U.S. Department of Education
2019 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[ ] Public or [X] Non-public

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

Name of Principal <u>Mrs. Kori Hockett</u>
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name <u>Wheaton Academy</u>
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address <u>900 Prince Crossing Road</u>
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

<u>West Chicago</u>   <u>IL</u>   <u>60185-5136</u>
City   State   Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County <u>Dupage</u>

Telephone <u>(630) 562-7500</u>   Fax <u>(630) 562-2823</u>

Web site/URL <u>https://wheatonacademy.org/</u>   E-mail   <u>khockett@wheatonacademy.org</u>

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

_____Date_____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*<u>Mr. Steve Bult</u>   E-mail <u>sbult@wheatonacademy.org</u>
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name <u>Wheaton Academy School District</u>   Tel. <u>N/A</u>
I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

_____Date_____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson <u>Mr. Steven Pearson</u>
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

_____Date_____
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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

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
   [X] 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	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	76	90	166
10	83	82	165
11	77	81	158
12 or higher	76	83	159
Total Students	312	336	648

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of   <u>1</u> % American Indian or Alaska Native
    the school (if unknown, estimate): <u>11</u> % Asian
                                        <u>6</u> % Black or African American
                                        <u>3</u> % Hispanic or Latino
                                        <u>0</u> % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
                                        <u>71</u> % White
                                        <u>8</u> % 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: <u>3</u>%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred *to* the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	2
(2) Number of students who transferred *from* the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	15
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	17
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	648
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.03
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

    English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: <u>0</u> %
                                                     <u>0</u> Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: <u>7</u> %

    Total number students who qualify: <u>45</u>

8. Students receiving special education services: <u>12</u> %

                       <u>80</u> 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>6</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>44</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>1</u> Developmental Delay	<u>25</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>3</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: <u>2</u>

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

	Number of Staff
Administrators	7
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	44
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	3
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	0
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

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   <u>15:1</u>

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

Required Information	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	97%	99%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	98%	99%	97%

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.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	160
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	96%
Enrolled in a community college	1%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	1%
Joined the military or other public service	1%
Other	1%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.
    Yes __   No X

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

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

The mission of Wheaton Academy is to nurture growth in students through relationships, excellence, and service to the glory of God.

PART III – SUMMARY

Wheaton Academy is a non-denominational evangelical Christian school with a deep history. Founded in 1853, today Wheaton Academy has students walking the halls who are fourth and fifth-generation students. Wheaton Academy is committed to educating students from a Biblical worldview by means of high academic standards, a mature culture, and opportunities for student leadership.

Enrollment in the 2018-2019 school year includes 648 full-time and partnership students. Students and families come from over 40 different feeder schools and represent a variety of denominational church backgrounds. Initially founded as a prep school for Wheaton College, Wheaton Academy became independent of the college in the mid-20th century and moved west of the college campus. Currently, Wheaton Academy is located in the western suburbs of Chicago, nestled in the West Chicago community.

Wheaton Academy is unique in that it seeks to be a "both/and" school, meaning it is neither an elite prep school nor the typical Christian school struggling to attract students. The vision of the school is that the student body would appropriately reflect the diversity found in the kingdom of God. Admissions targets have been developed to create a student profile that includes students who excel in their various areas of giftedness--scoring a perfect score on the ACT, being named National Gatorade player of the year in soccer, attending New York University Tisch School of the Arts--as well as students with learning needs that range from mild ADD to more severe autism.

In order to meet the learning needs of a diverse scope of students, Wheaton Academy has a robust academic program, ranging in courses that support those with learning difficulties to those seeking to earn college credit. Recently, the Student Services Department has expanded its staff and support systems by including more guidance counselors to address the growing student needs on the social/emotional level and to provide support for the demands of an increasingly-complex college application process. In addition, Wheaton Academy has a staff member who is trained to meet the needs of individual learners and is assigned solely to Academic Support. In each department, classes are offered at regular and advanced levels and, when needed, at more conceptual levels. Wheaton Academy has a healthy AP program, starting as early as freshman year, with class offerings that range across 18 different disciplines. Wheaton Academy extends the learning opportunities presented in the classroom by offering a unique Winterim program, a two-week period in January where students choose among taking classes on campus, going on trips across the world, or interning at local businesses. In addition to Winterim, students may also extend learning in our recently developed MASTER program or as part of Project LEAD, a leadership program designed for seniors.

Beyond the academic world, Wheaton Academy has the distinction of developing a co-curricular program that meets our school mission of helping students to develop and discover their gifts, which means students have the opportunity to participate in multiple activities to support learning both inside and outside the classroom. Currently 84 different opportunities for co-curricular participation and 1,988 "spots," ranging from varsity athletics to gaming clubs, are available for our 648 students.

During the past five years, significant changes have been made to the campus at Wheaton Academy. The school recently completed the "Let There Be Light" capital campaign which allowed for a cutting-edge addition to the main academic building: the new Science and Technology Center, complete with six new laboratory classrooms, and the "Idea Lab," a makerspace with the technology requisite for design and engineering, such as 3D printers and a CNC laser cutter. Wheaton Academy has completed field renovations, including the addition of a turf football/soccer field, a track, three new tennis courts, and a turf baseball field. The renovations and additions have given Wheaton Academy the opportunity to increase stewardship of the facilities through rentals and has allowed community groups more exposure to the Wheaton Academy campus.

Wheaton Academy is committed to consistent growth and development, and while challenges are associated with growth and change, they also provide the impetus for improvement and new opportunities to implement the mission and vision of the school.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

Every five years the English department conducts a curriculum review process. Following the most recent review, the English department has revamped all course UBDs to describe what is currently being taught in each class. Standards for each unit are aligned with national standards from the Common Core English Language Arts Anchor Standards and the National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE). Students entering Wheaton Academy take an English placement test for English I that ultimately places them in either the advanced or regular class. Movement is possible within the four years from regular to advanced based on achievement in the class and success in meeting reading and writing standards. Argument writing standards are vertically aligned, and text complexity increases in rigor each school year. The English Department uses data from AP assessments and the PSAT to inform curricular decisions with recent focus being given to inserting more non-fiction texts into the curriculum. Five years ago, after the previous curriculum audit, the Wheaton Academy English department changed its focus, placing higher emphasis on developing close reading skills and utilizing a rhetorical framework for argument writing. The past five years of data have confirmed the decision to make that change. The department has seen an all-time high in English (27.1) and Reading (27.2) averages on the ACT.

Students entering Wheaton Academy complete two semesters of English I, which places special emphasis on honing close reading skills and developing evidence-based argument writing. English II builds on the skills of English I by increasing text complexity and rigor while developing thesis-driven essays which utilize appropriate text-based evidence. Sophomores also take the single-semester Communication for the 21st Century course where they develop speaking and listening skills. English III focuses primarily on rigorous texts of American literature while introducing full-length research writing. To fulfill the nine required semesters of English instruction, seniors are offered choices for fulfilling their English credit by taking AP English, Senior Rhetoric, 20th-Century Literature, or Creative Writing.

1b. Mathematics:

The Mathematics Department uses a combination of Common Core standards as well as the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) standards to develop its curriculum. Since the NCTM contains content and process standards, both are woven into the math curriculum. Students acquire foundational skills in mathematics class primarily through direct instruction and repetition of key skills. In Geometry and upper-level math courses, self-discovery is encouraged as students apply concepts to proofs and other process problems.

Data is used in the Mathematics Department in two key areas. First, a placement test is administered to incoming freshmen. Data from the test is used to determine the course that would enable the student to experience the most challenge and success during the freshman year. Students are not tracked for the remainder of their high school career but rather have the opportunity to demonstrate mastery over key concepts that warrant promotion into higher level classes. Wheaton Academy requires that students take six semesters of mathematics courses, two of which must be Geometry. Students may take AP courses within the department by taking AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, or AP Statistics.

Additionally, the Mathematics Department has recently begun to use data from the SAT and PSAT to determine areas within the mathematics curriculum that warrant further attention. For example, results from the previous two years' PSAT have shown that students are missing key content knowledge in the area of statistics, and the department is now considering ways to address the statistics standards and skills within classes for underclassmen. This data has also led to further conversation about potential changes to the school curriculum that would involve more emphasis on integrated math and application.

1c. Science:

The Science Department derives its standards from Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Students acquire key skills in class through explicit instruction, lab activities, and common formative and summative assessments across classes. The Introduction to Research class is completely inquiry-based and guided by student interest.

With the recent opening of the school's new Science and Technology Center, the Science Department has moved away from content delivery and more toward utilizing labs, research rooms, and a makerspace to engage in scientific pursuit and application. In a science classroom, seeing students engaged in hands-on activities that integrate key content from class with applied learning is common. In addition to the core classes of Physics, Chemistry, and Biology, students are offered expansive elective choices which include Robotics, Engineering, Networking, and Research. Students now have the opportunity to graduate from Wheaton Academy with a MASTER endorsement on their transcript, indicating they have engaged in 30 credit hours of approved MASTER courses. To receive the MASTER endorsement, students must take credit hours in the fields of Mathematics, Applied Science, Technology, Engineering, and Research as well as complete a Capstone Project and a science-related internship. The department also seeks to be more innovative in its offerings and is exploring cross-curricular courses with both the English and Bible departments.

Data is being used in the Science Department primarily within the PLC framework as teachers use common formative assessments to determine instructional plans and continually to assess key standards from the NGSS. Additionally, the Science Department uses data generated from the Mathematics Placement Test to inform placement of students in their freshman year physics class.

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

The Social Studies Department derives its standards from National Council for Social Studies C3 Standards in addition to some overlap with the College Board's AP History Disciplinary Practices and Reasoning Skills. The department chose these standards because they place a heavy emphasis on skill development within the discipline, which leads to greater emphasis on application to authentic questions and problem solving. The skill development emphasis aligns with standards and points of emphasis within Wheaton Academy's other humanities departments.

Within anchor standard 1, gathering and evaluating sources, each assessment achieves one of the following skills: sourcing, contextualization, close reading, corroboration, or research. Within anchor standard 2, developing claims and using evidence, each assessment supports one of the following skills: supporting a thesis, problem solving/causation, or presentation.

Data is used at the AP level to determine areas of strength and weakness. Several years ago the department identified a particular weakness on the FRQ section of the AP exam and worked systematically within the curriculum to address the issue; a successful increase in AP scores have been seen as a result. Additionally, within the department PLC time, common formative assessments have been developed to assess the skills from anchor standards, and strides are being made towards using the common formative assessments to alter individual lessons on a weekly basis.

The Social Studies Department's innovative curriculum places a high emphasis on World History courses and offers a number of choices to fulfill the six semesters required for graduation. Students must take Introduction to Historical Inquiry, U.S. History, and U.S. Government. Students must also take two additional semesters of World History courses and can choose from courses like Heroes and Villains or Art History. AP course offerings within the department include AP World History, AP Art History, AP U.S. History, AP U.S. Government, AP Comparative Government, and AP Psychology.

1e. For secondary schools:

Over the past four years Wheaton Academy has placed special emphasis on developing a research-based college readiness program that instructs students in six key non-cognitive areas: gratitude, hope, passion, perseverance, self-control, and social intelligence. For more information on this program, see Part VI–

strategies for academic success.

In addition to the school's college readiness program, students are also required to engage in an internship as part of the Winterim program. For two weeks, students are required at least once in their four years at Wheaton Academy to engage in a 60-hour internship in a field of their career interest.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Wheaton Academy offers an extensive program of academic classes outside the core subjects, with special emphasis on a robust Fine Arts program that is cited as a strength of the school. After completing all necessary graduation requirements, students will have nine extra semesters in which to take elective course offerings. Some students even elect to take core classes offered over the summer through the Wheaton Academy summer school program in order to free up their schedules for elective offerings in the fall and spring semesters.

In the non-core classes, Wheaton Academy requires students to take six semesters of Bible courses, two semesters of Fine Arts courses, and five semesters of Physical Education and Health courses. World Languages classes are not required for graduation but are recommended since many colleges have language requirements.

In the Bible Department, students are required to take at least one semester each of the four years of high school with emphasis on foundational Bible knowledge and skills courses for freshmen and upper-level Doctrine and Philosophy courses for seniors. The Bible Department largely develops standards independent of any national organization and is in the process of developing a curriculum that can be replicated by other Christian schools. During their time in Bible classes, students are given a Spiritual Inventory Survey to assess both core doctrinal knowledge and spiritual behaviors of students. The same survey is given to seniors to track progress and growth of the students during their time at Wheaton Academy.

In the Fine Arts Department, students have a wide array of courses from which to choose in Dance, Instrumental Music, Theater, Media, Visual Arts, and Vocal Music. The standards for each of the courses are informed by the National Arts Standards and focus on acquisition of skills in four key areas: Create, Present/Perform, Connect, and Respond. Students in each of their art classes are pushed to acquire skills through repetition of positive skills which then allow for critique and connection. Not only are key skills repeated, but relevant content that provides models for the aspiring student artists also is selected intentionally. For example, many students elect to take four years of music classes and are exposed to a systematic four-year curriculum that covers a breadth of styles, time periods, and cultures. Though only two semesters of Fine Arts courses are required, hundreds of students elect to participate in Fine Arts courses beyond the graduation requirement.

In the PE and Health Department, students are required to take Health and Fitness during their freshman year and Advanced Topics in Health as upperclassmen, completing at least one PE credit in each year of school. The PE credit can be satisfied in a number of different ways: enrollment in certain Fine Arts courses, Strength and Conditioning courses, the Performance Training program, Fitness for Life, or Physical Fitness Performance Testing. The Health and Fitness and Advanced Topics in Health class curriculum is determined by the Illinois State Curriculum standards. In those classes, students learn by direct content instruction and practice of key lifetime fitness skills in the weight room and gym.

In the World Languages Department, students have options of courses in Spanish, French, Chinese, or an online Latin course. Often, students choose to participate in these courses and then elect to stop after satisfying the college requirements although upper-level and AP courses are offered to those wishing to continue elective study. The curriculum is determined by standards set forth by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), and each class develops and assesses in four key areas:

communication, culture, connections, and comparison. Students acquire knowledge and practice speaking, reading, and writing in each class. Wheaton Academy is in compliance with the program's world language requirements.

Additionally, Wheaton Academy offers electives in computer science courses such as 3D Design, Introduction to Python Programming, Advanced Python Programming, and Networking. Through these courses students learn basic coding skills and other 21st-Century technology skills that translate into many workplaces. These courses are offered to all grade levels and typically generate interest in students considering a future in the field.

Finally, in 2013 Wheaton Academy became a 1:1 school by providing all students with Chromebooks as part of the school's tuition costs. In 2016 the school switched to the Microsoft Surface as the primary student computer. Teachers are trained and encouraged to use the technology to enhance and extend learning opportunities for students.

3. Special Populations:

Wheaton Academy places a high emphasis on student learning and seeks to ensure that all students are learning, regardless of needs or challenges. Over the course of the past five years, Wheaton Academy has systematized and organized its Academic Support department in order to best serve the growing population with diverse learning needs. In addition to having three trained counselors on staff to address students' social-emotional needs, the school also has an Academic Support Coordinator in charge of coordinating all students with ISPs (individual service plans–the school's 504 equivalent) and another Academic Support staff member on the front lines, providing support in study lab classes. With nearly 100 students who have ISPs that allow for a wide range of accommodations (from extended time on tests to study guides provided for class periods), the school has the necessary support staff in place to ensure that student learning needs are being met.

At the beginning of the school year, each incoming student with an ISP and his or her parents meet with the student's teachers in order to review the ISP and accommodations that will be needed in each class. The Academic Support specialist helps facilitate these meetings in order to ensure that the school is partnering with the family to meet the learning needs of the individual student. The school considers this practice especially important as the student begins freshman year at Wheaton Academy since the adjustment from middle school to a new environment can be challenging. These meetings allow for questions to be addressed and families to be in alignment with the school on which accommodations can be expected from the teachers.

Teachers at Wheaton Academy are trained on the most effective ways to meet student learning needs, not only for special needs but also for the entire student body. As teachers are challenged to think about the best ways to help students learn, heavy emphasis has been placed on differentiation during professional learning days. Re-teaching of material outside of class hours is not uncommon; teachers regularly can be seen meeting with students before and after school hours and even during lunch hours. At the beginning of each semester, all teachers are provided with a list of the students with ISPs in their classes so that teachers may review accommodations and partner with Student Services to set up students for success in each class. Finally, the Student Services academic support team meets on Wednesday mornings to review students' grades and concerns. During Wednesday morning department meetings, department heads discuss with teachers the students who are struggling in class and pass on pertinent information to Student Services via a shared document that provides space for comments on ways Student Services can intervene to help. At the weekly Wednesday review meeting, the Student Services support team strategizes effective approaches and then communicates with students and families, providing intervention to support in areas where students are struggling.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. **School Climate/Culture:**

Students at Wheaton Academy have a truly transformative experience in their time at school because of the highly-relational culture centered around ensuring student success.

On a weekly basis, Wheaton Academy places a high priority on ensuring academic rigor and variety, as evidenced by weekly schedules which include 45-minute class periods on Monday, Tuesday, and Friday and 90-minute block periods on Wednesday and Thursday. Monday includes a Community Time assembly where the entire school community gathers for news, announcements, and points of celebration. Tuesdays and Fridays include chapel schedules where we gather as a school community for worship and a variety of speakers and other experiences that encourage spiritual growth. Wednesday's schedule includes our unique Advisory Program where students meet in groups of twelve to fourteen with a faculty or staff member on topics ranging from use of social media to implementation of our College Readiness traits.

Outside the normal class schedule, students are offered an extensive variety of co-curricular opportunities as outlined in the school summary. Seniors are given the opportunity to join one of eight different leadership teams as part of the school's unique Project LEAD, where seniors are equipped to lead their peers. In addition to these co-curricular offerings, Wheaton Academy has a Director of Student Events on campus who designs inclusive events for students, ranging from school dances to an entire homecoming week of activities that engages all students with dress-up days (where 100% participation is not uncommon) and after-school service events. Students genuinely want to be on campus and be a part of the initiatives that help to ensure students are growing relationally, striving towards excellence, and serving the school and local community.

Finally, teachers are encouraged and incentivized to participate in all areas of student life: as sponsors of co-curricular activities, as leaders of advisory groups, as leaders of trips during Winterim, as chaperones or drivers on field trips and special events. Teachers are hired and evaluated according to the school's proprietary Living Curriculum Teacher Development Model which places a high emphasis on making excellent hires who will advance the mission of the school. Wheaton Academy upholds the value of the teacher by referring to all faculty as "Living Curriculum Teachers" who have a direct impact on the experience of the student and who shape school culture.

2. **Engaging Families and Community:**

On a yearly basis, Wheaton Academy is strategic in engaging parents and the surrounding community in an ongoing effort to improve as an institution. Organizationally, the school is governed by a board of trustees strategically comprised of parents of current or alumni students, alumni, and other stakeholders who have invested in the school. The board is a group of leaders from a wide variety of career backgrounds, and its primary role is to hold the head of school accountable for the implementation of key policies and long-range plans, which all have an impact on the day-to-day operation of the school and the way faculty are positioned to maximize student potential.

Additionally, Wheaton Academy solicits feedback from parents regularly, primarily in the form of surveys. Recently, feedback was solicited from parents on our policies pertaining to late work and test retakes. Parents were dissatisfied with the levels of accountability to which we were holding students in reference to late work. Accordingly, the school made timeliness a key initiative and developed a more stringent late work policy that improved student timeliness in submitting work. In the spring of 2018, Wheaton Academy had parents complete another survey where parents indicated a desire to see expanded opportunities for diversity and inclusion within the school community, and expanding those opportunities has been a focal point for professional development in the 2018-2019 school year.

Teachers are encouraged regularly by administration to maintain proactive contact with parents of individual students. We seek to partner with parents in a student's success at school. Teachers are pushed to

communicate positively with families when students are performing or behaving well in class. Parents cite these contacts as energizing, thus ensuring students remain motivated in class. Teachers are also expected to contact parents when students are struggling, both to inform and to solicit help from home.

Finally, Wheaton Academy engages the community in a number of ways, from community service days--where entire classes of students are released from school for a day to serve alongside local ministries and service organizations--to class projects that partner with local businesses. (One of the AP classes works with a local business to field-test products the company is developing.) One of the unique ways Wheaton Academy solicits help from the community is in the internships that are a part of the Winterim experience. During Winterim approximately 100 students choose to seek internships at local businesses and companies. For two weeks students perform whatever the internship asks of them, gleaning invaluable skills and insights along the way. The hope is that students not only will provide services to help the business but also will learn about the way a future in the career looks. Through the internship experience, many students have developed a further passion for pursuing work in the field in which they interned.

3. **Professional Development:**

Wheaton Academy's professional development program is predicated on four guiding principles: First, it must be relevant to the work that is being done; this includes training in instructional practices to maximize student learning, work with data to understand results and outcomes, pedagogy and practices inside the classroom, and an ongoing commitment to training teachers to educate students from a distinctly Christian and Biblical perspective. Second, it must allow for multiplication; this allows for the development of leaders at all levels throughout the school. The collaborative culture of Wheaton Academy expects that when learning occurs, it will be shared with colleagues at the department or whole faculty level. Training needs to empower teachers to lead their colleagues toward best practices. Third, it must be differentiated; given that the Wheaton Academy faculty and staff are at different levels, the school needs to allow for those differences to be reflected and addressed in staff and faculty development. Whether this includes offering different topics or grouping teachers strategically, administration seeks to ensure that each teacher has a plan for professional growth that reflects individual strengths and allows for growth in weak areas. Finally, it must be reflected in the way evaluation takes place; the goal is for all faculty and staff to receive training in targeted areas that they are expected to master in order to allow them to see growth as they are given feedback each year.

All of these expectations for teacher planning, instruction, and learning environment are measured as a part of Wheaton Academy's evaluation system in the Living Curriculum Teacher Development Model. Teachers are not only trained in these key areas, but their observations, coaching, supervision, and evaluations are geared around the personal areas where their growth is needed. The coherence between the expectations for teaching and learning and the way teachers are evaluated has been extremely positive and has also correlated with increased student learning measured in the AP, ACT, and PSAT scores, as well as significant teacher improvement at an individual level.

Finally, professional development for teachers and administration is supported and encouraged by the Board of Trustees. Annually, the school commits 2% of its operating budget to fund travel and attendance at conferences on best practices for professional development of teachers and administrators. Teacher in-service days are intentionally designed and allow for learning and practice. Professional development days for the 2018-2019 school year are centered around five growth targets in the fields of student learning, innovation, discipleship, use of data, and the Kingdom Community initiative (a comprehensive school approach to diversity and inclusion from a Biblical perspective).

4. **School Leadership:**

Wheaton Academy has been deliberate to ensure that all policies are derived from the mission statement and the core values and philosophies of the school. This priority is a strength insofar as stakeholders understand the way the policies fit with the mission and vision of the school. Not only must the creation of policy at Wheaton Academy be consistent with the execution of the mission and vision of the school but consistency between the policies and the daily practices at Wheaton Academy must also exist. Policies are

not created for the sake of having policy but rather are reflected in the daily workings of the school at all levels. Codified policies exist first at the board level, as seen in the Board Policy manual, for all employees, which are reflected in the employee handbook, and for all student activities both academic and co-curricular, which are reflected in the Student Handbook, the Co-Curricular guide, and the Curriculum Guide. Additionally, we are creating a parent handbook where policies for families will be centrally located for easy access for parents.

Wheaton Academy's Board is a strategic policy board and therefore is accountable for ensuring the Head of School and the Associate Head of School meet the appropriate outcomes determined by the mission and the strategic five-year plan. The Board operates according to the policies in the Board Policy Manual and undergoes training each year to those ends. The Board has empowered the administration to be accountable for the daily execution of the way these goals are achieved, and therefore the Board is not involved in the daily operations or practices, but operates at the strategic policy level.

As a result of the consistency between policy and practice, stakeholders, including parents, faculty and students, value and appreciate the culture and community that is in place at Wheaton Academy. The values in our mission of relationships, excellence, and service set not only high standards for students, faculty and administration, but also provide an exciting and innovative school culture that seeks growth for all involved. In fact, personal growth for all involved at Wheaton Academy is an expectation, whether that be faculty, staff, administration, or students. In surveys, this culture that values and accelerates innovation as well as collaboration and community is clearly both recognized and appreciated. This emphasis on growth is seen in the focus on student learning that pervades the entire educational process at Wheaton Academy. Both inside and outside the classroom, students are being taught ways to see their gifts and talents as well as to understand their progress toward achieving their learning goals which reflect strategically developed standards.

PART VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Over the past four years Wheaton Academy has placed special emphasis on developing a research-based college readiness program that instructs students in six key non-cognitive areas: gratitude, hope, passion, perseverance, self-control, and social intelligence. This program has had a positive impact on the school's culture, unifying terminology and trickling down to all areas of the school: classroom, stage, and field. Wheaton Academy recognizes the importance of instructing students and helping them become excellent in the classroom but recently has begun to place more emphasis on intentionally addressing each of the six traits listed above in addition to encouraging students to adopt a growth mindset. Research indicates that success in college and vocation goes beyond intelligence or academic achievement and that in many cases intelligence and achievement are a direct result of some combination of the above traits.

When the College Readiness program was being implemented, faculty and staff were trained during professional in-service days on the definition and implementation of each of these traits as both teachers and coaches were asked to consider the best ways to focus on these traits in their spheres of influence. Students have learned about these traits in Advisory Groups as curriculum and lessons have been designed for the advisory time around each of the six college readiness traits. For example, in an advisory lesson on gratitude, students take time out of the school day to write thank you notes to teachers. Or during a lesson on perseverance, students will take the Grit Scale assessment as developed by Angela Duckworth and then have discussion around how grittiness (perseverance) translates to success.

Since implementation, Wheaton Academy has seen unified terminology among faculty and staff around these non-cognitive skills. Students evidence fluency in their understanding of these traits, and the six words are posted in every classroom of the school. Last year's theme in chapel was "Hope." Winterim trips offer students the opportunity to develop social intelligence while experiencing other cultures. Coaches instruct players on the importance of perseverance as they practice. Students are encouraged regularly by teachers to pursue areas of passion that will make a difference in others' lives. Overall, the College Readiness program is taking root; though still relatively early in its implementation, it has yielded exciting results as students and teachers alike shift the conversation regarding what breeds success both inside and outside of the classroom.

PART VII – NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

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 <u>X</u>   No

3. What is the educational cost per student? $<u>18647</u>
   (School budget divided by enrollment)

4. What is the average financial aid per student? $<u>2698</u>

5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to   <u>14</u>%
   scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?

6. What percentage of the student body receives
   scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction?   <u>33</u>%

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math   **Test:** ACT   **Grade:** 12
Edition/Publication Year: N/A   **Publisher:** ACT   **Scores are reported here as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Jan
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	25.3
Number of students tested	152
Percent of total students tested	95
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Asian	
Average Score	28.4
Number of students tested	21
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

Subject: Reading/ELA   **Test:** ACT   **Grade:** 12
Edition/Publication Year: N/A   **Publisher:** ACT   **Scores are reported here as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Jan
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	27.2
Number of students tested	152
Percent of total students tested	95
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Asian	
Average Score	25.9
Number of students tested	21
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES: