

**2003-2004 No Child Left Behind—Blue Ribbon Schools Program
Cover Sheet**

Name of Principal Mrs. Judith M Regec
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name St. Mary's School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 9501 Gayton Rd.
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address)

Richmond VA 23229-5319
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)
Tel. (804)740-1048 Fax (804) 740-1310

Website/URL www.saintmary.org E-mail JMRegec@saintmary.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Ms. Diane Biakowski
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Richmond Diocese Tel. (804) 359-5661

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

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board President/Chairperson _____ Ms. Elissa Ecker

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this package, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

[Include this page in the school's application as page 2.]

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades K-12. (Schools with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has not been in school improvement status or been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's adequate yearly progress requirement in the 2003-2004 school year.
3. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, it has foreign language as a part of its core curriculum.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 1998.
5. The nominated school or district is not refusing the OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
6. 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 the OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
7. 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.
8. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Questions 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district: _____ Elementary schools
 _____ Middle schools
 _____ Junior high schools
 _____ High schools
 _____ Other (Briefly explain)

_____ TOTAL

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: _____

Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: _____

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

- Urban or large central city
 Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area
 Suburban
 Small city or town in a rural area
 Rural

4. 3 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

_____ If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?

5. Number of students enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PRE-K	20	17	37	7	21	14	35
K	20	25	45	8	14	13	27
1	27	23	50	9			
2	22	21	43	10			
3	23	24	47	11			
4	32	18	50	12			
5	15	30	45	Other			
6	13	18	31				
			TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →				410

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school:
- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| 87 | % White, |
| 5 | % Black or African American |
| 3 | % Hispanic or Latino |
| 2 | % Asian/Pacific Islander |
| 0 | % American Indian/Alaskan Native, 3 % Other |
| 100 %Total | |

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 0.9 %

(This rate includes the total number of students who transferred to or from different schools between October 1 and the end of the school year, divided by the total number of students in the school as of October 1, multiplied by 100.)

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	1
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	3
(3)	Subtotal of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	4
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	444
(5)	Subtotal in row (3) divided by total in row (4)	0.009
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	0.9

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 0.7 %
3 Total Number Limited English Proficient

Number of languages represented: 2
Specify languages: **1) EWE 2) ARABIC**

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 0.7 %
3 Total Number Students Who Qualify

If this method does not produce a reasonably accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families or the school does not participate in the federally-supported lunch program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

10. Students receiving special education services: 0.7%
3 Total Number of Students Served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

<u> </u> Autism	<u> </u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u> </u> Deafness	<u> </u> Other Health Impaired
<u> </u> Deaf-Blindness	<u> 1 </u> Specific Learning Disability
<u> </u> Hearing Impairment	<u> 2 </u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u> </u> Mental Retardation	<u> </u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u> </u> Multiple Disabilities	<u> </u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

Number of Staff

	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u> 1 </u>	<u> 1 </u>
Classroom teachers	<u> 23 </u>	<u> </u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u> 6 </u>	<u> </u>
Paraprofessionals	<u> 7 </u>	<u> </u>
Support staff	<u> 2 </u>	<u> </u>
Total number	<u> 39 </u>	<u> 1 </u>

12. Average school student-“classroom teacher” ratio: 18

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. The student dropout rate is defined by the state. The student drop-off rate is the difference between the number of entering students and the number of exiting students from the same cohort. (From the same cohort, subtract the number of exiting students from the number of entering students; divide that number by the number of entering students; multiply by 100 to get the percentage drop-off rate.) Briefly explain in 100 words or fewer any major discrepancy between the dropout rate and the drop-off rate. (Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates and only high schools need to supply drop-off rates.)

	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000	1998-1999
Daily student attendance	96	97	97	97	97
Daily teacher attendance	98	97	98	98	98
Teacher turnover rate	21	3	7	0	3
Student dropout rate	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Student drop-off rate	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Part III-Summary

St. Mary's, a Catholic school located in the West End of Richmond, Virginia, was established in 1965. Current enrollment is 410 students in grades Pre-Kindergarten through eighth. The school employs a developmental, structured, and challenging curriculum. It is a close, caring community of students, teachers, and parents. Although Saint Mary's is a parish school, many students are children of other parishes and denominations.

Founded in the Catholic tradition, St. Mary's School adheres to the belief that learning is the process of acquiring and applying knowledge, thinking critically to solve problems, and stimulating curiosity through inquiry and discovery. We encourage learning through a multi-sensory approach that encompasses basic skills acquisition, higher level thinking, and collaboration within an integrated curriculum. We recognize diverse learning styles among our students and strive to differentiate instruction so that creativity is fostered and individual needs are addressed. Character development is taught by encouraging responsibility, accountability, respect, and compassion for one another.

St. Mary's faculty consists of qualified professionals with varied teaching experiences. Approximately one-half are veteran teachers with more than five years in the classroom. Less than a quarter of the teachers have fewer than three years, with the remaining having three to five years experience. Approximately one-fourth of the faculty has post-graduate degrees, and all are given the opportunity to attend seminars and continuing education workshops that are funded by our Parent-Teacher Organization.

St. Mary's has a tradition of strong parental involvement. The School Board is composed of parents with varied professional backgrounds who advise the principal on development, finance, legislation, and strategic planning.

Our active Parent-Teacher Organization helps in a variety of ways with maintenance of the physical plant by mulching the playground, building bookcases, and painting. Also, PTO fundraising projects have raised money for audiovisual, technological, and playground equipment, books, and classroom supplies. The PTO hosts community events such as the Advent Breakfast, a variety show for the students, school picnic, and a yearly golf tournament.

A Middle School Steering Committee coordinates social and educational activities for the students in grade six through eight. Exploratory clubs established by this committee help expose the Middle School students to a variety of topics such as chess, music, and journalism.

Parents are also involved in the day to day operation of the school. Parents volunteer to help with morning carpool duty, coordinate volunteers and social activities for the classroom, maintain an area in the workroom where items are cut or copied, and administer the Accelerated Reader program. Parents also volunteer in the office, help with vision screening, assist the librarian, and plan and staff an annual field day.

St. Mary's offers activities after school such as band, clubs, intramural sports, color guard, and a state accredited on-site childcare program.

These facets of St. Mary's School make it a place that inspires and develops the whole child academically, spiritually, and physically.

Part IV-Indicators of Academic Success

1. St. Mary's School uses the Terra Nova tests by CTB/McGraw-Hill. These achievement tests, taken in the spring of each year, provide reliable and accurate information about student performance. The tests are norm-referenced, meaning scores of individual students and of groups of students can be compared with other students and groups in the nation. All students at Saint Mary's take the Terra Nova tests.

An assessment data table of St. Mary's students' scores for the past three years is included in Part VII, Assessment Data. The scores reported in the table are the Median National Percentile (MDNP). For example, in Grade 5, the MDNP in reading for 2002-2003 and 2001-2002 is 87 and for 2000-2001, 85. This tells us that the median score of St. Mary's fifth graders is 87, 87, and 85 for the three reported years. In other words, for the year 2002-2003, half of the fifth grade students scored below the 87th percentile and half scored above the 87th percentile. A score of 50 would be average. Therefore, the students in fifth grade at St. Mary's scored above average for the past three years when compared with groups of students taking the test nationwide.

Again referring to the attached table, reading and math scores are reported for each year in grades 1 through 8. As you can see, St. Mary's students consistently performed in the above average range for both math and reading all three years. The majority of scores were in the 80th percentile range with the overall range from the 65-96th percentile as compared with other students in the country who took the test.

St. Mary's School is proud of its student achievement. The results of the Terra Nova confirm what we have always known, that Saint Mary's School is a school with high academic standards which result in above average student achievement.

2. St. Mary's School effectively utilizes assessment data to understand and improve student and school performance. Terra Nova test results are reviewed annually by individual classroom teachers for their current students. Strengths and weakness are noted by the teacher. Grade level teachers then meet to discuss the commonalities of the strengths and weaknesses of the whole group. After individual and grade level assessment, the entire faculty meets to discuss the general strengths and weaknesses of the school as a whole. This information is communicated to the Diocese. During the year teachers work to address weaknesses in areas that were identified by the assessments. In particular, St. Mary's has made an effort to address the need for developing critical thinking skills across all curriculum areas. Texts have been adopted which promote critical thinking and teachers actively look for activities and lessons that require students to apply knowledge.

3. St. Mary's School communicates student performance in a variety of ways. Each year, parents receive a copy of their child's scores on the Terra Nova assessment. The overall Terra Nova scores for the school are sent home in the fall with a letter to the parents. These scores are also made available to members of the community by request. The Catholic Diocese of Richmond reports Terra Nova scores as a whole via their website. Another method of communicating student performance is through quarterly reports of their progress. In 5th grade through 8th grade, interim reports are issued for students needing significant improvement before the end of the grading period or for students who are not working up to their ability. All parents

are scheduled for a conference with their child's teacher at least once a year. In the middle school, all of the teachers attend the conferences together to discuss the progress of the student. In addition, many other ways are used to communicate student performance. Teachers often call home, send notes to parents via the child's backpack, or use e-mail. Some teachers require a parent signature on tests.

4. St. Mary's School shares its successes in many ways. Through publications like the *West End Press*, the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, and other local, neighborhood, and school newsletters, St. Mary's successes are profiled. Graduates of St. Mary's who attain Honor Rolls in various public, private, or parochial high schools are recognized and these lists are publicly displayed on centrally located bulletin boards within the school facility as well as the church facility. In particular, St. Mary's shares its successes with other Catholic Schools within the Diocese of Richmond. Diocesan teachers meet twice yearly and discuss strategies and projects that have been successful in the classroom. Resource and foreign language professionals stay in touch with St. Mary's teachers to gain information about various ideas and programs that have benefited the students. St. Mary's teachers also attend classes and seminars with public school teachers where strategies and information are exchanged.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. St. Mary's Catholic School employs a developmental, structured, challenging curriculum. Resource classes are offered in music, art, computer, library, and French or Spanish. Physical Education is offered twice a week. All resource classes build on the overall curriculum while introducing the basic skills specific to each area. Children are taught the importance of fine arts, technology, and cultures of other countries.

St. Mary's Pre-K program is primarily designed to promote developmental and socialization skills. Emphasis is placed on basic readiness.

In the primary grades the language arts program places a heavy emphasis on phonics while integrating literature for interest and application of skills. Grade appropriate reading, comprehension, correct language usage, grammar and written composition are all parts of the program. At the intermediate level the language arts program teaches reading and writing while incorporating English, phonics, and spelling skills. Primary math skills are introduced through a "hands on" curriculum. Repetition and applied learning techniques using grade appropriate manipulatives to reinforce concepts are utilized. At the intermediate level computation, numeration, estimation, measurement, and geometry are introduced. Critical thinking, mathematical reasoning, and problem solving are also introduced and developed. Science and social studies at the primary level utilize a wide range of materials to teach the beginning concepts of living in families and communities as well as units of study in health, physical science, earth science and life science. At the intermediate level regions of the United States are introduced with a special study on Virginia. A study of American history, beginning with prehistoric times up to and including 20th century history is presented. The intermediate science program emphasizes hands-on experience in labs and a yearly science fair in which outside science teachers judge student projects.

At the middle school level the language arts curriculum consists of implementing the writing process, learning correct grammar usage, punctuation, capitalization, and speech. The literature

is based on the classics and a literature text. The mathematics program integrates concepts in general math, measurement, proportionality, probability, algebra, geometry, and statistics. Students are offered opportunities to develop problem-solving strategies and apply them to real world situations, to enhance mathematical skills. Eighth grade students in advanced math are offered the opportunity to gain an algebra credit for high school. The middle school social studies program encompasses the teaching of world history from pre-history to the twentieth century and American history from the age of exploration to the present. Also integrated in the course study are units in civics, Supreme Court cases, and the Constitution. The middle school science curriculum is unique in that it integrates all of the natural sciences presenting them as a single area of study. The integration of these science themes gives students the opportunity to make connections among the disciplines of earth, life, and physical science. The Foreign Language program allows students to choose either French or Spanish. Students remain in their chosen language for three years (6th, 7th, and 8th grades) and are able to earn a high school credit.

2. St. Mary's School is committed to providing excellence in reading instruction. We are in the process of adopting a new reading series and restructuring and revising how we teach reading. Our new basal, Scholastic's *Literacy Place*, is research based, sequential, contains explicit phonic instruction, and uses quality literature. We have supplemented the basal with Modern Curriculum Press *Ready Readers*. These leveled readers allow us to tailor flexible guided reading groups on the student's instructional level.

Last year and this year we have concentrated on phasing in the new program in kindergarten and first grades. Emergent readers learn to match speech to print, learn how language works, develop phonological awareness and phonemic awareness, and learn letter sound association and letter formation. Beginning readers work on developing automatic word recognition while continuing phonics instruction, developing comprehension, and learning basic writing skills. When students progress further, they work on their speed and accuracy, learn word patterns and other comprehension techniques. In writing they express their ideas and thoughts on paper.

In addition to the changes in reading materials, we have also changed many other areas within the classroom. We have leveled books for independent reading time for students and are working on building up classroom libraries. In kindergarten, we have purchased new carpet and furniture to make the rooms more children friendly and to promote cooperative grouping. We are utilizing the Resource teacher and the classroom aide to facilitate more hands on learning during small group instruction time. Our teachers are committed to making reading fun. They share ideas regularly about new strategies and classroom management techniques that work for them.

This is an exciting time for our reading program. With the changes we have made and implementation of this new reading program in upper levels, in the future we expect to see student engagement and achievement soar!

3. The Social Studies curriculum is reflective of St. Mary's Mission and Philosophy of Learning. Realizing that students today are part of a larger global community, our curriculum encompasses not only basic knowledge and essential skills, but also value-based themes. Basic knowledge and essential skills are addressed in our Consensus Curriculum through the themes of National Identity, Constitutional Heritage, Geographic Literacy, Historic Literacy, Cultural

Literacy, and Economic Literacy. Value-based themes include the teaching of Ethical Literacy, Sociopolitical Literacy, and Civic Values, Rights, and Responsibilities. The wide range of our curriculum instills in the students the sense of being members of a greater community where diversity is embraced, divergent cultures are explored, and pride in one's heritage is fostered. Taking into account the diverse learning styles of the student population in our school, teachers employ various strategies to engage the children's curiosity through inquiry and discovery within the curriculum. Differentiated learning techniques are utilized within the classroom to foster creativity and address individual needs. To this end, the Social Studies curriculum includes activities that teach Basic Study Skills, Critical Thinking Skills, and Participation Skills. With this rich curriculum, we feel our students are on their way to becoming valued members of the global community.

4. Teachers diversify instructional methods to improve student learning and meet multiple learning styles at St. Mary's School. They use manipulatives, movement activities, acting out, games, songs, map making, labs, overhead projectors, computers, flannel boards, and individual dry erase and chalk boards. Instruction is provided utilizing more than one sense. For example, teachers talk through math problems and also show visually how to complete them. Students use highlighters to find word patterns or show important information. Other strategies used include incorporating literature into content subjects, debating, using analogies, and puppetry.

Teachers also vary instruction between large and small groups and individual instruction. Peers are used to increase learning through project work and the pairing of stronger and weaker students.

One of St. Mary's strengths is the collaboration between the resource classes and the individual classrooms. Monthly, ideas are collected by the resource teachers (art, music, French, Spanish and library) on subject areas which are being studied. Then, along with the classroom teachers, they develop projects that complement and enhance student learning.

5. St. Mary's School provides many opportunities for staff to continue in their professional development. New faculty members are paired with a mentor to assist them during their first few years on staff. The staff is also divided into curriculum teams which meet periodically. The teams discuss new ideas and strategies and are currently reading and discussing *The Differentiated Classroom* by Carol Ann Tomlinson.

The Parent Teacher Organization provides money for continuing education. Teachers attend conferences, workshops and take courses. They share new concepts, techniques and ideas with the whole staff and also between related grade levels. Some of the courses/workshops/seminars attended during the last year include: using technology in the classroom, guided reading, word walls, classroom management, curriculum methods, differentiated teaching, a symposium on historical issues, writing workshop, children's literature, attention deficit disorder, educational issues, and grade level and professional association meetings.

The Catholic Diocese of Richmond also provides a conference for teachers two times yearly. The conferences feature speakers on various educational topics, round table discussions and exhibits with new products and vendors.

PART VI - PRIVATE SCHOOL ADDENDUM

The purpose of this addendum is to obtain additional information from private schools as noted below. Attach the completed addendum to the end of the application, before the assessment data tables.

Private school association(s): National Catholic Education Association (NCEA)
 (Give primary religious or independent association only)

Does the school have nonprofit, tax exempt (501(c)(3)) status? Yes X No

Part II - Demographics

1. What are the 2001-2002 tuition rates, by grade? (Do not include room, board, or fees.)

<u>K-8, Parishioners (annual)</u>		<u>K-8, Non-Parishioners (annual)</u>	
one child	\$2,975	one child	\$4,585
two children	4,715	two children	7,700
Three children	5,995	three children	9,800
four children	6,995		
each additional child	800		

<u>Pre-K, Parishioners (annual)</u>		<u>Pre-K, Non –Parishioners (annual)</u>	
3 days	\$1,595	3 days	\$1,885
4 days	1,985	4 days	2,360
5 days	2,295	5 days	2,760

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| 2. What is the educational cost per student?
(School budget divided by enrollment) | \$ <u>3,313.25</u> |
| 3. What is the average financial aid per student? | \$ <u>2,083.33</u> |
| 4. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? | <u> 1.7 </u> % |
| 5. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? | <u> 2.7 </u> % |

VII-Assessment Results

SAINT MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Assessment Data-without subgroups

Terra Nova

CTB/McGraw-Hill

2002-2003 copyright 2001

2000-2001 copyright 1997

Scores are reported as percentiles.

No students are excluded from the test.

	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Testing month	March	April	March
Grade 7			
Reading	79	88	92
Mathematics	80	89	80
Number of students tested	34	33	33
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0
Percent of total students excluded	0	0	0
Grade 6			
Reading	82	83	87
Mathematics	78	86	89
Number of students tested	39	36	35
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0
Percent of total students excluded	0	0	0
Grade 5			
Reading	87	87	85
Mathematics	85	84	77
Number of students tested	50	51	46
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0
Percent of total students excluded	0	0	0
Grade 4			
Reading	86	85	89
Mathematics	83	84	85
Number of students tested	50	48	49
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0
Percent of total students excluded	0	0	0
Grade 3			
Reading	81	81	78
Mathematics	78	79	77
Number of students tested	49	48	49
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0
Percent of total students excluded	0	0	0
Grade 2			
Reading	77	84	91
Mathematics	75	84	80
Number of students tested	52	47	45
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0
Percent of total students excluded	0	0	0
Grade 1			
Reading	94	96	82
Mathematics	95	94	65
Number of students tested	48	50	48
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0
Percent of total students excluded	0	0	0