

U.S. Department of Education
2022 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 Dr. Eugene Sweeney
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Notre Dame Preparatory High School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 9701 East Bell Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Scottsdale State AZ Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 85260-2125

County Maricopa

Telephone (480) 634-8201 Fax (480) 634-8299

Web site/URL https://www.ndpsaints.org E-mail gsweeney@ndpsaints.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* Mrs. Julie Platt E-mail jplatt@ndpsaints.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Diocese of Phoenix Tel. (602) 354-2345

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 Mrs. Sheila Doherty
(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 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 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 2016 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: 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 or 2021.
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. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s nomination and/or rescind a school’s award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

12. 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.

The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for current school year (2021-2022) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools. . For charter schools: If a charter school is part of the public school system, information should be provided for the public school district. If a charter school is considered its own district or part of a charter district, the information provided should reflect that.)

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 for 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 in the school as of October 1, 2021 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	123	136	259
10	106	121	227
11	85	103	188
12 or higher	94	96	190
Total Students	408	456	864

*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):
- 2.2 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 0.3 % Black or African American
 - 11.1 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 81.1 % White
 - 3.3 % 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 2020 - 2021 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, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	15
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	3
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	18
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	802
(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):

Spanish, Russian

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

0 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 3 %

Total number students who qualify: 29

8. Students receiving special education services 14 %

With an IEP or 504: 121 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 with an IEP or 504 should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>2</u> Autism | <u>30</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>2</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>58</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>24</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>3</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>2</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

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

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to 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	7
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher, CTE teacher.	64
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	4
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	2
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	6

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 13:1

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

Required Information	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2016	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	95%	94%
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 2021.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	206
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	88%
Enrolled in a community college	6%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	6%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

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

Notre Dame Preparatory is a Diocesan Catholic high school, dedicated to the promotion of academic excellence and the pursuit of holiness through the shared values of Reverence, Respect, and Responsibility, out of love for Jesus Christ. Vision: To provide the highest quality Catholic high school educational experience, offering student-centered learning opportunities which develop the whole person: mind, body, and soul.

16. Provide a URL link to or text of the school’s nondiscrimination policy.

Non-Discrimination

It is the policy of Notre Dame Preparatory that it shall not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, creed, color and/or national origin in the administration of educational policies, scholarships, athletics or any other school programs.

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

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Notre Dame Preparatory is a Roman Catholic high school located in Scottsdale, Arizona, that serves students in grades 9 through 12 under the auspices of the Diocese of Phoenix. The school has served students throughout the greater Phoenix East Valley since its founding in 2002, providing a challenging, comprehensive, and innovative curriculum. While NDP is a Catholic college preparatory school, it is a blended community with 63 percent of the student population identifying as Catholic and the remainder of the community being of varied faiths and backgrounds. Students and families attend Notre Dame Prep for the small class size, quality education, and the spiritual environment that surrounds the community.

Stakeholders are invested in the mission and vision of educating students: mind, body, and soul.

Many families who attend NDP are affluent and provide for their students in ways not possible at other schools; however, 71 percent of the student body attend classes on partial or full scholarship. Despite these differences, faculty, students, and staff strive to be one holistic community in academics, athletics, and the arts. In the 20 years since opening its doors, Notre Dame Prep has worked equally hard to support all its programs financially, building new classrooms in 2002, a state-of-the-art stadium in 2015, and, most recently, a performing arts center in 2019.

During the summer of 2020, Notre Dame invested \$250,000 into classroom technology, installing integrated displays in every classroom on campus to provide quality education during the pandemic. Throughout most of 2020, NDP transitioned from in-person to online to hybrid learning, meeting students where they were both physically and emotionally while maintaining high academic standards. Even during the pandemic, Notre Dame Prep was able to matriculate 100 percent of its senior class. In addition to their extremely high college acceptance rate, the graduating class received 7.2 million dollars in academic-based scholarships.

Students are supported on campus by a highly educated group of teachers, with 75 percent of Notre Dame's faculty having a master's or doctoral degree. Because of this, NDP students are provided with greater educational diversity and a solid foundation for college entry. Compared to the surrounding schools, NDP expects more from students, including four years of theology instruction, two semesters in the same arts discipline, and completion of 120 service hours by graduation. The emphasis on giving back is a cornerstone of many programs on campus, including National Honor Society, St. Thomas Aquinas Scholars, and sports, fine arts, and club programs participating in service together. In the 2019-2020 school year, students completed 28,970 hours of Christian service.

Notre Dame Prep offers an 8-period day featuring a block schedule model. With the freedom to take additional courses, students have many opportunities to earn college credits. NDP currently offers 10 Dual Enrollment courses and 15 Advanced Placement courses in a wide range of subjects. Besides the courses that earn college credit, Notre Dame Prep provides "career pathways" to outline courses at NDP that assist students as they begin to think about the world of work. These are not locked-in paths but merely are used to exhibit for students the ways in which they can gain real-life experience and foundational skills to aid them in future careers.

Two key socio-emotional and academic components of the school are the House System and the What I Need - Academic Resource Time. All students, faculty, staff, and administrators belong to one of ten Houses. The school mantra is "Ten Houses, One Community of Saints." Each House is subdivided into four families to build closer bonds and has the personalization of the school as its purpose. Each Family and House is served by student leaders who plan and execute various lessons and activities. Some days focus on students engaging with classmates in other grades; other days, students are given presentations by various groups, including the assistant principal for student learning, the counseling department, or groups such as the Diversity Student Union. Each House sits together at Mass, rather than students attending with a designated class. What I Need - Academic Resource Time is another program built into the weekly schedule to allow teachers and students to meet for academic remediation and extension. While also providing a more personalized experience, the program supports the school's academic mission by helping teachers in their commitment to intervene when students are not learning what is expected.

For one Thursday What I Need - Academic Resource Time session, a junior asked her English teacher for feedback on a history essay, while on Friday, that same student was having her morale boosted by a Theology teacher in House. These opportunities would not have existed before creating the House System and What I Need - Academic Resource Time. They truly serve to center NDP's goal to grow whole young adults spiritually, academically, emotionally, physically, and socially.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

The Notre Dame Preparatory High School curriculum reflects a commitment to offering student-centered learning activities that develop the whole person: mind, body, and soul. This commitment permeates all instruction. Graduation requirements are significantly higher than those required by the state of Arizona and satisfy even the most selective college entrance criteria. All of the curriculum is aligned to diocesan, state, and national standards.

Classes are delivered in four synchronous 80-minute instructional blocks each day. Periods 1-4 meet on Mondays and Thursdays. Periods 5-8 meet on Tuesdays and Fridays. Wednesday is a shortened day, with all eight classes meeting for 20-25 minutes each. During the early days of the COVID-19 crisis, this schedule helped to easily adapt to various requirements of local government and health departments. NDP shifted seamlessly from whole classes to half classes (hybrid learning) in-person to full-time online instruction. With the online option, all students could access classes virtually using Microsoft Teams and the video conferencing hardware installed in each classroom. In addition, instructors could teach students at home or on campus using both synchronous and asynchronous strategies. Teachers received on-site and virtual professional development about effective delivery models while teaching in the block for both the classroom and online.

Teachers at NDP are grounded in the science of learning and development that supports strong, trusting relationships; collaboration in the learning process; connections to prior experience; inquiry interspersed with explicit instruction where appropriate; and support for individualized learning strategies as well as collective learning. Authentic, engaging tasks with real-world connections motivate student effort and engagement, which is supported through teacher scaffolding and a wide range of tools that allow for personalized learning and student agency. NDP teachers do not “cover” curriculum for their students; they “uncover” learning experiences that put students in their “zones of proximal development.”

1b. Reading/English language arts curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Notre Dame Prep’s English offerings help students to develop proficiency in reading, writing, critical thinking, text analysis, and oral communication. There are three levels of English at every grade level to meet students’ needs. For example, during the freshmen and sophomore year, English is offered as a part of the Gonzaga Program, on-level learning for college preparatory students, and honors-level courses. In their junior and senior year, students can take on-level English, Dual Enrollment English taught at the honors level, and Advanced Placement English. As a part of the admissions process, incoming freshmen are identified through testing to determine their current skills. If needed, they are invited to attend summer school prep to strengthen language arts skills, thereby positioning them for success.

As a department, the English team has created curriculum roadmaps that create horizontal and vertical alignment of key concepts, focusing on a broad exposure to various literature. Throughout this mapping process, the Diocesan Standards that follow closely with Common Core English standards were kept at the root of how students process and analyze literature. In all courses, teachers utilize Membean to facilitate an individualized study of vocabulary in preparation for the ACT/SAT exam, and NoRedInk as a tool for grammar study.

Freshmen take English 1: Introduction to Literature, a survey course emphasizing literary analysis. Throughout this course, freshmen are provided a consistent base in writing by using the Schaffer Method for teaching paragraph organization. The freshman year English course includes a survey of short stories, providing a background in the basics of close reading and analyzing literature: characters, setting, plot, literary devices, and theme.

Sophomores take English 2: World Literature, studying fiction from around the world, emphasizing how culture influences literature and how literature influences the culture of the time. Working closely with the Social Studies department, World Literature is taught in chronological order to create cross-curricular projects and learning opportunities. For example, during the second semester, sophomores in World History and English research the marginalized people of the world earning credit in both courses for the assignment. For English, this lays the groundwork for reading *Night* by Elie Wiesel, a memoir of the Holocaust while in history; this sets the stage for the study of World War II and the treatment of marginalized groups in countries such as Germany and Russia.

Juniors take English 3: American Literature or AP Language and Composition, capitalizing on the study of rhetorical strategies employed in both American literature and nonfiction. Junior English also works closely with the Social Studies department creating opportunities for students to read seminal works of American literature while studying those time periods in history.

Seniors take English 4: Literature and the Modern World or AP English Literature and Composition. In the on-level course and Dual Enrollment course, students focus on making connections between 19th and 20th-century literature and the world in which they live. In addition to literature, students explore news articles and other media focusing on contemporary issues as they prepare for college.

1c. Mathematics curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Mathematics offerings at Notre Dame Prep stress the use of inquiry-based mathematical terminology, uniform techniques of problem-solving, and facility in using and applying mathematical concepts and skills. In addition to math content, courses teach critical thinking skills, problem-solving, and grit. For example, in a calculus class, after working through a difficult math problem, teams of students troubleshoot their critical-thinking strategies with their instructors, who are encouraging the struggle and creativity needed to problem-solve.

Freshman and sophomore math curriculum includes beginning, college-prep, and Honors levels courses in Algebra and Geometry. Students who are identified as having learning gaps or attention deficit at admission may qualify for the Gonzaga program. In this program students who demonstrate academic potential and a desire to learn receive support in math during their freshmen and sophomore years with the goal of transitioning into full college preparatory study by their Junior year. This may include additional instruction, time to practice, and intensive support and feedback in 9th grade Algebra and 10th grade Geometry. The goal is for all students to build a strong base in mathematics their first two years in high school so that they are prepared to handle the rigor and content of the regular college-prep curriculum with their grade level peers junior and senior year.

Junior and senior courses include College Algebra, Pre-Calculus, AP Calculus AB and BC, Probability and Statistics, AP Statistics, and Math and Money Management. Math and Money Management is an elective math course designed to provide students an opportunity to learn and practice mathematic skills necessary for adult life such as buying a new car, deciding whether to rent or purchase a home, analyzing income and expenses and understanding student loans and ways to build good credit.

From a summer Math Prep and Pre-Algebra review for selected incoming freshmen to AP courses, NDP's mathematics department exposes students to a variety of instructional methods, ensuring an optimal opportunity for success. Math Homework Labs are open after school as resource area for individuals and groups of students to receive homework help and tutoring from instructors and National Honor Society students who are volunteer tutors.

Math instructors use multi-faceted methods of delivery. An Algebra 2 teacher models a new concept using in-class instruction, followed by modeling with an instructional video and student practice with immediate feedback from interactive websites. Teachers employ both traditional and flipped class models, employing technology such as Albert.io, AP Classroom, and Canvas as tools to leverage learning and assess competency by standard. Live lessons are recorded on Microsoft Teams for students who may be absent, and videos of

the lesson are posted for all students to watch, pause and replay as often as necessary for learning and review.

Adapting to the post-pandemic world with significantly less face-to-face instruction during COVID allowed the math department to revise the curriculum to address the most crucial areas of need and assess student performance, emphasizing intervention and support. The math department's mission is to form future leaders, help students practice problem-solving and analysis, and show students the truth and beauty of God through mathematics.

1d. Science curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The science department at Notre Dame Prep offers an integrated, rigorous curriculum focusing on laboratory experiences. Courses are standards-based and meet or exceed all state and diocesan academic standards. These practical hands-on offerings envelop critical thinking and problem-solving enhanced by math and technology applications.

On-level 9th grade students begin with applied physics, while more advanced students are ready for the rigor of Biology Honors. Course progression in science includes biology, chemistry and either applied physics or physics. Students may then branch off and discover their passion in the fourth year of science with AP Biology, Anatomy and Physiology or Honors Anatomy and Physiology, AP Chemistry, AP Physics, AP Environmental Science or Astronomy.

NDP recognizes the need for more scientific literacy and has met this challenge using lab groups that discuss concepts, apply reasoning, and reach conclusions. Students also share ideas and innovations in class and on discussion posts (in Canvas). Active teaching is a cornerstone of the science department. Students learn best when they are fully engaged. Finally, students demonstrate confidence when sharing their findings and providing recommendations to their peers.

Assessments measure the depth and breadth of student understanding. Formative assessments such as chemistry "quests" provide the students with feedback on their progress in each unit and give teachers the data necessary to move forward in the course. Summative assessments range from lab practical's, written lab reports, and standard exams to project-based learning, research papers, live presentations, and video projects, allowing students to show what they know about science and the world in which we live. Students make real-world connections, see the application of science, and learn by applying their knowledge. Science educators have been proactive in meeting the challenges of the 2020 school year with online options and assessments for students that are engaging and motivating.

1e. Social studies/history/civic learning curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The Social Studies Department aims to help students become the best possible citizens that they can be locally, nationally, and globally. To do so, the following sequence of instruction is used. As freshmen, students begin with a semester course called Freshman Seminar: Becoming a Saint. In this course, students are taught about the history and mission of the school. More importantly, they are also introduced to various study and learning techniques. This includes learning the value of formative schoolwork to help them achieve their best on summative work. Freshman Seminar then builds the academic framework which will serve them throughout their time at NDP.

In the second semester of freshman year, students study World Geography. Students will learn about the region they live in, about the country they live in, and about the world they live in. As sophomores, the material begun in World Geography is extended through the study of World History. Here, students learn where society has collectively come from to better understand where society is collectively headed. In junior year, the focus is on US history as that is where they live, and it is here where they will put into place their citizenship skills. As seniors, these citizenship skills are extended in the US Government and Economics courses.

In addition to these core classes, students may enrich their learning experiences through several elective,

dual credit, and AP courses. Finally, the department is aware of technology's role in modern life and education. As the internet continuously surrounds them, students must be taught to become critical users of what they find online. Therefore, an essential purpose of the curriculum is to help students identify and understand information, misinformation, and disinformation. The entirety of the social studies curriculum develops civic learning and college and career readiness through skill development that engages students in the process of discovery through a social science education that will allow them to compete at a global level in a manner commensurate with empathetic Christian values.

1f. For secondary schools:

Notre Dame Prep readies students for college and careers by offering a rigorous curriculum of college-prep courses in all core subject areas. In addition to the core curriculum, NDP offers a robust selection of AP and Dual Enrollment courses, business, engineering, and technology electives, and college-prep counseling that helps students focus on courses that prepare them for college, career pathways, and job shadowing.

To help students begin discerning a career, courses are offered that align with several “career pathways.” Students are encouraged to consider these pathways during their course selection process with our experienced counseling staff. For example, suppose a student is interested in pursuing a career in business. In that case, they can follow the suggestion to take the core curriculum and additional classes such as Public Speaking, General Business, or Probability and Statistics. Quoting the associate director of admission for Creighton University, “[I find] that NDP graduates are well-rounded and ready for college.”

After a pause due to campus visitor restrictions and COVID health concerns, Notre Dame Prep will again be hosting a Career Day, where business partners from a variety of companies come together to share information about their careers and the education and skills that are required for success in their career. The activities are structured to enable students to begin identifying areas of career interest, give them opportunities to learn from and interact with adult professionals and create opportunities for students to reflect upon the experience. Students are then given opportunities to network with these professionals to plan a job shadowing experience which offers further insight as they discern their future career interests.

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

Not Applicable.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

To support the arts, Notre Dame Prep opened a new 20,000-square-foot facility in 2021: the St. Catherine of Bologna Performing Arts Center (PAC), which provides a flexible black box theater and additional classroom space. This modern facility provides all stakeholders with the space to support theater, instrumental, choral, and digital video programs as well as a gathering space for large community events, including Mass, Christian service activities, lectures, and meetings. This new facility is home to classes for all grade levels daily.

The PAC houses NDP's instrumental and vocal music programs as well as theater and film production classes. Fine Arts offerings promote the excellence and understanding of the arts through education and performance. Visual Arts classes address art styles, multicultural art, and specific artists for inspiration while working with a variety of media. Performance classes address the various aspects of dance, theater, and vocal and instrumental music. Digital arts and technology classes address the principles of graphic design, drawing, media, and photo and video editing. Beginning, intermediate, and advanced Guitar courses lead students through a study of classical, jazz, and rock. Dual Enrollment Rock Music and Culture includes a study of the history of music in America and the influence of music in culture around the world. Vocal courses include concert choir through advanced Bella Voce acapella choir. Theater classes address various aspects of acting, movement, etiquette, voice, history, production, and performance. Courses include the study of graphic design/Photoshop, video production, digital painting, and digital photography. Music classes address instrumental and choral music and establish strong fundamental music skills, including the ability to read music, good vocal techniques, and the development of performance skills.

The Physical Education/Health Department promotes positive interaction, physical development, mental stimulation, and lifelong learning among students. All ninth graders take Health and Physical Education, studying physical, mental, social, and spiritual areas of growth, building a base for understanding how their body works and how they can make decisions that promote a healthy lifestyle. Students in grades 9-12 can choose from classes that emphasize physical development of the body through team sports, dance, weightlifting, and sports medicine. A modern weight-training facility and courses that focus on strength training needs and physical development for student athletic programs help athletes stay safe and strong. Sports teams also have strength-training curriculum tailored specifically for their sports.

World Language classes help young people appreciate and accept the diversity in God's creation and open their minds and hearts to appreciate various languages and cultures. The World Languages curriculum develops a well-rounded learner who can communicate effectively through reading, writing, and speaking that is grammatically correct and culturally acceptable. Courses include Honors and AP Spanish, French, and American Sign Language. The language, literature, and culture of Spanish-speaking, French-speaking, and American signing people worldwide consciously offers the opportunity to broaden students' experience and understanding.

Theology offerings assist students in integrating a systematic knowledge of the Catholic faith with their life experiences. Freshmen through seniors take courses that include regular and Honors levels study of the basics of the Catholic faith, including the Old Testament, Christology, church history, the Bible, the Mission of Jesus, Sacraments, World Religions, Morality, Introduction to Logic, and Philosophy. A capstone project is the freshman "Pieces of My Heart" scrapbook in which students reflect on the important people and moments that have helped shape their life and their faith. Teachers return the individual projects senior year so that students can see how they have grown during their four years at NDP.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Named in honor of St. Aloysius Gonzaga, the patron saint of young students, this academic support program is designed for incoming students who demonstrate academic potential and a desire to learn but need support to navigate Notre Dame Prep's college preparatory curriculum successfully. The program includes an increased focus on English and mathematics during freshman and sophomore years with the goal of transitioning the student into a full college preparatory schedule of study by his or her junior year.

For freshman and sophomore students, the Gonzaga Program provides extra time specially designed core English and math courses, taken within a two-year period. The curriculum is designed to foster learning for students who have academic promise despite the presence of educational gaps. The Gonzaga Program also offers additional support for students who struggle with executive functioning skills or have been diagnosed with ADHD.

Student growth is tracked through detailed data collection in English and math during freshman and sophomore years. Students graduate from the program after sophomore year and can seek additional support through the Student Resource Center as needed and grades continue to be tracked as students' progress through their high school career. When questioned about the benefits of the program, one graduate responded that "Notre Dame provided a safe and positive school environment, dedicated teachers, and differentiation to meet every student's individual needs. The Gonzaga teachers' creativity and passion helped me to succeed because I knew they did not only care about my education, but also my well-being. The curriculum was challenging, but achievable and helped me reach my educational goals."

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Named in honor of St. Thomas Aquinas, the patron saint of all educational institutions, this academic support program is a highly competitive, integrated program of study that provides a challenging, well-rounded education to Notre Dame Prep's most gifted and motivated students. Students are admitted to this

program based on academic test scores, transcripts, letters of recommendation, a writing sample, and a personal interview with the directors of this program. The intention is to stimulate academic and personal development through rigorous courses, unique cultural and academic field experiences, and advanced research opportunities.

The St. Thomas Aquinas Scholars Program requires students to meet rigorous academic requirements in their four years at Notre Dame Preparatory. Students in the STA Program must maintain a GPA of 3.85 or higher (weighted), complete 15 honors or AP-level courses, a 4th-level of consecutive study in the same World Language and must take AP Seminar and AP Research to have the option to pursue the AP Capstone Diploma. They attend special meetings and activities to enrich their learning experience with a curriculum that prepares scholars to succeed in even the most rigorous institutions of higher learning. Each grade level that students' progress through has a focus as they move from expanding their worldview to developing a critical and personalized lens with which to view the world, refining their research and critical thinking skills; students in STA culminate with their senior year by completing a research project of their choosing.

Aquinas Scholars also have a designated counselor assigned to them for all four years to bolster academic skills, social-emotional growth, and college and career planning and have individualized support during the university discernment and application process, and an analysis of potential career interests.

3c. Special education:

As a neurodiverse community, NDP provides Exceptional Education services to address the needs of students who learn differently due to a variety of challenges. Pope Francis reminds us, "An inclusive education finds a place for all and does not select in an elitist way the beneficiaries of its efforts." As an unapologetically Catholic school, NDP fulfills Christ's desire to love and help each brother and sister no matter what cross they must bear.

The Exceptional Education Department works to support students with learning challenges to find academic success, helping them to overcome barriers inherent in the curriculum so they can be successful. Its growing team of highly specialized special educators are innovative and keep Christ at the center of their teachings. The testing center offers accommodations, such as having a test read aloud, allowing for extra time, or providing a scribe for those who need it. NDP graduates will be provided academic support at the collegiate level; therefore, it is important for NDP to model it.

Also included in the Exceptional Education Department, the St. Aloysius Gonzaga Program is for students with gaps in their prior preparation or who need a little extra time to adapt to rigorous college preparatory curriculum. Because the transition from middle school to high school is not always seamless, especially as students dealt with disrupted learning through the start of the pandemic, the Gonzaga Program offers a mandatory summer school course and then provides an emphasis on mathematics and English during the student's first two years at NDP, with the goal of transitioning the student into a full college preparatory schedule of study by his or her junior year.

3d. English Language Learners, if a special program or intervention is offered:

Not Applicable.

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

Not Applicable.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Notre Dame Prep engages, motivates, and provides students with a positive environment that supports their academic, social, and emotional growth, and college and career readiness development in a plethora of ways. For example, the St. Thomas Aquinas Honors Program English teacher shares her writing process with 20 sophomores. Using the integrated whiteboard, she shows the original brainstorming notes for one of her essays. Students learn the writing process by observing models of writing.

In engineering/robotics, students work together to solve a real problem of practice. Early in the semester, the principal challenged the class to create options to deal with the traffic problems that the school has had for years. They make their final team presentation to administrative staff that provides two potential solutions that have real promise. Students learn by collaborating.

In a theology classroom, the teacher asks, "Is there room for morality in wartime?" then says nothing for the next 30 minutes. Students carry the discussion, using their text as support, as the Socratic Seminar format allows them the chance to explore their ideas. Students learn by analyzing and synthesizing.

Cooperative group work and various discussion methods are two additional examples of how students actively construct knowledge. No longer merely passive receptors of input, students are called upon to demonstrate mastery, to show what they know. It is not just that the block provides more time; it is what teachers do with the time that is significant. Teachers are changing their instructional delivery methods to ensure active learning.

The best lessons build on students' strengths. "We want students to know the answers are in them, not floating around out there somewhere," said one teacher. "It's not a guessing game, where only I know the answer or even that there is only one correct answer," agreed another teacher. "Having them gain confidence in constructing their own knowledge and skills is what focuses our work here."

When confronted with the COVID-19 shutdown, NDP did not miss a beat and continued to offer rigorous instruction with a sense of grace and understanding. Standard practice since introducing Canvas for the 2015-2016 school year has been for teachers to have their courses built out on the learning management system. "Our teachers adapted fairly seamlessly to online instruction as we ramped up to do remote learning," said one of the Assistant Principals. "Now remote learning is just another instructional tool that we can utilize to support learning."

2. Engaging Families and Community:

At Notre Dame Preparatory, improvement is a continuous process in which stakeholders must always be engaged. A cyclical series of systems to facilitate this process and engage families and the community is in place.

On a monthly basis the principal meets with students, staff, and the community in a variety of different meetings, including faculty meetings, House Representative meetings, meetings with the president, and meetings with the Mothers' Guild and the Dads' Club. Each of those meetings and the relationship between the principal and those various individuals provide vehicles for those stakeholders to have input in the long-range goals and priorities of the school.

Both the executive team meetings and department chair meetings are utilized to focus on planning what takes place daily at school. These committees involve key leaders in the school who are heavily involved and openly voice their opinions and beliefs about what needs to change in the school. The principal, as a result, has a significant feel as to the program and what needs to take place to make sure that a high-quality education is provided for students.

The principal also meets with the leadership teams from the Mothers' Guild and the Dads' Club monthly to discuss the operation of the school. "The administration looks to parents as partners," said one parent leader. "We parents are underutilized and a resource that has not yet been fully tapped." The laughter that followed her remark was warm; "...it is tremendous what we can do here for students by working together and using all our resources."

"The principal is the academic leader of the organization, and he welcomes our input. Since he arrived here and throughout the COVID-19 experience, he has used surveys to involve us, listen to us, and get our ideas to make the school better. Many of the ideas that have been implemented have been because parents suggested them. We are asked for our input and not brushed off. Parents have changed Notre Dame Preparatory for the better."

Quite simply, NDP is a stronger school because of the intense involvement of all members of the school community. Truly this partnership is reciprocal: The community likes to be involved, and Notre Dame Prep values their involvement.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The most significant way in which professional culture has been built at Notre Dame Preparatory is in the focus on the three big ideas of a Professional Learning Community: learning, collaboration, and results. This clear and evident focus coupled with the overriding vision that Notre Dame is a community of caring learners has helped focus teachers on their responsibility to see that students learn what they intend for them to learn. The criterion-referenced testing program offers a process to teachers to help them assess their work, solve a variety of problems, and try out innovative ideas in their coursework.

The most important step in the process is having teams of teachers write course descriptions that identify general course goals, specific objectives, specific course activities, central course requirements and the parameters for evaluation and assessment, and then having teachers write comprehensive criterion-referenced tests as final exams, having those results monitored and shared with teaching staff, and finally having teams of teachers analyze those results, identify problem areas, and develop improvement plans for working with students and student learning in classes. It is this recursive focus on the improvement of learning through collaborative effort that centers the professional community.

One of the interesting things about Notre Dame Preparatory is the ease with which teachers and students moved to online and hybrid instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic. This was due to the number of teachers that were already comfortable with online learning and what needed to be done to make that a successful experience. What facilitates this is the number of regular on-site learning opportunities available for teachers.

On one hand, internally, Notre Dame has several teachers involved in committees like the Assessment Committee. NDP also has a group of mentors for new teachers, guided by the Dean of Faculty, that both informally and formally help new teachers to come to understand the culture of Notre Dame, the curriculum that is taught, and the instructional strategies and support system that is available.

On the other hand, externally, Notre Dame Prep is involved in numerous professional conferences and staff has presented at national conventions and/or written for, the National Council of Teachers of English, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum and Development (ASCD), the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) and Solution Tree. The school has also developed ongoing professional development relationships with higher education institutions locally including Arizona State University, the University of Arizona, Grand Canyon University, and Scottsdale Community College. The cycle of improvement has been facilitated by this focus on learning, collaboration, and results.

4. School Leadership:

"Notre Dame Preparatory High School is not the same place it was a year ago. We must work steadfastly to fulfill our mission as a college preparatory institution. We are now working to focus our effort to become a

community of caring learners. Together we will build a school where learning, collaboration, and results are the most important things that can happen, where every teacher believes that every student in his or her class can learn the material contained in the course. Together, we will build an organization where every individual--teacher, coach, student, parent, support staff member, and administrator--will be treated with dignity and respect by every other member of the community while maintaining our high academic standards." In his initial address to the staff, the principal assured everyone what the direction would be and the foundation upon which Notre Dame Prep's mission rests.

Historically, Notre Dame has undergone significant growth and improvement as an academically challenging, and, as a result, continually growing, school. The current administrative team, uniquely collaboratively led by the president and the principal, has established a standard of servant leadership and shared decision making, using two assistant principals, a dean of faculty, a coordinator of engagement, clubs, and governance, a coordinator of belonging, mentoring, and house, a coordinator of service learning, twelve department chairs, and two deans of students to focus attention upon alignment of curriculum, the improvement of instruction, and the creation of community.

The president and the principal collaboratively provide leadership through their shared and clear vision of what they want the school to become--a vision that focuses on students and their needs first and foremost. They translate this vision into goals that are mirrored in the expectations for their teachers, students, and fellow administrators. They work to continuously monitor student achievement as evidenced by the "scorecard" that they developed. They work to intervene as supporters for faculty and staff and students directly involved in establishing incentives for teachers and working to genuinely encourage the improvement of instruction.

Finally, and most importantly, the president and the principal have effectively and efficiently mobilized resources for staff. Staff have not gone wanting in most any situation for any need. They understand that time is the most valuable resource and have planned to increase the amount of time that students and teachers are in class while working to create order and discipline to minimize factors that would disrupt learning. Their shared vision for the revision of the House program, the addition of the Student Resource Time program, the expansion of the Guidance and Counseling staff, the addition of a therapist to the staff, the addition of the role of Director of Student Culture, and the revision of the Exceptional Education Program offer significant promise for increasing the school's effectiveness.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

One aspect that will never change about Notre Dame Preparatory High School is the school's guiding commitment to the Catholic faith, striving to instill the desire to grow their relationship with God and knowledge that all things are possible through Christ. Despite the roadblocks from COVID-19, students have continued to perform Christian service and attend mission trips to help those in need. Notre Dame Prep's campus chaplain instills faith and love in each student.

NDP offers grade-level and all-school Mass to students and community, as well as daily Mass in the chapel. The community has the privilege of hearing from visiting priests who offer unique messages. During Catholic Black History Month, the Diocese of Phoenix chaplain to the African American Community hosted Mass where students learned about what it takes to become a saint. Moments like this help the students see faith through others' eyes. NDP also offer reconciliation, adoration, weekly Bible study, and other special moments celebrating the school's faith.

In 2019, NDP convened a steering committee composed of faculty, staff, parents, students, alumni, and administrators to oversee a systemic equity audit and guide stakeholders to lead the initiative. Their efforts involved addressing all the ways in which human dignity is subjugated and trivialized: racism/ethnicity, sexism/genderism, ageism, ableism, sizeism, classism, country of origin, citizenship status, linguistic profiling, religious persecution, sexual preference, and xenophobia. Sadly, the list is long. The defense of human dignity is integral to the Catholic faith yet counterintuitive to modern culture. In response to the initiative, students created several clubs to bring people together and to help those in need.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

It is 3:00 p.m., and while the school day ended 30 minutes ago, a freshman is making up a science lab with the help of his teacher. In the classroom next door, juniors are asking their teacher review questions for a chemistry test. Notre Dame Prep's unique daily schedule is a well-researched one designed to provide depth and to maximize instruction. While schools in the surrounding area offer 6 periods a day, NDP offers an 8-period one. It includes time to meet in House, time for a mid-morning break as well as the mid-day lunch, and time after school for required teacher office hours. NDP prides itself on its breadth of career pathways, AP and Dual Enrollment courses, and varied electives to broaden students' knowledge—all possible with the 8-period day plus the 9th-hour office period.

Recent adjustments to the day itself was a research-based decision to benefit students, recognizing when they learn best. First bell was at 7:40, but the school day now starts at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 2:30 instead of 2:50. Another recent change was the move to the block schedule. NDP's block schedule contains two sections of the block, Monday/Tuesday, Thursday/Friday, while all 8 classes meet on Wednesday. Students can break up homework and dedicate themselves to the study of four subjects each night as opposed to having homework from all classes each night. Because of the length of the 80-minute block periods, students may delve into a subject, focusing on the depth instead of the breadth of understanding as they spend such a large chunk of time in one classroom. They also are given a better opportunity to form relationships with their classmates as a community of learners—as well as with their teacher. This relationship is key to the development of students as they navigate the outside world and advocate for themselves in college and in life.

This variation of class meeting time allows for different types of instruction and assessment: both short summative assessments and lengthier test-prep style assessments that challenge students to highlight their knowledge in a high-stakes test environment. Students can enroll in additional academic courses to distinguish themselves for college applications or explore the arts and other electives to broaden their minds. Students take classes that interest them in academics, arts, STEM, or athletics. Philosophically and, the block schedule offers the opportunity for teachers to build deeper relationships and creatively develop lessons that help students to “learn by doing” while focused on constructing their own understanding.

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? \$19722
(School budget divided by enrollment)

4. What is the average financial aid per student? \$2104

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? 71%

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)