

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

[] Public or [X] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Ms. Beth Schmitz
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Trinity School at River Ridge
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 601 River Ridge Parkway
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

<u>Eagan</u> City	<u>MN</u> State	<u>55121-2499</u> Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)
----------------------	--------------------	--

County Dakota

Telephone (651) 789-2890

Fax _____

Web site/URL https://trinityriverridge.org/

E-mail bschmitz@trinityschools.org

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

_____ Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Jon Balsbaugh E-mail jbalsbaugh@trinityschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Trinity School at River Ridge School District Tel. _____ N/A

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

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Dr. Craig Lent
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

_____ Date _____
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

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

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

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2019 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2013 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, or 2018.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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

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

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 0 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 0 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban
 - Rural or small city/town
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2018 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	10	12	22
7	15	14	29
8	20	16	36
9	15	31	46
10	27	22	49
11	24	26	50
12 or higher	19	22	41
Total Students	130	143	273

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 6 % Asian
 - 3 % Black or African American
 - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 2 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 83 % White
 - 2 % 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: 3%

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	3
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	5
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	8
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	292
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.03
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 5 %
Total number students who qualify: 13

8. Students receiving special education services: 0 %
0 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>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>0</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: 2

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	8
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	29
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	0
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	0
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	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 9:1

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	96%	96%	96%	96%	97%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

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	54
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	97%
Enrolled in a community college	2%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	7%
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. 2008

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

Guide students in the acquisition of basic ordered knowledge and intellectual skills within a community of learners that pursues truth, practices goodness, and creates beauty.

PART III – SUMMARY

Trinity School at River Ridge (Eagan, MN), a two-time Blue Ribbon Award recipient (1996, 2008), provides a classical education in the Christian tradition for students in grades six through twelve. Currently, 273 students from a range of socioeconomic households from throughout the Twin Cities metropolitan area are enrolled. Trinity School at River Ridge is accredited by The Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS). Founded in 1987, Trinity School at River Ridge is owned and operated by Trinity Schools, Inc., a 501 (c) (3) corporation, which also owns and operates two other schools: Trinity School at Greenlawn (South Bend, IN) and Trinity School at Meadow View (Falls Church, VA). All Trinity Schools have the same mission, goals, curriculum, and pedagogy.

Trinity School students follow a common academic core curriculum that includes seven years of mathematics, science, writing, literature, and religion. They also take four years of Latin, two years of a modern language, five years of drawing and painting, four years of music and two years of drama. Although the program is rigorous, Trinity School welcomes students of ordinary ability as well as the brightest. Student ACT scores rank among the best in the state.

Trinity School is distinguished by small classes (18 is the maximum in high school), single-sex instruction, high academic goals, the use of original texts and seminars, and a highly trained and skilled faculty (of 29 FTE, 1 holds a Ph.D. and 9 hold Masters Degrees). These components contribute greatly to the success of the students.

The educational objectives of Trinity School can be arranged under the categories of the true, the good, and the beautiful. With regard to truth, the goals are that students develop the ability to discover and understand the truth, possess a sense of wonder and knowledge of reality, and desire to learn more about it. With regard to goodness, the goals are that students desire the good in their own lives and in the world, develop the ability to recognize the good, and appropriate the practices that will produce goodness in their own lives and in the lives of those around them. With regard to beauty, the goals are that students develop the ability to produce beautiful things in art, music, and drama and to recognize and love beauty. Since Trinity students all study the same curriculum, they are challenged to engage in topics that they may not have pursued elsewhere. All are exposed to the best that Western civilization has to offer – students read and discuss works by Dostoyevsky, solve problems in advanced calculus, and perform Shakespeare’s works. This trains future engineers to be strong communicators and future policy-makers to be well-versed in analyzing scientific data.

This search for the good, the true, and the beautiful is an enterprise which human beings carry on together. Thus, we understand ourselves as a community of learners. The faculty of the school constitutes the heart of this community. Each teacher is fundamentally a learner and is responsible to contribute to the intellectual life of the school. We read together, discuss ideas, learn from one another, and share our insights. The faculty continually engages and trains the students to be active participants in this community. To this end, teachers’ desks are in one faculty room. This facilitates conversation among faculty about their own intellectual projects as well as about their work in the classroom.

In addition to creating a vibrant culture of learning inside of the classroom, the traditions of the school also engage the students in the community of learners outside of the classroom. In the annual Lecture and Performance Series, students are exposed to the broader community of learners and given the opportunity to interact with researchers, artists, and professionals in a variety of fields. In the Noon-Time Series, students and faculty alike share their extracurricular intellectual pursuits. Co-curricular clubs, driven by student interest and initiative, are a venue through which students can invite faculty and other students to join them in a particular field of study.

Trinity’s most recent Blue Ribbon Award provided a nationally-recognized accolade which both bolstered school pride and provided a significant advantage in recruiting international students. Since receiving the award, international students have regularly enrolled at Trinity and enriched our community.

Since receiving this award in 2008, many developments have enhanced the professional development of faculty, the curriculum, and the school's climate and culture. First, Faculty Colloquia, quarterly gatherings of the faculty for presentations on topics ranging from philosophy to mathematics, have enhanced the community of learners among the faculty. Second, our curriculum now includes one semester of Computer Science through which all students gain literacy in computer programming, a skill which is integrated into their study of calculus and calculus-based physics. In 2015, we extended our curricular offerings to sixth grade. Families in the community enthusiastically embraced this additional year for their children in Trinity's educational environment. Finally, in 2017 we expanded our Summer Enrichment Program into a year-round program that offers engaging, free workshops and interactive, week-long summer camps on a variety of topics to elementary-age students in the broader community.

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

In the ninth through twelfth grades, humanities are studied together in the Humane Letters seminar. Literature, history, philosophy and theology are taught through reading, discussion and disciplined writing about issues that emerge from the study of original texts and source documents. The seminar meets for two hours every day throughout grades nine through twelve. The literature and composition courses in the sixth, seventh and eighth grades lay the foundation for the high school Humane Letters curriculum.

Trinity students receive writing instruction in a unified step-by-step program through every grade level. In grades six, seven, and eight they learn the fundamentals of English grammar and how to write a formal paragraph. In high school, students begin by learning thesis formation and the forms for developing a five-paragraph essay. In grade ten they learn to write an analytical essay. In grades eleven and twelve, students work on eloquence and deepening their analysis.

Students' reading skills are sharpened through the discussion of over 50 major works of literature and philosophy, including: *The Red Badge of Courage* and *To Kill a Mockingbird* in ninth grade; *Crime and Punishment* and *Pride and Prejudice* in tenth; Plato's *Republic*, Socratic Dialogues, and Augustine's *Confessions* in eleventh; and Dante's *Inferno*, Descartes' *Meditations*, Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and short stories by Flannery O'Connor and Raymond Carver in twelfth grade. Poetry is included in each year's reading list. Through reading, discussion, and writing, students learn to comprehend and analyze dense, complicated material without the aid of secondary sources.

The seminar itself is a guided discussion that is neither a polite conversation nor a lecture in disguise. The discussion focuses on the text itself. In the seminar, students learn to read carefully, think analytically, speak precisely, keep to a topic, express themselves logically, uncover meaning, and grow in their ability to listen and understand.

1b. Mathematics:

One of our educational objectives is that students learn how mathematics works and become proficient in its use. The proficiency in computation and symbolic manipulation that students gain in junior high prepares them to employ mathematics in their high school science classes as well as for the abstraction and logical proofs in their high school math classes. In all grades, students develop proficiency in skills and problem-solving. In addition to becoming proficient in applying formulas and theorems to problem-solving, students are asked to understand the logic that justifies these relationships.

Mathematics is taught from numerical, geometric and symbolic points of view. In the early grades, one viewpoint is used at a time while in the later grades the viewpoints are integrated. In addition to building a strong foundation in algebra, junior high students are introduced to basic concepts of number theory, set theory, and geometric construction both to provide them with tools for logical, strategic thinking and to give them knowledge that prepares them for high school mathematics.

The concepts of function and transformation structure the high school courses. Geometry, trigonometry, precalculus, single variable and multivariable calculus, and linear algebra are taught. Students work to understand both the proofs for important relationships, such as trigonometric identities and the Fundamental Theorem of Calculus, as well as applying these relationships to mathematical modeling. Students learn to use graphing calculators and MATLAB as an aid to their mathematical thinking.

Small class sizes allow teachers to provide one-on-one coaching to their students. Students in need of remedial work are provided with basic practice, and gifted students engage in more challenging explorations and problem-solving. All students benefit from a dynamic classroom environment that encourages

questions, conjectures, and explanation of logical processes. Homework and quizzes provide the opportunity for individual practice and daily feedback. Projects and tests allow teachers to assess student progress.

1c. Science:

The science program begins with wonder and puzzlement about the physical universe and proceeds to scientific explanation. The science curriculum is designed to engage the student in direct observation of the world and to elicit a desire for understanding. Once wonder is aroused, students are introduced to the tools that will enable them to satisfy it as well as to pursue answers to even more sophisticated questions.

Sixth, seventh and eighth-grade students focus on life and earth science. Freshmen study biology, focusing on the structures of living organisms in order of increasing complexity and how these structures relate to their functions. Sophomores study the basic concepts of chemistry. They begin by laying a foundational understanding of chemical bonds and structures as well as energy, kinetics, and equilibrium. They then use this understanding to explain how living organisms maintain homeostasis and how they interact with their environment.

Juniors spend one semester learning how to write programs using MATLAB, followed by the first of three semesters studying physics. Junior-year physics focuses on the fundamentals of Newtonian Mechanics. In their senior year, students apply their knowledge of Newtonian Mechanics to study gravity, thermodynamics, and electricity and magnetism. They then study special relativity, quantum mechanics, and particle physics.

Junior high students spend time observing the natural world, recording their observations and finding patterns in their observations over time. As these observations generate questions, they then research related topics and present their knowledge to the class. High school students perform dissections and experiments. They also apply their knowledge to problem-solving. The aim is that they be able to wonder, observe, and theorize. Juniors and seniors learn to write computer code and employ this and their knowledge of calculus to discover and explore solutions to problems in physics.

Daily homework plays a critical role in practicing the skill of observation and internalizing the concepts and theories the students discuss during class. Homework also prepares students for the next day's discussion, when they have opportunities to ask questions and build on the knowledge they solidify during homework. Projects, tests, and lab reports provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and receive feedback.

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

The history curriculum ranges from study of early civilizations to the mid-20th century. In junior high, sixth grade covers Minnesota History, seventh covers Egyptian, Near Eastern, Greek, and Roman ancient histories, and eighth grade covers Medieval History. Ninth grade studies American History with an emphasis on original sources, including America's founding documents and the Federalist Papers. While studying European history, sophomores read literary and philosophical reflections on decisive historical moments, including Hobbes's *Leviathan*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, and *Animal Farm*. Readings in the junior year include the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War*.

Trinity School believes that each of its students should acquire basic ordered knowledge. Didactic instruction happens at all levels of the curriculum but most extensively in the sixth, seventh and eighth grades where factual information is conveyed through lectures, demonstrations, and explanations. In junior high history classes, these modes of communication are filled out with questioning and coaching so as to engage the students with the subject matter at hand. In addition to tests on the basic facts, projects provide students with the opportunity to synthesize and present what they have learned.

In high school, the content of our Humane Letters seminars compels our students to engage with profound and perennial political and societal questions. The format of the seminar, centered on the free and rigorous exchange of ideas, also equips the students with conversational skills that allow them to engage in civic

matters both analytically and constructively.

Twelfth graders take a World Issues colloquium, in which the students examine various situations in the contemporary world where human suffering and oppression are the result of systemic failures, and then produce a final project proposing feasible and sustainable solutions to a specific problem.

Both the Humane Letters seminar and World Issues colloquium involve daily, rigorous conversation which trains students in inquiry, regard for others, and moral and spiritual seriousness. Through participation in the seminar, students are able to clarify their thoughts and deepen their understanding. They receive regular feedback on their essays and have frequent opportunities to meet with their teacher individually to discuss their growth as a writer and as a seminar participant.

1e. For secondary schools:

Trinity School's interdisciplinary course of study cultivates in each student the ability to think critically, collaborate, and approach problem-solving with agility and stamina. Alumni who go into STEM fields often report that their exposure to calculus, calculus-based physics, linear algebra and MATLAB is a strong foundation for their studies and careers. They also consistently report being prepared to write at the collegiate level and, having been encouraged to become agents of their own learning while at Trinity, have great success at participating in courses and engaging with their professors. They are also prepared to step into leadership roles in their internships, careers, mission-fields and communities.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

In addition to their courses in the humanities, mathematics and science, every Trinity student engages in a course of study through which they become well-versed in the Scriptures and adept at languages and the fine arts.

Technology is employed judiciously so as to serve our educational objectives of training students in intellectual and aesthetic habits of mind and imparting basic ordered knowledge. Each classroom is equipped with a projector that teachers employ to facilitate class discussion and student engagement with the material, for example, displaying artwork in art history, maps in Scripture and history courses, and texts for translation in Latin. A computer lab and laptops are available to teachers for use in executing the curriculum. For example, sixth-grade students learn typing skills in homeroom and ninth-grade geometry students employ Geometer's Sketchpad for geometric constructions. Juniors and seniors are provided with laptops for the purposes of MATLAB programming for their math and science course work.

Visual and Performing Arts:

MUSIC

Music is a required course in grades seven, eight, nine, and ten. The curriculum each year focuses on the areas of music theory, music history, performance, listening, and composing.

The seventh and eighth grades focus on developing the basic skills of musicianship in students, which are later used in composition and performance. In the seventh grade, each student performs solo and ensemble works on the alto recorder, and in the eighth grade students perform in mixed recorder ensembles. By listening to works of great composers, students learn to identify basic elements of music. In eighth grade students try their hand at writing melodies and harmonies.

All ninth and tenth-grade students meet two days per week for the entire year as separate girls and boys choirs. They learn healthy vocal technique and apply the skills they acquire to reading music. They study

and perform choral music from many styles and periods. Both ninth and tenth-grade students sing in a public performance at the close of each semester.

ART

Believing that training in aesthetic sensibilities is an essential part of the humane and reflective life, Trinity gears its curriculum toward giving students strong basic skills in drawing and painting, as well as a basic understanding of how the visual arts fit into the history of human expression. Through careful observation of life and emulation of masterworks, as well as exposure to the history and analysis of art and its distinct vocabulary and working parts, students gain a repertoire of technical skills, experience with multiple artistic media, and an appreciation of excellence and beauty in human visual expression.

Students take art in grades six, seven, eight, eleven and twelve. The eleventh and twelfth-grade courses also include fundamentals of art history. The historical components are introduced in order to inform the techniques and methods being studied in the studio. The students learn the analytical tools of art appreciation: line, color, texture, light, spatial relationships, etc.

DRAMA

All students in the junior and senior years take drama. In the junior year, students are trained in the fundamentals of acting and performance. Through exercises and class workshops, students develop a working knowledge of stage movement and blocking, vocal techniques, interpretation of texts, and character development. The students also begin to learn the basics of set design, and sound and lighting principles. They plan and implement advertising and publicity in advance of each performance. The juniors perform a play, or a collection of one-act plays, twice for their classmates and families.

In the senior year, students review the techniques and skills gained in their junior year and implement them in a full-scale production with two public performances. Students are actively involved in all areas of the productions. Seniors are given direction while working, but they take considerable responsibility for researching, planning and executing all of the technical aspects of the production.

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Sixth-grade Literature and Composition includes a study of the Greek and Latin roots of English words. All students take Latin for a full year in grades seven through ten. The Latin program culminates in a year spent reading selected works of Caesar, Cicero and Virgil in the original Latin and discussing their content and style in a seminar format.

Having acquired advanced linguistic and translation skills from the study of Latin, juniors choose another foreign language to study. Our offerings include French, German, Spanish, and Koine Greek. The principal aim of each of these courses is the acquisition of the essential grammar and vocabulary that is necessary for translation.

Trinity School at River Ridge is in compliance with the program's foreign language requirements.

SCRIPTURE AND RELIGION

Students study Scripture and doctrine in grades seven through eleven. The religion courses aim at the acquisition of knowledge and intellectual skills, and the development of certain habits of mind.

Sixth-grade students study one semester of Biblical geography, which develops their geographical literacy in preparation for the scriptural narratives in later years. In the seventh and eighth grades, students study the Old and New Testament. Both courses seek to give the students an overview of the story line of the Scriptures.

In the ninth grade, students are separated into courses that cover the distinctive teachings of different

denominations. They elect either Catholic, Protestant, or Orthodox doctrine as their course of study.

In the tenth and eleventh grade, students engage in a more careful reading of the Scriptures, learning how to employ both literary and historical analysis in order to understand the story of God's work in creation and with his people in greater depth. The tenth grade course covers texts from the Old Testament followed by selections from the New Testament in eleventh grade. Both are seminar-style courses. In addition to learning how to read carefully, students also learn how to speak and write coherently about the Scripture story.

3. Special Populations:

At Trinity School, the student is the primary agent of his or her education. This demands that the student be engaged. The necessity for student engagement led the founders of Trinity to design a school with small classes, single-sex instruction, original texts, and a performance-based curriculum, where all students read, discuss, write, solve problems, create music and art, and perform in dramas.

Trinity School believes that all knowledge begins in wonder and that questioning is a key component of learning. As a pedagogical means, questioning happens at every level of the curriculum. The teacher's question is a key lead into the text, phenomenon, topic, or problem under consideration. It is also the model of how the student is to ask questions and develop a sense of wonder and depth of inquiry.

Trinity School believes that learning is largely a matter of trial and error, practice and performance. Thus, feedback from the teacher is vital to the student's development. In the practice of coaching, when a student performs proficiently, the teacher reinforces that performance; when a student makes a mistake or needs improvement, the teacher corrects the flaw or demonstrates the pertinent skill so as to guide the student to better performance. Every aspect of a student's performance is under the direction of the teacher as coach. Coaching happens at every level of the program and is the chief means used to directly shape student performance. For example, substantive comments on areas of strength and weakness are provided, rather than grades, on students' essays and tests. Teachers also meet with students individually about their progress in writing, for example, to make sure these comments are understood and to individually coach students in their continued growth.

Because Trinity School has a low student-to-teacher ratio (9:1), teachers are able to closely monitor how each student progresses through the material. Those students who struggle with a particular skill or in a particular course are often engaged by teachers outside of class where they receive further instruction and individualized direction. Those who excel are given more challenging problems and assignments. For example, math projects and assignments are often differentiated by ability. Small class sizes also allow time for students to ask questions and for the class to discuss them.

The Academic Dean plays an important role in helping teachers and parents provide assistance to students who need additional academic support. The Academic Dean arranges peer tutoring to provide additional coaching in a particular subject and facilitates accommodations such as more time on tests and oral testing for students with diagnosed learning disabilities. He or she also directs faculty in hosting a Study Skills Seminar every fall for students who are new to the school. This seminar equips students with organization skills and strategies for studying that will support their learning both in the classroom and when doing homework assignments.

1. School Climate/Culture:

Trinity School believes human beings have an innate desire to understand the world and that this desire propels us to learn. We strive to awaken this sense of wonder in our students. To that end, each teacher's dynamism, preparedness, knowledge, intellectual curiosity, and love for both the students and the subject establish a culture to which each student is expected to respond and against which their performance is measured. Each teacher models the intellectual and aesthetic habits of mind that mark the school's culture and it is through their example and leadership in the classroom that we strive to foster in each student learning that is increasingly motivated by a love for the true, the good, and the beautiful. We strive to de-emphasize extrinsic motivations, such as grades and tests, that can be harmful to a student's sense of wonder and active inquiry.

Trinity School's respect for each student's dignity and freedom permeates our work as a community of learners. Our belief that each student is the main agent of his or her own learning and has an innate desire to understand the world underscores this respect. The faculty model for students that the pursuit of truth, while often marked by argument or disagreement, is also to be marked by a free and disciplined exchange of ideas that bears the Christian characteristics of kindness, gentleness, and self-control. At the beginning of each school year, the faculty talk with the students about Christian teaching on honoring one another in our speech. The faculty then work closely with the students throughout the year to cultivate a school culture in which relationships are guided by the highest standards of respect. Daily common prayer, relationships built on Christian charity, and the ideal of service to mankind are all powerful formative influences upon the student.

As the school's faculty constitutes the heart of the community of learners, the faculty's work of learning and teaching is shared in common. All classrooms are shared and faculty members' desks are all housed in one common office. This makes dialogue commonplace between teachers of the same course or of courses within the same discipline. It also facilitates training of new teachers and conversation across curricular areas. Each year, the faculty engage in a common intellectual project that culminates in a seminar four times a year. This conversation and collaboration is crucial to the vitality of classroom instruction. Faculty also share in the administrative leadership of the school through their participation in committees that foster the school's culture and promote the school's mission. Such work includes planning field trips and events for prospective families and fosters a strong sense of ownership and collegiality.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Parents play an essential role in the life of Trinity School. To function effectively, Trinity School needs the cooperation of parents who understand and embrace the school's mission, share its core values, and fully support its culture, curriculum, faculty, and staff. When united by a common set of beliefs and purposes, the school and parents form a powerful team with far-reaching, positive effects in the lives of the next generation.

Trinity School encourages frequent and direct communication between parents and the school as well as between parents, faculty and staff. Direct communication fosters a climate of trust, respect, and mutual concern for the well-being of individual students and the school as a whole. Faculty communicate directly with parents and guardians when a student is struggling academically. Formal, thirty-minute meetings are scheduled at the end of each semester for parents and teachers to discuss each child's performance. These communications provide parents with valuable information about how they can support their children's learning at home. Furthermore, the Parent Faculty Meeting at the beginning of the school year and biannual Mission and Vision nights, led by the Head of School, provide opportunities to discuss the school's mission.

Parents of Trinity students are members of the Parent Service Association (PSA). The PSA supports Trinity School by providing a forum for soliciting personal participation by parents in the life of the school. The

Social Committee of the PSA plays a significant role in helping the school establish the sort of Christian culture that reflects the ideals of the school. Through this committee, parents plan fun, inclusive, and ennobling social gatherings for students, thus partnering with the school to foster a culture in which each student is free to learn.

The local community is rich with resources that enhance our students' learning and wonder about the world. Annual field trips to research laboratories and to local art museums allow students to gain valuable experience outside of the classroom. The community of learners is also enriched through the Lecture and Performance Series which had featured speakers such as the Minnesota Poet Laureate, professional musical performances from groups such as the Rose Ensemble, and professors and professionals from the local community.

Trinity School's membership in the Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS) has provided a valuable resource for regular, comprehensive self-evaluation of every aspect of the school community. As a part of the accreditation cycle, the school surveys the entire Trinity community and involves students and parents along with every member of the faculty and staff in preparing a self-study. This report identifies strengths, challenges, and plans and priorities for school improvement.

3. Professional Development:

The members of the faculty are the key to the community of learners at Trinity School. They are themselves a dynamic community of learners, and their role is to draw students into that community by enacting the culture, curriculum, and pedagogy of the school. The quality of the Trinity education is directly proportional to the quality and dynamism of the community of learners constituted by the faculty.

At Trinity School, professional development is a constant and ongoing process. It is aimed at two goals: facilitating the participation of the faculty in the community of learners and supporting them as effective classroom teachers.

The school facilitates faculty participation in the community of learners by hosting quarterly Faculty Seminars and Faculty Colloquia. The Faculty Seminar, required for all full-time teachers, is foundational. These seminars serve to deepen intellectual curiosity, breadth, and depth in the faculty. The enthusiasm for learning nurtured in these gatherings accompanies each teacher into his or her classroom. These seminars consist of the study of a specific topic through reading and discussion of selected texts. Unlike the seminar, colloquia require no prior preparation on the part of the teachers and consist of a presentation and discussion. Typically, the topics of seminars and colloquia are not directly connected to the curriculum or a teacher's duties. For example, the faculty worked through an account of the proof of the Four Color Theorem in *Four Colors Suffice*. The faculty has read and discussed works of literature such as John Steinbeck's *East of Eden*. Other topics have included poetry, theology, philosophy, short stories, and the fine arts.

Trinity oversees an extensive program for developing new teachers. Trinity School's New Teacher Institute provides new teachers with in-depth instruction on Trinity's educational philosophy and pedagogy. It is followed by a series of training sessions prior to and throughout the school year that include assistance in developing lesson plans, managing the classroom, grading and evaluation, and relating to students. Trinity School supports continued development and improved classroom teaching through the Master Teacher program, regular faculty meetings, and a teacher evaluation process. External professional development happens in several ways. Some teachers have received grants for various summer study programs or have regularly attend university lectures. For example, two faculty recently received a grant from National Endowment for the Humanities to study Jean-Paul Sartre's writings on existentialism. In the subsequent school year, they led a colloquium with the faculty on Sartre's philosophy. This greatly enriched the faculty as a community of learners.

4. School Leadership:

Trinity Schools, Inc., headquartered in South Bend, Indiana, is the corporation that owns and operates the three Trinity School campuses. Its board of trustees is entrusted with the responsibility for ensuring that the schools carry out the mission of Trinity Schools, providing broad oversight of the operation of the schools, and ensuring the financial health of the institution. The President of Trinity Schools is the chief administrative officer of the corporation and directs the Heads of School to guarantee that each school's operations are faithful to the design of Trinity Schools. Fundamental operational principles include unity, subsidiarity, transparency, and cooperation.

Since the community of learners is at the heart of Trinity School, the preservation, development and support of this community are the focus of the entire organization. The founders of Trinity School had a concern that nothing interfere with its work. Thus, they stipulated that the Head of School must be a senior member of the faculty and remain an active teacher during his or her tenure as Head of School. This allows him or her to be in daily contact with the climate and needs of the faculty and the student body.

The administration of Trinity School at River Ridge is divided into two areas, both overseen by the Head of School. The first pertains to the accomplishment of the school's mission. The faculty, who are the leaders of the community of learners, are responsible for this area. Faculty administrators include the Head of School, Academic Dean, Dean of Girls, and Dean of Boys. All faculty bear responsibility for administrative areas that directly impact the daily life of the school through their participation in committees, the Disciplinary Board, or Academic Board. Second, non-instructional staff support the work of the faculty through providing the support services necessary for the operation of the school.

If the school is to accomplish its mission, a culture marked by the pursuit of truth, the creation of beauty, and the practice of goodness must permeate all aspects of student life. Faculty assume responsibilities for committee work, such as organizing the Lecture and Performance Series or Noon-Time Series, which fosters a culture marked by these ideals. The Dean of Boys and Dean of Girls are responsible for disciplinary matters and caring for the culture of the student body as a whole. The Academic Dean looks out for the academic well-being of each student and facilitates academic accommodations.

Administrative staff take on responsibility for the many non-instructional administrative tasks that are required for the smooth running of the school. Their work allows the faculty to remain focused on their primary task of educating students.

PART VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

For thirty years, Trinity School at River Ridge has offered a classical education in the Christian tradition to students in the Twin Cities area. When Trinity School was founded, there were few public or non-public schools like it. Since Trinity's founding in 1987, the Twin Cities' educational market has been flooded with a variety of classical educational offerings, both public and non-public.

Even as competition has increased, Trinity School has continued to attract and retain students from throughout the Twin Cities metropolitan area, and the Trinity School community has expanded to include international students as well. As evidenced by an average attrition rate that is lower than the National Association of Independent Schools average, students who come to Trinity experience a vibrant community of learners in which they are free to grow as learners themselves. Through their participation in our community, they develop their natural abilities and discover new ones.

By both internal and external measurements, students at Trinity School are learning as they engage a rigorous core curriculum that requires them to read and discuss original texts, solve calculus problems and write computer programs, translate multiple languages, sing, draw, and act. The primary reason for their success is that a vibrant community of learners is at the heart of Trinity School.

This community of learners is led by a dynamic faculty who have a deep love for learning and for sharing this with their students. Through the faculty's leadership and direction, students develop skills that equip them to participate more fully in the community of learners. Students are inspired to become agents of their own learning as they witness their teacher's love for truth, beauty, and goodness and are asked to respond to these things themselves.

The culture of this community is marked by the creation of beauty, the pursuit of truth, and the practice of goodness. The traditions of the school uphold this culture and provide concrete opportunities for students, parents, and friends of the school to participate in the community of learners. Furthermore, the school strives for this community's culture to be marked by love of God and neighbor, and by joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, purity, truthfulness, gentleness, and self-control (cf. Gal. 5:22; 2 Cor. 6:6-7), qualities which are necessary for a civil exchange of ideas in the often difficult pursuit of the truth.

Finally, the entire administration of the school, from the board and president to the head of school and administrative support staff, directs its energy and resources to ensure the thriving of the community of learners.

PART VII – NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

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

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

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

3. What is the educational cost per student? \$17182
(School budget divided by enrollment)

4. What is the average financial aid per student? \$6750

5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 21%

6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 54%

PART VIII – ASSESSMENT RESULTS FOR NORM-REFERENCED TESTS

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math
Edition/Publication Year: 2018

Test: ACT
Publisher: ACT

Grade: 12
Scores are reported here as: Scaled scores

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Jun
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	26
Number of students tested	38
Percent of total students tested	70
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: 2018

Test: SAT
Publisher: College Board

Grade: 12
Scores are reported here as: Scaled scores

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Jun
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	655
Number of students tested	30
Percent of total students tested	56
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: 2018

Test: ACT
Publisher: ACT

Grade: 12
Scores are reported here as: Scaled scores

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Jun
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	28
Number of students tested	38
Percent of total students tested	70
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: 2018

Test: SAT
Publisher: College Board

Grade: 12
Scores are reported here as: Scaled scores

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Jun
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	33
Number of students tested	30
Percent of total students tested	56
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: