

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):
- 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	17	21	38
K	7	16	23
1	7	16	23
2	8	6	14
3	10	12	22
4	9	6	15
5	9	12	21
6	15	14	29
7	12	5	17
8	9	7	16
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	103	115	218

*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
 - 2 % Asian
 - 2 % Black or African American
 - 1 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 94 % White
 - 1 % 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: 2%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	0
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	4
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	4
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	227
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.02
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 4 %
 Total number students who qualify: 8

8. Students receiving special education services: 5 %
10 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>0</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>4</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>3</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>1</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>3</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 6

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	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	13
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	7
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	4
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 16:1

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%	95%	97%	97%	97%
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.

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

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

Yes No

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

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

Prepare students as critical thinkers and problem solvers in a setting where love of God, human dignity, justice, excellence, and service are among the values lived.

PART III – SUMMARY

Ascension School is a fully accredited Catholic, suburban, elementary school in Louisville, KY offering an unparalleled education grounded in the Catholic faith. Ascension recognizes the uniqueness of each student in a caring, disciplined environment, which exemplifies Christ's command to serve one another. The pastor, nineteen faculty, four assistants, guidance counselor, learning coordinator, two administrators, secretary, custodian and full cafeteria staff work jointly, and tirelessly, to ensure students are prepared to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world and to live cooperatively as critical thinkers and problem solvers in a global society. Love of God, human dignity, justice, ecumenism, service to others, stewardship and excellence are among the values lived at Ascension.

Nestled within the St. Regis Park neighborhood since 1965 and drawing students from the connecting neighborhoods of Brookhaven, Regency Woods and Ashmere, Ascension opened with 260 students in grades K-8. With steady increase in enrollment, Ascension reached its maximum capacity of 480 students by 1982 where it remained until the late 90's. Because of the aging St. Regis Park and Brookhaven neighborhoods, as well as expansion of the east end of Louisville, which saw the opening of several new Catholic schools, enrollment declined from 1998 through 2013, reaching a low of 121 students. With new administration, turnover within the neighborhoods surrounding the school and new pastoral leadership, Ascension has seen continuous increase in enrollment and overall renewal of enthusiasm for the school and its mission.

Throughout its fifty-three-year history, including the ebbs and flows, the Ascension community has maintained a deep-rooted commitment to the success of the school. Parents and grandparents of children who graduated long ago are still visible in all facets of the ministry: coaching, maintenance, mentors, tutors and all-around volunteers. Students are still greeted, by name, every morning by faculty and staff, Mass is celebrated weekly, murals painted by the first graduating class are maintained, trophies from athletic victories dating back to the 1960's are still on display and Alumni are honored through Ascension publications and social media, regularly.

Today, students come from all over the city to be a part of Ascension, which has dedicated itself to 21st century learning. The reputation of the school continues to grow as a leader in technology, differentiation, project-based learning, critical thinking and problem solving.

Under new administration in 2013, the faculty and staff at Ascension worked collaboratively to begin transitioning from outdated ideologies of education to embracing 21st century realities of learning. Among the first additions were 1:1 iPads in grades K-8 coupled with sincere commitment of faculty to attend professional development across the country: learning how to effectively use these valuable educational tools to enhance learning. Next was overhauling our classrooms to bring flexible seating, Apple tv's, HD projectors, carpeting and new furniture as well as an overall de-cluttering: all made possible due to careful management of funds over the course of nearly twenty years leading to one of a very few parishes within the Archdiocese of Louisville to be debt free.

By departmentalizing grades 2-8, students have the opportunity to learn with teachers who are passionate about the subject they teach while allowing students to move from class to class every 50 minutes. The addition of robotics, coding, 3D printers and upgrades to our computer lab challenge students to create and problem solve: building a foundation of skills they will use in high school and, likely, beyond. In 2016, Ascension became the first Catholic school in Kentucky to train every faculty member in project-based learning. To date, faculty collaborate in cross curricular projects, which include small businesses (3D printed key chains and hand soaps) as well as service projects, working with refugees, student publications, gardens, birdhouses for Habitat for Humanity, composting, global classrooms, art gallery, tv studio and music compositions, to name a few. Weaving through all of this is the encouragement of students to ask questions, think critically and solve problems, daily. Because of a sincere commitment to all of these advances, Ascension remains the fastest growing school in the Archdiocese of Louisville.

The commitment of students, faculty and staff to serve is intertwined in educational goals. Efforts to feed the

homeless, work with seniors, feeding/clothing the poor, Blessings in a Backpack and a student run business making pillows for dogs in shelters have enriched recipients and servants alike. Several service projects have garnered accolades within the local news community. Overall, the student body engages in more than a thousand hours of service every year.

Ascension faculty, staff and students unremittingly seek opportunities to learn and stay abreast of the fastest changing world we have known. It is part of our mission to form Christ-centered students who think critically, problem solve and act as stewards of the global community.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

Through a variety of teaching methods and strategies, Ascension’s language arts curriculum helps students acquire a variety of skills including: phonemic and phonetic awareness, fluency, word decoding strategies, structural analysis, textual analysis and reading comprehension. Students also acquire specific reading comprehension skills including identifying cause and effect scenarios, summarization, sequencing, comparing and contrasting, inferencing, relating background knowledge, identifying the author’s purpose and using context clues to identify unknown words. Writing encompasses skills needed across the curriculum. Ascension’s writing program focuses on using the six traits of writing to guide progression. Written pieces include narratives, expository, opinion, research driven pieces and how-to. Students have the opportunity to showcase their creativity and skills by participating in Young Authors. Faculty differentiate the instruction through small groups and whole class settings, based on students’ individual needs and learning styles. The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) allows teachers to assess students at their current reading and writing level. Additionally, it allows them to monitor student progress and adapt instruction accordingly throughout the school year.

Raz-Kids is an app used in kindergarten through third grade in connection with the DRA encouraging students to read at or above their reading level. Raz-Kids monitors students reading comprehension and allows teachers to assess fluency. Membean and Reading Plus are two multimodal apps used to increase language, vocabulary, word analysis and comprehension in upper grades. Students are able to demonstrate mastery in a variety of formats, including: iMovies, Pic Collage and Flip Grid as they develop the critical thinking skills needed to prepare them as 21st century learners. Ascension incorporates project-based learning within our curriculum in order to make learning visible. Project-based learning allows students to be engaged and initiate the direction of their learning. Students often work cross-curricularly as faculty work together to integrate different subject areas into students’ projects. As a language arts department, the faculty meets weekly as part of the professional learning community to provide each other with advice, guidance, recommendations, accountability, and discussion of specific students’ needs as we strive for the greater good of students.

1b. Mathematics:

The math department at Ascension meets weekly, as part of the PLC to provide each other with advice, guidance, recommendations, accountability and discussion of specific students’ needs. Ascension’s math text is GoMath. Students are able to utilize imbedded online videos, manipulatives and additional technology via the iPad. The math classes integrate technology through the use of IXL, Khan Academy, Zearn, faculty created videos and/or other engaging math apps. Before entering a new unit, faculty gather pre-assessment and formative data to help determine further instructional direction. Grades K-8 use Simple Solutions to help reinforce previously learned skills through a constant review. Grades 4-8 utilize a flipped classroom, which allows students to move through the curriculum at a pace that matches their level of understanding and ability. The math faculty attempt to create a safe and nurturing environment where mistakes are seen as opportunities for growth. The teachers encourage hands-on learning, collaboration and reflection.

Test corrections, test retakes, tutoring and Fast Forward math program help students master content. 8th grade is taught high school Algebra I, which contributes to their understanding in high school and the ability to be placed in higher level Geometry or Algebra II classes.

A considerable amount of focus is placed on proper terminology by the teacher and students using content specific vocabulary in discussions and question/answer periods. Faculty strive to have all students answer questions in complete grammatically correct sentences. All math classes provide a word board reinforcing math vocabulary. The math department incorporates project-based learning within the curriculum in order to

make learning visible. Purposeful intent to integrate project-based learning allows students to be engaged and initiate the direction of the project. Some examples include creating tabletop golf courses, combination of math and religion project to buy a goat for an African village and constructing birdhouses, which were donated to Habitat for Humanity.

1c. Science:

The Ascension science curriculum uses student-driven inquiry methods based on the Next Generation Science Standards. These standards involve teaching the core concepts of science using hands-on activities and experiments to emphasize the relationship between all disciplines of science. Ascension is departmentalized and includes two fully equipped science labs: one in the elementary wing for grades kindergarten through fifth grade and one in the middle school for grades sixth through eighth. Students gain real world knowledge and skills through the project-based learning approach. Many of the project-based learning activities are cross curricular and collaborative with language arts, math, religion and social studies topics embedded within the science project. Learning takes place both inside and outside the classroom with an emphasis on digging deeper into the concepts and understanding the real-world implications. A school garden is planted, maintained and harvested each year by the students. Much of the fresh produce from the garden is used in the school cafeteria. The science curriculum also uses technology to support student inquiry and critical thinking. 1:1 iPads allow students to easily research information about topics and then create digital presentations to share with the class or on the school website. Technology is used to assist in learning and is often used in STEM/STEAM projects. The goal of the science program at Ascension is to develop 21st century learners who are curious about the world around them and are empowered to seek answers through problem solving and experimentation.

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

Ascension's social studies curriculum focuses on connecting students to the world around them – past, present, and future. Students use Pearson Realize Interactive as a base text. Through this curriculum students are able to access and annotate directly on the iPads. Students use Google Expeditions to “visit” the places and time periods being studied. Google Earth allows students to zoom into a particular geographic region and take a glimpse of everyday life in that area. Students are encouraged to present in multimodal means including but not limited to: PowerPoint, Google Slides, iMovie, Pic Collage, Thinglink, and Prezi. Teachers use formative assessments daily in the classroom to differentiate their instruction. The social studies faculty work with other content areas during professional learning community time, weekly, to analyze data and to help build lessons that are multifaceted and teach power standards while also connecting to core curriculum across content areas. Additionally, faculty focus on incorporating content specific vocabulary in discussions, questions, and debates. Faculty strive to have all students answer questions in complete, grammatically correct sentences and to use their critical thinking skills in all writing and reading within the classroom. Students are encouraged to see multiple perspectives and have mature conversations when they do not see eye to eye. (A goal being to help create young adults who are able to have civil discourse as they enter adulthood.) Students are also allowed multiple opportunities for civic engagement and participation through the service projects offered throughout the year. The social studies department incorporates project-based learning within the curriculum in order to help make learning visible. By incorporating project-based learning, students are engaged and initiate the direction of the project.

1e. For secondary schools:

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

Ascension preschool offers a preschool program which is licensed by the state and has achieved four stars in the STARS for Kids Now initiative. Students explore language arts and math through guided play in interest centers, STREAM, MAPs2Learn, Learning Without Tears curriculum, interactive calendar and games. Students grow their Catholic faith by regular Mass attendance, prayer and service projects. The preschool seeks alignment of standards by participating in Ascension's professional learning community, where

faculty meet weekly to discuss power standards and formative assessments. By sharing assessment data, faculty are aware of each grades scope and sequence and insights into students and instruction. Faculty use data collected to differentiate small group instruction. On average, preschool students scored 90% on the KRT Larson Kindergarten Readiness Test, with the lowest scores registering in the average range.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Ascension's special area classes are an integral part of the school's total educational program, with a focus on lifelong enjoyment and appreciation of all types of creative endeavors. Special area faculty use the Archdiocesan Curriculum Framework as their guide. The faculty commitment to our professional learning community and project-based learning provides opportunities for collaboration with other faculty to design cross-curricular lessons. These lessons involve students in activities which help them make connections between the specialty area, other core disciplines and the real world. Ascension students attend eight special area subjects per week. Our preschool through first grade students attend for a 30-minute period while our second through eighth grade students attend for a 50-minute period.

Music

The music program at Ascension explores all aspects of the world of music: listening, creating and performing, music history, world music and music theory. The goal of the music program is to instill in our students a life-long love of music and prepare our students to successfully engage with music in school, church and the community. Students use technology such as Garageband, iMovie and Notation Software to compose, arrange and record their own musical compositions. There are also performance opportunities for all grades with Ascension's Christmas program and spring musical.

Art

Weekly art lessons involve students in activities including research, discussion and demonstration. Hands on studio time allows students to build their knowledge of famous artists past and present, styles of art, art mediums, tools, techniques, art vocabulary and self-expression. While engaging in the creative process, students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills which encourage students to become creative, free thinking individuals.

Physical Education

The physical education program at Ascension coaches students to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to enjoy a physically active lifestyle. Students work on body control, movement patterns, sportsmanship, effort and teamwork. The goal is for students to develop and maintain acceptable levels of physical fitness while learning a variety of skills which allow them to experience success.

Spanish

The Spanish program at Ascension brings the Hispanic world into the classroom. Students explore the exciting world of Spanish by providing language enrichment through songs, games and cultural experiences. Students are introduced to new vocabulary, grammar and conversational phrases through literature, activities, technology, games and cultural celebrations. Students learn the language in an engaging and interactive way.

Technology

The technology program introduces students to word processing, spreadsheets, and presentation software. Coding, which involves critical thinking and problem solving, is taught in all grades using various coding languages including HTML, Python, Swift Programming and 3D design software. Elementary students are coding Spheros and other robots to move, turn and change colors. Middle school students use the project-based learning approach to design a 3D printing replica of the school utilizing the original blueprints. In collaboration with other subject specific faculty, Virtual Reality Goggles are used for students to take virtual field trips. Students are encouraged to join the after-school robotics club for additional practice with building and coding robots.

Library

Reading is a key part of the curriculum as students grow to become lifelong learners and readers. Students

have access to a large selection of books with encouragement to read various genres and authors. In addition to weekly class, the library is accessible for students to check out books before and after school.

Guidance

Ascension uses a unique approach with its guidance counselor. The counselor meets with each class weekly exploring family life, Theology of the Body, stranger danger, gun safety, internet safety, esteem building, team building, anti-bullying and self-reflection as well as participating in Junior Achievement. One of the many benefits Ascension students receive from guidance classes is a slow but ongoing process where students become familiar with the counselor in a non-threatening or invasive way, which lends itself to a more comfortable rapport should students need individual or family services during their school years.

Trivium

With its deep roots in the earliest traditions of the Catholic education, Trivium supports the school's goals of providing an intentionally Christian curriculum. The Trivium has three parts: grammar, logic and rhetoric. These three ideas form the foundation for all education. Armed with these skills students can be lifelong learners in any subject. Language is input, logic is process and rhetoric is output. The language goals focus on the mastering of Latin and Greek roots, prefixes and suffixes that make up the majority of English words. The average student will encounter 10,000 new words every year and 80% of them have Latin or Greek roots.

3. Special Populations:

Ascension provides a highly supportive, highly structured growth mindset school culture where students are challenged to reach their full potential. Students receive differentiated instruction using a combination of direct instruction, student-centered learning, project-based learning and a 1:1 iPad program. Faculty differentiate instruction and assignments to address each student's individual skills and grade level. In addition, Ascension is utilizing the PLC process where administration and staff meet weekly to evaluate and provide feedback on student assessment data. Faculty present current assessment data and then collaborate on ways to improve learning for all students. The presenting faculty members reflect, and the team debriefs. This process is an effective way to address both struggling and gifted populations by continually answering the four questions which serve as the foundation for a PLC: what should each student be learning? How does faculty know they have learned it? What is the response when students have difficulty learning it? What should be done if they already know it?

Students who require specialized instruction can be identified in a variety of ways: teacher requests, parent request, psycho-educational evaluation, student requests and/or referral from an outside agency or service. Once a student has been diagnosed, the learning coordinator, along with an educational team, develops a Student Accommodation Plan that is updated annually. Progress reports are uploaded electronically which teachers and parents may view at any time. Contacts are made and releases signed for students who are receiving outside services such as occupational therapy or speech therapy. Our faculty collaborates with these outside professionals to insure continuity and consistency with regards to their treatment plan. Frequently, these professionals are included in our progress meetings either through conference calls or actual attendance.

Ascension currently has five licenses for Fast Forward. This is a reading intervention program which uses a 3-part model to directly target and fix the root causes of language and reading difficulty. It provides students with foundational language and cognitive skills, deliberate practice and guided reading support they needed to make fast improvements. These students are committed to 30 minutes of programming five days a week including holidays. Both minutes and progress are tracked daily and are reviewed as each new level is achieved. Reading grade levels have seen improvement for 90% of the students who complete the required hours. In addition, in-school tutoring is provided during the school year as well as a summer mathematics program. Each student is assessed three times a year using the DRA and adjustments are made to their reading assignments as necessary. As is evident above, a variety of best practices are routinely used in all classrooms, for all populations.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

At Ascension, there is no place a student goes where he/she is not welcomed and known. From morning carpool where students are greeted by several faculty, staff and student patrols to classroom or office, they feel at home. Because Ascension is a smaller school, it is easy and important to know each student and their families. At the end of every year, faculty and staff gather to discuss every student at Ascension: their strengths, areas to focus on, family life and social life.

Knowing students individually goes a long way in helping to make sure they remain involved in areas they are passionate about. Ascension is proud to offer the following school clubs: robotics, Governor's Cup, archery, Quick Recall, Boy and Girl Scouts, homework help, Girls on the Run, music lessons, band, choir and TV studio production team. Ascension also offers most every sport as part of our athletic program. Students are recognized through social media outlets as well as in weekly newsletters and church bulletins for outstanding performance.

Because of the dedication to formative assessment and making learning visible, students know their teachers are working to make sure they KNOW concepts and material before moving ahead or taking summative assessments. In today's world, it is imperative we remain aware of high anxiety in students, and children overall. Working with them to KNOW material, as opposed to memorizing or simply moving forward without checking for complete understanding, minimizes stress and anxiety as they feel they can achieve success with hard work.

Faculty at Ascension are part of a dynamic, driven team who support each other like family. Every member of the faculty and staff is committed, as evidenced by the number of professional development hours, to their own and student learning. Rarely a day goes by without teachers gathered in each other's rooms during planning periods or after school discussing strategies, opportunities and ideas for project-based learning. Our commitment to the PLC process brings us together weekly. The spirit committee provides fun, snacks and entertainment on a regular basis and, at every meeting, we take time for, "Golden Squares," thanking a colleague for something they've done.

It is truly exciting that all of this is organic, not forced— students can't wait to come to school and our faculty seeks ways to learn so they can be most effective.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The root of Ascension is dedicated and active families. With nearly seventy percent participation from parents through committees, organizations, coaching and general volunteering, a unique and powerful brand of support adds to our overall success. Parents, grandparents and extended family regularly eat lunch with their children, volunteer as assistants in classrooms, mystery readers, field trip monitors, library support and so much more.

Parents, alumni and parishioners also serve as participants and leaders on the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) Finance Committee, School Board, Parish Council, Athletic Committee, Boy and Girl Scouts, Governor's Cup, Quick Recall, Robotics, Archery and serve as room parents for each class. Ascension receives feedback, via a yearly online survey, which is used by administration and various committees to improve and plan for future growth.

Communication is a key to the success of Ascension. Through the online parent portal, website, Twitter, Longhorn Lowdown (weekly school publication) church bulletin, Rediker (student information system providing grades and report cards) as well as the Ascension app and student ebackpack (where homework, projects and classwork are housed) parents, students and the community at large are well informed.

The PTO and School Board serve as a conduit for continuous improvement, channeling information to

administration, which assists in growth and success. These committees further provide support in the form of fundraisers for technology, classroom improvements, and professional development. Events such as the back to school night dinner, trivia night, trunk or treat, open houses, Catholic School's Week and Summer Festival would not be possible without this dedication to Ascension. These events also bring the entire community together to share and build camaraderie.

Service projects further bring the community together to help those in need or offer thanks and prayers. Blessings in a Backpack provide backpacks and food for those less fortunate, monthly visits from our students to a local nursing home provides cheer and friendship, letters to veterans and service members offer thanks and support, sandwich Sundays brings families together after Mass to make sandwiches for the homeless, which are delivered throughout the city, and many of our students act as altar servers at school Masses and on Sundays.

3. Professional Development:

Each Ascension faculty member is required, by the Archdiocese of Louisville, to participate in eighteen hours of professional development each year. For the past five years, each faculty member at Ascension has averaged fifty-five hours with a great majority turning in upwards of sixty. The areas of focus are determined by Terra Nova Test scores, 21st Century Best Practices, teacher input, AdvancED accreditation process and Archdiocesan goals.

Prior to 2013, Ascension School had an overall budget for professional development of \$1,500, which was to be spread among 14 faculty. In 2013, under new administration, and with the necessity to increase enrollment or face closure, it was imperative to restructure the educational approach and perform an overhaul of the school. To do so required more money to train faculty, and the budget grew to \$5,000 that year. Today, the budget is \$21,000, which opens more opportunities to the faculty and, ultimately, provides inspiration, knowledge and growth of the faculty.

Throughout each year, faculty, staff and administration discuss needs for continued growth and learning opportunities which will have the greatest impact on student learning. So far, faculty have participated in project-based learning, PLC's, multiple technology conferences, differentiation, maker spaces, fishbowls at other schools, formative assessment, writing, reading assessment, critical thinking, math, science and social studies. Along with these, which take place throughout the year, but predominately over the summer, is the Archdiocesan Summer Institute, which offers several weeks of speakers and mini-workshops here in Louisville.

Before school begins each August, faculty members present what they learned and offer workshops when needed. The product of this two -week period of learning from each other, is the yearly faculty mission (2018-19 is, "Making Learning Visible") as well as collective commitments and vision. SMART goals are also established based on data from formative assessments, Terra Nova scores and observations. New ideas and knowledge from conferences, workshops and sessions provide the needed, "know-how" as well as inspiration and overall passion.

The five main focus areas at Ascension are: differentiation, critical thinking, technology, formative assessments and project- based learning. These are wrapped within the PLC process embraced by many schools as well as the Archdiocese of Louisville. To accomplish these means providing time for faculty to collaborate. As such, the faculty meets every Tuesday bringing formative assessment data to share and receive feedback. At least one Tuesday a month is set aside for faculty to discuss specific students as well as time for the learning coordinator to discuss DRA data and student accommodation plans.

4. School Leadership:

Ascension School is led by a principal with the support of a consultative School Board. Because Ascension is part of the parish community, the school falls under the guidance and decision-making authority of the pastor. The principal works collaboratively with the school counselor, learning coordinator and pre-K director to make decisions and move Ascension forward.

The School Board meets monthly to consult with the pastor and principal regarding school policy and other issues of concern within the community. Minutes are recorded and posted to the school website. The Board also serves as a conduit of information coming from parents or other community members to the principal and pastor. The members also communicate with and answer questions throughout the year.

The principal relies heavily on input from faculty and staff regarding curriculum and instruction, professional development, student progress in development as well as intervention and service. Day-to-day operations, final decision making, budgetary concerns, spiritual growth, faculty supervision and observation, aggregating data and providing inspiration and support fall under the principal's duties.

Because of the unique circumstances the principal inherited (low enrollment and facing closure) it has been the charge of the administration to also take leadership in promoting, marketing and advertising the school's stellar achievements in different ways: new logo, open houses, use of media, videos, banners, motto, website, social media and overall appearance of the school.

The implementation of 21st century educational practices has been the focus over the last six years. The principal has led the faculty and staff through substantial change in personnel, educational practice and rapid enrollment growth. As a result, test scores have continued to rise, academic responsibility, enthusiasm and overall achievement have risen. The changes Ascension has made, and continues to make, revolve around preparing students for a world of uncertainty: being critical thinkers who understand and know how to solve problems, being self-confident, caring stewards of a global community and exemplifying Christ's command to serve.

Students at Ascension are encouraged to participate in the vast array of activities, clubs and athletics offered as well as to question, collaborate and never be afraid to work with faculty, staff and administration for change which benefits their learning.

PART VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Because Ascension School has undergone substantial changes over the last six years with positive outcomes, it is difficult to pinpoint one practice which has been most instrumental in the school's success. However, when looking at the significant changes, they do, in fact boil down to one immutable practice: professional development.

As Ascension began to restructure in 2013, it became clear there was no way to simply incorporate changes without buy in and knowledge of how they work in the classroom. Without professional development it is quite possible the impact of careless and misguided practice would have adversely affected student learning and certainly created chaos within the school and community.

After meetings with faculty, which produced research and interests, professional development opportunities began to surface. With an increase in the budget and grant money, faculty members began their quest for the knowledge needed to successfully implement changes.

Introducing 1:1 iPads in grades K-8 was a huge undertaking. Understanding how to use these tools effectively meant dedication and understanding. Both were quick to come from hundreds of hours spent at conferences and workshops as well as reading, speaking to schools across the country who had successfully implemented them and practice. Five years later, Ascension is consistently consulted for advice. The faculty continue to attend technology workshops, conferences and webinars as every year shuttles new breakthrough advancements, which generate further interest from students while motivating them to learn in different ways.

For the past three years, a different team of faculty has attended Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) conferences. The result of this is a faculty committed to ensuring students learn through a culture of collaboration and a focus on results. Ascension faculty are now interested in four questions: what should each student be learning? How do faculty know students have learned it? What is the response when students have difficulty learning it? What should be done if students already know it? To understand where students are in their learning (an answer to these questions) the faculty use formative assessments, share data and work collaboratively through departmentalization to address student needs.

The entire faculty at Ascension has been trained to use project-based learning, which develops and enhances student learning by encouraging critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork and self-management. The project's proposed question drives students to make their own decisions, perform their own research, and review their own and fellow students' process/projects.

With projected budget appropriations for professional development over the next three years in place, Ascension faculty will continue to pursue the necessary tools to drive student learning into the future.

PART VII – NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

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

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

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

3. What is the educational cost per student? \$7754
(School budget divided by enrollment)

4. What is the average financial aid per student? \$1885

5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 4%

6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 30%

PART VIII – ASSESSMENT RESULTS FOR NORM-REFERENCED TESTS

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math

Test: Terra Nova 3

Grade: 3

Edition/Publication Year: 2013

Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill

Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	70
Number of students tested	17
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math
Edition/Publication Year: 2013

Test: Terra Nova 3
Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill

Grade: 5
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	75
Number of students tested	22
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math
Edition/Publication Year: 2013

Test: Terra Nova 3
Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill

Grade: 7
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	87
Number of students tested	19
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Reading/ELA
Edition/Publication Year: 2013

Test: Terra Nova 3
Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill

Grade: 3
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	78
Number of students tested	17
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Reading/ELA
Edition/Publication Year: 2013

Test: Terra Nova 3
Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill

Grade: 5
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	79
Number of students tested	22
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Reading/ELA
Edition/Publication Year: 2013

Test: Terra Nova 3
Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill

Grade: 7
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	73
Number of students tested	19
Percent of total students tested	0
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES: