

***U.S. Department of Education***  
***2020 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program***

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[ ] Public or [X] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Marian High School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 7400 Military Avenue  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Omaha State NE Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 68134-3398

County NE

Telephone (402) 571-2618 Fax (402) 571-3228

Web site/URL https://www.marianhighschool.net E-mail ssullivan@omahamarian.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\* Dr. Michael Ashton E-mail mwashton@archomaha.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Archdiocese of Omaha Tel. (402) 557-5600

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 Ms. Pamela Mortenson  
(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**

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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 2020 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 2014 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: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, or 2019.
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

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Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2019-2020) 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. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)
- Suburban
- Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2019 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	183	183
10	0	166	166
11	0	174	174
12 or higher	0	166	166
<b>Total Students</b>	0	689	689

\*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):
- 0.1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 2.2 % Asian
  - 6.8 % Black or African American
  - 6 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0.1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 79.7 % White
  - 5.1 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2018 - 2019 school year: 1%

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.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	4
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	5
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	9
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	704
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1

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: 8 %

Total number students who qualify: 53

8. Students receiving special education services: 5 %

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>27</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>4</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5

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

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	4
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	47
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	1
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.	5

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 15:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	95%	96%	96%	96%	96%
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 2019.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	176
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	98%
Enrolled in a community college	2%
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. 1998

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

The mission of Marian High School is to commit all of its resources to the college preparatory education of young women, teaching them to be leaders and lifelong learners in a society where their talents and faith will give hope to the world.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

## **PART III - SUMMARY**

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Marian is a private, Catholic, college preparatory four-year high school for young women located in Omaha, Nebraska. Founded in 1955 by the Servants of Mary, Marian teaches the beliefs of the Roman Catholic faith in a caring and loving community atmosphere and is dedicated to Mary, the Mother of God. The school shares its 40-acre campus with the sisters, who also built their motherhouse here over 90 years ago. The sisters' charism forms Marian's six core values: compassion, empowerment, service, Marian identity, spirituality, and community.

As Nebraska's only Class A girls' high school, Marian provides the opportunities of a large high school in a smaller setting. With an average freshman class of 180 students, Marian has what researchers identify as an optimum enrollment size (600-900), providing strong student achievement, high student participation, and a rich curriculum. Students come to Marian from 75 different grade schools and 47 different zip codes and represent a variety of socioeconomic, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. Marian students are recognized as articulate, independent, intellectually curious, resourceful, socially aware, and faith-filled young women.

Marian's culture and traditions have been shaped by our core values. Spirituality, service, Marian identity, and compassion are rooted in our Campus Ministry program. More than 200 students plan and lead activities for their classmates including Masses, retreats, service projects, and prayer. Although not required, students contribute more than 10,000 service hours each year. Freshman retreat is one of the first traditions students experience. Scheduled early in the year, it provides a meaningful faith experience, welcomes freshmen to the Marian community, and builds a sisterhood that lasts a lifetime. May Crowning is an annual tradition celebrating our devotion to Mary. Seniors identify a classmate who is a modern reflection of Mary, and this student delivers a speech to the entire student body. Alumnae whose daughters recently made their First Holy Communion are invited to be a part of the ceremony.

Our most enduring tradition -- and the key to building a sense of community -- is Field Day. Each class has one week to carry out a class theme that includes decorations, a mascot, and costumes, and culminates in a demonstration complete with singing and dancing. Along with healthy competition and pageantry, the entire process is an exercise in 21st century learning, engaging student creativity, collaboration, problem-solving, and teamwork.

Our core value of empowerment compels us to challenge our students in the classroom. Marian offers a rigorous college prep curriculum, and students have access to 44 honors courses, 16 Advanced Placement courses, and 15 dual enrollment courses. Marian has had 125 scholars, finalists and commended students in the National Merit Scholarship Program.

Marian is recognized in our community as a leader in women's education and received the National Blue Ribbon award in 1992 and 1998. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics recognized Marian as one of the top three Blue Ribbon programs. Marian was the first high school in Nebraska to sponsor local chapters of honor societies in English, social studies, and science. The school boasts 64 state athletic titles. Marian students are also champions in journalism, speech, and student government. Seven times Marian has been awarded the Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA) Cup having earned the most points in state-sanctioned activities programs. To support student success, three full-time counselors provide college counseling, along with emotional and social support. Furthermore, a learning services coordinator offers assistance to students with an accommodation plan. A dedicated math teacher is available for tutoring during each period of the school day, and additional peer tutoring is provided by National Honor Society students. Any student who scores below a 20 on the ACT in math has access to an enrichment program. An ACT prep course is provided for all juniors. Finally, student tutors are available each morning from the National English Honor Society to assist with writing. The Rho Kappa Social Studies Honor Society tutors small groups of freshman students on note-taking and reading strategies for the Pre-AP World History and Geography course that all freshmen take. With the addition of a part-time Licensed Mental Health Practitioner, students have access to and are provided individualized mental health counseling. In addition, our LMHP will provide programming for both students and parents.

With advances in technology, we have expanded engagement with our families through monthly parent e-newsletters and frequent updates on social media platforms. We promote direct involvement and volunteerism, continually inviting families to help with everything from daily lunch to monthly adoration in our chapel.

Our back-to-back Blue Ribbon endorsement has enhanced credibility both locally and nationally. Many changes have occurred since our 1998 award. Most notably, curriculum and instruction have advanced with the addition of STEM courses, Advanced Placement and dual enrollment courses, and 1:1 technology. We continue to evaluate curriculum, best practices, and the social and emotional development of our students. In 2011 all faculty were certified in Empowering and Engaging Female Leaders. Professional development opportunities have greatly expanded, with significant focus on integrating technology into the curriculum. To stay current on technology, we have a monthly professional development presentation on instructional strategies, and we have participated in an all-faculty book read.

School leadership has changed since our last Blue Ribbon commendation. A long-tenured principal retired, her successor served for five years, and the board of directors changed to a president/principal model. The current president is in her sixth year and the principal is in her fifth year. Despite these changes, the leadership philosophy of the school has remained the same. In conclusion, Marian High School honors its traditions and continues to improve and evolve in the interests of our students.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.**

**1a.** Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas

Marian offers all students a rigorous college preparatory course of academic studies with three levels of coursework: college prep, honors and Advanced Placement. Our curriculum incorporates the best of traditional content and methodology with current developments in education. This foundation prepares our students for a future that will be both increasingly complex and highly specialized. Higher-order thinking skills, including problem-solving, creative adaptation, and long-range judgment, are integrated in the methodology of our program of theology, English, world language, math, science, fine arts, social studies, physical education, business, and technology electives. All teachers follow the standards of the State of Nebraska, along with the curriculum and standards of the Archdiocese of Omaha. Marian uses these as a guide and exceeds the expectations of the state.

Marian High School resides within the Archdiocese of Omaha, where the Catholic Schools Office provides support to all the Catholic private schools. Marian is a college preparatory school and is accredited by the State of Nebraska and AdvancED. In addition, we follow the guidelines of the College Board for all Advanced Placement course offerings, and we offer courses that are dual enrolled through the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Nebraska Wesleyan University and Metropolitan Community College. Each dual enrolled course follows the specific guidelines from the university.

Marian High School is a 1:1 iPad school and through this program, teachers have integrated technology into the curriculum to increase student engagement. Many departments utilize iPad applications to complete formative assessments, which provide immediate feedback to students.

### **1b.** Reading/English language arts

Students are required to take four years of English, which includes the following courses: Composition and Literature, American Literature, English Literature, English Language, and World Literature. All courses are offered at the college prep and honors levels, with Advanced Placement and dual enrollment options available to juniors and seniors. Freshman students are placed in their first English course based on their placement exam scores. In addition to the required courses, there are elective courses in journalism, speech, debate, communication, and creative writing.

Marian's English department promotes academic excellence in literature, composition, communication, and the acquisition of higher-order thinking skills. The entire program of study is vertically aligned to ensure the continual acquisition of skills to promote college readiness. Teachers use the standards of the State of Nebraska, the National Council of Teachers of English, and the ACT College and Career Readiness standards to guide skills and curriculum for the department.

Throughout their time at Marian, students write a number of primary and secondary source literary analysis essays using MLA format. Grammar and vocabulary are taught at each level through a variety of strategies. In addition, timed essays, essay examinations, and practice presentation skills are expectations of all English students. At the end of their four-year experience, Marian students are accomplished writers and are fully prepared for the next level of education. In addition, the department promotes awareness, understanding, and appreciation of world cultures and applies these within the context of a well-rounded Catholic education. Because we are a community of readers, each year the English department develops a summer reading program for the entire school. Each grade level reads a novel, and accompanying activities are posted on our website. Upon return to school in the fall, each grade level has specific activities related to their novel. Activities from previous years have included Skype conversations with authors, local guest speakers, and small group discussions. The program started in 2010.

## **1c. Mathematics**

Math courses available at Marian include Algebra I, Geometry, Pre-Calculus, Advanced Algebra with Trigonometry, Statistics, AP Statistics, AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, and College Math. Students are required to take three years of math; however, 99% of our students take four years of math. Freshman students are placed in a math course based on their placement exam scores and have the opportunity to test into upper levels of math if desired. We provide a summer school math course for incoming students who need extra help with their skills, and we have several Advanced Placement and dual enrollment courses for students with advanced skills. A full-time math tutor is available for all students to see during study hall for extra assistance.

The Marian math department develops critically minded students who will be prepared to use fundamental math concepts. As such, the curriculum prepares students to be successful in their future educational and professional endeavors. Each student is encouraged to develop her talents and become confident in her ability to understand and to function in new problem situations. The math curriculum stresses conceptual understanding and problem-solving with multiple representations and connections, so all students will be equipped to reason and communicate effectively in an ever-changing, technologically rich environment. A scope and sequence is followed by all teachers who scaffold skills that include calculator-based research skills, basic statistics, and analysis. The department follows the standards of the State of Nebraska, the National Math standards, the Advanced Placement course descriptions, and the ACT College and Career Readiness standards.

Students in Advanced Algebra and beyond are required to have graphing calculators, which are incorporated into class nearly every day. Teachers utilize online resources as strategies to support classroom activities. In addition, they use a variety of online tools as formative assessments to check for understanding during class lectures. Teachers are able to provide immediate feedback and assist students. Summative assessments are given at the end of each chapter and unit. A comprehensive final exam is given at the end of each semester. Cumulative review assignments are given through a website to help students retain information. Online apps are also used to create video lectures and to work through challenging homework problems. All math teachers provide ACT practice problems on a weekly basis to expose students to a variety of problem sets that they will see on standardized tests. In addition, the junior class attends a day-long workshop where they rotate through sections taught by each math teacher to practice skills for the ACT. Results of a practice ACT establish the curriculum focus for this workshop. Standardized test scores are tracked and data is used for curriculum decisions. Additional instruction and review is provided to students who score lower than 20 in math on the practice ACT.

## **1d. Science**

Three years of science is mandatory at Marian; however, over 90% of our students exceed this requirement. A course progression of biology, chemistry, and physics is required for all students. The courses are offered at the college prep, honors, and Advanced Placement levels. Freshman students are placed in a science course based on their placement exam scores. A separate foundational course in chemistry and physics is designed to help students who struggle with math to achieve success in science. This course follows the same curriculum as the college prep level, but allows for more differentiated instruction. By senior year, many students enroll in elective Advanced Placement science courses and/or Anatomy and Physiology to complete four or more years of science coursework.

A scaffold approach for foundational knowledge and lab skills is used to prepare students for the next level of science study. Students are introduced to the scientific method their freshman year and are able to apply and synthesize scientific data and information throughout their science course sequence. The science courses follow a scope and sequence aligned to the State of Nebraska standards, the Next Generation Science Standards, and the ACT College and Career Readiness standards. Laboratory experiments are central to all science coursework, and hands-on learning is at the core of all science courses.

Our 1:1 iPad program allows teachers to utilize online textbooks, providing a number of interactive activities that enhance and further student understanding. Teachers incorporate a variety of instructional

strategies including problem-based learning, interactive simulations, collaborative laboratory experiences, and content specific iPad apps. High-level assessments are provided through online experiences, including the College Board's AP Classroom. It is through these experiences and programs that students acquire the skills necessary to move to the next level and be successful in their university studies.

#### **1e. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement**

Marian students are required to take three years of social studies. The required courses are Pre-AP World History and Geography, U.S. History, U.S. Government and Politics, and a one-semester elective of choice. Students are given several choices for electives, including International Issues, Sociology, Social Problems, Psychology, African-American History, Human Geography, Women's Studies, European History, and Introduction to the Humanities. The courses are offered at the college prep, honors, and Advanced Placement levels.

The department has vertically aligned all required courses to ensure students have an understanding of the world, the United States, and our government. All social studies courses encompass critical reading and emphasize the importance of becoming a responsible citizen in a democratic society. The department has focused on scaffolding research skills beginning freshman year and continuing through senior year, so students are college-ready. Primary and secondary source papers are written beginning freshman year utilizing APA format. Teachers use a variety of instructional strategies, and students regularly analyze historical and present-day documents for developing critical thinking skills and formulating evidence-based arguments. Lecture and discussion is a common format, and the 1:1 iPad program allows for many interactive lessons. Formative and summative assessments are given throughout the courses with multiple categories of questions along with essays to practice critical analysis.

The addition of the Humanities Scholars Program in the social studies department has provided an emphasis on specific cross-curricular coursework. Students selected to be part of the program take a foundational course, Introduction to the Humanities, along with a prescribed number of elective courses in the humanities. A portfolio, capstone research project, and presentation are the culminating activities to achieve the Humanities Scholar designation on a student's transcript.

#### **1f. For secondary schools:**

Marian's Student Services department supports students in their college search. The four-year curriculum begins with freshman year advising, which includes study skill sessions and an introduction to Naviance, a comprehensive college and career-readiness program. This program allows students to create a resume, track volunteer activities, list school involvement, and search for colleges that match their strengths. Sophomore year, students continue to add information to their Naviance profile and begin their college and career searches. During junior year, all students take an ACT prep course provided at Marian by an outside vendor, parents are invited to a college informational night, and students continue to use Naviance and online resources, as well as meet with their counselor for their college search. Finally, during senior year, students are guided through the application process with one-on-one appointments with counselors and are supported beyond college acceptance as students are informed of and continue to apply for individual scholarships.

Students are introduced to different careers through a job shadowing program, a marketing internship opportunity, and a Day of Business held each semester. Each curricular area brings in speakers to highlight careers in their specific area. In addition, our activities programs bring in specific speakers in order for students to be exposed to different career options.

#### **1g. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:**

### **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

1. Students are required to take two semesters of fine arts for graduation; however, most students take more. Marian offers Art I to all grade levels, and Art II, III, and IV are designated as honors-level courses. We also offer Sculpture and Pottery I and II as additional electives. In the area of music, we have three different

choir courses along with Band, String Ensemble, Honors String Ensemble, and Handbells I. To round out our fine arts courses, we offer Ballet & Tap I and II, along with Theater Seminar. Teachers equip students with the opportunity to exhibit verbal and written communication skills in responding to their own and others' artistic expression. The curriculum is designed using the State of Nebraska standards for art education.

2. In the area of Physical Education, students can choose Team Sports, Individual and Dual Sports, Lifetime Fitness, and Weight Training and Conditioning. Introduction to Wellness is required for graduation and covers elements such as mindfulness, nutrition, stress management, and healthy relationships. Some P.E. classes are offered during the summer, which enables students to meet their requirements and provide more space in their schedule for other electives. P.E. teachers promote writing across the curriculum; students are expected to complete written assignments and projects in all courses. The Physical Education curriculum aligns with the State of Nebraska standards.

3. World languages currently offered include Spanish, French, and Mandarin. Interested students may take Latin online through the Arrupe Virtual Learning Institute. Two years of the same language are required to graduate; however, many students take four years. Coursework covers literature, culture, and history, in addition to the oral and written communication of these languages. The department actively promotes writing across the curriculum. Through the study of grammar and major authors, students are equipped with critical thinking skills. Teachers include a variety of instructional strategies to engage students in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and studying the culture of the target language. iPads give students the opportunity for interactive practice, along with regular formative assessments to check for understanding. Summative assessments are given at the end of each unit.

4. Marian has routinely offered technology applications courses that teach advanced topics in Excel, Photoshop, and InDesign. To meet the changing needs of society and better prepare our students for college, additional courses in Mobile App Development, Cybersecurity, AP Computer Science Principles, Honors/AP Computer Science A, and Computer-Aided Design I and II have been added. Several courses are also designed as dual enrollment so students may be able to receive college credit. Using an activity-based methodology, students compile a digital portfolio of computational artifacts. Regular assessments measure skill proficiency. Specifically, Computer-Aided Design I and II introduces students to the technology skills of architecture, 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional modeling, use of the AutoCAD software suite, and the ability to read construction documents. Students in this course partner with engineering firms for informational meetings and tours of job sites.

The new Haddix Academic Center supports and enriches the work of each classroom teacher while assisting students with their curricular, informational, and social needs to become ethical 21st century learners. All freshmen take a digital citizenship course that teaches responsibility in all areas of digital communication. Our librarian provides research presentations to all students in a variety of subject areas, so each student is proficient in research skills and prepared for university-level research.

5. As a Catholic school, theology is part of our core curriculum. Theology teachers at Marian utilize a curriculum that was created by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and endorsed by the Archdiocese of Omaha. In addition to the four-year curriculum, students study the history of the Servants of Mary, our founding order. Teachers utilize lecture, discussion, projects, and reflection to deepen students' understanding of Catholicism and their own faith.

Marian offers a variety of business electives. Business and Personal Law, Economics, Marketing, and Introduction to Business are offered to sophomores, juniors and seniors. Introduction to Business is dual-enrolled with Metropolitan Community College. Lecture, discussion, and projects introduce all aspects of business, and assessments are both formative and summative. Field trips and outside speakers provide insight into careers in law and business.

Finally, Marian belongs to the Arrupe Virtual Learning Institute, which has allowed us to expand our curriculum offerings through online, individual learning. This year we offered AP Art History, Astronomy, Latin and Digital Photography.

### **3. Academic Supports:**

#### **3a. Students performing below grade level**

The faculty at Marian High School continually challenges students to reach their highest learning potential. Our students come from 75 different grade schools, and they arrive with a variety of skill levels. In order to determine the best fit for each student, all incoming freshman students take a placement exam to determine placement in English, math, and science courses. At Marian, students benefit from three levels of coursework. The College Prep level is the standard for all of our students. For advanced students, an Honors level provides more academic rigor. Finally, Advanced Placement and dual enrollment courses allow students to earn college credit while in high school. Each department has a tiered vertical alignment of skills and dispositions to ensure college-readiness for all students.

To measure success, Marian uses a variety of assessment data. The placement exam is taken by all students to gain entrance to Marian; results are used for course placement only. The PSAT is taken by all freshmen, sophomores, and juniors. Teachers analyze this data and use it to improve classroom instruction. The sophomores take the Pre-ACT exam in March. This data, along with PSAT results, is used to provide math ACT enrichment to individual students. The juniors take a practice ACT each year. The math, English, and science departments use this data to guide classroom instruction. In English classes, all students take a practice ACT English test; data from this assessment is used to build grammar and writing skills during the next four years. Data from Advanced Placement exams are also analyzed for course trends and performance. Finally, all the faculty use a variety of formative and summative assessments to assess and evaluate their students and provide re-teaching based on the results.

To maintain high levels of achievement, we evaluate and adjust our programs, courses, and curriculum on a regular basis. Based on classroom performance and standardized test data, individual students can move between the college prep and honors levels from year to year. There is an expectation that 100% of our students will go to college. At Marian, students are able to reach their fullest potential because of the high expectations placed on them.

A Jump Start program designed for freshman students who have the lowest scores on our placement exam. This week-long program takes place in August before the start of the school year and provides a firm foundation of academic expectations for the 25-30 students who are required to participate. The department chairs present and review organizational strategies, note-taking skills, time management, and resources for academic assistance.

Data has demonstrated that this program has made a difference to the students who participate by increasing retention of our most at-risk student population. Students performing below grade level (based on standardized test scores) have several avenues for assistance. For those who need more support in math, there are two courses at the college prep level that allow for a more differentiated approach beginning in freshman year. A summer math class to solidify pre-algebra skills is provided to some incoming freshmen who need assistance. Any student who needs additional math help can find it in the math tutoring room, which is staffed all day by a dedicated math teacher.

#### **3b. Students performing above grade level**

For high performing students, our honors level provides more academic rigor. For example, if a student excels in math, there are several choices for advanced math coursework for a freshman student. There are currently 44 honors level, 16 Advanced Placement and 15 dual enrolled courses at Marian. Students are encouraged to graduate from Marian with college credit through Advanced Placement or dual enrollment. Faculty members partner with Creighton University for our Humanities Scholars Program and our Honors Independent Research class to provide an additional layer of rigor for our top students. Through these programs, students are able to research and present on topics of interest and receive mentoring from university professors as they move through the course.

### **3c. Special education**

For students who need specific accommodations, a learning services coordinator designs an individual plan for each student. Through coaching, she guides the students in communicating with teachers and becoming proactive in their education. The learning services coordinator also coordinates our math ACT enrichment program. Students who score a 20 or below on the math section of the ACT complete an eight-week intervention and enrichment program. This program focuses on test-taking skills, math anxiety, and foundational skills to increase success on the ACT.

Help with writing is also available. Students from the National English Honor Society are available each morning to assist with writing, proofreading, and citation. Students may drop in for these services at any time. In addition, students may sign up for a peer tutor from the National Honor Society for assistance in any subject.

Our faculty are available before and after school for additional assistance to individuals or small groups of students. Teacher-moderated study sessions are a regular practice and part of the culture of our school at every grade level.

**3d.** ELLs, if a special program or intervention is offered

**3e.** Other populations (e.g., migrant), if a special program or intervention is offered

## **PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE**

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### **1. Engaging Students:**

The Servants of Mary founded Marian in 1955. The sisters continue to provide a foundation for the school through their influence on our six core values of compassion, empowerment, service, Marian identity, spirituality, and community. The presence of four sisters working in our building each day and the convent that is attached to our school provide a reminder of our values to all of our students. It is through these values that our students are engaged as part of our unique community.

Marian prides itself on producing graduates who are confident, independent, thinking leaders inspired by faith. The academic expectations at Marian are demanding but balanced with spirit-filled activities. Grades are important and challenging courses are what our students want. The students have built an atmosphere of achievement that is supported and encouraged by the faculty. Interaction and collaboration are viewed as critical to the learning styles of young women, and Marian's culture supports a learning environment that is student-friendly and girl-friendly. Students find at Marian a welcoming and nurturing spirit that is infectious. The student body values hard work along with the freedom to be oneself and discover one's gifts—without the pressures that are associated with physical appearance or social status.

College preparation begins freshman year, so that students can feel confident not only in their academic progress but also in the college planning process. At the beginning of freshman year, students are assigned a counselor, and they remain with the same counselor all four years. Counselors offer social and emotional support, provide a four-year program of college counseling, and create and lead support groups based on the needs of students. A learning services coordinator works with students with specific learning needs. She creates a plan and guides the student to successfully manage Marian's rigorous academic standards.

In addition to academic and college readiness programs, a Marian girl has numerous opportunities to develop her leadership potential, become part of a group, discover who she is, and explore new opportunities. With nine state-sanctioned sports and over 50 clubs and activities, there is something for every interest. Student activities are moderated by faculty, staff, and coaches who guide the students in their interests. Each year we hold a competitive Field Day, which includes developing a class theme, designing costumes, and creating a demonstration. Other school traditions include Gnimocemoh (Homecoming spelled backwards), Spirit Week, a Halloween movie, Surprise Day, Walk-A-Thon, Prom, and Winter Formal. Pep rallies are held at the beginning of each season to recognize those who participate in athletics and other activities. All of these traditions and activities allow students to bond with their "sisters" and create an inclusive community.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

The faculty, staff, and administration work with the parents and the community to provide students with an environment that is not only educational, but nurturing. Through our accreditation process we survey students and parents every three years. The results are used to make changes as needed. To generate student feedback and encourage communication, the president and principal have lunch with small groups of seniors throughout the year to gather suggestions for improvement. The principal meets with small groups of freshman students during the second semester each year to discuss the transition to high school. Parents are involved through a variety of organizations including Marian Moms Crew, Athletic Booster Club, and Fine Arts Marian Enthusiasts. Several parents are board members, who are all actively involved in the success of Marian. Additionally, many parents are involved in fundraising through Marian FEST, our annual dinner-auction, and our Lexus Golf Tournament, as well as campaign and annual fundraising.

Communication of student success takes place in several ways. Parents receive a quarterly progress report and semester report cards. In addition, students and parents have a PowerSchool account to access grades online. Parent-teacher conferences occur in the fall and spring. Teachers use email to contact parents, and the communication policy, outlined in our handbook, provides a plan to empower students to communicate with teachers. An electronic parent newsletter is distributed monthly and social media is used to inform

parents, alumnae, and the community of our activities and many accomplishments.

Early in the first semester, parents are invited to Curriculum Night to meet teachers as they follow their daughters' schedule through an abbreviated school day. Teachers review their syllabus and expectations. Parents are also invited to attend several informational meetings throughout the year. For freshman parents, orientations occur before the start of school and early in the year to discuss the transition to high school. Sophomore parents attend an evening meeting with the counselors to discuss academic success and the personal and social dynamics of the sophomore year. At the end of sophomore year, through the Sophomore Review, the student, her parent(s), and a faculty member meet to discuss the first two years of high school and set goals for the last two years. Junior parents have a series of meetings to discuss the college search and application process. Counselors also present information to senior parents on choosing a college, completing applications, and meeting deadlines.

Although service hours are not required, Marian girls annually contribute more than 10,000 hours of community service. As part of our retreat programs, freshman and junior students complete a service activity. Campus Ministry orchestrates monthly collections and drives to engage the student body for the benefit of a local, national, or international charity. Students frequently contribute to the Omaha community through participation in leadership programs, youth councils, social service projects, and fine arts performances.

### **3. Creating Professional Culture:**

Holding the belief that professionals must continuously renew themselves and reflect on their practice, Marian provides ongoing opportunities for professional development through meetings, seminars, and conferences. Our strategic plan ensures that every faculty member has financial support to attend a professional conference at least once every three years. Participants can then share new pedagogies and skills with the entire staff. In-service activities include staff meetings, in-service days, professional development activities, Professional Learning Communities, and an annual retreat. All of our Advanced Placement teachers are required to attend professional development conferences, sponsored by the College Board, every three years.

Throughout the school year there are five required in-service days for faculty. At the beginning of the year, the professional development plan is outlined for the teachers based on our AdvancED improvement goals. Each month teachers are expected to attend a faculty-staff meeting, a department meeting, and one Professional Learning Community meeting. These are built into the schedule. Faculty also attend a monthly 45-minute professional development presentation. This year's focus is on technology and our new Learning Management System, CANVAS. A faculty member who has attended professional conferences on this topic leads this portion of professional development to share the latest information with colleagues. In years past, we have focused on McRel Instructional Strategies and 1:1 iPad technology.

Through departmental Professional Learning Communities, our faculty are given time to work collaboratively to create lessons and assessments, analyze data, and discuss best practices. The culture of collaboration has always been present at Marian, but it is now even more intentional. We now have academic wings by subject area in our building. This allows for close proximity for academic departments to communicate and collaborate. Each year, every department is given an entire day to collaborate. Substitutes are brought in, so teachers can plan and review curriculum for their individual departments.

A library of professional development books are available to our faculty in the Haddix Academic Center. In addition, our faculty web page provides a common location for curriculum guides and tools for reading strategies for all teachers to use. To improve, we continually evaluate courses, curriculum, technology, and teaching practices. The culture of collaboration among our faculty is evident in the achievement of our students.

The leadership team attends annual professional conferences and remains committed to the faculty and best practices in the classroom. Tuition expenses for advanced degrees are covered through Marian's professional development budget, the Creighton University reciprocal tuition program, and the Archdiocese NBRS 2020

of Omaha. Several teachers have completed master's degrees and the Principal is currently pursuing a doctoral degree through Creighton University.

An annual faculty retreat, commissioning ceremony by the Servants of Mary, and faith formation activities are the heart and soul of all that we do at Marian. These faith-sharing experiences continue to renew our faith in and commitment to our students in our Catholic community.

#### **4. School Leadership:**

Marian High School uses a president/principal model of leadership. The president oversees advancement, recruitment, finance, and human resources. She is also the spiritual director of the school and works closely with the board of directors and the board of trustees. The principal is responsible for the internal, day-to-day running of the school including hiring of teachers, curriculum, instruction, assessment, school improvement, athletics, and faculty evaluations. One assistant principal is the director of academics, a second assistant principal is the athletic director, and a third assistant principal is the dean of students. These areas are assigned for the purposes of delegation. The four-person administrative team meets weekly to focus on total school management and updates. The principal and two of the assistant principals meet weekly to provide updates to the president.

The principal oversees the Curriculum Area Team, which meets monthly. The leader of each department makes up this team of faculty who focus on academics and act as a liaison for the department. This group assists the principal with decisions, while also providing feedback. Many decisions are shared and are always based on research. Each department has a monthly meeting and the principal attends a portion of these meetings.

The mission and vision of Marian guides any discussion about a change or improvement. The mission of Marian is to commit all its resources to the college preparatory education of young women, teaching them to be leaders and life-long learners in a society where their talents and faith will give hope to the world. The strategic plan stresses academic excellence and contains several benchmarks for the school to meet. These are discussed at board meetings along with the action plans to achieve our goals. Student achievement is always at the forefront of these plans. A few of the programs the leadership team has incorporated in the past five years include an ACT prep class for all students, the Jump Start program, a full-time math tutor, a salary increase for faculty, the addition of a licensed mental health therapist one day per week, a new student schedule, the Crusaders Elevating Others leadership development program, a required wellness class, adopting mindfulness practices during our school day, and a \$12 million capital campaign for facility renovation and endowment. The administration also hired two educational support personnel to cover extra duty assignments to allow teachers more time to focus on academic excellence.

## **PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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Marian's mission creates a culture of achievement that is instrumental to our success. Our philosophy is dynamic, yet remaining values-centered keeps us successful in an ever-changing world. Guided by our mission, we proceed with what is best for our students' religious, academic, and social needs.

Marian's religious philosophy is to provide our students with opportunities for a personal commitment to Christian values, to foster an understanding of mutual respect for and responsibility to one another, to offer instruction which will give students an intellectual grasp of key philosophical questions pertaining to faith, and to encourage students to be involved in our Christian community.

The academic philosophy is to create lifelong learners, to establish a school atmosphere that is conducive to the learning process, and to develop skills in the art of communication, analytical thinking, independent reasoning, and problem solving. Our faculty provides a high caliber of instruction, which translates to success in college. Our faculty have high expectations, and our students do not want to disappoint themselves or their teachers.

Individual social development complements the culture. We want to provide our students with co- and extracurricular activities to broaden their experiences, to work for the community at large, and to provide opportunities to utilize leadership and organizational skills. Students show up wanting to do their best each day. The culture dictates that if a student puts in the time and effort, she will have success. Our students have built a community of encouragement to work hard and try new classes and activities. Through success as well as struggle, confidence is built and students are ready to take this confidence to the next level in college.

The culture of achievement has been evident since Marian's founding over 60 years ago. Never content with the status quo, we continue to evaluate, re-evaluate and make improvements as needed. This culture keeps Marian High School relevant and successful in the Omaha community and beyond. Each year Marian turns out a new class of young women who will join over 9,500 alumnae as engineers, doctors, teachers, architects, mothers, entrepreneurs, scientists, artists, and business professionals whose talents and faith bring hope to the world.

## **PART VII - NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION**

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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?      \$12275  
(School budget divided by enrollment)

4. What is the average financial aid per student?      \$3998

5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?      17%

6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction?      48%