

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. John Luciano
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Holy Spirit Catholic School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 11665 Ft. Caroline Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Jacksonville State FL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 32225-1645

County Duval

Telephone (904) 642-9165 Fax (904) 642-1047

Web site/URL https://www.hscatholicschool.com E-mail dr.luciano@hscatholicschool.com

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* Deacon Scott Conway E-mail sconway@dosaf.com
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Diocese of St. Augustine Tel. (904) 262-3200

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. Angela Mathews Gale
(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	9	12	21
K	16	9	25
1	8	11	19
2	7	7	14
3	15	10	25
4	13	11	24
5	10	13	23
6	13	13	26
7	11	9	20
8	3	23	26
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	105	118	223

*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
 - 22 % Asian
 - 0.8 % Black or African American
 - 2.2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 61 % White
 - 14 % 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	2
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	2
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	4
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	223
(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, Indian (country of India), Tagalog

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

0 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 0 %

Total number students who qualify: 0

8. Students receiving special education services 5 %

With an IEP or 504: 11 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>0</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>2</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>4</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>5</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 20

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	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher, CTE teacher.	11
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	6
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	5
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 20:1

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

Required Information	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2016	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	96%	97%	97%	97%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2021.

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

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

Yes No

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

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

Holy Spirit Catholic School will provide a nurturing and faith-filled setting for each unique child of God. Through a variety of methods, our students will learn the gospel of Jesus Christ and the traditions of the Catholic Church. Holy Spirit students will develop skills for future success and a desire to serve others.

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

Holy Spirit School is committed to providing an environment that is free of discrimination and harassment. In keeping with this commitment, the school will not tolerate harassment or discrimination on the basis of a person's protected status, such as gender, color, race, ancestry, national origin, age, physical disability, mental condition, marital status, veteran status or citizenship status. All employees, faculty members and students are protected under this policy.

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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

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Holy Spirit Catholic School (HSCS) opened in 1988 and has a current enrollment of 223 students from pre-K to the 8th grade. The school's population is mostly middle-class families who reside within five to ten miles of the school. However, like many schools across the country, Holy Spirit families really encompass a wide range of economic situations. One hundred and nine of our students receive an income-based state scholarship. Approximately 85% of the students come from homes where both parents work outside the home. Student ethnic backgrounds are also quite diverse with 22 percent of the students being Asian, 13 percent Hispanic, 1.35 percent African American, 19 percent are multi-racial and 45 percent white. Student mobility rate is extremely low, only .02%, with most transfers having to do with Navy relocation.

HSCS is fully accredited by the Florida Catholic Conference and all but three teachers hold state teaching certificates for the field in which they teach. These teachers are not required to hold a certificate to teach in their area, but they do, however, have documented training and experience to serve in their positions. A pre-K teacher has an AS degree in Early Childhood Education, the Art teacher holds a BA in Fine Arts, and the Technology teacher has a BA and MBA in Business with extensive experience in business software applications. The teachers at Holy Spirit School average 18.7 years of experience. (5% hold a Master's degree.) Ten staff members have remained at the school for over 20 years. The staff at the school has been very stable over the years.

During the 2020-2021 pandemic school year, forty-one students remained at home and participated in real time "distance learning" instruction provided by Holy Spirit teachers. All of those students returned to in-person instruction by March 1, 2020. It is significant to note that even with this unique instructional platform in place, Holy Spirit students attained some of the highest standardized test scores in the history of the school. In fact, every grade from 3rd-8th scored above the required Blue Ribbon Award cut-off levels in both reading and mathematics on the spring Terra Nova assessments.

Holy Spirit School strives to nurture and educate the "whole child." A well-rounded curriculum is presented throughout the school year. The backbone of our curriculum are the grade level objectives developed by the Diocese of St. Augustine to address which skills are to be mastered at every grade and in every subject area. These skills address not only academic goals, but critical thinking and moral reasoning topics, as well. Every child participates in weekly instruction in Art, Music, Spanish, Religion, Physical Education, Computer Technology and Media Science. Teachers provide instruction to entire classes in addition to small groups and give one-on-one explanations when needed. Primary grade teachers present activities to develop phonemic awareness and closely monitor children's Accelerated Reader Lexile scores to foster continual literacy development throughout the school year. Student math skills grow through a variety of instructional methods and are enhanced with a diagnostic IXL software program. The first sentence of our school's mission statement states that, "We will provide a nurturing and faith-filled setting for each unique child," and that is an accurate description of what takes place every day.

Holy Spirit students have shown high academic performance in a variety of areas in recent years. Class averages at every grade level, except one, scored above the Blue Ribbon cut scores in both 2019 and 2020. Disaggregated data from the 2021 Terra Nova Assessment indicates that all subgroups scored on par with the overall school averages in all grades except for 11 Hispanic students in 4th, 5th, and 7th grades. Holy Spirit students have won our diocesan Battle of the Books competition four times, and our Brain Brawl team has finished among the top four schools three times since 2015. Seventy-seven percent of our graduates attending Bishop Kenny High School in 2021 attained Honor Roll status. Every 8th grade graduating class since 2010 has had at least two students accepted into the highly selective Stanton College Preparatory High School.

The school benefits from a high level of parent support and involvement every year. Parents volunteer to head-up fundraisers, yearbook publication, and various student activities such as fall festivals, Santa shops,

pancake breakfasts, and field days to list only a few. Every school family agrees to volunteer for at least 15 hours per year.

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 foundation of Holy Spirit School’s curriculum is the approved instructional objectives from the Diocese of St. Augustine for each subject and every grade level. Holy Spirit teachers are intentional about designing instructional activities that reflect how children learn at appropriate age levels.

All grade levels use Accelerated Reader (AR) and STAR Reader Assessment software to evaluate reading comprehension growth and extend reading vocabulary development and fluency. AR test scores are monitored throughout the year to assure that students are becoming more proficient readers. The AR program allows individualized learning to take place with students of varying skill levels. For example, a third grade classroom might have students reading on level 3.8, as well as 2.6. Each student is required to read books which are appropriate to their zone of proximal development, so they can adequately comprehend the text, and improve their fluency and vocabulary. At the close of the 2021 school year, 82% of Holy Spirit students in grades 3rd-8th showed evidence of growth in STAR Reader reports.

All students complete the IXL real-time mathematics diagnostic assessment during the first weeks of each school year. This software provides an individualized program to remediate specific math skills based upon the student’s performance on the diagnostic. Students begin weekly visits to the computer lab with 10 minutes of IXL Math skill training. Holy Spirit students in grades 1st-8th averaged a +9.5 IXL math skills monthly growth in 2021.

Interactive boards, laptops and tablets are present throughout the school. 8th grade students are issued iPads which they use every day, and all middle school students utilize that same technology at some time during every week. These forms of technology became vital components of our distance learning efforts during the Covid pandemic. Live video streams of teachers presenting subject matter for our forty-one students who remained at home were active right through the first three months of 2020.

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

HSCS Language Arts curriculum stresses a continuity of skills and practices such as Accelerated Reader, IXL, direct grammar instruction, collaborative learning, and writing portfolios across all grade levels. These programs give teachers direct and usable data on reading levels, vocabulary, comprehension and writing skills which allow for intervention when needed. Student writing portfolios enable the school to track annual writing improvement and demonstrate development for specific writing skills. Teachers in every grade level model writing using the writing process, student’s work, writing workshops, and peer editing. All students write a variety of grade appropriate texts such as personal narratives, persuasive and informational essays, letters, constructed responses, original fiction, and newspaper articles for formative and summative assessments.

Teachers at HSCS use a combination of direct instruction, guided instruction, and independent learning. Collaborative learning takes place through centers, and literature circles which allow student-centered discussion and teamwork. Summative assessment occurs after each novel or unit and may include presentations, projects, tests or essays. Despite hybrid learning (teaching in-person with desk shields, masks, social distancing, and live video streaming), HSCS played to the strength of faculty collaboration and continuity to ensure that our students increased reading performance and writing proficiency throughout the pandemic months.

Beginning in preschool, our students develop language skills through multiple methods. These include play-based learning, letter/sound studies, themed units, and exposure to a variety of texts. In kindergarten and first grade, a spiral learning approach in the Saxon phonics program helps students learn to read through the

development of phonemic awareness and incremental steps. Our phonics program, along with daily writing, read-alouds, and weekly story studies, cultivate a passion for reading in our school. Students learn to read so they can then “read to learn.” This is reinforced in second grade with literature units. Comprehension is key as students study vocabulary, use graphic organizers, and complete projects based around various novels.

In the intermediate grades, students build reading comprehension with literary elements in a variety of texts including short stories, novel studies, nonfiction articles, poetry and drama. For example, in third grade, an author study unit allows the students to compare an author’s style, themes and characters while making personal connections with the author’s life. Grammar for Writing and Vocabulary Workshop textbooks give explicit grammar, vocabulary and spelling instruction in these grades.

In middle school, our readers engage deeply with texts by using annotations, note-taking skills, and text-based questions to demonstrate literal and figurative understanding of more advanced content. After each novel or unit, students reflect in writing on the literary themes and personal associations they’ve encountered in the text. Participating in Socratic Circles gives the students an opportunity to discuss the text, and to relate it to real life experiences and current events. Listening civilly to classmates’ opinions, clarifying others’ comments and learning how to disagree are important skills for participation in a democratic society.

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

HSCS mathematics promotes hands-on, real-world, problem-solving skills throughout all grade levels. Math practice includes manipulative games, drills, partner tasks, group work, and whole class instruction. IXL Math, Kahn Academy, Brain Pop, and Kahoot are used as practice and formative assessment platforms to inform the teachers of gaps in skills.

In the elementary grades, the focus is basic mathematics concepts that develop a foundation for higher level problem-solving. Daily practice using visuals such as base-ten bars, clocks, and pattern blocks are essential for developing concepts of counting, addition, subtraction, part to whole, fractions, money, and measurement concepts. Primary grade students participate in a mock classroom store using plastic coins to purchase goods. This activity teaches addition, subtraction, and counting change. Kindergarten and first grade use supplemental workbooks in addition to the main textbooks. Simple Solutions workbooks are used in second through fifth grades for skill building and formative assessments. Summative assessments are given mid-chapter and at the end of a chapter or unit.

With this foundation in mathematics, middle school students are ready for higher-level skills. Sixth grade mathematics develops general concepts using more difficult and complex questions. Seventh grade is split into two Pre-Algebra classes: accelerated and remedial. Eighth grade is divided into two classes: Algebra 1 and the second part of Pre-Algebra. Classroom instruction utilizes interactive boards, iPads, direct instruction, small group collaboration, demonstrations, and individual instruction. Some examples include the Pre-Algebra students learning ratio and proportion by drawing a candy bar in a poster sized scale. Middle school students learn to measure the approximate height of the school’s flagpole by measuring its shadow on the ground. Summative assessments take place mid-chapter, after each chapter, midterm and final exam.

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

Science standards at HSCS allow an in-depth understanding of the scientific process and grade level science concepts. At all grade levels, students learn through both a hands-on experiential approach doing science experiments, as well as whole-class projects. Science instruction also includes lectures designed to consider real world STEM issues. During hybrid learning, instruction was adapted for live streaming in conjunction with in-school learning. For example, in middle school, Google Forms were used as an online assessment format for our hybrid learners.

Examples of elementary science instruction include analyzing an indoor plant growing lab, a butterfly garden, and a chicken hatchery, which all provide students a deeper understanding of plant and animal life

cycles. Class discussions and observations during these hands-on activities serve as formative assessments.

All middle school students participate in hands-on activities, lectures, and labs including coding through Code.org. Sixth grade students study three branches of science; physical, earth, and biological sciences. Seventh grade focuses on earth and biological sciences. Eighth grade examines chemical and physical sciences. Middle school students work collaboratively using technology such as Google Docs and Google Slides. Cross-curricular project-based learning between seventh grade science and language arts classes examines the life cycle and environmental concerns of T-shirt production. Summative assessment for this project is a brochure presenting problems and solutions to combat those environmental effects. Formative practice in science is assigned using online platforms which include IXL, Khan Academy and Virtual Labs. Discovery Education video clips are used in nearly every science classroom to provide visual imagery related to instructional topics.

Our after-school Tree Huggers Environmental Club enriches the curriculum for many students. Contacts have been made with local nonprofit organizations such as St. Johns River Keeper, Jacksonville Arboretum, Master Gardeners Extension, and the Jacksonville Zoo. These organizations share valuable insights on global and community STEM issues helping students become critical thinkers and real world problem solvers.

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

A good citizen in any community understands and follows the rules, appreciates the benefits of citizenship, and accepts the consequences when rules are broken. Knowing that your behavior impacts others in the community is ingrained in HSCS students from the earliest grade level.

Our social studies curriculum in the elementary grades explores citizenship through family, school, and neighborhoods. Students might compare and contrast their life to that of a Pilgrim or Native American child by creating dioramas. Primary grade children share a community feast of Thanksgiving with another class to emphasize community building. Geography and map skills are taught through hands-on activities such as building United States land forms from tortillas. Students read Scholastic News magazines to further understand their community and current events.

Upper elementary curriculum expands the circle of citizenship to include our state and national history. Visiting St. Augustine, the nation's oldest city, is an eyewitness experience of Florida history for our 4th and 5th grade classes. Even during Covid restrictions, virtual tours were available. American history comes alive when the teacher becomes King George demanding taxes (candies) of the students, or when the students create a mural about events during the American Revolution.

In middle school, the citizenship circle includes our role on the world's stage through World History, Civics, and American History. Our curriculum highlights how our democracy has developed from other ancient civilizations to a government that overcomes adversities to ensure citizen's rights outlined in the Constitution. For instance, when students read and try to fill out the literacy test given to newly freed slaves in order to vote, or when they compare the limited rights of other nations, they reflect upon their own civil rights, and become appreciative citizens in a global community. Assessments for all grade levels include projects, quizzes, and chapter and unit tests.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

The focus areas of the pre-K curriculum are social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, mathematics, science and technology. The remaining focus areas are basic knowledge such as the alphabet, measurements, number concepts, weather, and plants relevant to the preschool learning ability. Extracurricular activities such as music, Spanish and physical education are also vital to a balanced and

well-rounded preschool education. All learning objectives are aligned with a scaffolded Diocesan curriculum.

Pre-K students learn valuable social skills through play-based centers and group learning. One unit might include the jobs in a typical neighborhood where the students role play a mailman or a firefighter. During role playing, the students develop social, emotional and language skills. The curriculum supports not only the development of letter names, phonemic awareness, and math concepts, but also the importance of cooperating with others and using oral language skills to express one's thoughts and emotions.

Covid-19 presented many challenges, but the school adjusted well to the situation. Desk dividers and air purifiers were installed, children and staff were often in masks, and ongoing sanitizing took place throughout each day. Pre-K staff worked with children in understanding mask safety; on how to wear masks properly and instilling the importance for their own safety and those around them.

State required Kindergarten readiness assessments indicate that our early education program impacts students' Kindergarten readiness and success in upcoming grades. In fact, 22 of the 26 pre-K students at the end of the 2020-2021 school year were "At or Above Expectation" in math skills and 23 of the 26 tested "At or Above Expectation" in vocabulary development. Students understand what to expect beyond pre-K when they become familiar with daily routines and procedures, classroom schedules and rules, and behavioral expectations.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

At Holy Spirit, students utilize the library and computer lab on a weekly basis. The media program helps students to become proficient with print and technology. In the elementary program, a love for literature is fostered by read-alouds that cultivate our character trait of the month while focusing on text features of fiction and nonfiction. The Media specialist collaborates with classroom teachers to integrate research and technology into content areas. Since COVID-19, Google Suites products have been used to complete a multitude of collaborative assignments in various subject areas, such as a colonial newspaper for social studies and a planetary travel guide for science.

The Physical Education curriculum at HSCS promotes the benefits of regular participation in physical activity through movement and exercise in games and sports. Students in preK-4 through second grade focus on mastering basic locomotor skills. Coordination is developed through simple games. In the upper grades, students learn the importance of fitness through stretching and exercise. Middle school classes concentrate on team sport activities and the health benefits associated with them. Sportsmanship is encouraged through an end of the year field day and the students participate in the Olympic experience in which they compete in both summer and winter events for "medals." Students in grades 5-8 can try out for varsity sports such as basketball, soccer, cheerleading, volleyball, and softball. Holy Spirit also offers a weekly after-school Run & Walk Club to promote a healthy lifestyle and physical well-being.

The art curriculum at Holy Spirit focuses on the introduction of elements in art and principles of art at the beginner level in grades K-3 and is integrated into art projects for grades 4-8. Students experiment with various mediums, a variety of final art compositions and art genres. Art projects make a connection to art history, cultural art, religious art and artist's studies. Holy Spirit holds an art show in the spring and artwork is displayed at our parish Family Life Center for family and friends to view and appreciate throughout the year. HSCS students participate annually in the diocesan art show and Christmas card contest.

Holy Spirit's Spanish program introduces students to beginning Spanish and prepares them to live in a global multilingual world. HSCS students acquire basic vocabulary as early as pre-K through songs, games and dancing. In the upper elementary grades, conversation skills and grammar are the focus of instruction in which students are fully immersed into a classroom in which only Spanish is spoken. Our students benefit from instruction delivered by a highly qualified teacher with over 25 years of experience teaching Spanish in Florida schools.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Students who appear to be struggling academically in any particular grade are provided with both individual and small group remediation help. Teachers spend time re-teaching grade level skills to students throughout the day in grades pre-K through 5th and middle school students often remain after school to get tutoring from their subject area teachers. Reading materials are assigned based upon each child's identified Lexile level and math assignments are sometimes adjusted to accommodate a student who may be having difficulty keeping up with the rest of the class. An example might be asking a student to complete only 10 math problems as opposed to 20 or allowing a child to provide a verbal response to a question instead of an essay to check for understanding of a concept.

An outside tutoring company (Catapult) provides a tutor for 12 hours a week for Holy Spirit students who are referred by their classroom teacher. Catapult also employs 3 Holy Spirit teachers to provide after school tutoring sessions to any students who may desire extra help. Our extended day program is run by classroom teachers who provide academic support and homework assistance for students who attend.

To assist the elementary grade readers, they are paired up with middle school students to "buddy read." For example, first graders read with seventh graders which provides an opportunity for struggling readers to get assistance from another student rather than a teacher in a more relaxed setting. This strategy builds confidence and fluency for emergent readers.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Students who are accelerated in their learning at Holy Spirit School are encouraged to read literature from our library and classrooms that is higher than their typical grade level. These same students will frequently be working on math IXL skills well beyond those of their classmates. The media specialist provides weekly academic enrichment for students who are performing above grade level.

Other academic opportunities include participation in Brain Brawl and Battle of the Books competitions. Eleven middle school students qualified for induction into the National Jr. Honor Society in 2019 and 10 others earned that distinction in 2021. Holy Spirit School averages 10 students per year who are chosen to participate in the Duke Talent Identification Program.

3c. Special education:

Students, who have a documented learning disability, receive small-group remediation from a local public school intervention specialist for 30 to 60 minutes per week during the school day. These students are also provided with various accommodations from their classroom teachers to assist their learning. These include additional time for completing assignments and tests, modified workloads and the ability to type written responses on a keyboard as opposed to hand written essays. The school's Guidance Counselor coordinates with local public school ESE personnel to screen students for potential learning disabilities. She also directs parents to consult with their pediatricians to explore possible ADD issues and coordinates early childhood evaluations for pre-K students who demonstrate potential learning delays.

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

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Holy Spirit’s reputation as an orderly and cooperative setting is a true strength of its operation. The school lives its Mission Statement of “providing a nurturing setting for each unique child” by focusing on individual children; one at a time. Instead of always examining a group of students or an entire grade level, Holy Spirit teachers concern themselves with how they can help each student be successful in their academic performance. For example, in any classroom, there may be students reading two grade levels above their current grade and others reading well below their grade level. A clear goal of this school is to meet the needs of the students in both those categories. Relationship-based learning is apparent in virtually every classroom where teachers are conscious about connecting with every student and being aware of which students need academic or social/emotional support.

The school’s guidance program includes a focus on monthly character traits taught to every grade level by the guidance counselor. She includes social emotional concepts through read-alouds and school wide service projects. One project focused on random acts of kindness written by students depicted on leaves of a “kindness tree.” This visual representation reminded students that kindness is a daily mindset at HSCS.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The family of every student at Holy Spirit School agrees to provide 15 hours of volunteer service each year. Examples of these activities include school and campus clean-up days, “painting parties,” fall festival help and Teacher Appreciation Week projects. The vast majority of the families with children in the school are also parishioners of Holy Spirit Church. That connection between the school and the ongoing parish activities allows for a very high level of community connection. Activities such as church sponsored rummage sales, Parish Youth Group functions, food drives, Christmas gift collections and visits to nearby senior centers are all opportunities for students to connect with the local community.

Annual Parent Climate Survey results indicate that the overwhelming majority of Holy Spirit parents are very pleased with the amount of communication they have with their child’s teacher and with the school in general. In fact, of the 69 respondents to the 2020 parent survey, 65 rated the school’s climate as an A and 3 as a B. Teachers often call and email parents to share information about their students, and written Parent Notification Forms (PNF’s) are sent for more formal communications regarding academic concerns or a student conduct issue. The school recognizes students throughout the year for a variety of awards. Quarterly conduct and academic certificates are distributed at awards assemblies. An annual “Spirit of Kindness” student is recognized in every class, as is a “St. Thomas Aquinas” student who demonstrates not only high academic performance, but an attitude of humility and service to others. The presence of numerous parents at each event sends a message of support for their children and the school.

Students participate in a variety of service projects throughout each school year. Monthly charity collections are held on the fourth Friday of every month to support local and national charities (St. Jude’s Hospital, City Rescue Mission, Humane Society, St. Vincent DePaul Society). Clothing drives are conducted during the winter months to gather coats and socks. Eighth graders engage with the local community by serving at the St. Francis Soup Kitchen each year and volunteering to load cars at the church’s quarterly food “give-aways” throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Nearly every Holy Spirit student has participated in walk-a-thons to raise money for the Autism Speaks Foundation and the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society in recent years. Many middle school students serve their local community by taking part in Jacksonville’s annual “Clean the Beaches” effort.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The leadership of Holy Spirit School, which includes the Principal, the Pastor, the Parish Administrator and the School Advisory Board, all play important roles in maintaining a culture of mission and professionalism within the school. A shared decision-making model is used whenever possible to establish policy and

determine school-wide procedures that impact the entire program. The Principal supports teachers and provides them with the materials, encouragement, and training they need to best serve the students. The skills and commitment of individual teachers are the most important elements to the effectiveness of the school. Treating teachers as highly trained “professional educators” is vitally important to maintaining high staff morale and retention. Indeed, the teacher turn-over rate (<5%) at Holy Spirit School has remained consistently low.

Teachers identify individual professional development goals each year which are included on their annual performance evaluations. All of the Holy Spirit teachers learned a great deal about technology-assisted remote learning during the initial months of the Covid pandemic. Nearly all professional development training addressed distance learning platforms over the past year and a half. Google Classroom became a major asset to the school during the 2020-21 school year. Teachers learned to use Google Docs, Google Meets, and Google Slides on a regular basis to connect with students and parents. Many teachers also participated in on-line webinars to learn about student social / emotional support issues during the 2019-2021 time frame. An average of five teachers annually attend the Future of Educational Technology Conference and others attend NCEA events and Brain Research conferences and webinars. Our PE teacher annually attends a two-day training conference in Georgia that focuses on current trends in physical education and student health issues.

4. School Leadership:

Holy Spirit School is referred to as “parish school” because it is funded with money paid by parents and through the financial support of Holy Spirit Church and state scholarships. The school functions under the supervision of the Diocese of St. Augustine, which was the very first Catholic diocese founded in America. The school Principal works in cooperation with the church Pastor and has been serving Holy Spirit School for twenty years. The diocese Office of Education is staffed by a Superintendent, an Assistant Superintendent, and office personnel. Holy Spirit School is fully accredited by the Florida Catholic Conference and is a member of the National Catholic Education Association. School leadership is provided by not only the Principal and Pastor, but by a committed School Advisory Board consisting of selected parents with expertise in law, education, finance, and marketing.

The school’s Principal provides ongoing communication with parents through weekly emails, backpack notices, Facebook posts, and Instagram photos. In addition to sharing information with the entire student body and staff every morning during assemblies, the Principal is also a visible presence in the school and at multiple church and school events throughout the year. The Principal maintains an open door policy for the staff, students and parents to share ideas, concerns or innovations which allows stakeholders a voice in the operations of the school.

The school’s Principal provides a calming presence in the school and sets a tone of cooperation and spirituality that greatly benefits the students, staff and parents. Faculty at Holy Spirit School feel comfortable requesting additional instructional materials that they feel will benefit their students. The Principal believes the best way to serve the needs of students is to first provide for the needs of their teachers.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Holy Spirit School is fortunate to have a large percentage of Filipino families in attendance. In fact 22% of our students come from that national background. By embracing the unique foods and traditions of that culture, the school has developed a warm connection between parents and the larger Filipino community. The school also acknowledges and celebrates the heritage of our Hispanic students with annual “Day of the Dead” activities, Cinco de Mayo parties and recognition of Hispanic saints such as Juan Diego.

The school attempts to make students with special learning needs feel very comfortable in this setting. In addition to the students who have been evaluated and identified as having a specific disability, there are many students in the school with attention deficits, hyperactivity issues and other health issues that impact their learning. All of these students receive special accommodations from their teachers and their academic

program is sometimes altered to adjust for their unique needs. For example, a middle student, with a learning disability, is sometimes allowed to take Spanish on a non-graded basis in an effort to reduce their academic workload outside of the core subjects.

Current events and social movements are addressed very carefully at a Catholic school with young children. Age appropriate discussions of such issues are handled on a class by class basis with the teacher's professional judgement always present. Holy Spirit students receive ongoing instruction on social media issues and digital citizenship. Teachers and staff are always mindful during election years to be completely unbiased, wear no clothing or buttons that support a particular candidate and limit any unnecessary discussions of purely political topics. The school utilizes Scholastic Magazine, an age appropriate and non-biased publication, to address many current events of national and global interest.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The one practice which is foundational to the school's success is the shared mission and community of cooperation that does not end on a Friday afternoon when students are dismissed or when a teacher closes his/her door for the day. A caring community is part of the fiber of Holy Spirit School where one will find administration, teachers, parents, staff and students, as well as alumni, all coming together after school or on a weekend to celebrate, help with a campus clean-up, or volunteer to serve families at a pancake breakfast.

Holy Spirit School maintains a common mission with a shared set of Christian values. Annual Parent Climate Surveys over the past five years indicate this is one of our strongest assets. That survey item averaged a score of 3.88 on a scale of 0-4. Our climate of compassion and the balance of schoolwide rituals and routines permeate the entire organization.

Holy Spirit families and students find not only a safe environment, but a high standard of academic expectations at every grade level. Because the school provides a safe base on which to succeed, fail, and grow, graduates return on a regular basis to share their successes and to tell us how well-prepared they were for high school. They often assist with middle school sports teams and tutor in the after-school care program. They know that once they are a Hurricane, they are always a Hurricane and are welcomed back to the school at all times. Parents also understand they can always ask questions, share concerns, or request a conference. Comfortable communication is an important element of the school community and is vital to students' social-emotional and academic success.

HSCS strives to be a traditional school where current best practices are present and all members of the diverse community feel welcomed and supported and where behavioral and academic expectations are established and exceeded.

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? \$6514
(School budget divided by enrollment)

4. What is the average financial aid per student? \$3959

5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 7%

6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 0%

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)