

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

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

School Mailing Address 3131 S 156th Street  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Omaha State NE Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 68130-1906

County Douglas

Telephone (402) 333-0818 Fax (402) 333-1790

Web site/URL https://skuttcatholic.com E-mail robmeyers@skuttcatholic.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\* Mrs. Vickie Kauffold E-mail vkkauffold@archomaha.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson Mr. Mike Agostino  
(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	87	105	192
10	86	78	164
11	107	85	192
12 or higher	103	71	174
<b>Total Students</b>	383	339	722

\*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):
- 0.2 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 1.6 % Asian
  - 0.2 % Black or African American
  - 0.3 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0.2 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 89 % White
  - 8.5 % 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: 4%

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

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

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	25
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	5
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	30
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	707
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.04
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	4

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

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

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

Total number students who qualify: 33

8. Students receiving special education services 2 %

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>1</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>1</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>5</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>2</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>2</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: 9

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.

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	5
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher, CTE teacher.	47
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	2
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	0
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 15:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2016	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	96%	97%	96%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

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

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

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	193
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	95%
Enrolled in a community college	3%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	1%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	1%

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

Yes X          No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.          2012

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

V.J. and Angela Skutt Catholic High School forms and educates young men and women to become Christian leaders who empower others, promote justice, and initiate change.

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

V.J. and Angela Skutt Catholic High School admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origins to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at this school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of our educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered 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**

---

V.J. & Angela Skutt Catholic High School is located in Omaha, Nebraska and was founded in 1993 as an Archdiocesan, coeducational, college-preparatory high school. The school is composed of grades nine through 12. The mission of Skutt Catholic High School is to “form and educate young men and women to become Christian leaders who empower others, promote justice, and initiate change.” Skutt Catholic prepares students to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ in the context of the community of the Catholic Church, practice a code of moral behavior based on the principles of Catholic beliefs, strive for intellectual excellence and academic achievement, demonstrate an understanding of self and society, and develop personal integrity.

Skutt Catholic High School has developed a comprehensive college-preparatory curriculum, including more fine and performing art courses than any other private school in Nebraska. With more than 150 courses, including 25 dual-enrollment courses and 17 Advanced Placement courses, students have access to a host of opportunities to prepare themselves for post-secondary studies. Skutt Catholic has recently added an additional 11 dual enrollment courses and four AP courses to provide further opportunities for students to challenge themselves. The average Skutt Catholic teacher has 18 years of teaching experience, and nearly 84% of Skutt Catholic educators hold a master’s degree or higher. For comparison’s sake, the state average for educators with a master’s degree is 45%.

In recent years, the average composite ACT score for the top half of graduating seniors has been over 28, (the class of 2021 was actually 29). The average composite score for the top quarter has been over 30 (the class of 2021 was actually 31.4). These scores rival or exceed those of the private schools around us that limit enrollment to a select group of students. Due to the importance placed on these tests, Skutt Catholic contracted with ontocollege.com for schoolwide ACT test preparation. All students participate in a four-year program designed to improve their ability to be successful on the ACT. Since its implementation, the school’s average ACT composite scores have jumped over a point per test and have consistently averaged above 25.

Skutt Catholic embraces the concept of the “4 Cs of education”. It is vital to cultivate in students the skills of creativity, communication, collaboration, and critical thinking. While acquiring knowledge is important, it is equally important that students are able to apply that knowledge to better function in a modern, connected society. The school has invested heavily in programs and practices to promote student learning in these areas. All staff are required to become Level I Google Certified Educators. Google Workspace fosters a higher degree of collaboration for students and staff. Regular staff training is provided to best integrate such ideas into project-based learning. Skutt Catholic created Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) committed to developing a curriculum that supports this type of learning.

Skutt Catholic maintains an inclusive, academic-based admissions process, allowing admission of students who might be unable to gain admission to other private schools in the area. Since 2004, Skutt Catholic has denied admission to less than 1% of all applicants. The school provides quality education to many different levels of students, not just to those who perform well on the standardized entrance exam. As an “Archdiocesan” high school, the school’s mission is to provide a universal educational experience for students of varying levels. The documented ACT data includes students on Individual Education Plans (IEP), 504 Plans, and many more who struggle with a variety of learning challenges. The Success Study Hall program works with students who need extra academic support to be successful in a rigorous college-preparatory environment.

Skutt Catholic is proud of its success in educating young women and men. The culture in the school community motivates all to hold themselves to an increasingly higher standard of excellence. Over 90% of students participate in one or more extracurricular activities. Skutt Catholic students volunteered more than 16,000 hours to the community last year (during a global pandemic), while earning more extracurricular state championships in the past 23 years than any other high school in Nebraska, public or private. In most years (including all of the last five), the school achieved a 100% graduation rate. Skutt Catholic students have been recognized by the National Merit Scholarship Program every year since the school’s inception in



1993, including 66 semi-finalists and over 100 total students recognized. Since the school's initial Blue Ribbon designation, Skutt Catholic's enrollment has increased 7.2%.

## **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:**

Skutt Catholic is a college preparatory high school that has been accredited by Cognia, the international school accreditation agency, for 25 years. The mission and curriculum of Skutt Catholic and the Archdiocese of Omaha, is to provide high level, quality education to students with regard to their interests and ranges of ability.

Skutt Catholic's Program of Studies articulates the minimum graduation requirements, which traditionally exceeds those of other school districts. The school offers the most extensive course catalog of any private school in Nebraska. Skutt Catholic students are also required to complete two years of foreign language, however, most complete a full four years.

In order to meet students' diverse academic needs, Skutt Catholic offers college preparatory and honors/AP programs. For students seeking an additional challenge, Skutt Catholic partners with local colleges to offer dual enrollment, enabling students to earn college credit while completing high school course work. By taking advantage of dual enrollment, Skutt Catholic students can complete nearly two years worth of college credit.

Skutt Catholic consistently maintains a 100% graduation rate and 98%-99% post-secondary enrollment rate, the majority of which to four-year colleges or universities. The graduation rate and college enrollment data is testimony to the quality of Skutt Catholic's student support programs. School counseling and academic support services provide identified students with individualized learning plans, guided-study opportunities as well as peer and professional tutoring.

In 2014, Skutt Catholic initiated a 1:1 iPad program to enhance students' educational experience by transforming the way staff teach and students learn. The iPad provides staff and students with creative tools, interactive textbooks, and a universe of applications. These tools enhance the relevancy and effectiveness of programs and allows for more differentiated instruction to better meet students' needs and prepare them for the future.

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

The English curriculum consists of 11 courses, all of which are college preparatory in nature. Students can choose between college prep courses and honors courses. In addition to college prep English courses, many seniors will register to take either AP Literature and Composition or AP Language and Composition. AP level courses build upon existing knowledge and prepare students to become more astute readers and writers. Students who enroll in AP courses can earn college credit via the AP exam or through local dual enrollment college partners.

Over the last five years, there has been an intentional effort to make adjustments to the curriculum. The school is working toward building a strong culture of literacy through several new initiatives. As part of the summer reading program, staff have chosen a variety of summer reading options. All core levels include opportunities for student choice and independent reading selections. The language arts department has made efforts to diversify the content and perspectives of all reading options. Students are encouraged to push themselves beyond reading for the sake of reading. The goal for students is to apply what they read to the real world, where they can promote Skutt Catholic's mission to empower others, promote justice, and initiate change.

Digital literacy and citizenship are emphasized when accessing primary source materials and applying them to personal, local, national, and global contexts. The school has leveraged available technology to modify

and enhance existing curriculum. Incorporating iPads allows for the infusion of technology into pedagogy. The school can more easily conduct formative assessments in classes by using tools such as Flipgrid, Edpuzzle, Nearpod, and Kahoot.

The English department firmly believes that vocabulary knowledge acquisition is critical. All English courses require student participation in an online vocabulary program. Skutt Catholic utilizes the Sadlier Connect Workshop series. It is an online, user friendly program that helps build student vocabulary. A strong vocabulary is essential to reading comprehension. It also assists students in communicating ideas, expressing themselves in writing, and overall language development.

Collaboration between English and social studies departments, as part of World Studies and American Studies, promotes an environment of collaboration. The literature and writing of a time period brings the history to life; the history gives perspective and direct application to the life and shared experience of all people.

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

The mathematics department fosters an environment which invites students to analyze situations, formulate logical solutions, appreciate the power of mathematics, and demonstrate confidence in the use of mathematics. The staff maintains high expectations for student achievement and holds the students and themselves accountable for learning.

Freshmen enroll in one of five core math classes ranging from Pre-Algebra through Honors Algebra II. The department offers 14 different math courses that correspond to students' varying aptitudes. For students who perform above grade level, a more rigorous course curriculum, including AP coursework, is encouraged. Skutt Catholic is one of the few schools in the area that offer both AP Calculus AB and AP Calculus BC as year-long courses, allowing for a more in-depth experience. 79.4 % of students taking AP Calculus exams (AB and BC) have received a score of 3 or better. Four math courses are also offered as dual credit courses via the school's partnership with Metropolitan Community College (College Algebra, AP Statistics, AP Calculus AB, and AP Calculus BC). Many students graduate from Skutt Catholic with most of their college math courses already satisfied.

Implemented in the fall of 2008, the math department created "skills tests" as a form of assessment in which all students are required to reach proficiency. Teachers continue to work with those students who do not meet the minimum standard initially and continue to work until all students are successful. Each student is required to pass a series of skills tests every semester, with 80% competency, before receiving credit for their current class. Based on internal data, teachers believe that these skills tests better prepare students for new material, help students with the retention of material from previous courses, and assist students in their preparation for future standardized tests (e.g. ACT, PSAT, SAT).

As a form of community outreach, Skutt Catholic is in its fourth year of offering a distance learning Online Geometry class for 8th graders in local Catholic middle schools. The students use a blended approach of daily online meetings and monthly in-person learning on campus. Students submit all work using Google Classroom where feedback is provided by the instructor. The instructor also works with a teacher from each of the schools served to aid in the administration of exams.

Skutt Catholic employs devoted teachers who are willing to work with students in and out of class to help them achieve success. In addition to help from the classroom teacher, a full-time math tutor is available on campus at no cost to families. The math tutor has volunteered more than 30 hours per week for the past 17 years. Tutoring is also provided for all students placed in the Success Study Hall program. Each Success Study Hall has a certified math teacher assigned to help struggling math students.

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

The Skutt Catholic science department offers a very diverse curriculum. It is the goal of the department that students graduate with a strong science foundation, setting them up for post-secondary success in any

science field. In order to fulfill science graduation requirements, students must complete three years of science.

All freshmen are placed in either Honors Biology or Biology. Placement is based on scores from the high school placement exam or past success in science courses in their middle schools. During their sophomore year, students are placed in one of three courses: Introduction to Chemistry and Physics, Chemistry, or Honors Chemistry. Placement for sophomore classes are based upon their abilities as measured in both biology and math courses. Most juniors (at least 90% each year) take either Physics or Honors Physics. An exception is made for students with lower math abilities, who register for Introduction to Chemistry and Physics. Seniors are allowed to take a variety of science elective courses. More than half of seniors enroll in an AP science course during their senior year.

Elective options include three AP courses (AP Chemistry, AP Biology, AP Physics), and a diverse selection of options geared at exposing students to a variety of different sciences. These AP courses are also available for dual enrollment so students can earn college credits. Recently, two new courses have been added to address new and growing science fields. Investigative Forensic Science and Biotechnology expose students to real world science that builds upon all other core sciences.

The science department emphasizes hands-on lab work and simulations using modern equipment and technology. As part of a recent campus expansion project, the school built a new biotechnology lab that includes equipment and technology rarely seen in high schools. All science courses place a premium on student inquiry, investigation, and exploration.

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

The mission of the social studies department is to develop citizens who contribute in positive ways to society in a complex and ever-changing world. Skutt Catholic students follow a required three year curriculum comprising World Studies, American Studies, American Government, and Senior Studies. Honors and AP options are available for students looking for a more rigorous curriculum.

In World Studies, students gain an understanding of different cultures as well as religions and traditions from ancient civilizations to the present. Making connections with these historical events and their effects in the present day. In American Studies, students experience a thematic, in-depth study of American history, literature and culture from the earliest Native Americans through the twenty-first century American authors. American Government is a one semester course in which students gain an understanding of American government and political behavior that is essential for effective citizenship in a democratic society.

Seniors are required to take Senior Studies. This interdisciplinary course explores various political, economic, and social issues existing in the world today from both a civic and religious perspective. Basic themes include justice and society, racism and discrimination, poverty, and violence. Students analyze principles of American government and economic systems and examine the Catholic Church's teachings so that they may become informed and active citizens with a Catholic moral conscience.

For this course, seniors complete a "capstone" project. Seniors choose a social justice topic and complete an awareness experience to gain knowledge of those impacted. Students research the causes of the injustice by interviewing an expert from the community, reflect on it through the lens of Catholic Social Teachings, and carry out an action plan to help alleviate the injustice. This project serves as their statement that they understand and want to live the basic mission of Skutt Catholic High School, which is to empower others, promote justice and initiate change.

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

Skutt Catholic prepares students for life after high school. Career planning has been embedded into the core curriculum. Counseling services provide students with comprehensive career planning via the Nebraska Career Connections program. All students are taught job-seeking skills, including resume building, interview preparation, and effective communication. Several core courses require students to explore their

career interests and abilities and to network with established professionals within the community.

School Counseling is in the process of transitioning the career planning curriculum to a new program called Naviance. This program has three assessments which allows students to explore career fields contrasted with their strengths and interests in those areas. The first assessment is the Career Cluster Finder. The Career Cluster Finder has the students answer questions to identify their interests and discover clusters with careers that might interest them. The Career Interest Profiler looks at student interests and helps identify personality traits to suggest careers based on data from the U.S. Department of Labor. Strengths Explorer helps students identify their perceived key strengths to find colleges and careers. Coupled with the rigorous yet accessible academic program, these experiences show how Skutt Catholic's curriculum supports college and career readiness.

Several core courses require students to explore their career interests and abilities, and to network with established professionals within the community. These experiences, coupled with the rigorous yet accessible academic program, these experiences show how the curriculum supports college and career readiness. This programming provides Skutt Catholic students with the necessary knowledge and skills to transition to college and the workforce.

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

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

As a Catholic school, four years of theology studies are required to advance the mission of the school and complement the strong core curriculum engaged by all students. Skutt Catholic is unique in its belief that the attributes of personal character and citizenship are skills that can be learned and mastered. To foster this belief, the school established its Character Skills program. All incoming freshmen complete one year of Character Skills. Transfer students are required to take a one semester version of the course prior to graduation.

Skutt Catholic teachers believe the school has the unique power to strengthen and teach those fundamental character traits which form the basis of a strong Christian identity. They believe that the school must identify, teach, and model these skills so that students can learn, practice, and make them their own. These patterns of behavior enable individuals to govern their lives with dignity, purpose, and a reasonable chance of success. They empower individuals to show responsibility and accept accountability for their actions, and to live according to the values of a religious heritage. The year-long course provides students with a direct teaching experience in the following three sets of skills: 1) critical thinking, 2) self discipline and 3) religious practice. Character Skills represents a very significant investment of time and resources in order to ensure that Skutt Catholic High School graduates fulfill the school's mission to "empower others, promote justice and initiate change."

Skutt Catholic offers four years of both Spanish and French. Students are required to take two levels of the same language to comply with graduation requirements. For those interested in advanced language study, there are honors and AP level options starting at the second level of each language. Most students go well beyond the required two years of language study.

Skutt Catholic takes great pride in its fine arts programs. Students are required to earn one credit (semester) in a fine or performing art course in order to graduate. Many students take Art Foundations as their entry level art course. After completing Art Foundations, students have a variety of electives from which to choose including: Digital Imaging, Animation, Painting, Stained Glass, Drawing, Printmaking, and Pottery and Sculpture. Honors and AP offerings are available to those seeking a deeper understanding of the fine arts. Many students choose to pursue vocal and instrumental music.

Although fine arts, language arts, physical education/health, and technology requirements mirror those of local public schools, Skutt Catholic's requirement of 10 semesters of elective study leads students back to

the core disciplines to deepen knowledge and appreciation of each subject matter. This broad elective requirement allows students to explore their own gifts and interests by taking courses such as Computer Aided Drafting, Biotechnology, Poetry Analysis, Sports Health Care, Guitar, Piano, TV and Film Production, Philosophy, Competitive Speech and Show Choir.

### **3. Academic Supports**

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

A Skutt Catholic education is accessible to students with a variety of academic abilities, not just those who achieve high scores on the entrance exam. As an Archdiocesan high school, the school embraces its moral obligation and Catholic mission to provide a high quality educational experience for students of differing ability levels. Because Skutt Catholic admits students who need additional support to be successful, a number of programs have been implemented to provide this support.

For students who score low on the admissions exam or struggle with the established curriculum, the school requires enrollment in the Success Study Hall Program. This program offers a personalized learning environment for students. In each section, three faculty members help facilitate learning. The assigned certified teachers assist the students in many ways. Success Study Hall offers an identified group of students the opportunity to receive individualized assistance with homework, time management, test taking strategies and also receive direct tutoring from teachers in math, reading, and writing study skills.

Many struggling students need assistance beyond traditional school structures. Skutt Catholic works closely with the Millard Public Schools to create and manage Individualized Education Plans (IEP) for students who qualify. Utilizing their special education expertise, and in conjunction with Skutt Catholic teachers and counselors, these plans are designed to provide necessary support for students to help them reach their full potential.

Student mental health can be a barrier to student success. In order to better serve students, the school has partnered with a local mental health provider (Munroe-Meyer Institute), which provides an on-site, licensed mental health care professional. The on-site mental health provider works closely with school counselors and school staff to provide prevention, intervention, and outcome evaluation at the individual, family, and school-wide levels to strengthen the health and well-being of all students.

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

Skutt Catholic High School has developed a comprehensive college-preparatory curriculum. Skutt Catholic offers more courses than any other private school in Nebraska. With over 150 courses, including 25 dual-enrollment and 17 Advanced Placement courses, students have access to a myriad of opportunities to prepare themselves for post-secondary studies. The school has added 11 dual enrollment courses and four AP courses over the last five years to provide additional opportunities for students to challenge themselves.

In most curricular areas, Skutt Catholic has honors level courses to provide enhanced rigor for high achieving students. It offers 55 different honors level courses, which carry an additional half point incentive for student grade point averages. This additional half point is a powerful motivator for students to enroll in advanced classes.

Due to partnerships with the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Midland University, and Metropolitan Community College, many students graduate from Skutt Catholic with at least a semester of college credit or more. This not only adds value to the Skutt Catholic degree, but it provides for a coursework pathway for students that typically perform above grade level. It is possible that a senior at Skutt Catholic could take almost exclusively college courses.

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

Skutt Catholic High School employs a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to assist students with a variety of academic and health issues. This structure helps organize resources through the alignment of

academic standards and behavioral expectations, implemented with fidelity and sustained over time, in order to enable every student to successfully reach their fullest potential.

MTSS is a tiered infrastructure that uses data to help match academic, social-emotional, and behavioral assessment and instructional resources to each and every student's needs. The multi-tiered supports are a huge part of MTSS. These tiers of support increase from one level to the next. A team approach is used for these interventions.

This is a proactive approach with several key elements. It starts with universal screening for all students followed by increasing levels of targeted support for those who are struggling, as well as integrated plans that address academic, behavioral, social and emotional needs.

Skutt Catholic utilizes a school-wide approach to student support. Teachers, counselors, behavioral health specialists, parents and others work as a team when assessing students and planning interventions. School Counseling offers professional development, so staff can intervene and monitor progress effectively. It is vital to incorporate family involvement, so parents can understand the interventions and provide support at home. This concludes with frequent monitoring of student progress, so educators can use the data to help determine if further interventions are needed. The key to the sustained success of this program is a team approach. With all members of the team collaborating, students have a much greater chance of success.

**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:**

Skutt Catholic is committed to providing a high quality education and an exceptional learning environment for all students. The development of good, positive, and healthy relationships are the cornerstone of student engagement. The school has implemented and sustained many practices, programs, and initiatives to engage students. The desire of Skutt Catholic students to be present and engaged in learning became evident following the state mandated shutdown during the fourth quarter of the 2019-2020 school year. Skutt Catholic administration was committed to welcoming students back for in-person learning for the 2020-2021 school year. As a result, Skutt Catholic became the only high school, private or public, to offer in-person, full-day learning every school day of 2020-2021.

Positive adult-student relationships contribute to student engagement. The School Counseling program is instrumental in this process, as school counselors serve as student advocates. Regular meetings provide opportunities to screen for a variety of things, monitor student engagement and intervene when necessary.

In 2019, the school implemented a homeroom program called HawkTime. The purpose of HawkTime is to create a comfortable, positive environment which enables students to build relationships in a smaller setting. When students develop personal connections with classmates and teachers they have a more positive experience.

Skutt Catholic recognizes the importance of student mental health. The school has partnered with Munroe-Meyer Institute for three years. Through this partnership, Munroe-Meyer renders universal supports to students in need, by providing a convenient, accessible, and familiar environment for students who need personalized mental health support. The on-site mental health professional works with school counselors and staff to offer prevention, intervention, and outcome evaluation at the individual, family, and community levels to strengthen the health and well-being of students.

Skutt Catholic demonstrates a thriving activities program. Ninety percent of all students were involved in at least one extracurricular activity during 2020-2021. More than 50% of seniors earned the Select 12 Award last year. To qualify for the award, a student must have participated in at least 12 activities at Skutt Catholic throughout their four years. Extracurricular activity involvement instills a sense of pride and commitment to the school. One of the many reasons people choose Skutt Catholic is its commitment to a successful activities program, both in terms of participation numbers and on-field success.

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

School and student performance improvement efforts are guided by the three-year Strategic Plan. The development of the Strategic Plan begins by collecting feedback from a large sample of community stakeholders. Working in conjunction with the school's president, board of directors, and strategic planning committee (composed of parents, alumni, staff and community leaders), with the goal to guarantee its implementation.

Parent advocacy groups focused on academics, arts, and extracurricular activities provide insight and guidance to school improvement efforts and are critical to maintaining proper balance when allocating resources essential to educating the whole person. Engaging individual stakeholders is critical when targeting planned giving. Doing so promotes additional support and community partnerships. School publications, local advertisements, social media, as well as selected mailings and emails, serve to inform and mobilize the wider population of Skutt Catholic families and the community.

Online account access to Infinite Campus (Skutt Catholic's student information system) allows parents to regularly track course progress and student performance. Parents and students are encouraged to communicate regularly with teachers, counselors, coaches, and sponsors to ensure each student derives a productive, positive learning experience. The school sends the Weekly Communication to keep parents



informed of upcoming events, policy/procedure adjustments, and opportunities to support the mission of the school. Annual grade-level parent meetings provide additional communication and support for families, including navigating the transition to high school, personal-social issues such as bullying and substance abuse, and the college application process. Well attended bi-annual Parent-Teacher Conferences cement the strong partnership between home and school when building toward student success.

Success in every facet of learning is the cornerstone of the Skutt Catholic climate and culture. School and community stakeholders actively partner with the school to advance this tradition of excellence. Skutt Catholic seeks feedback in a variety of ways from its community. Various surveys are sent to the community to assess programming success and weakness. During the pandemic, the school president hosted weekly Zoom sessions with parents to share updates on the school year and school management of the issues related to COVID 19. The community was willing and able to make adjustments and sacrifices to provide a high quality, in-person learning environment. Skutt Catholic has seen a distinct spike of incoming transfer students this year largely due to the school's success in proactively managing the pandemic educational landscape.

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

Skutt Catholic High School has a strong relationship with Creighton University in Omaha. Creighton is a large, Catholic (Jesuit) university in the city. Creighton offers many programs, including an outstanding teacher preparation program, which is designed to foster sharing ideas and strategies to improve upon the quality of secondary education. This partnership has allowed school staff to pursue advanced degrees and education certification programs at no cost to employees. Skutt Catholic offers a \$2,500 tuition discount to Creighton University employees. In exchange, Skutt Catholic staff are allowed to use those funds to pay for post graduate coursework. Due, in part, to this program, nearly 84% of Skutt Catholic educators hold master's level degrees. For comparison's sake, the state average for educators with a master's degree or above is 45%.

Beyond the healthy connection to collegiate academia, quarterly all-school administrator meetings, sponsored by the Archdiocese of Omaha, bring all Catholic school principals together to share experiences learned in Archdiocesan schools. Teachers and staff have also visited other area schools to discuss best practices and train educators in other buildings on methods successfully employed. Staff have recently participated in faculty exchange days with DC West High School and Duchesne Academy. These opportunities allow educators to share best practices in their schools, brainstorm new ideas, and make new connections.

There is a culture within the school that fosters professional growth. This, in turn, translates into a dedicated and talented staff that is prepared to share what they know with other educators and schools. Skutt Catholic has a strong internal professional development program. During the school year, school leadership hosts frequent sessions called "Lunch and Learns." Administrators and teachers present knowledge, skills, and pedagogy that they have seen implemented or that they have successfully integrated in their classrooms. Topics include educational technology implementation, student and staff mental health, Catholic identity, and newly available resources to staff and students. Sixty to seventy percent of staff voluntarily attend regularly. The school has committed significant financial resources to this program.

Skutt Catholic has a strong partnership with Millard Public Schools, as the school resides in the Millard Public School District boundaries. Through this relationship, the school is able to secure Title IIA funding to pay for staff professional development opportunities. Additionally, staff has access to a variety of free resources provided by the Millard Public Schools.

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

Skutt Catholic High School has been operating with a typical "President / Principal" model since the fall of 2013. The president is appointed by the Archbishop of Omaha as the Chief Executive Officer of the school and the Executive Secretary of the corporate board of directors. The president represents the school in all relationships with its various publics in accordance with policies approved by the school board. The

president articulates the mission and spiritual vision of the school, has responsibility for all school operations, assumes responsibility for creating a fiscally sound educational facility, and serves as the final in-house appeal in all personnel and student affairs.

The principal assists the president and school board in achieving the strategic goals and objectives of the school and is accountable to the president for the daily operational activities of the school. The principal plans and coordinates the development and management of safe, sound and effective academic and co-curricular programs, assures compliance with accreditation agencies, and provides supervision to all internal operations.

The principal operates with three assistant principals who facilitate the day-to-day operations of the school. The school's admissions director, vice president of Finance, vice president of Advancement, campus minister, and director of School Counseling round out the leadership team.

The principal relies heavily on department chairpersons., as they play a key role in stewarding instruction and learning in their departments. At the same time, they work collaboratively with the other department chairs to ensure the academic program aligns with the mission of the school. Department chairs play a key leadership role as they often fulfill the role of teacher and administrator simultaneously. This valuable, middle-level leadership is crucial in establishing open communication between and among departments and between administration and faculty. The department chair openly participates in dialogue with members of the department, other department chairs, and school leaders to ensure that the goals and direction of the school are clearly aligned with the mission of the school.

The leadership team also enables the faculty to take a clear leadership role in much of the decision making process within the school. The implementation of Personalized Professional Learning Committees (PPLC) allows staff to advance ideas to improve the school's curriculum and programming. In recent years, the staff has been involved with many changes, both small and large (e.g. HawkTime, student literacy programming, revised summer reading curriculum, and the creation of common assessments, etc).

## **5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:**

V.J. & Angela Skutt Catholic High School forms and educates young men and women to become Christian leaders who empower others, promote justice, and initiate change. The mission is very clear. All programming provides students with the ability to promote justice, and when needed, initiate change. As a community, Skutt Catholic must be willing to promote justice in a positive way. The school takes this responsibility seriously, and through curriculum, words, and actions must continue to find meaningful ways to engage the school community to ensure that equity, cultural awareness, and respect are ingrained.

First and foremost, Skutt Catholic addresses culturally responsive teaching and learning through its curriculum. It is addressed specifically in several areas of the curriculum. Required Theology courses routinely address issues of respect and equity through the lens of the teachings of the Catholic Church. We are called by God to "Love one another. Just as I have loved you." As part of the seniors' capstone project in Senior Studies, all are required to tackle social injustice and create a plan to make the community better.

Character Skills class addresses justice, equity, cultural awareness and respect as well. We have multiple units on racial inequity in the world. The units include: The Leadership Project, in which discussions surround racial inequities in India and South Africa, The Place at the Table unit, which asks students to research their own ancestry to see how the United States has mistreated or welcomed immigrant groups, and the Tolerance Project, which requires students to discuss these inequalities for many different individual identifying groups.

Traditional faith-based education calls on the school to provide service to the less fortunate. All students are required to perform direct service to local charitable organizations. Skutt Catholic also sponsors many different service trips. COVID impact aside, students routinely participate in mission and service trips to Haiti and Native American reservations in South Dakota, the March for Life in Washington D.C., as well as local, weekend overnight service performed in Omaha.

Skutt Catholic has also contracted with a local firm to provide training on racism and inclusion. The goal of this program is to equip teachers with knowledge based within the teachings of the Catholic faith with regard to these societal issues.

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

---

Skutt Catholic High School worked incredibly hard to minimize the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on its school community. The most instrumental practice employed by Skutt Catholic in recent years has been to remain fully open during the COVID-19 pandemic. Late in the summer of 2020, school leadership made the decision to return to full-time, in-person learning. As a result of data collected by surveying parents, students and teachers, it became evident that the community wanted to return to school. The school community believed in-person learning was vital to the academic, social, and spiritual development of the students and staff. Skutt Catholic was the only high school in the Omaha metropolitan area that offered in-person learning for the entirety of the 2020-21 academic year. Developing and implementing a plan to provide in-person learning for school and staff required school leadership to reimagine what the in-person school environment should look like.

Providing a safe environment for everyone at Skutt Catholic became the priority. Creating such an environment required taking multiple factors into consideration including: increasing cleaning measures, installing an improved ventilation system, reducing class sizes, and requiring masks while on campus. To fulfill these requirements and comply with local health regulations, Skutt Catholic had to embrace a new normal.

Skutt Catholic staff members were asked to take on additional responsibilities to reach the goal of full-time, in-person learning during the pandemic. Teachers were asked to teach an additional class period. They had to manage both in-person and remote learners simultaneously as well as sanitize their classrooms at the conclusion of each period. This allowed the school to reduce class sizes to comply with distancing requirements. School counselors had to recreate the master course schedule to include new, additional sections in less than a week. School administrators were tasked with additional supervision duties, including multiple study halls, lunch, and covering classes while teachers were absent or quarantined. Students, while wearing masks and maintaining appropriate distance, still achieved academic excellence, extracurricular success, and built positive relationships with peers.

Staff support and willingness to go above and beyond for the sake of their students, enabled Skutt Catholic to overcome a multitude of challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. Success in surpassing these obstacles has galvanized the Skutt Catholic community.

## **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?      \$12736  
(School budget divided by enrollment)

4. What is the average financial aid per student?      \$4775

5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?      13%

6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction?      38%

## 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)<sup>1</sup>. 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 subgroup<sup>2</sup> 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 assessments<sup>3</sup>).

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.

---

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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)