculum, perform virtual lab experiments, and can go paperless for assignments. Middle school students take a computer keyboarding class and are expected to reach levels of typing proficiency for high school work.

#### 5. Character Building and Life Skills

For a faith-based school, biblical study is foundational. Students gain proficiency in biblical literacy and are encouraged to apply the principles of faith as followers of Christ in their lives and relationships, to love God and others, to value each and every person, to live a disciplined life of integrity, to understand that all work possesses dignity, and to maintain a profound sense of gratitude in the spirit of grace and humility.

Four life-skill middle school courses prepare our students to be confident, influential leaders. Logic teaches students to critically assess faulty premises frequently used in the media, politics, advertising, or debate and correctly identify common fallacies such as emotional appeal, straw man, and ad hominem. The works of Plato and Aristotle provide models for constructing a logical argument. The rhetoric course teaches crafting persuasive arguments in written presentations and formal essays. A mock trial elective, instructed by an experienced attorney, teaches trial preparation, persuasive arguments, and public speaking skills. Students practice direct and cross examination. They present opening and closing arguments. Students participate in a recorded video presentation in the Middle School Mock Trial Virtual Competition sponsored by the Florida Law Related Education Association. Etiquette is a required course that encourages confidence and professional poise in social and business settings. Students master the basic rules of respectful, courteous behavior as well as professional, community, dining, sports, and dance etiquette.

### 3. Special Populations:

Weston Christian Academy has a designated Academic Enrichment and Support Center (AESC) that addresses intervention for students below grade level in reading and mathematics – two areas the school specifically targets. Multiple assessment tools are employed to collect data identifying achievement gaps, lower subgroup performances, and students who are above grade level. The school tests all students annually with the TerraNova 3 national standardized test and the InView national test measuring individual, class, and subgroup progress in all core course instruction – mathematics, reading, language arts, social studies, and science. These help to identify both students with learning challenges and the above grade level population. Classroom differentiated instruction is available in language arts, history, and science through digital classroom lessons. Classroom teachers are equipped with lessons and activities for below grade level, at grade level, and enrichment instruction.

#### 1. Reading

For additional reading assessment, the Gray Oral Reading Test, 5th Edition (GORT 5) is administered to 1st and 5th graders annually and to students who appear to be struggling with reading. The GORT 5 provides an efficient, objective identification of difficulties and measurement of growth in oral reading. In addition to the GORT 5, the Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP) is administered to K5 students assessing phonological awareness, rapid naming, and phonological memory. Children may have a high Intelligence Quotient (IQ) but experience phonological deficits, so the CTOPP identifies children who may profit from tailored instruction. Other assessment tools used include the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT4), the Expressive Vocabulary Test (EVT2), and the Test of Written Language (TOWL4).

The AESC provides reading intervention with individual and small group sessions. Research-driven reading instruction is available with Seeing Stars, Read Naturally, Great Leaps, Barton Reading System, and Read NBRS 2019

Theory. Elementary classroom differentiated learning opportunities begin with small group leveled readers. Faculty that are leading reading groups receive coaching and counsel from the reading specialist.

## 2. Mathematics

The school uses the TerraNova 3 and the InView assessments for placement along with teacher recommendation for students performing below or above grade level in mathematics. In mathematics, the school tiers instruction for 1st through 8th grades. First and second grades have two tiers: 1) individual/small group for students performing below grade level and 2) students performing at grade level. Third through fifth grades have three instructional tiers: 1) individual/small group for students performing below grade level, 2) students performing at grade level, and 3) advanced curriculum for students performing above grade level. Middle school mathematics has four tiers: 1) individual/small group instruction for students performing below grade level, 2) high school preparatory instruction for grade level performance, 3) advanced instruction for above grade level performance (equivalent to honors), and 4) “Gifted Education in Mathematics” (GEM) level instruction for students assessed as gifted and/or performing two years above grade level. This track includes high school Algebra I Honors and Geometry Honors. Students taking the state of Florida’s End of Course Exams for high school mathematics courses have had a 100% pass rate with many scoring in the upper percentiles.

### **1. School Climate/Culture:**

The school's culture fans the embers of small acts of kindness in students to a strong flame of thoughtfulness and benevolence. How is that done? We require it. We inspect what we expect; thoughtfulness, compassion, helpfulness, and consideration for others are not options; however, it is not learned in a vacuum, for what we expect of students we expect of ourselves as administrators, teachers, and staff. Cruelty and prejudice are not tolerated. We do not look the other way. Actually, the spirit of kindness becomes contagious, and students feel safe, particularly if they previously experienced negativity in other educational environments. So at Weston Christian Academy, students hold the door open for others. When they attend public functions as a group, their demeanor is such that adults frequently inquire as to where these children attend school. Students demonstrate civility and respect to adults and to each other regularly in almost a throwback to another era. As one visiting educator of another faith said, "If I were a Christian, this is where I would want my children to go to school."

Students sold handmade, scented soap at Christmas so that other children stricken by poverty could have a classroom in their village rather than crossing dangerous rapids and mountain passes in Nepal to attend a distant school. Weston Christian Academy students raised funds to build clean water wells in Ebola-stricken Liberia and Tanzania. They helped organize a 5K race for the International Justice Mission to combat modern slavery. In partnership with the Ryder Corporation, they annually provide a full truckload of food for struggling families with children who have severe disabilities. They partnered this year with a ministry in Uganda and Ethiopia that cares for widows and orphans. They care about others.

How does Weston Christian Academy engage and motivate students? It certainly is not the school in isolation. It is a cultural mandate. We deliberately covenant with our families who share the burden of properly instructing a child. By doing so, we cultivate a community of trust so that parents accept decisions that teachers make to benefit the student. This inculcates an environment where teachers are considered esteemed professionals. It is in this culture that a student feels supported to grow, to experiment, and to perhaps attempt something that previously may have created fear or indifference. It is in this classroom setting that it is okay to make a mistake at the board with a math problem, to read a challenging book or poem without being ridiculed, to take the steps necessary to excel academically, and to grow in faith and character.

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

Engaging families is a crucial portion of the school's dynamic. Parents receive frequent information through our Constant Contact electronic communication, text/voicemail/email alert system, weekly e-mailed newsletter, school website, and weekly class updates. Parents remain informed of their children's academic progress/challenges through an online site where families and students can access their current grades and homework assignments. Families receive an immediate electronic notice on a student graded assessment that falls below the satisfactory level or are contacted when a student's tardies or absences affect achievement. Annual elementary parent-teacher conferences are held with each family to discuss student progress. Middle school parents meet with the core faculty team when a student faces learning achievement difficulties. A vibrant Parent-Teacher Fellowship provides teacher support, and each class has parent sponsors to assist with activities. Parents are often on campus for lunch, chapels or class events. Parents serve on the advisory school board while others serve as chaperones on field trips or work with students in math coaching. Parents and community members serve as guest readers.

Community engagement includes a sister partnership with a school in El Salvador where students stay with our families, attend classes, and share cultural interests. Our 5th grade class annually leads the pledge of allegiance at the Weston city government meeting. The school participates with nine other community schools in the mayor's Weston Community Art Show. Family members and the community are invited to our Veterans Day event in which the local public high school provides an ROTC color guard; community firefighters perform as a pipe and drum band; and students engage in a letter-writing campaign to deployed

military (The Good Morning America television program covered a portion of one of our assemblies featuring a student who had created a national letter-writing campaign). On a day dedicated to family, grandparents are invited to the classrooms, and grandchildren speak, sing, and perform in a special chapel in honor of their grandparents. An annual Christmas pageant, winter concert, spring concert, and middle school musical are open to the community. Two of our administrators serve in community capacities: one serves as the chairman of the board of directors for a graduate school and the other serves as a regional accreditation commissioner. The school partners with a business and a public school to assist local families whose children experience serious learning difficulties and social-economic challenges. A partnership with a local business assisted a Puerto Rican school devastated by Hurricane Maria. Classes volunteer and support charity organizations such as the Ronald McDonald House and the Sheridan House residential home for boys. Students annually provide gifts of toys, personal care items, and clothing to children in need throughout the world.

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

Professional development centers on the school's academic focus. First, in order to think critically, students must have a wealth of factual knowledge which includes a broad base of cultural knowledge. A substantial foundation of grade-appropriate factual knowledge is needed from which to draw inferences, analyze, and capture creative thought. This levels the academic playing field for our many children whose families recently came to this country. Secondly, a school mantra that is repeated consistently is that of full literacy. We want our children to read and write prolifically and accurately with increased complexity at each grade level. Reading and writing is the core of cores in our instruction. Literacy extends into the sciences and social studies as well. Professional development teaches effective reading strategies through Open Court, Seeing Stars, Reading A-Z, Read Theory, and Reading Horizons as well as coaches differentiated reading instruction with small groups. Finally, mathematics in American education tends to be amassed with standards. We instruct with less standards allowing for a deeper level of study so that the student grasps the concepts and owns them for life. We, in turn, bring in national and local experts on Singapore mathematics curriculum, for example, so that our teachers are sufficiently trained in methodology that explores mathematics deeply and deliberately. Faculty do required readings on improving student learning.

Recent professional development begins with an orientation week often led by a contracted professional expert. Training continues with quarterly workshops and weekly mini-development opportunities. Teachers receive a stipend to enhance training in conferences and workshops specific to their areas of instructional need. The administrators attend annual educational leadership conferences and regional accreditation meetings, and engage in monthly consortiums of local private school administrators that center on school improvement. Our development intent is to stay true to the north star of our academic focus.

Our professional development demonstrates alignment to our academic standards, support of student achievement, and fulfillment of school improvement objectives in the following measurements: 1) a majority of our students tested in the upper five percent in the TerraNova 3 national standardized test in critical thinking subtests (2018); 2) national school norms (Iowa Test of Basic Skills) for 1st through 8th grade mathematics and reading averaged at the 94th percentile respectively; and 3) a significant number of our recent 8th grade graduates transition to honor roll status at parochial, private, and public high schools in the area.

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

Weston Christian Academy's leadership promotes effectiveness of the school and growth of the student. Governance contributes to an ongoing operationally and financially sound institution. The executive leadership is comprised of the head of school as leader and the administrative team composed of the principal and the assistant principal. A broader leadership team includes these three as well as the business director, the Academic Enrichment Center director, the IT director, the admissions director, and the athletic director. An advisory parent school board meets monthly and reviews the headmaster's report, the principal's report, and the business director's financial report. The board provides accountability to ensure the integrity, effectiveness, and reputation of the institution.

The head of school and the executive leadership team set the vision for the school with input from stakeholders creating a School Improvement Plan (SIP). The head of school is responsible for the implementation of the SIP as well as the supervision of all operations and the application of all policies. The principal oversees the academic and instructional aspect of the school including professional development, accreditation, security, emergency procedures, and student discipline and assists in general day-to-day school management reporting directly to the head of school. The assistant principal is responsible for middle school management and reports directly to the principal.

To help assist in determining if policies, programs, relationships and resources focus on student achievement, the school leadership queries parents, middle school students, and school faculty with AdvancEd perceptions surveys. The results from these surveys are tabulated and reviewed by the leadership team. In responses from our most recent surveys, 100% percent of all responses positively exceeded the AdvancEd national network averages. As related to student achievement, parents and students rated the school “high” in the quality of education, in academic expectations, in challenging academics, in available learning resources, and in student readiness for the next grade level. The AdvancEd survey for teachers did not query specifically on student achievement; however, it did ask related questions about professional development and an orderly learning environment. Both of these areas received high scores from faculty. Input from stakeholders assists the school leadership in evaluating progress on student achievement; but, the school primarily measures student achievement through regular class assessments, national standardized tests results, state and school end of course exams, and various normed assessments for literacy.

## PART VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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The primary factor shaping Weston Christian Academy's success is socio-emotional, i.e., the sense of grace that flows from leadership and faculty towards students and parents and that, in turn, flows back again. As one faculty member noted, "It is always redemptive. It is always positive. It is always decisive." It is redemptive in the sense that the administration and faculty look for means to create hope. A struggling student is not seen as a problem, but as a person. The administration and staff view each child as wonderfully made in God's image and with that comes this sober responsibility to think of the outcomes – of what that child can be, will be. That positive presumption filters interactions and really creates a grace-soaked approach to relationships. It manifests itself in an aura of kindness that permeates the school culture and encourages children, and they often emulate that. It creates a safe emotional haven that does not necessarily protect students from consequences but holds each accountable with a measure of graciousness. The cynic is uncomfortable here. At times, critics may say that, "You are too soft." Yet, we doggedly believe it is the unspoken value that accelerates our high level academic achievement that schools so desire. The school culture mirrors that redemptive, positive spirit, and it manifests itself into kindness and courtesy and gentleness. It springs from the leadership and the faculty to students and even to the occasionally difficult parent.

Grace is the velvet backdrop for the hard diamond of high expectations. High expectations from teachers who exude grace and yet mandate accountability nurture authenticity. Students held accountable for their actions here rarely lie, rarely are deceptive. They usually agree that the academic or conduct expectations set are clearly understood and that they have failed to meet them this time. Grace opens fresh opportunities to succeed. Because each child senses that he or she is loved even in difficult moments, the trust that has been built persuades a willingness to work at an elevated level. This same grace dynamic towards families forms a binding trust with even the most suspicious parent, disarms negativity, and promotes a strongly connected partnership that benefits the child. As a result, the socio-emotional factor of grace in relationship with students and families, coupled with a relentless sense of improving our curriculum, our instruction, and our craft, performed in an amazingly diverse population, ultimately unites us. It indeed sparks, from the beginning, a synergy that exponentially translates into academic success.

## PART VII – NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

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

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

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

3. What is the educational cost per student?      \$9750  
(School budget divided by enrollment)

4. What is the average financial aid per student?      \$890

5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?      11%

6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction?      32%

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

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**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math

**Test:** Terra Nova 3

**Grade:** 3

**Edition/Publication Year:** N/A

**Publisher:** DRC/CTB

**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	80
Number of students tested	28
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>	
<b>1. Hispanic</b>	
Average Score	70
Number of students tested	11
<b>2. Other 2</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>3. Other 3</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math

**Test:** Terra Nova 3

**Grade:** 4

**Edition/Publication Year:** N/A

**Publisher:** DRC/CTB

**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	77
Number of students tested	42
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>	
<b>1. Hispanic</b>	
Average Score	73
Number of students tested	21
<b>2. Other 2</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>3. Other 3</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math

**Test:** Terra Nova 3

**Grade:** 5

**Edition/Publication Year:** N/A

**Publisher:** DRC/CTB

**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	81
Number of students tested	42
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>	
<b>1. Hispanic</b>	
Average Score	80
Number of students tested	22
<b>2. Other 2</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>3. Other 3</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math

**Test:** Terra Nova 3

**Grade:** 6

**Edition/Publication Year:** N/A

**Publisher:** DRC/CTB

**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	72
Number of students tested	42
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>	
<b>1. Hispanic</b>	
Average Score	63
Number of students tested	14
<b>2. Other 2</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>3. Other 3</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math

**Test:** Terra Nova 3

**Grade:** 7

**Edition/Publication Year:** N/A

**Publisher:** DRC/CTB

**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	84
Number of students tested	34
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>	
<b>1. Hispanic</b>	
Average Score	80
Number of students tested	12
<b>2. Other 2</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>3. Other 3</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math

**Test:** Terra Nova 3

**Grade:** 8

**Edition/Publication Year:** N/A

**Publisher:** DRC/CTB

**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	84
Number of students tested	31
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>	
<b>1. Other 1</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>2. Other 2</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>3. Other 3</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Reading/ELA  
**Edition/Publication Year:** N/A

**Test:** Terra Nova 3  
**Publisher:** DRC/CTB

**Grade:** 3  
**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	72
Number of students tested	28
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>	
<b>1. Hispanic</b>	
Average Score	64
Number of students tested	11
<b>2. Other 2</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>3. Other 3</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Reading/ELA  
**Edition/Publication Year:** N/A

**Test:** Terra Nova 3  
**Publisher:** DRC/CTB

**Grade:** 4  
**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	76
Number of students tested	42
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>	
<b>1. Hispanic</b>	
Average Score	73
Number of students tested	21
<b>2. Other 2</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>3. Other 3</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Reading/ELA  
**Edition/Publication Year:** N/A

**Test:** Terra Nova 3  
**Publisher:** DRC/CTB

**Grade:** 5  
**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	81
Number of students tested	42
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>	
<b>1. Hispanic</b>	
Average Score	81
Number of students tested	22
<b>2. Other 2</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>3. Other 3</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Reading/ELA  
**Edition/Publication Year:** N/A

**Test:** Terra Nova 3  
**Publisher:** DRC/CTB

**Grade:** 6  
**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	82
Number of students tested	42
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>	
<b>1. Hispanic</b>	
Average Score	81
Number of students tested	14
<b>2. Other 2</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>3. Other 3</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Reading/ELA  
**Edition/Publication Year:** N/A

**Test:** Terra Nova 3  
**Publisher:** DRC/CTB

**Grade:** 7  
**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	81
Number of students tested	34
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>	
<b>1. Hispanic</b>	
Average Score	76
Number of students tested	12
<b>2. Other 2</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>3. Other 3</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Reading/ELA  
**Edition/Publication Year:** N/A

**Test:** Terra Nova 3  
**Publisher:** DRC/CTB

**Grade:** 8  
**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	85
Number of students tested	31
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>	
<b>1. Other 1</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>2. Other 2</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>3. Other 3</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

**NOTES:**