



## 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):
- 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, 2018 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	16	20	36
K	15	34	49
1	35	33	68
2	25	28	53
3	22	30	52
4	24	34	58
5	30	28	58
6	35	36	71
7	18	27	45
8	18	19	37
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	238	289	527

\*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):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 4 % Asian
  - 1 % Black or African American
  - 8 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 79 % White
  - 8 % 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: 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.

<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	6
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	1
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	7
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	535
(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):  
Catalan, Italian, Spanish, Malayalam, Lebanese, Chinese, Vietnamese, Indonesian

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 1%  
 Total number students who qualify: 4

8. Students receiving special education services: 6 %  
29 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>30</u> Multiple Disabilities                |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>1</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>19</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>7</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>3</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</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	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	27
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	9
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	15
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 19:1

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	98%	97%	97%	98%	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. 2011

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

OLA Catholic School seeks to create a nurturing environment grounded in the Catholic faith, which provides for the spiritual and academic development of each child.

## PART III – SUMMARY

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Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic School (OLA) was established in 1951 by the Archdiocese of Atlanta and staffed by the Sisters of Mercy, known for their unique fourth vow of service. OLA is celebrating its sixty-seventh anniversary and is overseen by the Society of Mary, Marist priests. Located in Atlanta, Georgia, OLA is set in a residential portion of the city. Approximately 81% percent of the student body is from the OLA parish community, while the remaining students represent sixteen other local parishes. The student body is made up of African American (2%), Asian (4%), Caucasian (86%) and mixed races (8%). Student ethnicity is composed of Hispanic (9%) and Non-Hispanic (91%) cultures. OLA received accreditation in 1970 through the Southern Area Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and Southern Association of Independent Schools (SAIS) and is currently accredited by AdvancED.

The mission of OLA Catholic School - to create a nurturing environment grounded in the Roman Catholic faith, which provides for the spiritual and academic development of each child - is the heart and soul of the school community. Mission, faith and culture are intertwined through acts of mercy, prayer and respect and all participants remain dedicated to providing service on a local, national and global scale. The school exists to enrich academic performance, provide spiritual development and promote strong minds and bodies while teaching the beliefs and practices of the Catholic faith. Worship, service, respect, dignity and weekly Masses are part of the school's faith instruction and support a commitment to honor the traditions and visions of the Sisters of Mercy, the Society of Mary and the mission of OLA.

Our commitment to excellence begins with our instructional staff and permeates through all aspects at OLA. Teachers serve the school with dedication and expertise. They are innovative in the ways they meet the needs of all students in the classroom. Sixty-one percent of the faculty hold graduate degrees in their areas of specialization. Faculty and staff leaders participate and present at local, national and state-level conferences, enhancing our own community as well as assisting other educators.

Throughout the history of OLA, the school has accepted students with a variety of learning differences, demonstrating a commitment to fulfilling the school's mission. Consequently, OLA employs the largest support staff for students in the Archdiocese. Resource personnel include two counselors and four resource positions. These leaders have implemented strategies such as flexible seating, guided reading, and co-teaching to challenge and assist all students to reach their potential. Expansion of the resource department has occurred over the years in order to be inclusionary and address the needs of the students and their families.

Our Lady of the Assumption fulfills its mission through sound educational practices with an emphasis on creating well-rounded students. Its educators promote creative thinking, teach problem solving strategies and differentiate lessons to meet the needs of all students. The recent addition of a STEM Coach promotes enduring understanding and collaboration in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics at all grade levels. The faculty also volunteers after school to provide social and athletic opportunities. Community speakers and performers are provided annually to enhance the students' cultural and social emotional experience.

The school and community collaborate to provide a climate suitable for the educational and religious development of our students. As the primary educators of their children, parents support the partnership between home, school and their community. Ninety percent of OLA families provide service to the school throughout the year. In response to the increased demand for an OLA education and the critical need for improved facilities, in the fall of 2016, the school launched a capital campaign to expand its campus and fund enhancements to the school's facilities. This campaign allowed for the renovation and expansion of our existing campus in the fall of 2018 to offer state-of-the-art STEM and computer labs, a commercial kitchen, a middle school wing and additional classroom space. An elevator was added to enable handicapped access for students and visitors to our second floor.

Receiving the National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence distinction in 2011 highlighted the excellence of our program. OLA proudly displays the National Blue Ribbon seal on the entrance sign at the front of the

school and all electronic and paper communications. Since earning this prestigious award, OLA has increased enrollment by 10.3% and strengthened the support and financial commitment of all stakeholders as reflected in an increase of both Annual Fund and Capital Campaign donations. OLA instituted an annual school-wide Day of Service in celebration of receiving this 2011 honor. This day of service is devoted entirely to projects benefiting local and worldwide organizations; parents and students alike participate in as many as 30 different service opportunities.

## PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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

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

Curriculum is provided by the Archdiocese of Atlanta in all areas. The Reading and English Language Arts curriculum encompass phonological awareness, phonics, spelling, reading, vocabulary, written composition and handwriting. In the primary grades, a strong phonemic awareness foundation develops through the incorporation of the Orton-Gillingham methodology. In primary and intermediate grades, McGraw-Hill Reading Wonders was selected based on performance data from the Iowa Assessments to address learning standards. In middle grades, novel units are chosen for exposure to both classic and current literature while also encouraging a deeper analysis of literary elements.

Teachers use a variety of both formative and summative assessments to drive instruction including Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI), Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy (DIBELS) and Easy Curriculum Based Measures (easyCBM). Classroom teachers use multiple strategies to teach reading comprehension including oral discussion, active listening, mental imagery, teacher modeling and prior knowledge. Whole and small-group instruction enhance reading fluency, comprehension, vocabulary and written composition while incorporating higher-order and critical thinking skills. Guided reading groups allow teachers to observe individual progress and differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all learners. In addition, resource teachers on the Student Success Team support learners in whole group instruction and small groups direct assistance.

Language standards are also addressed through various resources such as Daily Grammar Practice, Vocabulary Workshop and Simple Solutions Grammar. All students have access to IXL, a technology resource which provides additional reinforcement of language arts standards. It also serves as an excellent tool to ensure understanding of grammatical concepts. Students use the guideline of a school-wide writing process to assist with editing, revising and publishing. This process is emphasized across all curricular areas. As the culminating assessment of writing, students complete a writing prompt which provides teachers with data to analyze and improve student performance.

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

The mathematics curriculum focuses on mastery and application of computation and skills concepts. Both individualized and whole group instruction provide learning opportunities for diverse learners. Students are actively engaged in lessons through the use of centers, manipulatives, independent and cooperative problem solving and technology. An emphasis is placed on computation, problem-solving, real-world connections and analytical skills. Students show their understanding of math concepts by demonstrating the ability to reason. OLA seeks to expose students to concepts and then build upon the big idea and equip learners with the tools needed to achieve math competency.

Kindergarten through second grade students use Sadlier Math. This program focuses on the ability to explain problem solving skills in addition to the mastery of foundational concepts. Third through fifth grade students use Sadlier's Progress in Mathematics. Progress in Mathematics emphasizes the application of foundational skills in real world scenarios. The middle school curriculum advances students' understanding of abstract concepts through mastery of algebraic reasoning, number sense and proportional thinking. Additional math resources include Bright Ideas Press Simple Solutions and IXL. Simple Solutions is used in grades one through eight as a year-long spiral review of basic skills. IXL is a computer-assisted program that provides immediate feedback for students as they receive further practice with specific skills.

OLA utilizes Iowa Assessments and CogAT data to drive student placement in math classes beginning in grade five. Students have the opportunity to progress to Algebra I in grade eight. Students in grades kindergarten through fourth also benefit from ability grouping based on teacher recommendation and performance on previous assessments.

## **1c. Science:**

Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) provide the foundation for the science curriculum. The curriculum addresses all facets of earth and space science, life science, physical science and chemistry. Online science programs such as Accelerated Learning's STEMscopes, Mystery Science and IXL provide the resources necessary for hands-on inquiry and problem-based learning activities, student resources, intervention tools and accelerated materials. Teachers use these programs to devise plans to address the areas of strengths and weaknesses that are revealed through students' Iowa Assessment and CogAT scores. The use of STEM models allow for application of skills in which students think, process and create. Teachers correlate curriculum to real world scientific problems, which allow students to explain scientific solutions and design models to demonstrate ideas. Science teachers work carefully with their colleagues to develop and integrate activities that are cross-curricular. Faith is integrated throughout science lessons. Students learn how they are called to be good stewards of the Earth through the principles outlined in Pope Francis's encyclical, *Laudato Si*. OLA has a STEM coach for grades pre-kindergarten through eight, who assists teachers with implementing challenges and the engineering design process into their lessons.

In response to the need for more STEM related programs, our new facility, which opened in November 2018, includes a STEM lab. The STEM lab is designed to build 21st century skills using cutting edge technology and provides students with all ability levels challenging and engaging opportunities. The STEM lab provides for authentic assessment of learning based on portfolios. Portfolios are developed and presented by students to demonstrate project work and document learning.

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

The social studies curriculum gives students the opportunity to think critically, make informed decisions and communicate respectfully with others while learning history, geography, economics, political science, world cultures, social justice, faith, civics and government. All teachers collaborate to integrate and differentiate concepts across the disciplines and grade levels to deepen understanding and create meaningful connections.

Primary grades heavily integrate social studies standards into language arts units, assessing through discussion, participation in differentiated small groups and integrated Reading Wonders comprehension tests. Primary and intermediate classes use Scholastic's Let's Find Out, Time for Kids and Studies Weekly magazines to supplement the integrated curriculum, as well as using novels such as *Molly's Pilgrim*, *Little House on the Prairie* and *Number the Stars*. Intermediate and middle grades utilize Pearson's *My World Interactive Social Studies* textbooks for its clear and concise presentation of concepts.

Beyond texts, students research units of study, create individual and class presentations, examine primary sources for authenticity, apply informational processing skills and analyze content. Project and technology-based assessments challenge students to expand their thinking by making personal, as well as global connections. Guest speakers, storytellers and field trips also support many areas of the curriculum. Teachers utilize Iowa Assessment scores to guide and enhance teaching strategies.

OLA works to incorporate Catholic values with civic awareness through serving the community on our annual Day of Service, weekly community prayer gatherings and multi-grade level prayer families led by middle school students. Our annual flag raising ceremony, Veterans' Day celebration, Adopt-a-Cop program and monthly hearty meals for the homeless are examples of school-wide activities that increase awareness of civic duty. OLA seeks to instill the value of using talents and resources to serve others, improve communities and help make the world a better place.

## **1e. For secondary schools:**

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

The OLA pre-kindergarten program includes balanced instruction in reading, writing, math, religion, science and social studies. Students are exposed to rich literature to help foster a love of reading, build vocabulary and oral language skills by listening to, re-telling and narrating stories. Students are prepared to learn to read and transition easily into kindergarten. Kindergarten teachers report that our pre-kindergarten students have strong phonemic awareness skills. Students develop early math skills in various domains: numbers and operations, geometry, patterns and algebra, measurement and time and data representation and probability. They leave pre-kindergarten as confident, well-prepared early childhood learners.

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

One of the components of the mission at OLA is to develop each child's spirit, mind and body. A myriad of other curriculum areas helps support this development.

All students at OLA attend visual arts weekly. The visual arts program includes exploring and creating art with a variety of artistic processes, tools and materials as well as utilizing the elements and principles of design. Creativity and visual communication are developed and strengthened throughout the art-making process. Students explore art for its historical, social, religious and cultural contexts to better appreciate how art is important to our world today.

Performing arts classes are available to all students on a weekly basis. Students in pre-kindergarten through third grade study the fundamentals of music including rhythm, steady beat, melodic line, expression and some basic musical notation. A variety of musical cultures, styles, composers and historical time periods are studied and related to other disciplines. Students in third grade extend their musical knowledge and learn the basics of the recorder. Students in grades four through eight choose to participate in either band or choir. In choir, previously learned skills such as musical terms, physiology of singing and music fundamentals are incorporated to expand the students' learning. Students in band experience learning to play a musical instrument and appreciate the value of working as a team. Choir and band performances are held twice a year. Students may also participate after school in fall and spring musical productions.

The physical education and health curriculum at OLA aligns with the National Standards for Physical Education. The program emphasizes the development of the fundamental skills and knowledge necessary to maintain lifelong physical activity and wellness. All students attend physical education classes twice each week. Instruction in physical education and health provides a solid basis in which students can foster and appreciate the benefits of living a healthy lifestyle.

The Spanish language program is taught weekly to all students in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade, with middle school students attending three times each week. Instruction at the lower level is introductory, exposing children to culture and language. In third through eighth grade, students read and write in Spanish, while enriching their cultural awareness. All students develop receptive and spoken skills through games, songs, listening comprehension activities and role plays.

At OLA, our technology program strives to arm students with future-ready skills, as well as supporting academics with technology. Pre-kindergarten through fifth grade classes have a set of iPads in each classroom and a Chromebook cart available for checkout. Middle school students participate in a one-to-one Chromebook program. Readily available technology allows for use in centers, differentiated instruction and technology-rich collaborative activities. Kindergarten through eighth grade students take part in weekly technology classes where students learn about coding, digital citizenship and skills needed for creating digital works.

The goal of the school library program is to make students "information literate," as well as to teach them the skills needed to access both print and non-print information. The primary grades go to the Media Center for story time weekly. Library skills instruction occurs weekly to all grades to support research projects in various subjects across the curriculum. To stimulate students' interest in reading, the Media Center hosts two book fairs a year and a Book Character Dress-Up Day. In addition, the third through sixth grades participate in the Archdiocesan Battle of the Books Contest.

Two guidance counselors offer classroom instruction to all students. They lead students through topics such as friendships, positive self-talk, empathy, stress management, online safety, healthy choices and conflict resolution. These discussions connect to OLA's mission statement and provide students with lifelong skills to help them navigate through difficult situations both inside and outside of school.

Students in middle school participate in two electives a year. Fifteen courses are available including Bible Study, Creative Writing, Financial Literacy, Knitting and Speak Out. These courses meet once per week and provide outlets for students to explore their creative side on a topic of interest. Students in grades three through five participate once per week in Creative Thinking class which offers students a variety of ways to extend their problem-solving and critical thinking skills.

### **3. Special Populations:**

As part of our commitment to academic excellence, OLA teachers recognize that each student possesses a unique learning style. Classroom instruction includes a variety of teaching methods and strategies to engage and support students' efforts to achieve at high levels. Differentiation of instruction is evident in guided math and reading groups, learning centers, flexible seating and cooperative learning opportunities. Teachers incorporate music and videos during instruction and "brain breaks" to reenergize and motivate students. STEM instruction presents students with a variety of hands-on, problem-based and inquiry-based projects that promote critical thinking.

OLA teachers employ a variety of techniques, including the use of rating scales, rubrics, demonstrations and presentations, to effectively assess student achievement and provide a comprehensive measurement of skill mastery. In addition, collaborative efforts are carefully assessed as students work with partners or in groups. Rubrics allow students to have a clear understanding of how their performance will be measured.

Technology is an instructional tool that is used at all levels to engage students and to support the learning process. Classrooms are equipped with interactive boards, laptops, iPads and Chromebooks, allowing teachers to integrate content in this age of digital learning. In addition, projectors, document cameras and numerous supplemental print and multimedia resources aid teachers in the presentation of content material. Students in pre-kindergarten through grade five utilize technology for center work, cooperative learning, additional skill practice, research and presentation creation. Middle school students have individual Chromebooks on which they use Google Classroom applications to enhance learning and as a resource for textbooks. Research skills are explicitly and progressively taught and research databases allow students the necessary resources to support their units of study.

The staff at OLA includes four resource teachers and two guidance counselors to assist students with academic or behavioral support. All primary-level teachers have been trained and incorporate Orton-Gillingham's techniques to enrich and enhance reading, phonics and spelling instruction. Early intervention and flexible resource support are used to identify and remediate areas of need for individual students. Teachers use preassessments to determine what students know in order to tailor their instruction to above and below grade level students. Students in grades three through five may be placed in advanced reading groups and students in grades five through eight may be placed in advanced math groups.

Faculty and administration analyze the results of the Iowa Assessments and CogAT to determine areas of strengths and weaknesses at each grade level as well as individual student growth. Students are tested in reading comprehension using EasyCBM, and those indicating a weakness are provided with additional support. IXL data provides teachers with information on areas for remediation in other content areas. Classroom teachers conduct item analyses of tests in specific subject areas to ensure mastery and identify skills needing content reinforcement. Formative assessment strategies occur throughout lessons, including thumbs-up/thumbs-down, the use of dry erase boards, exit tickets, Kahoot, Padlet and Plickers.

Currently, there are no subgroups with an achievement gap of 10 or more percentage points.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

Teachers are vital to the success of each student. Through the implementation of Archdiocesan standards, teachers honor, adapt and differentiate to meet the needs of a variety of learners thus creating an engaging learning environment. Evidence of teacher support and value can be seen in professional learning communities, teacher luncheons, faculty retreats and parent prayer circles. The administration encourages partnerships in teaching, with teachers observing, sharing and problem-solving with colleagues. Moreover, faculty work closely with grade-level student support teachers to optimize individual success.

The nurturing climate of OLA is evident throughout the student body. Interaction of students across grade levels during programs such as Prayer Families, Safety Patrol and annual Day of Service provide opportunities for all students to help build the school's positive culture. Sitting side by side, middle school students serve as role models to the younger student body. Students are recognized for displaying Virtues of the Month, further fostering a community which represents the Body of Christ. Faculty regularly send Living the Promise postcards to parents highlighting acts of empathy and kindness displayed by their children.

Parent support and input in school-wide projects and ministries link the school body as one community serving one another and the greater Atlanta community. Classrooms have adopted police officers in the Adopt-a-Cop program. Veterans and first responders are honored at special luncheons. The Atlanta homeless are supported through a hearty meals program. Coats are collected, food pantries are filled and refugees are given essential provisions to assist in establishing their new home.

The fulfillment of the mission of OLA is embodied in its students, faculty, staff and parents. Feedback from stakeholders through annual surveys confirms the presence of the school's loving, enriching and challenging environment. OLA is a school where the gifts of faculty, staff, parents and, most importantly, students are treasured, acknowledged and nurtured.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

A strong partnership exists among our faculty, staff and school community. Consistent communication and parent involvement are at the core of our engagement success.

OLA offers many communication vehicles to ensure continued engagement with our families including a weekly e-newsletter detailing school-wide messages, individual grade level weekly e-newsletters, Thursday folders sent home through each student containing graded school work along with any other vital information and room parent communications. In addition, OLA utilizes the school website, social media posts and Parent Alert phone calls to inform stakeholders of pertinent school-related information. The school also utilizes RenWeb as its password-protected portal where parents can find information regarding homework, grades, upcoming events and necessary forms. OLA is also using SeeSaw to share a glimpse into students' daily activities. Additionally, quarterly report cards, mid-term progress reports, parent teacher conferences and annual parent surveys further engage parents as partners. Incoming families are assigned an ambassador family to welcome and engage them in the OLA community.

Parent involvement is woven into all layers of our school. Our Home and School Association (HSA) is a parent organization that provides a vital and much-appreciated service to school leadership and the entire school community. Our active HSA meets monthly and oversees many community events such as student enrichment activities, spiritual life efforts, principal coffees, Muffins with Mom, Donuts with Dad, Father Daughter Sock Hop, Mother Son Night and the bi-annual Gala and Art in the Park(ing Lot) events. Parents often attend weekly Friday morning prayer service, Virtue of the Month award ceremonies and school Masses. Volunteerism is high and parents offer vital help with special events including field day, Day of Service and Grandparents' Day while also serving every day in the school dining hall and the library. In the classroom, our parents volunteer on projects, special celebrations and reading to our students.

The School Advisory Council supports both the principal and the pastor. This collaboration focuses on Catholic identity, curriculum, strategic planning, finances, facilities, marketing, development and advocacy. The School Advisory Council meets quarterly.

Our school has cultivated many community partnerships outside of the school setting. Throughout the year, such activities include monthly hearty meals for the homeless, participation in the Adopt-a-Cop program, community service work through our annual Day of Service, holiday cards in neighbors' mailboxes and Catholic Charities refugee support with our Adopt-a-Family program.

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

The administration and faculty of Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic School view life-long learning as imperative for educators and for the success of OLA students. OLA strives to develop new teachers and enrich practiced educators with a variety of professional development. Consequently, student achievement is enhanced through shared ideas and learned best practices. To guide teacher education, OLA requires professional goal setting based on archdiocesan goals, school-wide goals and data drawn from student assessments.

Embedded professional development opportunities as well as outside learning experiences are funded for, developed and offered to the faculty. These include conferences, graduate level course work, Archdiocesan and local collaboration, on-site workshops and peer mentoring. The wide variety of professional development opportunities helps teachers refine their professional expertise. Funding for professional development is available through budgeted monies, a teacher endowment and Title IIA. Teachers maintain a professional learning log and accrue at least thirty hours yearly as a necessary part of the certification process as established by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission and by Archdiocesan certification requirements.

Significant improvements have been realized with OLA's goal-directed professional development plan. To improve higher order and critical thinking skills, the administration dedicated faculty meetings for workshops with an outside expert and with internal peer leaders. Subsequently, teachers implemented enhanced questioning techniques and now have greater expectations for student responses. The administration also developed plans for creating OLA's STEM initiative and created a new teaching position leading to a school-wide STEM program focusing on critical thinking, engineering and integrated lessons. Regular technology seminars are provided to enhance technology in the classroom. Research, formative assessments, creative expression and collaboration have advanced at every level because of teachers' increased skills.

Following a recent seminar, Responsibility Centered Discipline, the school has seen a decrease in office reports and infractions of the conduct code. This program delivers techniques for discipline which regulate student behaviors with a positive, respectful, dignified and thereby more Catholic approach.

Finally, OLA is a highly collaborative environment. A program called "Three Cheers for Peers" provided teachers with substitutes and time in the day to observe and meet with colleagues. Survey feedback expressed overwhelming support of peer-to-peer learning. Therefore, this year OLA has established formal professional learning communities. These communities are tasked with different initiatives dedicated to student achievement and school improvement.

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

Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic School is a parish school within the Archdiocese of Atlanta. Under the authority of Our Lady of the Assumption Church's pastor, the principal follows all the policies of the Archdiocese. The principal collaborates with the pastor, the School Advisory Council and administrative team to ensure alignment to the school's mission. All employees serve under the auspices of the principal and work to enhance, enrich and remediate the student population.

As the spiritual, academic and managerial leader of the school, the principal promotes the philosophy of student learning in a nurturing environment while working to meet the academic and spiritual needs of each child and providing a Catholic education to all students. The principal establishes the culture of dignity and respect for all individuals and models for all stakeholders the responsibility to exemplify a faith-filled life. Students and teachers are encouraged to be the best version of themselves through the OLA School Promise recited every day along with morning prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

The principal encourages collaborative leadership to enhance student achievement and school improvement. Collaboration occurs between the principal, pastor, School Advisory Council, Home and School Association and the administrative team to enhance learning at OLA. Community members serve on these committees to ensure alignment to the school mission. This collaboration focuses on Catholic identity, curriculum, strategic planning, finances, facilities, marketing, advancement and advocacy, all of which ultimately support student learning. The principal also collaborates with the Parish Finance Committee and Office of Catholic Schools to ensure the alignment of policies and procedures.

The administrative team, consisting of the principal, assistant principal, business manager, advancement director, admissions director, curriculum coordinator and communications coordinator, assists the principal in monitoring curriculum alignment, student progress, instructional practices and adherence to mission. This team works to ensure the school runs efficiently and continues its outstanding viability.

Budgeted funds are allocated for resources, scholarships and professional development. The principal fosters life-long learning for teachers and students. Teachers assume leadership roles by participating in embedded professional learning communities focusing on district and school-wide goals, leading professional development presentations and disseminating research-based practices to colleagues learned through conferences.

The principal is visible in the community attending parish and athletic events, cultivating donor support and seeking community involvement. These relationships foster and promote the Catholic faith and guide the exemplary educational program at OLA.

## PART VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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The mission statement provides the foundation for academic success at Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic School. The tenets of the Catholic faith are the basis in which the school seeks to create a learning environment that nurtures the whole child both spiritually and academically. The mission statement guides all stakeholders to inspire students to develop their individual, God-given gifts and talents; to help students reach their academic potential in a supportive learning environment; and, to instill in students the commitment to serve others. We have found our increased focus on service to others to be one of the most instrumental factors in OLA's success.

As a longstanding tradition, OLA faculty and students participate in a variety of service projects throughout the year. In 2011, to celebrate being named a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence, OLA established an additional service opportunity, an entire Day of Service. The day honors the fourth vow of service taken by the Sister of Mercy nuns who staffed the school from its inception. Following Mass, students in all grades participate in projects, both on and off campus, serving over twenty-three organizations. The entire day is focused on serving others.

We have found that continuous and consistent volunteering in community service projects and helping others has been very fulfilling for both the faculty, the students and the parent community. Since implementing an Annual Day of Service and through our various other service projects, we are seeing our students develop a stronger sense of gratitude for what they have and empathy for the needs of the less fortunate around them. Additionally, our Annual Day of Service also requires a great number of parent volunteers. We have seen an increased sense of community and pride among our parent base since establishing this effort.

Research has shown that when children volunteer or participate in service they are more likely to have stronger academic goals and outcomes, are more motivated and get along better with others. Through these acts of service to others, our students are also further developing skills that go hand in hand with benefiting their academic work such as leadership, communication, dependability, time management, decision making and team work. Finally, our focus on serving others supports accreditation goals and Laudato Si', Pope Francis' call for us all to hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.

## PART VII – NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

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

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

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

3. What is the educational cost per student?      \$9877  
(School budget divided by enrollment)

4. What is the average financial aid per student?      \$2475

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

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

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

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**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math

**Test:** Iowa Assessments  
Form E

**Grade:** 3

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2011

**Publisher:** Riverside  
Publishing

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

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	85
Number of students tested	59
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>	
<b>1. Other 1</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>2. Other 2</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>3. Other 3</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math

**Test:** Iowa Assessments  
Form E

**Grade:** 4

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2011

**Publisher:** Riverside  
Publishing

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

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	76
Number of students tested	52
Percent of total students tested	95
Number of students alternatively assessed	1
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>	
<b>1. Other 1</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>2. Other 2</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>3. Other 3</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math

**Test:** Iowa Assessments  
Form E

**Grade:** 5

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2011

**Publisher:** Riverside  
Publishing

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

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	81
Number of students tested	58
Percent of total students tested	98
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>	
<b>1. Other 1</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>2. Other 2</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>3. Other 3</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math

**Test:** Iowa Assessments  
Form E

**Grade:** 6

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2011

**Publisher:** Riverside  
Publishing

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

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	77
Number of students tested	60
Percent of total students tested	98
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>	
<b>1. Other 1</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>2. Other 2</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>3. Other 3</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math

**Test:** Iowa Assessments  
Form E

**Grade:** 7

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2011

**Publisher:** Riverside  
Publishing

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

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	74
Number of students tested	38
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>	
<b>1. Other 1</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>2. Other 2</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>3. Other 3</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math

**Test:** Iowa Assessments  
Form E

**Grade:** 8

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2011

**Publisher:** Riverside  
Publishing

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

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	75
Number of students tested	53
Percent of total students tested	98
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>	
<b>1. Hispanic/Latino</b>	
Average Score	77
Number of students tested	13
<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

**Test:** Iowa Assessments  
Form E

**Grade:** 3

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2011

**Publisher:** Riverside  
Publishing

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

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	83
Number of students tested	59
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

**Test:** Iowa Assessments  
Form E

**Grade:** 4

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2011

**Publisher:** Riverside  
Publishing

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

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	76
Number of students tested	52
Percent of total students tested	95
Number of students alternatively assessed	1
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2
<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

**Test:** Iowa Assessments  
Form E

**Grade:** 5

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2011

**Publisher:** Riverside  
Publishing

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

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	83
Number of students tested	58
Percent of total students tested	98
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>	
<b>1. Other 1</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>2. Other 2</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>3. Other 3</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Reading/ELA

**Test:** Iowa Assessments  
Form E

**Grade:** 6

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2011

**Publisher:** Riverside  
Publishing

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

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	74
Number of students tested	59
Percent of total students tested	97
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

**Test:** Iowa Assessments  
Form E

**Grade:** 7

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2011

**Publisher:** Riverside  
Publishing

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

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	73
Number of students tested	38
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

**Test:** Iowa Assessments  
Form E

**Grade:** 8

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2011

**Publisher:** Riverside  
Publishing

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

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>	
Average Score	78
Number of students tested	53
Percent of total students tested	98
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>	
<b>1. Hispanic/Latino</b>	
Average Score	82
Number of students tested	13
<b>2. Other 2</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
<b>3. Other 3</b>	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

**NOTES:**