

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
 - 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	14	6	20
K	11	10	21
1	9	16	25
2	6	10	16
3	10	5	15
4	5	10	15
5	11	11	22
6	12	9	21
7	7	10	17
8	12	12	24
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	97	99	196

*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
 - 6 % Asian
 - 53 % Black or African American
 - 19 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 14 % White
 - 8 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2017 – 2018 school year: 10%

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	5
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	14
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	19
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	195
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.10
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	10

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas): Akan, Amharic, Cebuano, Creole/Pidgin English based, Esan, Ewe, French Creole, French, Ga, German, Grebo, Ibu, Igbo, Korean, Lamnso, Luganda, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish, Swahili, Tagalog, Tamil, Tigrigna, Twi Go, Urdu, Vietnamese, and Yoruba.

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 17 %
33 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 30 %
 Total number students who qualify: 58

8. Students receiving special education services: 2 %
3 Total number of students served

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

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

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1

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.	10
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.	3
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	0

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 20:1

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%	97%	97%	96%	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.

The mission of St. Joseph's is to cooperate with families, who are the primary educators, in forming the whole child in the Catholic Christian faith.

PART III – SUMMARY

St. Joseph's Regional Catholic School is a small, co-educational, Catholic community located in Beltsville, Maryland. It serves students and their families enrolled in grades pre-K4 through the 8th grade within the Archdiocese of Washington. With over 32 countries and 27 languages among the 196 students, the school represents the ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity of the nation's capital, approximately 16 miles southwest of St. Joseph's. Additionally, the school is also diverse economically and spiritually as 30% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch within the population of 85% Catholic and 15% non-Catholic students.

Since opening its doors in 1964 as the local St. Joseph parish school, St. Joseph's was regionalized with the parishes of St. Hugh of Grenoble and St. Nicholas in 2011. Since its regionalization, it has continued its emphasis of being rooted in Gospel values and committed to excellence in education. Its mission is to cooperate with families, who are the primary educators, in developing the whole child in the Catholic Christian faith. With Christ and his teaching as their foundation, they focus on creating an environment of prayer (ora), study (stude), work (labora) and play (lude), thereby providing each child with the opportunity to grow in all areas of his or her life.

Fundamental to the school is the creation of an environment in which children learn and practice their Christian faith. This environment is shaped by an understanding that each person is created in the image of God and therefore is unique and equally deserving of respect, kindness, love, and mercy. Faculty and staff work collaboratively with parents to ensure that human dignity is preserved in all situations and that children learn to be of service to others. This spiritual emphasis permeates throughout all aspects of the school and its policies and procedures. Therefore, to support each child and faculty member's spiritual development, each day begins and ends with student-led prayer and everyone participates in weekly mass. Significant Catholic rituals such as May Crowning, the Feast Day of St. Joseph, Stations of the Cross, First Eucharist, and Reconciliation, among others are celebrated. Students are empowered to serve others through monthly food drives for local pantries and the homeless, as well as to fundraise for hurricane relief and breast cancer awareness, all of which have contributed to the school being nationally recognized by the President as a recipient of the President's Volunteer Service Award at the highest level.

The commitment to develop the entire child serves as the guiding compass for the direction of the school by emphasizing that each child is beautifully and wonderfully made. Each child is blessed with unique talents that will help him or her achieve his or her God-given potential if he or she possesses a growth mindset, and is kind, disciplined, and loving. Therefore, the faculty and staff, in collaboration with parents, work diligently to foster the self-discipline required of each child by monitoring his or her thoughts, words, and actions so that an environment conducive to learning is established. Using data-driven decision making, teachers emphasize progress in all aspects of personal growth- academic, emotional, physical, and social.

The first strategy employed to facilitate this emphasis is teacher professional development on the growth mindset approach. This concept is reinforced through multiple faculty meetings and teacher in-services throughout the year. Additionally, teachers are evaluated on their implementation of a growth mindset approach in the classroom and in the language they use in discussions about and with their students and parents. Parents are also introduced to the concept with weekly newsletters and provided with resources throughout the year referencing how to develop a growth mindset within their child. Select articles are shared with parents on the St. Joseph's social media platform to reinforce its importance and to share best practices regarding implementation. Based on the growth mindset model, student behavior and academic achievement are consistently compared with previous outcomes to determine progress. That information is used for individual student discussion that arises from student self-reflection and teacher or administrative facilitation.

The second strategy focuses on building a more supportive culture for teachers by removing some of the policies and practices that reduce teacher effectiveness. This strategy improves teacher morale and increases the time for teachers to engage in self-reflection and to implement research-based pedagogical practices. Additionally, teachers are provided with opportunities for feedback on major changes to improve the quality

of the decision-making process. Moreover, celebrating birthdays and personal and professional achievements of faculty and staff creates a positive work culture. Collectively, these measures improve teacher engagement which translates into better outcomes for all students.

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

The core curriculum of St. Joseph's is based on the academic standards of the Archdiocese of Washington. As language arts is the gatekeeper that allows all students to access every aspect of the curriculum adequately, more time is dedicated to English language instruction than other academic areas. Instruction lasts approximately 750 minutes each week in kindergarten to 3rd-grades, 525 minutes in the 4th and 5th grades, and 450 minutes in the 6th to 8th grades. All grades consistently incorporate reading, spelling, and vocabulary, and the skills of listening, speaking, and writing within the curriculum and also within other content areas. All students receive a combination of whole and small group instruction that is tailored to the needs of the class, specific groups, and individuals. Frequent higher-order questioning techniques and scaffolding are used consistently so that students can support their ideas using textual evidence, relate the text to pre-existing information, and utilize other critical thinking skills. Furthermore, students are exposed to expository, narrative, technical, and persuasive texts at all grade levels from different genres, eras, and cultures. Students are also exposed to word components so that they are able to decode terms based on their prefixes, suffixes, and word roots. Furthermore, students are able to participate in monthly challenges using prefixes and suffixes as well as the annual county-wide Spelling Bee competition. The expectation is that as students progress through the grade levels, fluency and reading comprehension improves so that by the time they are enrolled in middle school, students are capable of engaging in increasingly more complex analytical processes needed to write research papers, book reports, and oratory speeches. To support this goal, data-driven practices are employed continuously by primarily using data obtained from the three independent Scantron tests as well as teacher-developed assessments, oral reports, comprehensive chapter tests, book reports, and presentations. That data is used to determine grouping, curriculum objectives, instructional practices and pacing, assessments, and the type of instructional supports used, including outside intervention. This information is relayed to parents and students so that the child's progress is made through collaborative support.

1b. Mathematics:

Mathematics instruction is also intentionally structured to receive a significant amount of instructional time compared with other subjects. Math instruction lasts approximately 300 minutes weekly for students enrolled in kindergarten through 5th grades and 225 minutes for middle school students enrolled in 6th to 8th grades using the academic standards of the Archdiocese of Washington. For students enrolled in pre-K4 through 8th-grade, math standards are structured around five main concepts- number sense, computation, algebra and functions, measurement, and geometry. Students enrolled in Algebra focus on ten concepts- operations with real numbers, linear equations and inequalities, relations and functions, graphing linear equations and inequalities, pairs of linear equations and inequalities, polynomials, algebraic functions, quadratic, cubic, and radical equations, and mathematical reasoning and problem-solving.

Mathematics instruction is influenced by student data and uses a hybrid of research-based math instructional approaches such as a combination of whole and small group direct instruction, metacognition techniques, manipulatives, rigorous questioning, and cooperative learning to solve basic and advanced mathematical computation and word problems. Student learning is also individualized and differentiated by skill set through the use of web-based math resources that serve to remediate and reinforce skills in students who need additional support. Targeted student grouping is also used to determine and apply additional interventions based on the student learning objectives that have not been mastered. All students also receive instructional activities with spiraled content so that students can connect past concepts with current ones to reinforce learning. Students who have consistently demonstrated academic talent through achievement on math assessments, both teacher-created and Scantron, are placed in advanced math classes starting in the 6th grade. Pre-algebra is offered in the seventh grade to academically talented students with the option of completing high school algebra in the eighth grade.

1c. Science:

Science instruction in each grade involves the formal study of life science, engineering, physical, and earth and space content based on the academic standards of the Archdiocese of Washington. Instruction occurs for 45 minutes per week in kindergarten, 125 minutes in 1st through 3rd grades, 225 minutes in 4th and 5th grades, and 180 minutes in middle school. Science instruction involves a combination of cooperative learning, the use of manipulatives, outdoor learning, experimentation, questioning, inquiry-based learning, and direct instruction. In the younger grades, science lessons are coupled with literacy and math. Students in 3rd-8th grades engage in increasingly more inquiry-based lessons that incorporate laboratory investigations designed around a central question. Students develop critical thinking skills as they build roller coasters, create a recipe to make a bioplastic bouncy ball that is flexible and durable, build simple machines, use circuits to build electronics, examine the development of chicken embryos, and investigate anatomy and physiology through dissections. Students' knowledge and application of scientific content and skills are assessed using a combination of authentic assessments and chapter tests. Based on the results of these assessments, teachers modify future instruction by re-teaching the concept and allowing for retesting.

Students enrolled in pre-K4 - 4th grades can participate in weekly STEM Club investigations afterschool in which they use the scientific method to solve investigations and explore the real world applications of science such as making rockets, crystals, and ice cream. Students enrolled in kindergarten- 8th grades are also able to participate in the weekly Lego Robotics Club in which students work in teams to design and program LEGO Mindstorm robots to complete tasks, culminating in a regional competition. Middle school students also have the opportunity to learn to code so that they can program real and virtual robots in a regional competition.

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

The social studies curriculum is centered on the five content areas that unify the academic standards of the Archdiocese of Washington: history; civics and government; geography; economics; and individuals, society, and culture. Social Studies instruction occurs for 45 minutes per week in kindergarten, approximately 125 minutes in 1st through 3rd grades, and 225 minutes in 4th through 8th grades. In younger grades, social studies lessons are infused with literacy as students explore themselves as individuals and their role within a larger community and culture. Through social studies courses, students learn that learning must be coupled with action so that, as stewards of the world, they can use their talents and treasures to serve the community. Therefore, students are provided with opportunities to organize local service projects to help the needy such as soliciting donations for hurricane relief, coats during winter, personal items for the homeless, food for local shelters, and non-perishable items for local food pantries. Each day begins with the raising of the flag and the Pledge of Allegiance. Students also participate in civic-minded events such as rallies, competitions devoted to civic learning, and charitable events.

Students actively participate in discussions, design and implement projects, visit historic sites, watch historic footage, and recreate colonial living through dress, games, and speech. Teachers use a combination of both formal and informal assessments to evaluate student understanding and critical thinking. Using both forms of data, teachers employ a data-driven instructional approach in which student data is used to inform curricular practices. This may include re-teaching the concept, adjusting the length of time the concept is covered, altering the assessment practices, and modifying the grouping structure.

1e. For secondary schools:

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

At the preschool level, four-year-old students receive explicit instruction in math, reading, science, art, music, religion, technology, PE, and Spanish. The curriculum is determined by both an integration of curriculum standards from the Archdiocese of Washington and the feedback of the kindergarten teacher discussed through vertical alignment meetings. The success of the program is determined using several

objective assessments, including periodic early childhood screening tests, teacher assessments, a standards-based report card aligned to the curriculum each semester, and concludes with the kindergarten readiness assessment conducted in the last semester. Based on the results of the kindergarten readiness assessment, students enrolled in the pre-K4 program are more likely than students who were not enrolled in a pre-K4 program to possess the content and social skills necessary to be successful in kindergarten.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

St. Joseph's aims to educate the entire child, and, consequently, the curriculum choices reflect this balanced perspective. The school adheres to the evidence-based philosophy that a comprehensive curriculum can adequately address the needs of a developing child. Therefore, all students, including those enrolled in pre-K4, benefit from weekly visual and performing arts, physical education, foreign language, technology, and religion course work all based on the academic standards of the Archdiocese of Washington.

All grades participate weekly in both visual and performing arts. The degree of instruction varies by grade level in which pre-K4, kindergarten, and 6th-8th grades receive 45-minutes of weekly music instruction while their 1st-5th counterparts receive 90-minutes of instruction per week. All grades receive 45-minutes of visual arts instruction once a week. Visual art standards fall into four disciplines that require students to produce and critique art, explore art history, and discuss aesthetics. The curriculum includes art field trips and student art displays year-round. During visual arts, students can improve self-expression as well as develop problem-solving and critical thinking skills needed to succeed in an increasingly technological society.

Performing art courses also develop the skills needed for success in the future by requiring students to understand the relationship between music and other disciplines by evaluating music and musical performances and by creating and performing music. Throughout the year, students learn hymns to perform during weekly mass and at the annual Christmas pageant, Talent Show, and Multicultural Night. Additionally, select students in 4th-8th grade participate in the band program that conducts five performances each year as well as participate in local band competitions, which allows students to improve self-expression and learn the skills to perform publicly.

Physical education is a weekly 45-minute course for all grades. In physical education classes, students learn that physical activity provides the opportunity for challenge, enjoyment, self-expression, and social interaction while developing motor skills. Students also participate in annual activities such as Presidential Fitness Day and Field Day to promote a healthy, active lifestyle.

St. Joseph's complies with the Blue Ribbon program's foreign language requirements. The foreign language program includes both a 45-minute Spanish immersion instruction during the school day and a weekly hour-long enrichment after-school course in Latin for students enrolled in 4th-8th grades. The frequency of Spanish instruction varies by grade level as students enrolled in pre-K4 and kindergarten engage in a weekly Spanish course. Students enrolled in 1st and 2nd grade receive instruction twice a week, while students enrolled in 3rd-5th grade receive instruction three times a week. Students in 6th-8th grade receive the most instruction, meeting four times a week. In the Latin class, students learn to read and write in Latin as well as learn the connections between the derivatives of Latin words and the English language. Both Spanish and Latin classes infuse cultural awareness and language instruction in which students learn to apply basic grammar and vocabulary to develop sentences. These classes also prepare students for future high school language course work and to effectively communicate in a global society.

Moreover, technology classes provide an outlet for students to learn basic computer competencies, the ethical use of technology, and the skills needed for digital citizenship to succeed beyond high school. Younger students learn the basics of using a computer in an interdisciplinary manner using personalized language arts and math web-based resources while middle school students learn to write code and create multimedia presentations.

Religion is also part of the core curriculum for all grades and consists of both formal instruction and demonstrative applications through a weekly mass and service opportunities embedded throughout the year.

Students enrolled in grades pre-K4- 2nd grade receive 150 minutes of weekly instruction. All other grades receive 225 minutes of weekly instruction. Students learn and practice socio-emotional principles that respect the dignity of each child and are used as the basis of all expectations for behavior. The religion classes help to provide an authentic Catholic school experience in which students learn traditions, Scripture, Catholic doctrine, and social teaching. Select grades also plan and lead a liturgical service as well as participate in reconciliation during Advent and Lent. All students participate in May Crowning to honor Mary, St. Joseph's Feast Day processional with mass, and the Stations of the Cross during Lent.

3. Special Populations:

St. Joseph's strongly believes in the dignity of each child and therefore respects that each child is unique and capable of experiencing significant academic growth. To do so, high expectations are intentionally set, and the services and support necessary for each child to perform at his/her best are provided. Two tiers of support are offered: the first and more concentrated is in the classroom and the second occurs at the Resource level.

Teachers employ a combination of a growth mindset and data-driven decision-making. At the beginning of each year, the September results from the Scantron assessment are disaggregated to determine areas of proficiency and areas of intervention for each child. Based on the results, each student receives an individualized plan for continuous improvement that is shared with the student and his or her parent(s). This process occurs, at a minimum, three times during the school year using data obtained from each administration of the Scantron assessment, comprehensive chapter tests, and informal assessments. Using the data obtained from Scantron, students who perform below and above grade level are grouped accordingly. Students scoring above grade level are homogeneously grouped and provided with a combination of instructional materials that require that students either explore a concept in greater depth or advance in the curriculum. Students who have excelled academically in math in the 7th and 8th grade are placed in advanced math courses designed to accelerate learning. During independent reading sessions, all students are able to read and analyze texts from the classroom library based on their Lexile level.

Students scoring below grade level in math and/or language arts receive more intensive small group support based on the standards that need remediation and current academic standards. Instruction is tailored so that these students receive more direct instruction, scaffolding, metacognitive strategies, and cooperative learning structures using instructional activities based on standards not previously attained spiraled into the new content. Students also address their specific academic challenges using technology that is tailored to their proficiency levels using web-based math resources. Furthermore, in fourth grade, students use software to reinforce math concepts to close the achievement gap between Black or African American students and those of other ethnicities. Since the goal of each teacher is to support mastery, students are allowed to retest on a concept after completing a scheduled re-teaching. Teachers also provide tutoring before, during, and after school, and select students benefit from Title I tutoring in reading and math for two hours a week.

If the student fails to meet sufficient progress on the standards despite multiple teacher interventions, he receives additional support from the resource program and a resource volunteer. The resource teacher uses information provided by each teacher to strategically target areas of improvement for select students twice a week in pull-out support. Additionally, the resource volunteer meets one-on-one twice a week with each child in kindergarten through fifth grade with significant academic challenges. This volunteer specifically tailors a curriculum for select students so that their individual needs can be addressed. If the needs of the student are still not met, students are referred for testing with the local county public school. Students who are deemed eligible can benefit from an Individualized Catholic Educational Plan (ICEP) which provides modifications and accommodations.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

The focus for both students and teachers is to respect the dignity of each person by being kind, loving, and being of service to others. Students and teachers have opportunities to build relationships with each other and the larger community which helps to create a positive environment.

Students are warmly welcomed and sent forth with a blessing by the administration during arrival and dismissal each day. The start and close of each day is a student-led prayer before the morning and afternoon announcements. In addition to fostering an environment based on Christian principles, teachers implement the growth-mindset philosophy that focuses on progress, not perfection. Due to the small student population, teachers and students know students in other grades by name. They also have an opportunity to learn about and from each other through partnering with other grade levels during reading activities and weekly Mass. During the awards ceremony each quarter, students who have demonstrated exceptional levels of kindness to others are recognized with the St. Joseph award.

Students are also able to partake in a wealth of opportunities based on their unique interests and talents. After-school activities and clubs include Bundles of Love, STEM, Lego, Set, Drama, Yearbook, Latin, Band, Altar Servers, Recycling, and Safety Patrol. Students are also able to join leadership organizations such as National Junior Honor Society and Student Council. They are also able to compete in the Scripps Spelling Bee, National Geographic Bee, Prefix and Suffix Challenge, Religion Bee, Coding, and Lego Robotics. Academic distinction and character traits are celebrated in quarterly awards. Therefore, students have ample ways to become involved within the larger inclusive school community.

Teachers are included in the decision-making process for policies that directly impact them, such as master scheduling and student discipline. Timely support is provided so that they can serve effectively by removing barriers that waste time or are unproductive. Faculty and staff celebrations occur that are both job-related and personal, such as birthdays, engagements, and pregnancies; during challenging times, a prayer is offered. Faculty can obtain self-renewal through the annual faculty retreat and enjoy the company of their peers in the jovial Christmas parties. Exemplary performance is recognized through 3 levels- a faculty nominated teacher for the Golden Apple Award selected by the Archdiocese, and at the school level, the monthly “Builder” award and Teacher of the Year. New teachers are assigned a mentor, and all teachers are treated to monthly teacher appreciation lunches by the Home & School Association.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Part of the success of St. Joseph’s is based on a solid understanding that faculty and staff work in partnership with parents in developing the whole child. Consequently, its practices support this collaborative understanding by providing opportunities for parents to share in their child’s experience within the larger community. This partnership with parents, supporting parishes, and the community is strengthened through annual traditions that build community and by offering a myriad of volunteer opportunities, providing leadership opportunities, and hosting community social events.

All parents are involved as members of the Home and School Association (HSA), the primary fundraising, volunteering, and social arm of the school. Parents volunteer 30 hours each year by serving in different capacities including acting as room parents, leading events, volunteering in the classroom, sponsoring clubs, or donating much-needed items. To build a sense of community, the HSA hosts several social and fundraising events such as Donuts with Dad, Muffins with Mom, Crab Feast, 5K Fun Run and Walk, Trunk or Treat, and Grandparent’s Day in collaboration with the school for families and the larger community. The school also organizes events to support parent involvement such as Back to School Night in August, the annual Christmas Pageant, Talent Show, Multicultural Night, Band Concerts, and Career Day. Parents also share their talents by serving on the School Board which helps in the governance of the school. Local emergency responders are also honored with the annual Breakfast with Badges event.

Additionally, the channels for communication within the school are varied so that parents are well informed. Several avenues for communication are utilized, including phone calls, the school's website, emails, texts, Facebook posts, and Twitter messages. Each Monday, parents receive both an electronic and hard copy of weekly newsletters, some of which are translated in Spanish to improve accessibility for Spanish-speaking parents. This communication is also shared on the website. Moreover, teachers provide reminders using a combination of email, personal websites, the online grading platform, and newsletters. Teachers play a central role in communicating student issues- academic, social, emotional, and spiritual- with parents. Teachers contact parents before school starts to introduce themselves and officially welcome them. At the end of the first marking period, all parents are invited to attend parent-teacher conferences and can request meetings throughout the year.

The community is also involved through weekly announcements that are shared in the bulletins of regional churches and, periodically, in the monthly local newspaper. Students also serve the community by providing monthly lunches, stocking local pantries, and donating clothing for the less fortunate.

3. Professional Development:

Research consistently demonstrates that teachers have a significant impact on student achievement outside of the home. Therefore, professional development is used as a tool to foster excellence through self-reflection and improved pedagogy. St. Joseph's approach to professional development is to focus exclusively on research-based practices and developments in the field of education that has the most significant impact on student achievement and the learning environment.

Consequently, the first emphasis is on the quality of the learning environment. Discussions are centered on ensuring that the classroom environment is a place where the needs of children can be satisfied- especially the needs of feeling safe, valued, and loved. These conditions are determined to a large extent by the teacher's well-being, priorities, and practices. Hence, teachers are provided with opportunities to develop their faith through daily morning meetings, weekly mass, twice-a-year district-wide faith and academic based collaboration days, and an annual retreat. Teachers also share strategies on how to best develop the faith of students so that their students are more kind, disciplined, and loving. They also share best practices on responding to negative behaviors in a calm, Christian manner that promotes student self-reflection and action. This approach preserves the dignity of each child while simultaneously allowing the child to feel safe enough to be open and engage in restorative practices. These collective socio-emotional practices help to make the classroom environment more conducive to learning.

The second emphasis addresses teacher mindset about themselves and students. Discussions are centered on teacher expectations and communication with and about students so that their thinking can create the environment to support positive self-fulfilling prophecies. Consequently, in the first teacher in-service we discuss growth and fixed mindsets and how the thoughts and language of a teacher can affect a child. Additionally, as math achievement has historically been lower than reading, the implementation of a growth mindset emphasis is couched in each math professional development. By coupling professional development in math with growth mindset, the goal is to ensure that teachers focus on the process of improving their practice through data-driven decision making and research-based practices. Through a partnership with Notre Dame of Maryland University and its Academy of Catholic Educators (ACES), teachers focus on the process of improving math achievement in each child, instead of solely evaluating the outcome of a standardized test. Consequently, by analyzing data to focus on areas of student progress, teachers adjust instructional practices to meet the needs of students.

4. School Leadership:

The school leadership team consists of the chief canonical administrator and spiritual leader at the helm with the principal, assistant principal, and pastors from the other two supporting parishes working collaboratively as servant leaders to the students, faculty, staff, and parents. Collectively with the School Advisory Board and School Finance Council, the leadership team provides the structure and resources to support student achievement. In employing the servant leadership model, all school leadership members espouse the school's top priority of fostering the conditions for the development of the whole child.

Consequently, by viewing all decisions through this lens, student outcomes can be improved.

As a private school with limited access to federal or state funding, St. Joseph's is severely limited in its abilities to address student needs that require a substantial financial investment. Consequently, they rely on the strong partnership with parents via the Home and School Association, supporting parishes, and the local community to effect any significant changes. Thus, when the leadership team explored measures that would improve faculty and staff morale, as well as working conditions, the financial implications were discussed. The team recognized that by directly addressing the conditions that limit teacher productivity and motivation, the school's atmosphere, along with student achievement and behavior, would improve. Consistent with the leadership team's priority, this was considered a worthy investment.

The collaborative approach to the decision-making process of the leadership team is demonstrated in the following two examples. First, teachers are invited to provide their input on the development of the master schedule. The administrative team recognized that, to improve math achievement, more instructional time had to be allocated weekly, especially at the middle school level where math achievement has been historically lower. Collaboratively, teachers proposed ideas for increasing math instruction while preserving the amount of planning time of the middle school math teacher who also doubled as the science teacher. The criteria for the evaluation of recommendations are based on whether proposed revisions would support or hinder academic achievement. All proposals, however, would have significantly cut planning time for the teacher. The team recognized that this change would have reduced the teacher's effectiveness and morale.

Based on this outcome, another example of the collaborative approach was the appropriation of financial resources to hire a part-time science teacher. This financial investment was the outcome of discussions between the administrative team, School Finance Council, and the School Advisory Board. Consequently, more math instructional time was provided to the students and the teacher experienced no reduction in planning time.

PART VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

St. Joseph's is faithful to the mission of having high expectations for academic achievement, service, and discipline as indicated in its mission statement of "providing each child with the opportunity to grow in all areas of life." Therefore, the most effective practice has been the adoption and implementation of the growth mindset philosophy. It has influenced the mindset and language of students and teachers, instructional practices, support systems, assessment practices, socio-emotional learning, learning environment, and the degree and quality of the parent partnership. The philosophy that all children are capable of improving in all aspects of life supports the Catholic perspective regarding the dignity of each child. The view that each child is beautifully and wonderfully made by the Creator, and entitled to equal access to all opportunities, is entrenched in St. Joseph's culture. Thus, where each child is today is considered to be merely a part of a larger journey that will be riddled with challenges that allow for growth.

This fundamental understanding is the expectation held by the faculty and staff. It is reinforced formally and informally through daily morning meetings, weekly mass, and monthly professional development. Consequently, teachers are mindful of the words they use in the classroom and deliberately incorporate practices to ensure that their words support student's adoption of the growth mindset approach. Additionally, instructional practices support the philosophy through setting high expectations and providing support for students to reach them by using research-based practices such as providing greater wait time during questioning, practicing meta-cognitive strategies, incorporating higher levels of rigor during instruction and assessments, and providing feedback related to the process of learning and less on the outcome. Teachers also employ more data-driven decision making in which progress is the focus to support student growth through differentiation.

Additionally, students learn that humans are sinners who are redeemed by God's grace. Humans will make mistakes that serve as opportunities for God to mold each person into what he or she is called to be. Thus students learn the importance of being resilient as a means of fulfilling one's destiny. Students also learn that their mistakes do not define them, but instead, call them to learn from them so they may be humble, compassionate of others, and courageous. This helps to create a positive family-oriented learning environment based on mutual respect for others.

The growth mindset philosophy is also communicated with families so that they are informed and able to support its implementation at home. Parents are provided with tangible ways of supporting a growth mindset through weekly communication and periodic articles on social media accounts.

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? \$7321
(School budget divided by enrollment)

4. What is the average financial aid per student? \$3000

5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 10%

6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 40%

PART VIII – ASSESSMENT RESULTS FOR NORM-REFERENCED TESTS

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math

Test: Performance Series

Grade: 3

Edition/Publication Year: 2016

Publisher: Scantron

**Scores are reported here
as:** Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	May
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	78
Number of students tested	12
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Black or African American	
Average Score	75
Number of students tested	10
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: 2016

Test: Performance Series
Publisher: Scantron

Grade: 4
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	May
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	84
Number of students tested	21
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Black or African American	
Average Score	73
Number of students tested	12
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: 2016

Test: Performance Series
Publisher: Scantron

Grade: 5
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	May
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	76
Number of students tested	21
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Black or African American	
Average Score	68
Number of students tested	14
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: 2016

Test: Performance Series
Publisher: Scantron

Grade: 6
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	May
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	76
Number of students tested	18
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Black or African American	
Average Score	67
Number of students tested	12
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: 2016

Test: Performance Series
Publisher: Scantron

Grade: 7
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	May
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	68
Number of students tested	20
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Black or African American	
Average Score	67
Number of students tested	13
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: 2016

Test: Performance Series
Publisher: Scantron

Grade: 8
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	73
Number of students tested	18
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: 2016

Test: Performance Series
Publisher: Scantron

Grade: 3
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	May
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	80
Number of students tested	12
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Black or African American	
Average Score	79
Number of students tested	10
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: 2016

Test: Performance Series
Publisher: Scantron

Grade: 4
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	May
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	71
Number of students tested	21
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Black or African American	
Average Score	64
Number of students tested	12
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: 2016

Test: Performance Series
Publisher: Scantron

Grade: 5
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	May
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	69
Number of students tested	21
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Black or African American	
Average Score	70
Number of students tested	14
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: 2016

Test: Performance Series
Publisher: Scantron

Grade: 6
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

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Number of students tested	

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REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Reading/ELA
Edition/Publication Year: 2016

Test: Performance Series
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3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Reading/ELA
Edition/Publication Year: 2016

Test: Performance Series
Publisher: Scantron

Grade: 8
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
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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: