

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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

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

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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

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

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

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

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

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	42	48	90
K	18	18	36
1	14	19	33
2	19	21	40
3	31	13	44
4	17	19	36
5	23	27	50
6	19	19	38
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	183	184	367

*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
 - 3 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 0 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 94 % White
 - 3 % 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	7
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	10
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	389
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.03
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 4 %
 Total number students who qualify: 13

8. Students receiving special education services: 9 %
33 Total number of students served

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

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>1</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>21</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>8</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>2</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	1
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	18
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	6
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 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	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2018.

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 is to form a community of faith and learning by promoting a Catholic way of life through Gospel values and academic excellence.

PART III – SUMMARY

The mission to form a community of faith and learning by promoting a Catholic way of life through Gospel values and academic excellence drives every decision at St. Mary School. As a Catholic school, the educators are committed to teaching the whole child: academically, physically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually. The staff emphasizes physical and emotional safety knowing students who feel safe at school are better equipped to maximize their learning potential. Christian Service is encouraged with a food drive at Thanksgiving, writing cards and singing for people in nursing care facilities during Advent, providing gifts for the Benedictine Sisters at Christmas, raising money for global needs during Catholic Schools Week, and providing supplies for local agencies that serve the poor during Lent. The combined emphasis of academic rigor and faith formation creates a rich environment for ongoing student success.

St. Mary School is one of six elementary schools within the Sioux Falls Catholic School (SFCS) system. St. Mary School opened in 1949 in the basement of St. Mary Church. The original school building was constructed in 1954 with additions completed in 1968 and 2011 to accommodate growing enrollment. St. Mary School is centrally located in Sioux Falls and serves approximately 370 students, preschool through sixth grade. In addition to serving the parish of St. Mary, the school draws students from across the city and region, including families who are not Catholic. Sioux Falls is the largest city in southeastern South Dakota, a primarily rural state. Sioux Falls has a wide array of post-secondary options including universities and technical institutions. The main employers are schools, hospitals, financial institutions, and manufacturing plants.

The vision of SFCS is to be a Christ-centered community providing a financially viable world-class education for an increasing number of children. St. Mary School is committed to continual improvement through assessment, analysis, and accountability to the students, families, parish, and school system. Each year a formal School Improvement Planning Committee reviews data from the Terra Nova 3 assessment as well as feedback from stakeholders to create system and school goals. Strategies to achieve goals are implemented and assessed for effectiveness throughout the year. The student to certified teacher ratio is 20:1 and is enhanced by educational aides, non-certified staff, and volunteers who complete the dedicated educational team.

The curriculum at St. Mary School is aligned with the South Dakota Content State Standards (SDCSS). St. Mary School focuses on increasing academic rigor and meeting grade level expectations, as well as fostering conceptual understanding and real life problem solving skills. The goal is for students to be self-directed learners who take responsibility for their academic success. Teaching the 21st century skills of collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity is an essential component in preparing students for their future. Instructors highlight the importance of exchanging ideas through effective communication and promote high level critical thinking through problem solving techniques. The students at St. Mary School are involved in dynamic learning activities for all types of learners. Utilizing sessions from the Breakout EDU platform to strengthen problem solving skills is an example of the immersive learning that occurs regularly.

St. Mary School takes a proactive approach to meet the needs of the diverse learning styles within the student body. Teachers utilize a variety of instructional methods including large group, small group, and individual instruction to improve student learning and promote student success. Varied ability and interest levels are addressed through differentiation by modifying curriculum, using flexible ability grouping, providing accommodations, and offering alternative curricula. Instruction is augmented with enriched and remediated instruction to accommodate gifted students and students with specific learning disabilities. St. Mary School is a technology rich environment with a ratio of 1:2 for student access to devices. Technology is effectively integrated into instruction through the use of Promethean Boards, Chromebooks, and iPads by focusing on the transformative levels (modification and redefinition) of the SAMR (substitution, augmentation, modification, redefinition) model.

Curriculum is boosted by a strong fine arts program and innovative clubs and projects. In addition to formal academic enrichment, the school offers band, jazz band, orchestra, private instrumental lessons, liturgical

music choir, and several after school clubs including Lego League. The school participates in an Artist in Residence program by inviting various authors or artists to present their craft to the students, exposing them to literature, art, and culture. The cast of Up with People spent the day with students teaching about various cultures through song, dance, and storytelling.

Attendance matters at St. Mary School. The school provides education to parents and students about the effects of chronic absenteeism on academic success. The school celebrates positive attendance and promptness with quarterly NFL and NBA bulletin boards, highlighting students who are “Never Found Late” and have “Never Been Absent.” Students with no absences for the quarter are recognized with certificates to Buffalo Wild Wings. St. Mary School proudly boasts a 96% rate of attendance.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

The language arts curriculum provides students opportunities to be immersed in literacy activities throughout the day. The goal of St. Mary School is for all students to be reading at or above grade level. The designated block of reading time provides the opportunity for differentiated instruction with the support of educational assistants. The use of Daily 5 creates an atmosphere where students can partake in meaningful activities and build stamina for sustained reading while the teacher works with small groups and individual students. Teachers utilize small group instruction to increase comprehension, fluency, and accuracy. Online reading instruction platforms provide additional opportunities for students to work at their reading level. Teachers promote a love of literature by modeling reading for enjoyment through read alouds, independent reading time, and book clubs. Students in primary grades are paired with intermediate students to form “Book Buddies” who read to each other weekly. Language arts instruction includes phonics, grammar, and writing instruction throughout the day. The phonics program used by the primary teachers incorporates a direct instruction approach to teach word attack and spelling skills. Grammar and writing instruction integrates daily grammar lessons with the creation of narrative, descriptive, creative, and expository writings. Journal writing, creative writing, Writers Workshop, and Story Starters with VOWAC are just a few writing activities the students explore. Students are asked to complete weekly mind puzzles such as perplexors, whodunits, and brain teasers to enhance logical thinking. Students are given sound strategies and methods to look for keywords, contradicting statements, and patterns. Students work on oral language and speaking skills by participating in Readers Theatre. Award winning novels are utilized to enhance and master language skills of building vocabulary, using words in context, and understanding figurative language.

1b. Mathematics:

St. Mary School uses a blended curriculum approach by incorporating online platforms along with traditional teaching methods to build a strong foundation of mathematical concepts and develop problem solving skills. The eight standards of mathematical practice are used to foster mathematical proficiencies. Teachers combine traditional approaches, including algorithms, with manipulatives and hands-on opportunities to develop a deeper mathematical understanding. Teachers identify individual learning needs and utilize small group instruction to fill any gaps. In the primary grades, number talks are built into daily math lessons aimed at building number sense: the ability to understand numbers and quantities, to use numbers flexibly, and to perform calculations mentally. Real life applications are utilized to enhance math objectives. For example, students may determine the amount of food needed for a Thanksgiving meal, the cost, and how many hours of work at minimum wage is required to pay for the meal. During guided practice, teachers check student work for understanding to ensure concepts are mastered before completing assignments. Problem solving and math talk provide teachers with formative assessments of conceptual understanding. Students also have the opportunity to learn through math games to build fluency in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Students receive adaptive math instruction through programs such as Zearn and iReady, while XtraMath is used to work on math fact fluency. Teachers of intermediate grades utilize self-paced math activities that promote independent learning. Math talk with correct terminology is part of the daily curriculum to ensure full understanding of mathematical concepts. In sixth grade, students are challenged with an advanced curriculum that aligns with the junior high standards to promote proficiency and rigor.

1c. Science:

Science standards embrace a vision for science education in which students are expected to actively engage in science and engineering practices. These standards include instruction in physical science, earth/space science, and life science, as well as applications of technology/engineering. The curriculum provides multi-grade level resources to meet the needs of each student. Teachers blend direct instruction and inquiry-based

learning to provide well balanced lessons that foster scientific interest and promote understanding of the scientific method. Teachers also provide science instruction that highlights areas specific to South Dakota, including responsible farming and geological resources. STEM activities are incorporated into the curriculum at every grade level to develop critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration skills. STEM activities allow students to explore, discover, problem solve, and apply technology to real world issues. Examples of project based STEM activities in the classroom include designing, constructing, and testing structures to withstand an earthquake; designing vehicles that can land on Mars; and creating aerodynamic egg drop baskets that are tested by being dropped from the roof. Field trips to the Outdoor Campus expose students to programs such as Project WILD which teaches students about fish and wildlife conservation. Visits to the Kirby Science Museum advance student understanding of research, development of hypothesis, experimentation, and drawing conclusions as they replicate experiments. Fourth grade students attend the Sioux Empire Water Festival which explores the use and preservation of water, inspiring good stewardship. Students engage in hands-on activities on topics such as wetland habitats, wildlife, groundwater, health, safety, and aquatic life.

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

Social studies standards incorporate communication, critical thinking skills, inquiry, and problem solving. These standards include instruction in the areas of geography, economics, civics, and history. The curriculum is guided by these standards using appropriate grade level activities to cultivate responsible and productive citizens. Teachers coordinate academic excursions which allow students to interact with social studies standards in real life experiences. At the beginning of the year, students in sixth grade are given the Citizenship Test required for naturalization, with their scores ranging between 15 to 30% correct. By the end of the year, all students receive a passing score of at least 70% on the test, with an average of 95% of students earning a perfect score. The fifth grade classes visit the Minnehaha County Courthouse to reinforce their understanding of the judicial system and participate in a mock trial with a real judge hearing their case. Students in fourth grade visit the homestead of Laura Ingalls Wilder in DeSmet, SD to gain understanding of SD history and the culture of people in the 1800s. Students in grades 4-6 participate in a Geography Bee at the local and state level. Primary grades utilize Discover Magazine and Scholastic News as resources to engage the learner and to develop geography skills and global awareness. Social studies units are often taught cross curricular with religion. Catholic social teaching principles of solidarity, subsidiarity, call to participation, and the dignity of work and workers rights are blended with learning economics and civil responsibility. The Junior Achievement program is incorporated at each grade level to provide community involved instruction that fosters greater knowledge and understanding of ethical economic practices, as well as an entrepreneurial spirit.

1e. For secondary schools:

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

The preschool program develops the social and emotional skills of the students while preparing them for academic success in primary grades. The preschool standards include building self confidence, respect, regulation of emotions, listening, curiosity, problem solving, and the foundational blocks of reading and math through creative play and exploration. Certified early childhood educators teach the core curriculum in the morning and foster skill reinforcement in the afternoon. Flexible scheduling allows parents to enroll their child from two half days to five full days based on their family needs. Dial 4 screenings indicate students who have participated in the St. Mary preschool program are more prepared for kindergarten than their counterparts in the development of fine and gross motor skills, language and concept understanding, social skills, and self-help skills.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The Catholic faith is integrated across curriculum with time dedicated for daily religious instruction. Scripture is the core of religious instruction with students learning Bible stories and how the lessons relate to

their everyday lives as Christians. Emphasis is placed on the fundamental baptismal call to serve others through positive peer relations and class projects to help others in need. Sacramental preparation in second grade focuses on the importance of God's mercy and forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the essential Catholic teaching of the Eucharist being the source and summit of the faith by providing God's grace and salvation. Students are taught Catholic prayers beginning in preschool and are given the opportunity to plan and provide ministries for weekly Mass and Rosary.

Students in kindergarten through sixth grade have physical education and vocal music classes twice a week, and library, technology and visual art classes once a week. Preschool students have vocal music, library and technology classes once a week.

St. Mary School encourages the development of creative exploration through visual and performing arts instruction. The visual arts instructor plans projects that incorporate art history and fosters each child's unique gifts. Music instruction develops an appreciation for both vocal and instrumental music. All students participate in two vocal concerts each year which allows them to demonstrate vocal music and performance skills. Beginning in fourth grade, students have the opportunity to participate in orchestra lessons, while fifth and sixth grade students may also participate in band lessons. Both orchestra and band provide small group instruction and private individual lessons. To encourage performing arts as a lifelong endeavor, students are encouraged to join extra curricular activities including Grace Notes, a vocal group that leads music ministry at school and parish Masses; Jazz Band; and Chamber Orchestra. All three groups have additional opportunities to perform for the community by visiting nursing care facilities, performing the National Anthem at high school and professional sporting events, and providing a prelude before community meetings.

The physical education program focuses on developing and improving gross motor skills while using a variety of teaching methods and standard driven strategies. Skill development is emphasized in the primary grades. Those skills are then implemented into a game format for the intermediate grades. The instructor incorporates music and modern games like Gaga Ball to engage students. All activities are designed to improve and measure a student's cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength, muscular endurance, and flexibility. The goal is to develop healthy lifestyle skills by promoting daily movement and an appreciation for individual and team activities while teaching good sportsmanship and teamwork. Students also prepare for the Presidential Physical Fitness Assessment.

During technology class, students are taught keyboarding proficiency, innovative problem solving, and technology skills in rotating stations. The technology instructor prepares students to use Google Suite and Microsoft Office and facilitates lessons on digital citizenship and coding. Students work with a 3D printer and develop 3D designs using Tinkercad. Within the regular classroom, students have access to Chromebooks or iPads that are used during Daily 5, centers, and individual work time. Preschool and kindergarten have one iPad for every four students. Grades one through five have Chromebook carts that are shared between two classrooms, while the sixth grade classrooms have 1:1 access to Chromebooks. Library time is designed to support literacy and to develop library skills, including the ability to research.

As part of the comprehensive counseling program, the counselor visits classrooms every other week to work on social emotional learning, which has proven to be beneficial in the academic and social success of students. The research-based Second Step program is used in classrooms and addresses empathy, feelings identification and management, and problem solving. The certified school counselor also works with students individually and in small group settings, using brief solution-focused techniques. Strengthening students' social skills helps students avoid aggressive and impulsive behavior at school and leads to healthy relationships with peers. The combination of improved skills, building new friendships through cooperative lesson and group work, and enhancing school unity helps students with positive peer relations.

3. Special Populations:

The Academic Services Team and classroom teachers utilize the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) Benchmark and Progress Testing Evaluation to ascertain which students need additional support to gain skills necessary to meet grade level expectations in early literacy skills. Students who

perform below the benchmarks have the opportunity to work on the reading curriculum in a small group setting. Their fluency, comprehension, and required skill work can be addressed at an individualized level, and specific areas of weakness can be targeted.

The KeyMath Assessment is administered to students who are not performing at the benchmarks in math. Those results are used to develop a program to close gaps and strengthen skills. The students also have access to Fast Math, a computer program that helps students become proficient with addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts. Many students are also utilizing the iReady math program and Moby Max activities that offer interactive practice and review of the required math skills at each grade level. St. Mary School is fortunate to be able to offer classroom aides during the reading and math periods to ensure all students are receiving the educational support they need during core class times.

The Student Assistance Team addresses student needs and develops personalized learning plans for individual students. Private speech/language therapy services, occupational therapy, enrichment/gifted services, and academic/remedial services are available onsite. Pullout programs are utilized in conjunction with classroom modifications when deemed appropriate for student achievement.

Achievement Academy is a supplemental academic program for students at St. Mary School. This special service offered to families includes enrichment and remedial programs to broaden and strengthen student achievement, skills, knowledge, and success. Achievement Academy utilizes researched-based assessments, extensive resources, proven methods of instruction, and a dedicated staff to design and implement an individualized learning program for each child. The program's goal is to assist parents and the school in educating students to their highest potential.

Achievement Academy offers curriculum content tutoring for students to receive additional instruction to ensure their understanding of daily lessons. Achievement Academy also offers skill specific tutoring, tailored to meet individual student needs. Students have access to researched based programs such as Sonday, Rite Flight, On Cloud Nine Math, Lindamood Phonemic Awareness program, Sound Reading, and a brain fitness program which all provide consistent strategies and skills that can be reinforced in the classroom. Achievement Academy provides opportunities to engage students in learning through the summer by offering instruction for all leveled learners in academics, STEM, social skills, and the arts.

If further assessment is deemed necessary, additional testing is available to pinpoint specific learning needs and to determine the programming required to move the student forward academically. Comprehensive testing includes Woodcock Johnson IV tests of Cognitive, Achievement and Oral Language, the Test of Reading Comprehension, and the Phonological Awareness Test. These assessments help identify the student's strengths and weaknesses in order to develop an individualized learning plan with appropriate accommodations to be used within the classroom. All programming and instruction is researched based and proven to support the needs of each individual child.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

St. Mary School has a rich tradition that includes multigenerational families. Approximately half of the current parents are former students of the school, with several families having third generation members enrolled. Parents continue to choose St. Mary School for their children due to its reputation of academic excellence and a strong sense of community. According to one of the parents, “I have seen first-hand the benefits Catholic education has delivered to my parents, siblings and now my own children. St. Mary School gives children a foundational education that will enable them to compete in any field they wish. The values that are instilled while acquiring this quality education are beneficial throughout their life. Combining these aspects with the sense of community, children are placed in an environment where they can thrive.”

The faith and spirituality of all members is strengthened with weekly student-led Mass and Rosary. Each month the school highlights a virtue and incorporates Catholic Social Teachings into regular instruction. Students in intermediate grades perform Christian Service duties for the school and parish. Prayers are offered throughout the day in each class. Additionally, the staff gathers for prayer before school on Fridays. The school celebrates Catholic pride during Catholic Schools Week with various dress up days, a student talent show, service project, and a staff versus sixth grade volleyball game. Culminating the week is a system wide Mass celebrated with the Bishop.

The Wellness Committee consisting of parents, teachers, and students plans for events and education that promote and support the physical, emotional, and social health of students, staff, and families. Each week, Wellness Wednesday is celebrated by encouraging students to bring fruits and vegetables for snacks, providing information about nutrition and exercise, and incorporating movement during the day. Classes pause for 5-15 minutes and engage in movement, either in individual classrooms with online tools such as GoNoodle or with a whole school dance party in the gym. Walking Club meets in the morning before school and Girls on the Run meets twice a week for ten weeks in the spring.

The Peer Relations Committee diligently promotes positive peer relations. Students in intermediate grades are educated on the differences between rude, mean, and bullying behavior and are encouraged to be upstanders in situations where poor behavior is displayed. Primary students learn about small vs. big problems and strategies for handling small problems. Recess activity sticks are used to divide teams at random, thereby eliminating disagreements and allowing more time to be spent enjoying recess. Older students mentor primary students during Mass, Christian Service, and other school activities. Above all, treating everyone with respect is modeled in the classroom, supported by education in social-emotional learning, and reinforced with religious teachings.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Parents participate in system-wide committees with over 200 stakeholders contributing their expertise to improvement of the schools. These committees serve as a great communication tool focusing on finance, innovation, technology, community relations, and capital improvement. The school has an active School Family Organization (SFO) which is led by an executive board consisting of the pastor, principal, parent officers, and teacher representatives. SFO meetings highlight student talents with a performing arts performance and include school news, fundraising goals, and parent education on childhood development. Community speakers educate parents on peer relations, online safety, resilience, and wellness.

The SFO assists in building a strong community by welcoming incoming families. Veteran parents begin mentoring new families prior to the start of the school year by providing insight to events and procedures. They continue to serve as guides throughout the rest of the year. An orientation is held for all families introducing them to teachers, staff, and other parents. In addition, current and prospective preschool and kindergarten families are invited for dinner, a tour, and presentations about the school, curriculum, and special programs prior to registration.

Many community building events are held, with the most successful being the Fall Festival. The Fall Festival is a time honored tradition that raises an average of \$80,000 due to the commitment and involvement of supportive families. The day includes food, games, a silent auction, and a raffle. The money raised supports the enrichment program and provides students with ample access to technology. Parents volunteer for a variety of events including Donut Day where current and past families gather for breakfast before Thanksgiving Mass, Trunk or Treat where parents create activities for students on Halloween, and a Fun Run to raise money for playground equipment. Parents also volunteer daily in the lunchroom.

Each K- 6 grade classroom is paired with a community volunteer from Junior Achievement to teach students about ethical business practices, the importance of community involvement, service, and economics. High school students mentor St. Mary School students by completing Christian Service in the classrooms and through programs like Character on Track where seniors teach about the importance of trustworthiness, responsibility, accountability, citizenship, and kindness.

Families are updated on events, curriculum, student expectations, and faith activities via newsletters emailed to parents weekly. Teachers send regular correspondence through email, "Friday Folders", and apps such as Remind or Seesaw. Student planners and the online parent portal communicate individual academic progress. Events are updated on the calendar, available on the website, while reminders and pictures of activities are communicated through Twitter. Parent/teacher conferences are held twice a year with an average participation rate of 95%.

3. Professional Development:

SFCS uses a systemic approach to professional development with all schools meeting as a system to receive instructional training. Individual schools also utilize professional development to address local concerns. A data retreat is held each summer for administrators and counselors to analyze data from assessments, attendance rates, and surveys completed by parents, teachers, and students. System-wide improvement goals are created based on this data. During pre-service, all of the schools gather for Mass and to discuss strategies for the goals. Each school then develops building level school improvement goals and provides training on strategies to meet those goals. Annual training on the use of DIBELS, Infinite Campus, Google Classroom and Impero is also offered. New teachers are paired with veteran teachers who serve as peer coaches for two years. All novice teachers and peer coaches in the system gather four times a year to discuss best instructional and assessment practices. The teachers observe each other and offer feedback.

Throughout the year, the system has inservice days devoted to each of these areas: faith formation, instructional practices, and innovation. Faith formation is provided to assist staff in the areas of theology, spirituality, and evangelization. The goal is to educate staff on Catholic Church teachings, provide opportunities for individual spiritual growth, and develop strategies for staff to witness the faith to students. Inservices on instructional practices include training related to school improvement goals, strategies to improve writing, training on close reading, and exploration of best practices for assessments. To focus on integration and innovation in technology, teachers and outside presenters lead break out sessions on various technology applications including Google Suite, Breakout Edu, Classflow, Impero, Google Classroom, iReady, Moby Max, and other web based programs. In addition, funding is available for teachers to attend workshops and national conferences that support their personal professional development goals. Teachers attend early literacy conferences, counseling seminars, Google Summits, NCEA, and ISTE, to name a few.

St. Mary School also provides professional development within the school day for teachers. The teachers meet regularly to address current issues and best practices through faculty meetings, professional learning communities, and partner collaboration time. Each month during faculty meetings, teachers work on strategies that relate to the school improvement goals. Teachers are currently being trained on Love and Logic behavior management strategies. The Love and Logic philosophy focuses on respect for the dignity of each child and teaches appropriate interventions and natural consequences. Each week professional learning communities meet to discuss and address issues by grade level. These teacher-led meetings focus

on curriculum, best practices, classroom management, assessments, and developing plans to improve instruction and learning.

4. School Leadership:

St. Mary School is under the umbrella of the Sioux Falls Catholic Schools system in the East River Diocese of South Dakota. The system is led by the President and Director of Instruction with each principal being responsible for the development of the staff and the learning of the students. Bimonthly principal meetings are held for collaborative system-wide strategic planning. The pastor of each cooperative parish works with the principal to promote the faith development of the students and staff.

Positive school climate starts from the top with administration being vital in setting the tone for the school. The principal is in the hallway, before and after school, creating a welcoming environment. Families are greeted with a positive attitude and a heartfelt smile. The principal is visible and present throughout the school day in the classrooms, lunchroom, and playground, connecting with students and staff. The office has an open door policy so everyone feels comfortable approaching administration with questions and concerns.

The principal is responsible for assessing the strengths and challenges of each teacher and providing opportunities for growth. St. Mary School utilizes a rotating three year cycle that includes formal summative evaluations by the administrator, self evaluations and reflective practices, and the development and implementation of professional goals. The goal of the growth plan is to support advancement through reflection and discussion on practices that improve teaching and learning. The principal meets with each teacher to note areas of accomplishment and discuss room for improvement. These conversations develop positive and professional relationships while meeting the academic and emotional needs of the students. The principal provides opportunities for teachers to lead through professional learning communities, teacher-led trainings, peer coaching, and committee representation.

Community building is essential to the overall morale of the staff and students. The school has several committees designed to support and appreciate staff. The Sunshine Committee acknowledges life events such as births, weddings, hospital stays, and death of loved ones with cards, flowers, and gifts from funds contributed by staff members. Social committees plan outings and potlucks for staff to enjoy. Activities range from playing Bunko to bowling to having a barbeque. The staff enjoys competing as teams in escape room challenges that encourage creativity, collaboration, and communication. The principal attends all of these community building events, as well as participates in school activities. For example, during the Fall Festival celebration, the students donate money to duct tape the principal to the wall. The principal also narrates the kindergarten Christmas program, leads the school in songs, and participates in dance parties in the gym to create an engaging experience for all.

PART VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

While all St. Mary School students partake in a rigorous curriculum, emphasis on differentiated instruction allows for each student to succeed. Response to Intervention (RtI) with tiered instruction, including core education and small group interventions within the classroom and intensive interventions with pullout classes, is employed. Teachers utilize formative and summative assessments to determine which tier each student should be placed and then monitor progress to evaluate the need for further intervention.

St. Mary School offers a pullout reading program (Beacons) for students who score at or below grade level. In Beacons, students have the opportunity to oral read daily which promotes self-confidence, fluency, expression, and greater accuracy. In addition to the reading textbook, leveled readers complementing the weekly story are also utilized. This provides ancillary usage of the vocabulary in a new context and practice comparing and contrasting the content of the different stories. Story discussions are held daily, giving each student a chance to verbalize their thoughts, promoting sequencing of ideas, and increasing comprehension.

Reading skill reinforcement sheets are used to break down new skills to promote better understanding and to increase student confidence. Robust vocabulary is reviewed daily by having students write the vocabulary word in a sentence or provide a written response to a question to assess understanding. Phonics skills are taught to increase fluency and the ability to decode new words. Grammar and punctuation skills are closely monitored in student work with responsive one-on-one instruction to promote accuracy and understanding. Language review sheets are used to review and reinforce skills presented in the reading curriculum.

St. Mary School also offers SPARKS (Students Propelled by Achievement, Responsibility, Knowledge and Scholastics) to provide enrichment for gifted students. In SPARKS reading classes, focus is placed on individual interests and unique skill sets. The very youngest readers start identifying genres and developing literacy goals. Students learn to write with elaboration and individual style, while skill practice aids each student in comprehension and writing ability. SPARKS fosters creativity, collaboration, and communication.

SPARKS math classes focus on vocabulary and problem solving strategies. While traditional methods are modeled, students are encouraged to use innovative approaches and share their ideas with others. Daily discussion of strategies help the more methodical students discover new concepts and reinforce content skills. The combined grade level classes allow for exposure to accelerated material for a stronger knowledge base.

Every student benefits by the individualized reading and math programs. Students emerge as strong readers with excellent problem solving and computational skills. They display a wide-range of knowledge and skills that prepare them for lifelong learning. Success is evident not only in test scores, but also in student confidence.

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? \$5700
(School budget divided by enrollment)

4. What is the average financial aid per student? \$829

5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 3%

6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 42%

PART VIII – ASSESSMENT RESULTS FOR NORM-REFERENCED TESTS

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math

Test: Terra Nova 3

Grade: 3

Edition/Publication Year: 2008

Publisher: CTB/McGraw-Hill

Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	83
Number of students tested	38
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math
Edition/Publication Year: 2008

Test: Terra Nova 3
Publisher: CTB/McGraw-Hill

Grade: 4
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	85
Number of students tested	47
Percent of total students tested	99
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: 2008

Test: Terra Nova 3
Publisher: CTB/McGraw-Hill

Grade: 5
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	86
Number of students tested	38
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math
Edition/Publication Year: 2008

Test: Terra Nova 3
Publisher: CTB/McGraw-Hill

Grade: 6
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	95
Number of students tested	46
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: 2008

Test: Terra Nova 3
Publisher: CTB/McGraw-Hill

Grade: 3
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	85
Number of students tested	38
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: 2008

Test: Terra Nova 3
Publisher: CTB/McGraw-Hill

Grade: 4
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	80
Number of students tested	47
Percent of total students tested	99
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: 2008

Test: Terra Nova 3
Publisher: CTB/McGraw-Hill

Grade: 5
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	83
Number of students tested	38
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: 2008

Test: Terra Nova 3
Publisher: CTB/McGraw-Hill

Grade: 6
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

School Year	2017-2018
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	91
Number of students tested	46
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: