

U.S. Department of Education
2021 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[] Public or [X] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name O'Gorman High School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3201 S Kiwanis Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Sioux Falls State SD Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 57105-4296

County Minnehaha

Telephone (605) 336-3644 Fax (605) 336-9272

Web site/URL https://oghs.ogknights.org/ E-mail jmahoney@ogknights.org

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Mr. Kyle Groos E-mail kgroos@ogknights.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Bishop O'Gorman Catholic Schools Tel. (605) 575-3351

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 Mr. Matt Mueller
(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, leave .blank*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The electronic signature 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 2021 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 must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2015 and grades participating in statewide assessments must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2019.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 or 2020.
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 current school year (2020-2021) 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. Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not the district.)

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, 2020 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

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	100	103	203
10	79	100	179
11	88	88	176
12 or higher	74	112	186
Total Students	341	403	744

*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
 - 1 % Asian
 - 3 % Black or African American
 - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 90 % 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 2019 - 2020 school year: 2%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	2
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	12
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	14
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019	768
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.02
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

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

Nepali

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 5 %

Total number students who qualify: 37

8. Students receiving special education services: 2 %

14 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. All students receiving special education services should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>3</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>46</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>19</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>2</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>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: 4

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. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	3
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher, CTE teacher.	46
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	3
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	0
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

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

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

Required Information	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	95%	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 2020.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	204
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	91%
Enrolled in a community college	1%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	5%
Found employment	2%
Joined the military or other public service	1%
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. 2014

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

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

16. Briefly describe how your school has been operating during the current 2020-2021 school year (e.g., open as usual, online only, a hybrid model, etc.)? If different grade levels in your building operate in different ways, include this. If the school began with one model and switched to another partially through the year, include this as well.

Open as usual with distance learning as an option.

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

PART III - SUMMARY

O’Gorman High School, a four-year Catholic high school of approximately 750 students, is located in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, a city of 225,000 people. Since opening in 1961, O’Gorman has established itself as a national leader known for its excellence. Students come from six Catholic elementary schools, a Catholic junior high school, and public schools within a sixty-mile radius of the city. The student body reflects the growing diversity in the city. The school’s vision is “...to create a Christ-centered community providing a financially viable, world-class education for an increasing number of children.” To realize this vision, the seven Catholic parishes of Sioux Falls contribute 50% of their ordinary income to the Catholic schools. This assistance, along with vigilant financial oversight, allows for over \$600,000 in financial aid to be given annually to students making attending the school realistic for families of all income levels.

All of the school’s success is rooted in its mission, “...to form a community of faith and learning by promoting a Catholic way of life through gospel values and academic excellence.” Forming community begins with over 95% of the student body participating in at least one of the 34 clubs and 23 sports available. Competing at the highest level against schools three times its size, O’Gorman has won 112 state athletic championships, more than any other school in the state. In addition, O’Gorman students excel in the visual and performing arts at the local, state, and national levels. O’Gorman’s Speech and Debate Team consistently ranks in the top 2% of schools nationally as noted by the National Speech and Debate Association.

O’Gorman students are challenged by a rigorous curriculum that includes 21 Advanced Placement and college dual credit courses. The class of 2020 graduated with 2,515 college credits earned through dual credit opportunities. O’Gorman students also average a near 90% pass rate on AP tests. Most O’Gorman graduates leave high school with at least a semester of college credits. The class of 2020 included twelve National Merit Semi-Finalists and 11 National Merit Finalists.

In 2019, O’Gorman entered a multi-faceted partnership with Avera Health Care System which has enhanced program offerings, provided key medical personnel on campus, upgraded athletic facilities, and much more, including helping to expand offerings in engineering and advanced computer programming. The partnership has also played a key role in establishing a residential program for international students. The partnership allowed O’Gorman to renovate a facility directly across the street from the campus which can host 32 international students. For many years international students participating in homestay programs have added diversity and global perspective to the school.

The mission of the school focuses on developing the whole student-mind, body, and spirit. A full-time chaplain and campus minister assist with the spiritual needs of the students. In addition to a rigorous core curriculum, students take a theology class each semester. These courses, combined with a vibrant faith community, provide students with ongoing opportunities to grow in their spiritual life. Each student enrolled in a theology class contributes twenty hours of service annually to the most vulnerable in the community. In addition, roughly 100 seniors take a semester-long Christian Service class where each student performs fifty hours of service at one designated location. Between this class and the Christian service requirement of the general student body, O’Gorman students volunteer over 20,000 hours a year.

O’Gorman invests in the well-being of every student. Mental wellness is a strong focus as two school counselors partner with the diocesan Catholic Family Services office to provide individual and group counseling for students. An international student coordinator works to assist international students adjust academically and socially as they participate in campus life. A family liaison works directly with immigrant families to overcome barriers allowing these students and families to participate more fully in all that the school has to offer.

O’Gorman was a recipient of the National Blue Ribbon School award in 1985, 2005 and 2014. The bar was set in 1985, and winning the award again in 2005 and 2014 assured families and stakeholders that the level of excellence in all areas remains a key fabric of the school’s culture. Becoming a Blue Ribbon School changed the trajectory of the school with excellence in academics and co-curricular activities making it a

school sought out regionally for the unique educational experience it provided. Being a Blue Ribbon School has helped to broaden opportunities for collaboration with local colleges and universities who trust that the rigor and relevance of the curriculum is strong.

Due to COVID-19, O’Gorman was forced to move to remote learning last March. This motivated the school to further embrace technology and to develop a distance learning program that continues today. During the months of closure, faculty and administration partnered to reach out via phone to students who, for any reason, did not interact with all of their classes each day. While a herculean effort, these efforts led to a nearly 100% pass rate for all classes for the spring semester.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

The school's curriculum surpasses state and national standards in all areas. O'Gorman's graduation requirements far exceed the state requirements and lead to the state of South Dakota's advanced endorsement.

Assessment plays a role in proper placement of students entering O'Gorman. Standardized test scores provide a snapshot of student ability that is considered in partnership with input from teachers and academic records to determine courses for students. The pre-ACT test, taken by sophomores, is used to analyze the freshman and sophomore level curriculum. The ACT test, taken by over 95% of students, provides additional data for analyzing curriculum. Students take common assessments and cumulative semester tests in every subject area. Formative assessment is a routine component of classroom instruction. The use of Google Forms has allowed teachers to conduct both formative and summative assessments whether students are learning in-person or remotely.

Reading/English Language Arts

Students take four years of English with the curriculum at each grade level incorporating reading, writing, speaking, and grammar. Students have the opportunity to earn college credit through AP English Language and Composition, AP Literature and Composition, and College Speech Communications.

The curriculum includes a strong focus on writing, particularly literary analysis, rhetorical analysis, and research-based writing. All English teachers use locally created rubrics to evaluate student writing.

Improving students' ability to understand complex text is a school improvement goal. Thus the reading portion of the curriculum includes a strong emphasis on "close reading" of informational and nonfiction texts. The class of 2020 achieved 81% proficiency in understanding complex text as measured by the ACT test compared to 41% nationally.

The move to 1:1 learning with Chromebooks three years ago has contributed significantly to the ability to adapt to distance learning. Students have access to both digital and print copies of all texts, and nearly all assignments are distributed, collected, and evaluated digitally using a variety of tools. This shift to digital learning has helped during the pandemic with numerous students absent on a rotating basis due to quarantine and isolation along with students who have chosen distance learning for the semester.

Mathematics

The mathematics curriculum includes courses designed for all levels of learners. In the class of 2020, 93% took four years of math. All students take Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II. Students have the opportunity to earn college credit through AP Calculus, AP Statistics, and College Algebra. In the class of 2020, 95% took one of these three courses. The remaining students, who take four years of math, enroll in courses that prepare them for college level mathematics.

Improving students' ability to solve complex problems is a schoolwide school improvement goal that combines the need to understand complex text with critical thinking skills. To meet this goal, the curriculum focuses on solving complex word problems that combine "close reading", critical thinking, and problem-solving skills.

All math teachers record their classes using a Promethean Board and post the video online for students to watch if they are absent due to quarantine or isolation. Several teachers utilize a flipped classroom approach using EdPuzzle which allows for more class time to check for understanding, individual instruction, and collaboration. Teachers use Google Forms, Quizlet, Kahoot, and other digital tools for formative assessment.

Science

The science curriculum offers multi-leveled courses in physical and life science designed to allow students of all ability levels the opportunity to earn four years of science credit. Over 90% of students take four years of science. The percentage of graduating seniors meeting the ACT STEM benchmark is more than double the state and national percentage. Biology, chemistry, and physics are required for graduation. Students can earn college credit in College Biology, AP Chemistry, AP Physics 1, and AP Physics 2. Anatomy and Physiology, another college preparatory course, attracts approximately 100 students each year.

To promote problem-solving and critical thinking skills, the curriculum emphasizes analysis and interpretation of data through a robust laboratory component and inquiry-based learning activities. Collaboration and rich discussion permeate the science classroom.

Adapting instruction for online learning has included using Promethean Boards and Screencastify to record lessons which are then available to all students. Teachers have also incorporated various online tools for formative assessment including Quizizz, Socrative, Plickers, Kahoot, etc.

Social Studies/History/Civic Learning

Students at O’Gorman are required to take three credits of social studies. The social studies curriculum includes the study of world history and geography, United States history and government, global issues, economics, personal finance, psychology, and sociology. Students have the ability to earn college credit in AP US History, AP World History, AP Government, AP Human Geography, AP Psychology, AP Microeconomics, and AP Macroeconomics.

The Economics and Personal Finance curricula include a partnership with Junior Achievement where outside speakers from the business community visit the classes regularly to focus on financial literacy. Students also take part in a statewide stock market challenge competition.

A strong writing component across the social studies curriculum is driven by the examination of primary sources. The social studies curriculum focuses on synthesis and analysis going beyond merely learning the factual information. The classroom instruction is student driven and includes debates, collaborative projects, etc.

1a. For secondary schools (middle and/or high school grades):

The curriculum at O’Gorman directly supports college and career readiness. Working with O’Gorman Junior High, O’Gorman is able to offer students the chance to enroll in advanced and college-prep courses before grade nine in the areas of math, science, world language, and computer science. From the beginning of the student’s high school career, these advanced classes successfully prepare students for rigorous collegiate-level courses. O’Gorman offers 21 Advanced Placement and dual credit college courses, but unlike many dual credit offerings at the high school level, O’Gorman’s dual credit courses are taught on campus by O’Gorman teachers who have the credentials to be adjunct professors through the partnering university.

O’Gorman students are well-prepared for emerging career fields. Courses are offered in the areas of architecture and construction, business management and administration, finance, arts, audiovisual technology and communication, computer science, and hospitality and tourism. Students have the ability to earn an advanced career endorsement on their transcript from the state of South Dakota as well as industry-recognized credentials in several of the different CTE clusters.

Architecture and construction courses offer students the opportunity to use SketchUp software to design prototypes which are printed using 3D printers. Students use CAD tools to create floor plans, foundation plans, etc. The computer science classes offer students the potential to become Google Certified. Students involved in FBLA and HOSA have opportunities to compete and lead at the local, state, and national levels. O’Gorman’s FBLA chapter, in its inaugural year, produced the state FBLA president, and O’Gorman HOSA NBRS 2021

students consistently earn their way to the national competition. A strong partnership with a local health system also allows students to participate in athletic training programs, where they assist student athletes and coaches with physical health and rehab, while working alongside certified medical professionals.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

O’Gorman values a well-rounded education for all students, offering an array of courses complementing the core. Performing and visual arts classes, physical education, foreign language, technology, and career and technical training courses all provide training for a diverse population, preparing students for 21st century citizenship. Students take a theology course each semester contributing to the goal of developing the whole student.

O’Gorman is known regionally and nationally for its excellence in the arts. Arts courses focus on developing content skills and cultivating arts appreciation for students of every grade level. Various oral interpretation, speech, debate, and theatre production courses are offered, and these teams regularly perform in the top tier of schools nationwide. In instrumental music, students of all grades participate in classroom instruction along with competitions and performances. Students can choose from marching band, concert bands, jazz bands, and orchestra, with additional chamber and solo opportunities. Vocal music offerings include multiple choirs targeting different ranges of ability along with auditioned show choirs and an elite chamber ensemble. Music students compete at the local, state, and national levels and regularly attend regional and national auditioned events. AP Music Theory is offered for advanced students. Visual arts offer four levels of drawing and painting, pottery, graphics, digital photography, and functional design. All arts courses meet daily for credit similar to other curricular areas.

Over 90% of O’Gorman students graduate with at least two years of a foreign language. Students may study Spanish, German, and Latin from introductory levels through Advanced Placement classes. O’Gorman is a part of the German American Partnership Program which allows students to earn credit studying in Germany, living with host families. German students also visit O’Gorman for a similar month-long experience.

Physical education classes are offered for every grade, and all students must take a physical education and health class. Courses include various levels of weight training, classes emphasizing life-time activities, a Wellness for Life class incorporating healthy living, nutrition, and physical fitness, and an innovative Theory of Coaching class. Additionally, Nutrition and Healthy Lifestyles and Intro to Culinary Arts classes teach essential skills for healthy eating and living.

Technology classes range from introductory computer applications to advanced computer programming, and AP Computer Science. These are available to all grade levels and incorporate state-of-the art technology and methods, including programming and piloting drones and other robotic devices.

Students are required to take theology courses throughout their high school years. Courses include Ethics and Relationships, Discipleship, Morality and Justice, Christian Service, and Advanced Theological Seminar. These courses are what sets O’Gorman apart from other high schools as they develop the whole student – mind, body, and spirit. Students learn the foundations of their faith and then participate in rich discussion leading to a deep understanding of the world in which they live.

In all of these areas, curriculum is rigorous and relevant. All subject areas support schoolwide goals of enhanced writing and "close reading" of complex texts. Courses and opportunities in all of these areas are available to students at every grade level. Through the pandemic, no cuts have been made to any of these areas.

3. Academic Supports:

O’Gorman has a robust Academic Services program that is committed to providing educational support to students who are in need of academic assistance so that all students may achieve their full potential. The Academic Services Coordinator, and two additional certified teachers provide a variety of services to students and act as a resource for faculty and administrators.

This team utilizes a three-tiered approach to provide support and early intervention for students in the classroom. The student is placed on a Language Acquisition Plan, Accommodation Plan, or Personalized Service Plan if a student is identified as an English Language Learner or is diagnosed with a condition that impacts learning. Each plan is tailored to the individual needs of the student, shared with corresponding teachers, and reviewed annually based on the student’s need for accommodations or modifications.

A key to the overall academic success of the school includes intentional supports put in place to keep as many students as possible on grade level. Reading Reinforcement and Literacy Reinforcement are courses designed to allow for re-teaching and support of the freshman and sophomore level English classes. These classes are taught by an academic services teacher who works in close cooperation with the classroom teacher. Algebra Skills is a class that reinforces Algebra I and serves to reteach concepts and to provide students with more individualized instruction. All of these support classes are credit-bearing classes which allow students to stay on track for graduation.

A student assistance team, consisting of the principals, counselors, academic services staff, and classroom teachers meets every six weeks to identify students who are in need of academic or emotional support. This team communicates with teachers and parents with the goal of having every student pass every class every semester.

Students can also receive additional support in the Study Center which serves as a structured study hall where students receive one-on-one assistance with assignments and testing accommodations. Over 100 students receive some form of assistance in the Study Center.

O’Gorman is known for its ability to challenge advanced students. These students have access to accelerated classes in every curricular area at all grade levels leading to the wide array of AP and dual credit college courses. The occasional student who exhausts all of the course offerings in a particular curricular area at O’Gorman is able to dual enroll at one of two local universities to continue their college level studies.

The school’s focus on preparing all students for post-secondary education and training, not just advanced students, has played a key role in its overall academic success.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

In order to provide a positive environment for student growth, O’Gorman offers a wide range of opportunities for students to grow both socially and emotionally.

Freshmen students are welcomed to campus with a full day of activities led by seniors and freshmen faculty advisors. Students are assigned to an advisory group with the same students and faculty advisor throughout their four years.

Students are encouraged to create new clubs and organizations to fit their interests. In addition to all of the existing clubs and sports, the 2019-2020 school year saw the creation of local chapters of Future Business Leaders of America, Educators Rising, and an Environmental Awareness Club. The student council promotes a positive environment through initiatives which encourage students to anonymously thank others. They also organize an evening study session held each semester where teachers cook, serve food, and help students prepare for final exams. Opportunities abound to grow spiritually through daily prayer, campus ministry activities, retreats, and monthly praise and worship nights.

The emotional well-being of students is a key focus of the counseling department, especially during the pandemic. A mindfulness room gives students a quiet space to work on coping skills in an effort to keep anxious students in the building. The space includes comfortable seating and a desk with mindful activities. Each student who uses the room has the opportunity to speak to a counselor.

Returning students attend lunch seminars highlighting new courses. Counselors visit every classroom with detailed grade level specific registration information for all incoming freshmen through juniors. The administration and counselors meet individually with each incoming freshman family to assist them with registration and any questions they may have. Each senior student also has an individual meeting with a counselor or administrator to assist with postsecondary planning.

When the school suddenly pivoted to remote learning in March 2020, the groundwork was already in place to maintain student engagement. From March through May students who did not participate daily with their classes received a phone call from a teacher, counselor, or administrator. Administrators and counselors created weekly videos to keep students informed of timely issues such as graduation announcements, academic planning, self-care tips, and ideas to stay social. To boost morale for the students and staff, the staff created two music videos to share with the students. The student council also sponsored “home staying” week complete with theme dress days for students during their Zoom classes, a virtual talent show, and a virtual game challenge.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

In order to accomplish the school’s mission, the school has established intentional, continuous, and innovative ways to partner with parents and community members. A daily student bulletin and monthly newsletter posted on the school’s website and social media platforms, highlights important news, activities, accomplishments, and upcoming events. Social media is used to post live updates and pictures to thousands of followers. Parents are surveyed annually to gain input from stakeholders.

A Parent Advisory Board that meets monthly with the school’s administrative team serves as a liaison between families and the school. A group of parents gathers weekly on campus to pray for students and staff. Various system-level committees and booster clubs involve hundreds of parents.

Opportunities exist throughout the year to bring families and community members into the building to connect with faculty and staff. Open houses, activity potlucks, activity fairs, etc. are scheduled regularly. Parent-Teacher Conferences are also held twice a year with the majority of parents attending. Building relationships with families is a high priority and has been instrumental in the success of the school.

O’Gorman students consistently seek meaningful ways to support the community through fundraisers, projects, and service opportunities. A recent example of this happened in the fall of 2019 when three tornadoes went through the city and caused significant damage to an apartment complex near the school. The students organized a fundraising challenge and raised over \$10,000 within one month to support the families impacted by the storm.

In the process of revamping the Industrial Arts program, several partnerships were established with local building construction companies. These companies partner with the classroom teacher to provide assistance with classroom instruction, to demonstrate different labs, and to offer summer apprenticeships.

In addition, O’Gorman partners with three area universities to offer students a wide range of college courses both at O’Gorman and on their campuses. A partnership created with a local university last year offers automatic admission and a \$17,000 scholarship to O’Gorman students who achieve a cumulative 3.0 GPA.

While the pandemic has presented unique challenges, O’Gorman has worked diligently to maintain parent engagement. A virtual open house was held in the fall. Parent-Teacher Conferences were held via Zoom. Parent Advisory Board meetings were moved offsite to a location that allowed for social distancing. A virtual activities fair is being planned along with socially distanced tours allowing incoming freshman parents into the building to meet staff.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Teachers truly believe in the school’s mission, and they weave it into a strong professional culture. O’Gorman works to ensure that new faculty members are supported by multiple people and that all teachers feel valued and supported. Teachers new to the school participate in “O’Gorman 101.” This group, led by a veteran teacher, meets to discuss procedures and upcoming events. A peer coaching program pairs teachers in their first two years of teaching with a veteran teacher to dialogue regarding best practices and to observe each other. The group meetings, led by a peer coaching coordinator, focus on the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Each year, six full days are dedicated to professional development. Topics include best practices in instruction, incorporating technology into instruction, school safety, and emotional well-being of students and staff. A retreat day is also set aside to provide faculty an opportunity to grow in their faith. All of these professional development opportunities give teachers the chance to reflect on their teaching and to determine professional growth goals.

The faculty’s strong sense of community and dedication contributed to the school’s success when learning was fully remote during the spring shut-down. Administrators led the faculty in preparation for the possibility of distance learning. Administrators, the technology integrationist, and teacher-leaders modeled and provided ongoing support for using various technological tools to make distance learning successful, including Zoom, Screencastify, and Edpuzzle. Training teachers before moving to distance learning allowed them to succeed from the start.

Two full-time substitute teachers were added to help with staff absences due to the pandemic. These teachers are in the building daily and have access to the learning management system and all technology necessary to keep classes moving forward with less work placed on the teacher in quarantine or isolation. In addition, a distance learning coordinator was added to facilitate the learning for students who chose to stay remote despite the school’s return to in-person learning.

Even amidst the pandemic, staff morale remains strong. In a typical year, each department hosts a monthly community building activity that enables faculty and staff to mingle. Departments have found creative ways to continue this tradition amidst the pandemic including leaving treats and notes for the staff, having students write personal notes of gratitude and encouragement, etc. A survey of faculty, in preparation for return to in-person learning in the fall, showed that their top concern was the health and safety of their co-workers. This powerful sense of community truly keeps faculty at O’Gorman High School for the long-term.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy at O’Gorman is collaborative and whole-person centered, focusing on the emotional, academic, and spiritual growth of all students and staff.

The goal of the school leadership is to create teacher-leaders. Every faculty member is involved in leading at least one group or activity. Teachers also serve on committees representing the high school at the system level. O’Gorman faculty members serve on system-wide technology, mission, academic services, peer relations, and wellness committees.

An administrative team composed of the principal and assistant principal, counselors, activities director, and the theology chair meets bi-weekly to discuss all things impacting the school. This group has the singular focus of making every aspect of the student experience the best it can be.

Ten faculty members serve as department chairs. This group acts as a bridge between administration and the classroom discussing everything from instructional resources to curriculum design, assessment, and lesson delivery. Departmental meetings, held every six weeks, focus on more content-specific topics related to teaching and learning. Assessment data is analyzed at the department level, and annual school improvement goals are determined based on this departmental input as well as input gathered at a data retreat held each fall.

The principal and assistant principal provide instructional leadership based on the school’s professional growth plan which includes an individual conference with each teacher twice each semester. This plan is built to promote professional conversations through a self-evaluation component and the use of this component to develop professional goals. The professional goals must be directly tied to improving student achievement.

The school is accredited through Cognia (formerly AdvancEd) in addition to state accreditation. A school-wide accreditation leadership team meets regularly and works with the entire faculty to develop school improvement goals based on assessment data and feedback from stakeholder surveys.

A 1:1 committee meets regularly to evaluate the 1:1 Chromebook initiative, now in its third year. This committee consists of faculty members from core content areas along with members of the IT department, the principal, and assistant principal. This committee assesses the impact of the initiative on teaching and learning and looks for ways to improve the experience for both students and teachers. The teacher-leaders on this committee have played a key role in bringing other teachers along on the journey to creating a more digital environment.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

To create a culturally responsive teaching and learning environment, O’Gorman prioritizes individualized support, unity, and integrity. To ensure equity, O’Gorman requires student demeanor and presentation to be respectful and politically neutral. For example, the dress code policy is the same for all students. O’Gorman provides Chromebooks to all students, and administrators work to ensure access to equitable opportunities for all students. At the start of virtual learning, administrators helped families gain Internet access, so students could fully engage. O’Gorman supports all family considerations by communicating through multiple formats, such as translated documents, phone calls while working families are home, and text messages. A tiered tuition system enables children of all staff to have the opportunity to attend O’Gorman.

To ensure cultural awareness, the school provides culturally diverse opportunities and learning experiences. O’Gorman embeds culturally representative literature and other considerations, such

as historical figures, traditions, and events, across core curriculum. The International Club hosts international activities including cooking, various modes of art, and informing the school about global topics. Respect in the classroom and school are also fundamental aspects of O’Gorman. Adherence to the highest ethical standards of integrity is one of the school’s core values that guides all decisions.

A diversity committee was established in July 2020. This committee discusses biases, researches representative curriculum, and seeks feedback from experts within the community, such as alumni and teachers of color. Surveys show that most students report O’Gorman is a safe space for all cultures, but it is of the utmost importance to continue conversations in supporting students, families, and the community.

International students represent one marginalized population provided superior support. A full-time coordinator meets with nineteen international students regularly and initiates discussions with faculty to ease the academic transition. International students have an initial orientation, attend monthly luncheons where they discuss shared experiences, and are connected with domestic students to acclimate to US life. International students also take US Language and Culture, a course designed to prepare students for upcoming transitions, to help them advocate for themselves, and to help them communicate effectively.

For students qualifying for free and reduced lunch, O’Gorman has a district family liaison who works closely with the whole family to provide resources, such as food, books, winter clothing, fee waivers, transportation, scholarships, and information regarding qualifications for community programs.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

From the announcement of COVID-19's imminent arrival, O'Gorman's most successful strategy for continued academic achievement has been a commitment to honest and frequent communication with all stakeholders. Connecting and informing students, staff, and families has been the highest priority.

O'Gorman held its last day of in-class schooling for the academic year on March 13, 2020. Because the school had been preparing for over a month for this possibility, by the next academic day, administration was ready to execute a plan and was meeting with teachers to discuss and refine. The creed: every student passes every class; the method: communicate daily with all. Every morning lessons were posted. Every day teachers recorded videos so students could see and hear them, preserving some normalcy in connection. Every day teachers had virtual office hours to check in with at-home learners. Every day students submitted work in all classes. Every day a team of administrators and staff diligently contacted students who did not complete assignments. The message from the school to students and families was clear: distance learning does not mean a loss in quality of instruction or relationship, and your education is valued every single day.

Throughout the spring, teachers and families were regularly surveyed about the plan, and their feedback was shared and incorporated. This continued through the summer as a return to learn committee made up of twelve faculty and administrators prepared for the resumption of in-person learning.

While the overall strategy remains unchanged, O'Gorman's tactics have morphed to cater to on-site, temporarily absent, and remote learners, meeting the specific needs of each group. Happily, most students currently study on site in a regular classroom setting. To support students through short-term absences caused by quarantine protocols or pending COVID tests, teachers record lessons using webcams which are hard-wired in all classrooms. These lessons are posted for students to view as they work at home.

To maintain connection with remote learners, teachers utilize Zoom to bring them into the classroom, allowing for interaction with their instructor and peers. A new distance learning coordinator also communicates daily with these students.

Administration continually provides updates to staff regarding the nature and duration of student absences and regularly informs all families of the number of positive cases reported among students and staff (with all privacy guidelines in place). The O'Gorman community has noted the level of transparency, which is not something found at all schools in the area.

Through all of the vicissitudes of 2020, O'Gorman's commitment to regular communication with all parties has allowed the mantra of connection and relationship to remain steadfast. Continued academic success for students has been the clear result.

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? \$8717
(School budget divided by enrollment)

4. What is the average financial aid per student? \$1898

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

6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 100%

PART VIII – NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL ASSESSMENT RESULTS

FOR NORM-REFERENCED TESTS

Non-public schools must report norm-referenced test (NRT) results in reading and mathematics for students tested in grades 3 and higher in the most recent administration of the test within the most recently completed school year (2019-2020)¹. Each school must obtain grade level summary reports from the test publisher for students tested in reading and mathematics for each of these grades.

These reports must include:

1. the number of students tested;
2. the average student scale score or the national percentile equivalent of the average scale score in reading and mathematics **for all students in each tested grade; and**
3. the average student scale score or the national percentile equivalent of the average scale score in reading and mathematics **for each sufficiently large subgroup² in each tested grade.**

Please make notations on these reports to explain results that represent fewer than 95 percent of the students enrolled at the time of testing (e.g., the number of students who took alternative assessments³).

A copy of these reports (in a PDF file) must be uploaded through the National Blue Ribbons Schools Portal.

Also, one hard copy of these reports must be submitted by mail to CAPE with two hard copies of this application.

¹ Because of school closings due to COVID-19, schools may use test results obtained in the fall or spring of 2019 or the fall of 2020.

² Possible subgroups are those identified in Items 4, 6, 7, and 8 in Part II of this application (racial/ethnic groups, ELL students, students eligible for free or reduced meals, and students receiving special education services). A sufficiently large subgroup is one that represents at least 10 percent of the school enrollment as reported in these items.

³ Alternate assessments are used to evaluate the performance of students who are unable to participate in a school's norm-referenced test (NRT) even with accommodations. These assessments are based on the grade-level content covered by the NRT, but at reduced depth, breadth, and complexity. (adapted from National Center on Educational Outcomes)