

# 2006-2007 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

## U.S. Department of Education

**Cover Sheet** Type of School: (Check all that apply)  Elementary  Middle  High  K-12  Charter

Name of Principal Ms. Mary Jo Burns  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Ascension School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 601 Van Buren  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Oak Park IL 60304-1310  
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Cook State School Code Number\* N/A

Telephone ( 708 ) 386-7282 Fax ( 708 ) 524-4796

Web site/URL www.ascension-school.com E-mail mjburns@ascension-school.com

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 12/13/2006

Name of Superintendent\* Dr. Nicholas Wolsonovich  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Archdiocese of Chicago Tel. (312)751-5200

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

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.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date 12/13/2006

*\*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 for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not 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 2006-2007 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 2001 and has not received the No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years.
5. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
6. 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.
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

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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  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 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. 9 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 as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	40	39	79	7	19	22	41
K	21	26	47	8	22	25	47
1	27	24	51	9			
2	25	20	45	10			
3	23	29	52	11			
4	23	24	47	12			
5	19	30	49	Other			
6	26	26	52				
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →</b>							<b>510</b>

*[Throughout the document, round numbers 1 or higher to the nearest whole number. Use decimals to one place only if the number is below 1.]*

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- |                   |                                  |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| <u>85</u>         | % White                          |
| <u>3</u>          | % Black or African American      |
| <u>11</u>         | % Hispanic or Latino             |
| <u>1</u>          | % Asian/Pacific Islander         |
| <u>0</u>          | % American Indian/Alaskan Native |
| <b>100% Total</b> |                                  |

Use only the five standard categories in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of the school.

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

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

<b>(1)</b>	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year	12
<b>(2)</b>	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year	23
<b>(3)</b>	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	35
<b>(4)</b>	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	510
<b>(5)</b>	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	.069
<b>(6)</b>	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

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

Number of languages represented:             
Specify languages:

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 0.6 %  
Total number students who qualify: 3

If this method does not produce an 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:  $\frac{4}{18}$  %  
 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 categories.

<u>  1  </u> Autism	<u>  1  </u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>    </u> Deafness	<u>  2  </u> Other Health Impaired
<u>    </u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>  4  </u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>    </u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>  4  </u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>    </u> Hearing Impairment	<u>    </u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>    </u> Mental Retardation	<u>  1  </u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>  1  </u> Multiple Disabilities	

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

	<b>Number of Staff</b>	
	<b><u>Full-time</u></b>	<b><u>Part-Time</u></b>
Administrator(s)	<u>  3  </u>	<u>    </u>
Classroom teachers	<u> 30  </u>	<u>  4  </u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>  1  </u>	<u>    </u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
Support staff	<u> 10  </u>	<u>  1  </u>
Total number	<u> 44  </u>	<u>  5  </u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1  18:1 

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. Also explain a high teacher turnover rate.

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	96%	97%
Daily teacher attendance	97%	98%	96%	95%	96%
Teacher turnover rate	0%	10%	12%	16%	8%
Student dropout rate (middle/high)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Student drop-off rate (high school)	%	%	%	%	%

## PART III - SUMMARY

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Ascension School is a community with a mission to educate, celebrate and serve. Ascension's goal is to form students to become life-long learners, people of faith, future leaders and responsible citizens committed to service.

Ascension was begun ninety-five years ago by the Ursuline Sisters whose directive from their founder, St. Angela Merici, was "*Build community wherever you go.*" The essential quality of the school, its warm, nurturing family atmosphere, is a result of that vision. This is a community that includes fourth generation Ascension students, yet welcomes new families and children who will change and challenge the school.

Ascension is a community that

- Calls each child by name
- Provides an excellent education for every student
- Encourages each student to own their own learning
- Promotes caring relationships between our older and younger students
- Adjusts to meet the need of its changing population
- Educates the whole child
- Actively mentors young leaders

Ascension is proud of its rich history and meaningful traditions. Ascension is also flexible and accommodating to the changing needs of families and students. When enrollment in Early Childhood programs grew, Ascension added a multi-age class with a curriculum that parallels the age-level preschool classes. In response to a writing focus in the local public high school, Ascension changed its schedule to allow junior high students time for a writers' workshop during Language Arts class. Another schedule change gave grade level teachers common planning periods each week to share strategies and outcomes.

Ascension is committed to the professional growth of its faculty and administers a grant program to help with the cost of graduate school tuition. Teachers are encouraged to collaborate as partners and to use technology in the classroom. Ascension has a learning resource professional on staff, a librarian, and a tutoring program. The assistant principal works closely with the local elementary school district to meet the needs of students who benefit from learning resource assistance at the public schools.

In addition to an excellent education through a broad, rigorous curriculum, Ascension proudly offers a full complement of "specials" at every grade-level with full-time faculty teaching Spanish, art, music, computer and physical education. The arts are an important component of the school with ambitious classroom programs supported by co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities. Ascension students participate in band, orchestra, three different choirs, and drama and art clubs. They have frequent opportunities to learn about the rich cultural resources of the Chicago area. Their artwork decorates the classrooms and halls of the buildings. Their music performances enhance liturgies and special events.

Recognizing a partnership with families, Ascension attentively monitors students' academic progress and social growth. The school benefits from active parental involvement, a dynamic school board and two-way communication between home and school.

Ascension mentors students for leadership, active involvement and service to the school itself, the parish, and local and global communities. Led by the Student Council, the student body commits to several service projects each year with the help of a faculty mentor. As part of the parish community, students participate in food, clothing and Christmas drives to benefit an urban parish. Classes are challenged each Lent to help with a global service project. Ascension students raised funds to build a grinding mill in Tanzania, a library in the Philippines, a retaining wall in El Salvador and a well for a school in India. The students are part of a parish engaged in seeking social justice, working at homeless shelters, visiting the sick and disabled, caring for the aged and disenfranchised. This is a welcoming community that promotes love, kindness and respect.

## PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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### 1. Assessment Results:

Ascension School students score above the national average on standardized tests at every grade level and in every subject area. Further, Ascension students consistently perform above average as they progress from grade to grade.

Each Catholic School in the Archdiocese of Chicago uses the Terra Nova Multiple Assessment Battery. Ascension administers these tests beginning in grade three and continuing through grade seven. Eighth graders take placement tests and entrance exams administered by local public and Catholic high schools. There are very few students with Individual Education Plans who require modifications on standardized tests. These students (less than 1% of the student population) are tested with the required accommodations. Terra Nova does not include these students' scores with the group.

In all grades tested for the past three years, Ascension's mean norm curve equivalent results (MNCE) are above the national mean norm curve equivalent of the normative sample in all areas of reading and math. The range of scores for the grades tested is above the national mean in every grade. Using the *No Child Left Behind-National Blue Ribbon* qualification requirements, these scores show that Ascension students in grade seven in 2006 tested above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile of national school norms in reading and math.

Terra Nova measures these objectives in reading: basic understanding, analyzing text, identifying and applying reading strategies and evaluating and extending meaning of written passages. The 2006 Terra Nova scores show grade level averages for grade three reading with a mean NCE at 64.5 to a high mean NCE of 74.5 in reading for grade five. Grades four, six and seven have scores within these extremes. Grade seven scored 68.9 in reading, above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile requirement of the *No Child Left Behind - National Blue Ribbon* equivalent.

In Math, test objectives include numbers and numerical relations, computation and estimation, measurement, geometry and spatial sense. Also tested are problem-solving, reasoning and communication patterns which include functions and algebra. Ascension School's mathematics scores for 2006 range from a low mean NCE of 63.1 in grade three to a mean NCE of 70.5 for grade five. Grade seven scored at 69.9 in math which is above the required 64.1 mean NCE, the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile.

Students' Terra Nova results show high achievement and mastery of learning objectives at every level in language as well. Ascension School strongly emphasizes the writing process as part of the language arts curriculum. The language tests assess sentence structure, writing strategies, and editing skills. The March 2006 results show that Ascension students at every grade level perform above the average MNCE. Grade seven scored at 78, significantly above average. These standardized test scores indicate that Ascension's emphasis on writing in the curriculum and instruction, translates into achievement on language tests.

Ascension School has a total minority population of 15%. Three percent of the school population is black/African American; one percent is Asian. The Hispanic/Latino minority represents 11% of the school population. However, the population is not evenly divided among all grade levels. There are more Hispanic/Latino students in the early childhood and primary grades than in other grade levels. These students have not participated in Terra Nova testing to date. In 2006, grade 7 had only two students representing the Hispanic/Latino minority in a class of 47, or less than 5% of the class's population. Therefore, Ascension School did not disaggregate tests scores since fewer than nine minority students took the test.

## **2. Using Assessment Results:**

In early May, Ascension receives the results of the Terra Nova tests that are administered in March. Teachers and administrators review individual results and group reports to monitor the performance of all students and identify students with achievement deficits. Staff compares cognitive scores of students with their achievement scores to ensure that they are achieving according to their ability. Ascension's goal is mastery of each objective. If students' scores are not at the level indicated by their aptitude, further individual testing is conducted, and remediation work is begun. Teachers re-teach concepts or work with particular students to improve understanding. The whole faculty compares longitudinal results of cohorts to evaluate progress on objectives over time. The results help the staff set goals for the following year.

The faculty uses the assessment information to adjust the curriculum. Two years ago, when teachers noticed that intermediate grade students were not mastering measurement, teachers adjusted the grade level curriculum and moved the concept forward in the year. To give students real life experience, teachers and administrators planned an activity to reinforce learning. Students studied recipes and measuring tools used in cooking and baking. Before Christmas teachers, community volunteers and parents organized a cookie bake to engage children in using the measuring skills that they had learned in class. The results were improved measuring skills and dozens of cookies for the parish fundraising event.

Junior high teachers perceived that grade eight students overall were not performing as well as anticipated on high school placement tests. The students now practice for high school placement tests using *Master the Catholic High School Entrance Exams*. Local high schools share test results, and grade level teachers adjust their curriculum when deficits appear.

## **3. Communicating Assessment Results:**

At Ascension School, each student's progress is monitored. Early Childhood teachers communicate with parents daily. Teachers complete formal age-level assessments indicating progress on outcomes three times a year.

Primary and intermediate teachers communicate weekly and use quarterly report cards. Teachers in grades four through eight use quarterly report cards and mid-quarter progress reports. Teachers in the junior high write weekly academic reports to alert parents of missing assignments or low test scores. Many teachers communicate through email and use required student assignment books to monitor homework. Formal conferences are held in the first semester and as needed through out the year.

Report cards for students who have varied academic ability are accompanied by a student accommodation plan and the *Student Profile Sheet*. The *Student Profile Sheet* communicates to parents and next grade teachers a brief profile of the students and accommodations for academic success.

Following the teachers' study of Terra Nova test results, the administrative team holds a workshop for the School Board. When the Archdiocese adopted the Terra Nova test several years ago, Ascension co-hosted a workshop for parents of several schools to explain the tests goals and scoring. After these information sessions, individual test scores are sent to parents with a grade level composite. Grade level reports are available to anyone who requests them – parents of perspective students, families with students in other grades, alumni. Ascension public relations materials include highlights of group achievement.

## **4. Sharing Success:**

As good stewards, the Ascension community generously shares its success with other schools. The administration works closely with three other Catholic Schools and a Montessori School in accessing special education services for children in need. Faculty and staff discuss intervention strategies, means of reporting achievement and instructional adaptations to best serve the variety of educational needs in our student body.

During the 2005-2006 school year, Ascension implemented an intensive literacy program in grade one. Ascension's Title 1 teacher administered the *Woodcock Johnson Mini Battery of Achievement* to each grade one student. Any students testing below grade level, and those recommended by teachers, received individual assistance in class and in "pull out" groups. By the end of the year, every grade one student

tested at grade level. Ascension shared this model with District 97, the local public school district. The district adopted the process for all Oak Park private schools. Now, Ascension shares the same Title 1 teacher who coordinates the program in all four schools.

Ascension's principal belongs to a council of eleven Catholic Schools whose administrators meet monthly. Principals begin each meeting with a session titled "What Works." The council cooperatively plans staff development programs that help grade level teachers create networks among the schools. Ascension, with other schools, has hosted workshops and development programs. Together, teachers have studied outcomes-based curriculum, classroom management, and alternative assessment.

## PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Curriculum:

**Religion:** Students learn religion daily in a developmentally appropriate curriculum. Celebrations of the liturgy provide opportunities for students to participate, celebrate and learn the depth of meaning in Holy Scripture and the significance of community worship. In addition, children from pre-school through second grade are introduced to the catechesis of the Good Shepherd, a prepared environment that nurtures and fosters the growth of the child's own unique relationship with God.

**Language Arts (including reading, writing, grammar, listening and speaking skills):** Reading is an organized, sequential program with an integrated approach to language arts development. The reading program in grades one through four includes authentic literature to motivate the students. In grades five through eight, a literature-based program is used. Writing is stressed at every grade level.

**Math:** Ascension's math program is based on the standards of Illinois State and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. Students are asked to articulate their thought process as they solve problems, allowing discussion of different approaches. Students investigate math through manipulative activities, drill, practice, and practical applications. Each student's learning style is considered, and concepts are presented in a variety of ways. After consultation with area high schools, Ascension chose to offer a thorough study of pre-algebra in seventh and eighth grades to promote student placement in high school Honors Algebra.

**Social Studies:** In grades one through four, the curriculum is focused on community living, culture, geography and map skills. Grade six studies world history with an emphasis on ancient civilizations, world religions and philosophies. Grades five, seven and eight focus on American history including in depth studies of critical issues: the American Revolution, treatment of Native Americans, slavery, the Civil War and constitutional government. Current events are integrated at every grade level.

**Science:** Ascension's comprehensive science curriculum incorporates life, physical and earth sciences in grades one through five. Students do a yearlong study of each of these content areas in junior high. Using the scientific method in experiments engages students' natural curiosity and develops critical thinking.

**Spanish:** Students in grades one through eight have Spanish as part of the formal and required curriculum. In grades one through four, children attend class weekly. Middle grade students have two classes each week, and upper grade students have classes three periods a week. The program uses the communicative approach to teach reading, writing, culture, grammar and conversation. Students correspond with pen pals from Spain and Mexico as part of the cultural component of the curriculum. More than 90% of students place into second year high school Spanish upon graduation.

**Art:** Ascension has an extensive art curriculum based on visual elements and principles of design. Primary students learn to control the tools of art to create finished products. Older students study art techniques and include knowledge of artists and art history in the projects they create. The visual arts allow students to express themselves and see the world in different ways.

**Music:** The music curriculum spans pre-school through grade eight and includes well-planned performance experiences in music, theater and dance. Activities are aligned to the National Standards in Music Education, and include singing, building and playing instruments, creating, performing, listening to and analyzing music. The curriculum emphasizes relationships between music and other arts, particularly language arts, social studies and technology.

**Computer Skills and Technology:** Students develop technology skills through computer classroom projects and on-line training programs. The computer lab is fully equipped for use by up to 26 students; mobile projection systems are also available. Teachers integrate technology into math, science, social studies, language arts, fine arts and Spanish classes.

**Physical Education:** Ascension's physical education curriculum stresses participation, teamwork and fair play, encouraging students to develop physically and socially. Working on a team helps children learn to value the contributions of all participants.

## **2. Reading:**

Reading instruction is an organized, sequential program, which includes an integrated approach to language arts development. It starts in our early childhood program with emphasis on listening and responding to literature, phonemic awareness and kinesthetic activities.

In first to fourth grades, the Houghton-Mifflin reading program was adopted in 2001 because of its integrated approach. It includes reading, writing, spelling and English. The reading program uses authentic literature which interests the students. Instructional methods include teacher-led instruction, the shared learning approach with cooperative learning and partner pairing. Students do independent learning activities such as author studies.

The fifth through eighth grade program is literature based, with a yearly theme at each level. Curriculum areas are taught from the novel itself. Sixth, seventh and eighth grades each have a yearly theme. The sixth grade theme is “Coming of Age,” seventh grade is “Life is a Journey,” and eighth grade is “Social Justice.”

Writing is an integral part of the reading program across all levels. The writing process moves through a series of steps: brainstorming, prewriting, first draft, revising, proofreading and publishing. Writing skills are used and applied in all content areas, at every grade level.

## **3. Additional Curriculum Area (Fine Arts):**

Ascension School’s mission statement includes “helping each child to grow in awareness of the child’s individual talents.” The arts are truly a driving force of the Ascension experience. When visitors walk the corridors, eyes are immediately focused on the ever-changing displays of student artwork. In the art studio primary students are cutting, gluing, and assembling; and intermediate students mixing colors and experimenting with paint. Middle school students visit Chicago’s Art Institute, then research an artist and learn what it is like to create a masterpiece. Each student duplicates a painting of the artist that they have researched. Ascension School has a student art gallery and students’ work is added yearly.

At Ascension one can hear wonderful singing and find students learning folk dances and multi-cultural rhythm games from around the world. Children play the recorder and experiment with mallet instruments. Primary music students construct their own instruments to learn about sound production. Middle school students compose original songs and produce beautiful musical scores. In the upper grades, students create pod casts based on musical styles. On a recital day, singers, pianists and even electric guitarists perform for their classmates. Students critique their field-based experiences: plays, musicals, operas, dance performances. Private lessons are available in string instruments and wind instruments in our Music Studio. Our student instrumentalists and the choirs give concerts and provide area high schools with excellent performers for their groups.

Ascension students perform plays and narratives that follow the language arts curriculum. In preschool, see the performance of *The Little Red Hen*. The third graders perform oral biographies in costume, and fifth graders perform skits. The sixth grade has a mythology day during which students display dioramas and perform Greek plays with costumes, makeup, and scenery in the school’s performance space.

The students’ daily experience in the arts helps them become well-rounded individuals, well-prepared for high school.

## **4. Instructional Methods:**

Teachers at Ascension School use a variety of instructional methods to meet the learning needs of their students. The teaching methods, addressing the different learning modalities (auditory, visual, kinesthetic and tactile), include, but are not limited to: whole class direct instruction, review and re-teaching of concepts using small groups of students, the use of visual aids for modeling, the use of computer programs and websites to aid in the students’ independent inquiry, dialogue, discussion and drama, and hands-on projects. Student partnerships are encouraged to contribute to the learning environment.

At Ascension, mastery of concepts is the main focus in all subject areas. Teachers develop the

students' use of oral and written expression in order to develop the students' inferential and critical thinking skills. Within the curriculum areas, the students use the six traits of writing for all their written work. The science and math curriculums emphasize problem-solving strategies and practical applications. Individuals requiring additional support receive homework assistance in lunch or after school groups.

Teachers integrate music and art into the school's curriculum, offering project based education and a collaborative learning experience. Ascension offers myriad field trips at all grade levels, thereby taking advantage of the many cultural programs throughout the city of Chicago.

In addition to teaching methods, teachers address students' organizational needs. Students record assignments on a master grid and transfer them to their assignment notebook. Those in need of further organizational help are assigned a buddy who checks their notebook.

Ascension offers a "pull-out" program led by a reading specialist, who offers small group instruction to students who require additional support.

### **5. Professional Development:**

Knowing that positive change in school success depends significantly on the education and training of staff, Ascension makes professional development a priority. Ascension sees itself as a learning community and supports and promotes professional growth at three levels – through planned programs at the school, in cooperative programs with local schools or the Archdiocese of Chicago, and by encouraging teachers to take advanced education programs.

The school sets annual goals based on student achievement results, the long- range plan and discerned needs. The staff development programs are created to help actualize these goals. Over the last several years, teachers studied test score results and other assessments in order to revise curriculum to match the outcomes based curriculum model. Working with other schools and *Genesis*, the long range plan of the Archdiocese, Ascension annually organizes and participates in staff development activities that promote academic excellence, school viability and Catholic identity.

One quarter of our current faculty is enrolled in coursework leading to masters' degrees. Through a special program funded by gifts from school families, parishioners and alumni, the school provides financial assistance to faculty for study. Ascension students benefit tremendously from the increased knowledge of their teachers. Teachers also share their learning with their colleagues, encouraging the adoption of cutting edge educational theory.

## PART VI - PRIVATE SCHOOL ADDENDUM

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*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. Delete if not used.*

1. Private school association(s): Roman Catholic  
 (Identify the religious or independent associations, if any, to which the school belongs. List the primary association first.)

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

3. What are the 2006-2007 tuition rates, by grade? (Do not include room, board, or fees.)

\$ <u>2,770</u> K	\$ <u>3,725</u> 1 <sup>st</sup>	\$ <u>3,725</u> 2 <sup>nd</sup>	\$ <u>3,725</u> 3 <sup>rd</sup>	\$ <u>3,725</u> 4 <sup>th</sup>	\$ <u>3,725</u> 5 <sup>th</sup>
\$ <u>3,725</u> 6 <sup>th</sup>	\$ <u>3,725</u> 7 <sup>th</sup>	\$ <u>3,725</u> 8 <sup>th</sup>	\$ _____ 9 <sup>th</sup>	\$ _____ 10 <sup>th</sup>	\$ _____ 11 <sup>th</sup>
\$ _____ 12 <sup>th</sup>	\$ _____ Other				

4. What is the educational cost per student? \$ 3,744  
 (School budget divided by enrollment)

5. What is the average financial aid per student? \$ 471

6. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 2 %

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

## PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

**Ascension School  
Terra Nova Test Scores  
2004-2006  
With Subgroups Less Than 9 Per Class**

<b>Grade 7</b>	March 2006	March 2005	March 2004
Reading National Mean Score NCE	68.9	65.0	67.0
Math National Mean Score NCE	69.9	72.3	68.7
Number in Group	47	33	33
% of Students Tested	100	100	100
Hispanic/Latino Students	<9	<9	<9

<b>Grade 6</b>	March 2006	March 2005	March 2004
Reading National Mean Score NCE	65.0	67.3	68.4
Math National Mean Score NCE	70.1	74.7	73.5
Number in Group	44	46	32
% of Students Tested	100	100	100
Hispanic/Latino Students	<9	<9	<9

<b>Grade 5</b>	March 2006	March 2005	March 2004
Reading National Mean Score NCE	74.5	73.0	73.3
Math National Mean Score NCE	70.5	72.1	72.7
Number in Group	51	37	48
% of Students Tested	100	100	100
Hispanic/Latino Students	<9	<9	<9

<b>Grade 4</b>	March 2006	March 2005	March 2004
Reading National Mean Score NCE	69.5	72.8	69.3
Math National Mean Score NCE	68.0	69.1	67.9
Number in Group	42	49	37
% of Students Tested	100	100	100
Hispanic/Latino Students	<9	<9	<9

<b>Grade 3</b>	March 2006	March 2005	March 2004
Reading National Mean Score NCE	64.5	64.9	70.6
Math National Mean Score NCE	63.1	64.2	70.6
Number in Group	46	38	48
% of Students Tested	100	100	100
Hispanic/Latino Students	<9	<9	<9

In each grade, students who have Individualized Education Plans took the test with required accommodations, but are not reported in the Terra Nova group score.