

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2009 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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Type of School: (Check all that apply)  Elementary  Middle  High  K-12  (Pre-K-8)  
 Charter  Title I  Magnet  Choice

Name of Principal: Mrs. Janet Cantwell

Official School Name: St. Mary's School

School Mailing Address:  
400 Green Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314-4320

County: Alexandria City State School Code Number\*:

Telephone: (703) 549-1646 Fax: (703) 519-0840

Web site/URL: www.stmarys-alexva.org E-mail: mscheessele@stmarys-alexva.org

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Superintendent\*: Sister Bernadette McManigal, B.V.M.

District Name: Diocese of Arlington, Virginia Tel: (703) 841-2519

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

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

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: N/A N/A

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), 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.*

Original signed cover sheet only should be mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as USPS Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, NCLB-Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, US Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

## PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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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 one or more of 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.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2008-2009 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2003.
6. The nominated school has not received the No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, or 2008.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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)

Does not apply to private schools

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

4 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	21	17	38	7	33	31	64
K	33	37	70	8	34	36	70
1	43	33	76	9			0
2	30	47	77	10			0
3	36	43	79	11			0
4	41	36	77	12			0
5	39	39	78	Other			0
6	30	45	75				
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL</b>							704

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native  
1 % Asian  
1 % Black or African American  
4 % Hispanic or Latino  
1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
89 % White  
3 % Two or more races  
100 % **Total**

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting 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.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 1 %

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

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	2
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	4
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	6
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	683
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.009
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	0.878

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: 1 %

Total number limited English proficient 7

Number of languages represented: 1

Specify languages:

Spanish

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

Total number students who qualify: 0

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 free and reduced-price school meals 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: 9 %

Total Number of Students Served: 60

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>0</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>31</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>14</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>12</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>2</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

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>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>36</u>	<u>2</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>7</u>	<u>3</u>
Support staff	<u>13</u>	<u>6</u>
Total number	<u>62</u>	<u>11</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 19 :1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any attendance rates under 95%, teacher turnover rates over 12%, or student dropout rates over 5%.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	96%	97%
Daily teacher attendance	95%	95%	97%	95%	95%
Teacher turnover rate	17%	19%	17%	14%	19%
Student dropout rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Please provide all explanations below.

St. Mary's turnover rate reflects the fact that many of the teachers' families serve in the military or are employed by the government such as the State Department, Congress, and aides to the Executive Branch.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools).

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2008 are doing as of the Fall 2008.

Graduating class size	<u>0</u>	
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	<u>0</u>	%
Enrolled in a community college	<u>0</u>	%
Enrolled in vocational training	<u>0</u>	%
Found employment	<u>0</u>	%
Military service	<u>0</u>	%
Other (travel, staying home, etc.)	<u>0</u>	%
Unknown	<u>0</u>	%
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>100</u></b>	<b>%</b>

## PART III - SUMMARY

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St. Mary's School, founded in 1868, serves the parishioners of St. Mary's Parish, the oldest Catholic parish in Virginia. The church was founded in 1795, served by priests from Maryland and later by Jesuits who came to teach at Georgetown College. The Reverend Peter Kroes, S.J., who became pastor in 1857, invited the Sisters of the Holy Cross to come to Alexandria to staff a five classroom school which had been built on the corner of Wolfe and Royal Streets. Eighty years later, the school moved to its present site on Green Street. St. Mary's current campus of two buildings supports a morning and afternoon pre-kindergarten class as well as three classes for each grade kindergarten through eighth.

Working together as a community, St. Mary's serves over seven hundred children from four hundred and forty-three families in Alexandria and the surrounding area. Most of the students attend St. Mary's from pre-kindergarten through eighth grade and, then, continue their Catholic education at such high schools as Bishop Ireton, Gonzaga, and Visitation. Many of the students' parents and grandparents also attended St. Mary's School.

St. Mary's greatest strengths are its students and the supportive community that nurtures these students. St. Mary's mission is to bring children closer to God so that they may know Him, serve Him, and love Him. Faculty and staff foster a safe, faith-filled environment where children are challenged to develop their God-given gifts and become lifelong learners. Enkindled by the Gospel message and alive with the enthusiasm of youth, the students look beyond their immediate faith community and seek to bring their blessings to Alexandria, the country, and the world. For example, students organized a Car Wash for Life to benefit the Paul Stefan Home for Expectant Mothers. They organized a Help the Homeless Walk and a soccer equipment drive to benefit those who are less fortunate here and in El Salvador. Many students volunteer at the Paul Springs Retirement Home and make regular visits to senior citizens.

Students also have time to enjoy one another through a variety of extracurricular activities. For example, parents and teachers sponsor CYO sports programs, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Student Council, and the Lego League. Students can also participate in Choir, Band, Battle of the Books, Math-letes, the Geography Bee, and the Spelling Bee.

The parent community, as members of the Home and School Association (HSA), supports St. Mary's School both financially and through volunteer work. Their generous volunteer support assures the close collaboration of families with St. Mary's. Through the Families-In-Service program, the students often see their parents volunteering during the day in the school setting.

The administration works closely with the pastor, and together, they oversee and promote the spiritual and academic life of the school. The pastor further calls upon the larger parish community to help renew and support the school's Catholic formation of faith and values. He and two other priests commit countless hours making classroom visits. Mass is celebrated every Friday throughout the school year, and the priests become familiar faces to the entire school community.

With the encouragement of the administrators and the financial assistance of the Home and School Association, the faculty pursues additional education and professional development opportunities. Setting an example of lifelong learning, teachers implement their new knowledge in the classroom. The administrators share leadership responsibilities as they build confidence and develop teacher leaders. The guidance counselor, school nurse, and the Learning Center staff use their expertise to help teachers and parents provide the best possible education for all students.

For 140 years, St. Mary's School has excelled in its consistent academic tradition that prepares students, the community's greatest hope and strength, for the world beyond the schoolyard. Together, community members teach the students who have been entrusted to the care of St. Mary's School so that they can become the persons they were created to be.

## PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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### 1. Assessment Results:

St. Mary's School administers annually the TerraNova Achievement Test, second edition, published by CTB/McGraw-Hill in order to assess student progress and continually enhance instruction. The TerraNova is a nationally normed test that assesses students in various subject areas including math, reading, language arts, science, and social studies. It is administered to students at St. Mary's in the 2nd through 7th grades. Prior to the 2004-2005 school year, this test was administered in September. Since that time, in conformity with the Diocese of Arlington, this test has been administered in the spring so student achievement can be better gauged for the following year.

The TerraNova provides both norm-referenced and criterion-referenced scores. The norm referenced scores, including national percentile rankings, allow St. Mary's students and classes to be compared with a nationally normed group of students. The criterion referenced scores assess student mastery of individual skills. These scores help the faculty of St. Mary's understand the instructional needs of the students and evaluate the success of curricula and instructional strategies.

The National Percentiles of the Mean NCE (Normal Curve Equivalent) recorded in the data tables in part VII of this report are a strong testament to the outstanding work and dedication of St. Mary's teachers, students and administrators. For the 2007-2008 school year, all but one score reported for math and reading in the 2nd through 7th grades exceeded the 85th percentile, and half of the scores matched or exceeded the 90th percentile. In addition, from the 2003-04 school year to the 2007-08 school year, the percentile rank rose for every grade 2nd through 6th. Seventh grade attained a percentile ranking of 87 in math and 86 in reading. Although this is a few percentage points lower than the 7th grade scores of previous years and St. Mary's always aims for growth, the difference in the scores is minimal, and it is clear that 7th grade is continually reaching a very high degree of achievement. In addition, this same class in sixth grade achieved the same National Percentiles of the Mean NCE (87 in math and 86 in reading), showing that they are making expected growth from year to year and maintaining a high degree of success.

For 3rd grade through 7th grade, a cut-off score was posted by the U.S. Department of Education to indicate rankings in the 90th percentile of National School Norms. A comparison between these cut-off scores and St. Mary's scores shows that St. Mary's easily meets the criteria for ranking within the 90th percentile in both math and reading for grades 3rd through 7th on 11 out of 12 scores. These 11 scores all exceeded the cut-off score by over 10 points. For instance, the cut-off score for 5th grade for both reading and math is a percentile rank of 74. St. Mary's 5th grade students achieved a percentile rank of 87 for reading and 91 for math. This year the 3rd grade NP of the Mean NCE fell just one percentage point below the "cut-off" score. The third grade maintains a strong instructional program in mathematics as evidenced by the national percentiles of previous years. St. Mary's believes that this small drop may be related to one third grade teacher leaving mid-year due to family reasons. It may also be an issue of pacing and aligning instruction. Thus, St. Mary's is beginning to create curriculum maps for mathematics instruction. The expectation is that the maps will allow the faculty to align their instruction more closely with the assessments. St. Mary's is confident that this will, in turn, restore 3rd grade's historically high scores.

The National Percentiles of the Mean NCE reported in the data tables of part VII include all students at those grade levels. St. Mary's is committed to serving all students regardless of individual disabilities and educational needs. All of St. Mary's students with learning disabilities or other challenges are administered the TerraNova, and all of their test scores are included with those of the school.

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

St. Mary's guidance counselor organizes the testing process, and the teachers administer the Terra Nova Tests in April to all students in grades two through seven. Using test results, the faculty members participate in the Diocese of Arlington Terra Nova Hand-Off Process. Homeroom teachers prepare a document identifying students whose scores show partial or non-mastery of skills in each tested area. This process reveals the individual needs of students. After reviewing the data and the diocesan curriculum standards, the teachers also identify the instructional strategies they used to teach each subject.

Once the current teachers identify their strategies, they discuss the results with the teachers in the next grade level and hand-off the written report. This process encourages discussion of strategies that were most beneficial for student learning. The teachers in the next grade level then identify instructional strategies they will employ to improve and sustain student learning. This process allows for vertical as well as horizontal continuity and consistency.

All teachers in grades two through eight identify three skill areas to which they will give particular focus for the up-coming school year. With the approval of the administrators, teachers write a Plan For Instruction as to how they will address these skill areas in their classrooms. Throughout the year, teachers are expected to evaluate their progress for these plans.

St. Mary's School has begun the initial stages of curriculum mapping. Curriculum mapping is data-driven and will eventually aid teachers in organizing their lessons and activities around essential learning objectives which will lead to improved student learning. For example, the testing results indicated that students could benefit from more writing opportunities. St. Mary's principal set up a task force, headed by the reading resource specialist, to address writing across the curriculum.

Students who would benefit from participating in the Johns Hopkins Summer Gifted and Talented Program are identified by Terra Nova data. Each year several students participate in this program.

In addition to the Terra Nova Tests, teachers and Learning Center staff administer the Early Prevention of School Failure assessment. Individual student data collected from this process is sent home to assist parents in preparing their children for kindergarten. The Metropolitan Readiness test is administered at the end of kindergarten for similar purposes. Next year, St. Mary's will use PALS to assess kindergarteners.

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

Academic success that leads to lifelong learning and service is the mission of St. Mary's School. The faculty members support parents as their children's primary educators and challenge the students to do their best. The administration and faculty employ a variety of methods to communicate student performance to members of the school community.

Teachers keep students and parents abreast of academic performance through personal notes, Friday Folders, mid-term reports, report cards, and parent-teacher conferences. To show how proud they are of student performance, teachers display student work in classrooms and hallways. Student projects are displayed in community areas of the school for everyone to see. Student and extracurricular club accomplishments are announced over the public address system and are written up in the weekly school and classroom newsletters.

Awards such as the sixth grade Bern E. Hynes Scholarship and the eighth grade academic achievement awards recognize excellence in academic performance. The National Junior Honor Society acknowledges students who excel in character and service as well as academics. Each quarter, students receive recognition

for achieving First and Second Honors. The honor roll is published in the school's weekly newsletter at the end of each quarter. Likewise, students are recognized for academic improvement. Each quarter, students who improve their scores by ten points receive an academic achievement award. In addition to reflecting academic achievement, the report cards also emphasize student effort.

Regarding Terra Nova Test results, St. Mary's School uses the Home Report provided by the testing service to communicate individual student performance. Parents are encouraged to share the results with their children and discuss the reports with teachers. Through the weekly newsletter, and Home and School Association meetings, the administration informs the parents that the testing results are used to guide classroom lessons in order to enhance student learning. The administration provides in-services to educate the faculty on how to read and use the data to support their curricular efforts.

#### **4. Sharing Success:**

St. Mary's teachers are active participants in the Diocese of Arlington. Teachers frequently serve on diocesan curriculum and textbook review committees. During these committee meetings, there are opportunities to share curriculum-related activities and successful teaching practices. Faculty members participate in annual diocesan break-out sessions, one in the fall and one in the spring. Teachers gather to discuss current diocesan initiatives and share and collect lesson plans, student activities, and resources that benefit student learning. St. Mary's teachers have attended the Arlington Academy since its inception two years ago. Attendees have shared lessons and gained information on differentiated instruction, peer teaching and coaching, assessment, leadership, and curriculum mapping. In addition, teachers interact with educators across the country through their graduate studies programs and attendance at national conferences and workshops.

St. Mary's teachers have led workshops at the annual Diocesan Institute. For example, the junior high math teacher attended the 2002 Summer Institute for Middle School Math Teachers sponsored by the National Security Agency. As a result of that experience, she presented a workshop at the Fall 2002 Diocesan Institute titled, "The Changing Face of America: Who Are We?"

In addition to serving students with occupational therapy needs, our licensed occupational therapist consults with other diocesan schools as well as schools in the Archdiocese of Washington. She presents workshops regarding the occupational therapist's role in an elementary school setting. In 2007, she hosted a diocesan workshop on "Fine Motor and Writing Readiness."

In 2007, St. Mary's began the initial stages of curriculum mapping. Curriculum mapping is a global opportunity to share and learn about best teaching practices, student activities, resources, and projects. St. Mary's is committed to becoming a global educational leader.

Recently, a sixth grade teacher presented information she gained from her curriculum mapping training to other diocesan instructors. The principal and assistant principal serve as members on the diocesan and local curriculum mapping teams. Teachers, such as the music teacher and occupational therapist, also mentor and guide other educators in the diocese. St. Mary's administrators, faculty, and staff see the benefit of interacting with other schools and will continue to share their insights and experiences as well as actively learn from others.

## PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Curriculum:

St. Mary's School educates the whole person – spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually – so all persons can effectively spread the Good News of Jesus Christ to the people they meet each day. The guidelines of the Diocese of Arlington, which are aligned with state and national standards, promote the development of students. Highly qualified teachers present a challenging curriculum to help their students reach beyond their current abilities. Ultimately, the goal of Catholic education is to encourage individuals to reflect Christ in the world and to become lifelong learners.

Religion instruction is multi-faceted. Through student and teacher interaction, students realize how to integrate the truths they are taught into their daily lives. Students begin and end the day with prayer. They attend weekly liturgy and participate in programs such as the Corporal Works of Mercy, the Adoration Club, and Girls' and Boys' clubs – a junior high initiative to promote the dignity and self-respect of young women and men. Students also participate in a number of outreach programs which reflect Catholic social justice teaching. In addition, the clergy supplement formal instruction by visiting each classroom on a regular basis.

Reading/LA: St. Mary's recognizes the importance of creating a firm foundation in the language arts and has implemented a sound, interdisciplinary language arts program throughout all the grades. The reading program is uniquely embedded within a larger language arts program with emphasis on the four areas of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Teachers use a variety of instructional materials and strategies, as well as differentiated small groups based on interest, readiness, and learning styles, to meet the needs of all students and provide for a well-rounded literacy education.

Library classes reinforce an appreciation for literature through book discussions and promotions. Instruction supports writing and research by immersing students in library procedures, including how to locate resource materials.

Mathematics enables pre-kindergarten through 8th grade students to understand numbers and operations, patterns, relations and functions, two- and three-dimensional shapes, data analysis and probability, and systems of measurement. Students are challenged to apply and adapt problem-solving strategies.

St. Mary's Science program encourages students to use scientific inquiry to learn about the worlds of life science, physical science, and earth science. Students work with lab materials and equipment, and hands-on activities are integrated into the lessons to help develop thinking skills and problem solving strategies.

The Social Studies program encourages students to view the country as part of the world community and to develop a global perspective. Field trips, projects, and discussions enable students to do this. Through the appreciation of geography, history, and culture, the students will develop an understanding of and a respect for all God's people.

Spanish is introduced in kindergarten, while students in first through sixth grades receive instruction twice a week. Junior High students have Spanish class every day. Teachers prepare students for academic success in high school Spanish courses as well as helping them recognize the value of knowing a second language in today's world. Students are immersed in Spanish as they converse and make presentations in class.

Art class encourages students to reach their full potential by making, viewing, discussing, and learning about art in cultural, social, and historical contexts. The curriculum stimulates each child to think creatively, plan, attempt, evaluate, and choose work using a variety of media, tools, and technologies.

The Technology curriculum strengthens the skills students need to access, interpret, and synthesize constantly changing information. As an educational tool, technology supports independent learning as students acquire critical thinking skills, creativity, productivity, and self-confidence.

Music allows students to grow intellectually by reading and writing music, socially through participation in ensembles, physically through movement, emotionally through the development of self-confidence gained in performance, and spiritually through the liturgy. Students participate in choir, band, and various concerts and musical productions.

PE reinforces values that promote life-long physical and spiritual fitness. Students attend classes twice in a six day cycle. Instructors emphasize motor skill development, agility, fitness, team play, and good sportsmanship. Students participate in the President's Physical Fitness Program as well as extracurricular sports programs.

## **2a. (Elementary Schools) Reading:**

St. Mary's reading program uses a multifaceted approach to reading in order to meet the unique needs of all students. The basal reading series integrates many different aspects of literacy in order to give students a well-rounded education in language arts. In addition, St. Mary's is increasingly employing a 'guided reading' model of instruction which uses leveled text to support readers at various levels of reading achievement while providing the same access to vocabulary and content for all students. The teachers at St. Mary's also recognize the unique advantage of using authentic literature in the classroom to maintain interest and teach academic concepts while exposing the children to complex ideas and diverse cultures. Authentic literature also gives teachers the opportunity to emphasize Christian values and offers students the opportunity to strengthen their character by assessing and thinking through the moral dilemmas of the characters.

During reading instruction, St. Mary's employs a combination of whole group instruction, instruction in small fluid groups, and one-on-one assistance as needed. This allows teachers to use a performance model of reading assessment and use assessment data to create targeted instruction. It also allows teachers to easily address what the National Reading Panel identified as the five core areas of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Critical thinking skills and problem solving skills are emphasized throughout literacy instruction.

St. Mary's philosophy includes reading as part of the framework of integrated literacy instruction. St. Mary's operates with the belief that the different skills related to literacy should not be taught in isolation, but rather, students should understand the interdependence of all literacy skills in reading and writing. St. Mary's also realizes that these foundational skills should not be taught in isolation from other content area subjects. Teachers are encouraged to integrate these literacy skills with other academic subjects in order to support students in transferring these skills and using them in all academic areas. Teachers of various subjects therefore work as a team to support well-rounded literacy for all students.

## **2b. (Secondary Schools) English:**

### **3. Additional Curriculum Area:**

The Saint Mary's science program is built on the belief that God has planted within human nature the desire to know and understand, to learn and explore, and to seek the answers to questions about the world around us. St. Mary's science program encourages the students to use scientific inquiry to learn about the worlds of life science, physical science, and earth science. Teachers develop lesson plans that encourage students to work cooperatively in small groups. Each science student learns how to classify objects based on similar characteristics, to observe using the senses, to predict outcomes, and to summarize information. Students are taught the importance of the correct use of science equipment and of safety in science class.

The science program at Saint Mary's helps to develop students who use a variety of problem solving strategies to learn about their world. The science program uses hands-on activities and technology to present lessons that encourage the students to carry out the scientific method and to use higher level thinking skills to form hypotheses and conclusions. For example, the sixth grade science teacher appeals to students' individual learning styles through her use of the Challenger Center program to teach space exploration, where students perform hands-on experiments similar to those performed by astronauts in space. Students at all grade levels carry out experiments, make observations, and gather data.

Laptop computers in the junior high connect students to the internet to find relevant information, to write reports, and to make classroom presentations. In the lower grades, students access information from the library and the school computer lab to research various topics.

The addition of the Activboard to the science classroom has brought new and exciting lessons to the science curriculum. In the junior high, students are guided through computer labs that demonstrate how bacteria cultures are grown and how DNA replicates. Websites from numerous scientific organizations are used to demonstrate the concepts being taught using the most current visual and numerical data.

### **4. Instructional Methods:**

St. Mary's School provides a strong foundation of academic instruction from the pre-K through eighth grade. Teachers place an emphasis on recognizing the varying learning styles and developmental levels of the students. For example, to best meet the needs of students in the early grades, St. Mary's provides instructional assistants in the Pre-K classes through first grade to help the classroom teachers differentiate instruction and meet the individual needs of each of their students. The sixth and seventh grade math teachers divide seventh graders into four math levels from general math through the pre-algebra level. These students take a final at

the end of their seventh grade school year and, based on those results, are divided into four math levels for their final eighth grade instruction. This differentiation allows for small groups of students and greater individualization.

St. Mary's recognizes the importance of integrating the language arts with the other academic disciplines. Spelling and vocabulary are often taught through the science, religion, or social studies curriculum. Writing skills are fostered across subjects, and math skills are no longer just confined to the math curriculum.

The entire school is wired for the internet, and most of the classrooms have Activboards which enhance learning and motivate students through the use of the worldwide web. Each teacher has a web page that provides parents and students with links to review homework and test information and to further pursue educational avenues. Parents and teachers regularly interact through email with questions, comments, and support. This additional technology increases the ability to communicate quickly and effectively within and outside the school community.

St. Mary's is able to academically support students with mild to moderate learning disabilities through our Learning Center. The Learning Center staff, comprised of a guidance counselor, learning resource specialist, reading specialist, and occupational therapist, works directly in the classroom, consults with classroom teachers and parents on a regular basis, and provides a mix of programs which may include tutorial, in-class assistance, extended time testing, fine motor skill development, and organizational strategies.

Together, teachers and staff recognize the obligation to provide for the needs of each student. St. Mary's continuously explores strategies to meet this obligation.

## **5. Professional Development:**

St. Mary's School is blessed with a thriving professional development program that offers opportunities on a continuous basis from various venues.

Within the school, frequent emails and updates at meetings notify faculty of courses pertaining to religious and academic certification, technology updates, and a variety of related areas of study. St. Mary's has provided the faculty with an annual spiritual retreat and in-services on relevant topics such as faithful citizenship and the temperaments from a Catholic perspective. Examples of other training within the school include: CPR, bullying, Brain Gym, Handwriting without Tears, curriculum mapping, assessment and effective strategies for school improvement, and special needs. Faculty members are trained in Grade Quick, St. Mary's assessment and record keeping computer program, and EDLINE, the web page and homework internet site. Faculty also have access to a complete technology curriculum on the intranet.

St. Mary's has used outside resources to improve programs also. The Marymount E2E grant for technology was used to create a website for the social studies program. The Confraternity of Mary provided a grant to evaluate and make recommendations on the effectiveness of the Learning Center.

The Diocese of Arlington provides events such as the annual Diocesan Educational Institute. It offers motivational keynote speakers such as Ron Clark and Harry Wong, various religious-based sessions, and vendors with relevant items for sale. Days are also set aside for education in diocesan initiatives such as Curriculum Mapping, Terra Nova hand-off, and data disaggregation.

Understanding that trained, motivated teachers provide the key to their children's success, the parent organization at St. Mary's is a major contributor to professional development. The Faculty Enrichment Program receives its primary income from the annual Golf Tournament fundraiser. The money raised at this event is specifically earmarked for teacher training in such areas as curriculum mapping, differentiated instruction, and approved coursework to encourage teachers to earn an advanced degree. It also provides for attendance at national professional conferences.

Ultimately, the goal of professional development is to increase student success. The professional development opportunities at St. Mary's provide teachers with skills and instructional strategies that offer opportunities for collaboration and allow for effective instruction. Training assists teachers with aligning curriculum and assessment and promotes optimum student engagement and learning.

## **6. School Leadership:**

St. Mary's School is led by a full-time principal and assistant principal who work closely with the parish pastor. The administrators act under the guidance of the Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Arlington, Virginia, who serves under the direction of the Bishop of the diocese.

The principal and assistant principal work alongside the faculty and staff to provide leadership focused on creating an academic atmosphere that promotes the dignity of community members and challenges students and faculty alike to achieve their potential.

St. Mary's administrators encourage faculty and staff members to view their positions as roles of leadership. They provide teachers opportunities to share in leadership positions and accept responsibilities beyond their normal classroom duties. For example, teachers serve as team leaders, acting as liaisons between the administrators and their grade level partners. Team leaders provide an efficient way for administrators and teachers to communicate information related to school policies and concerns regarding student learning. Another example of shared leadership and responsibility is the new teacher mentoring program. The assistant principal works with veteran teachers to help new teachers adjust to the school and embrace its mission, ensuring consistent and quality teaching within the school.

The principal and assistant principal also provide and support professional development opportunities. St. Mary's School is actively participating in the diocesan curriculum mapping initiative. St. Mary's principal serves as a member of the diocesan mapping team. She supports the training of all faculty members, especially three teachers and the assistant principal who serve as members of the local mapping team. She established a council who works with the local cabinet members in order to lead other teachers as they begin mapping.

St. Mary's principal encourages teachers to attend seminars and conferences and share what they learn with their colleagues. A recent example of this is a differentiated instruction conference attended by the seventh grade math teacher and the sixth grade language arts teacher. They have incorporated what they learned into their lessons and are willing to share their experiences with others.

St. Mary's administrators have reached out to the parent community by establishing a series of lectures that help parents provide the best possible education and life for their children. Recent examples include a lecture on the high school application process, discipline, and motivating children.

## PART VI - PRIVATE SCHOOL ADDENDUM

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1. Private school association: Catholic
2. Does the school have nonprofit, tax exempt (501(c)(3)) status? Yes  No
3. What are the 2007-2008 tuition rates, by grade? (Do not include room, board, or fees.)

<u>\$4600</u>	<u>\$4600</u>	<u>\$4600</u>	<u>\$4600</u>	<u>\$4600</u>	<u>\$4600</u>
K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
<u>\$4600</u>	<u>\$4600</u>	<u>\$4600</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>
6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th
<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>				
12th	Other				

4. What is the educational cost per student? \$ 5500 (School budget divided by enrollment)
5. What is the average financial aid per student? \$ 1500
6. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?  
1 %
7. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction?  
13 %

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

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## ASSESSMENTS REFERENCED AGAINST NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Mathematics                      Grade: 2    Test: Terra Nova  
 Edition/Publication Year: 1997    Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill  
 Scores are reported here as: NCEs

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Sep
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	89	84	86	78	78
Number of students tested	76	72	77	73	74
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Scores are based on the National Percentile (NP) of the Mean Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE). No students are excluded from the test.

Subject: Reading

Grade: 2 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: 1997/2nd edition Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill

Scores are reported here as: NCEs

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Sep
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	91	88	91	86	85
Number of students tested	76	72	77	73	74
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics                      Grade: 3    Test: Terra Nova  
Edition/Publication Year: 1997    Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill  
Scores are reported here as: NCEs

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Sep
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	74	81	87	79	72
Number of students tested	70	72	72	75	73
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Subject: Reading                      Grade: 3   Test: Terra Nova  
Edition/Publication Year: 1997   Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill  
Scores are reported here as: NCEs

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Sep
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	91	89	92	89	85
Number of students tested	70	72	72	75	73
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics                      Grade: 4    Test: Terra Nova  
Edition/Publication Year: 1997    Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill  
Scores are reported here as: NCEs

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	91	88	92	92	77
Number of students tested	73	74	71	73	71
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Subject: Reading                      Grade: 4   Test: Terra Nova  
Edition/Publication Year: 1997   Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill  
Scores are reported here as: NCEs

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Sep
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	87	88	90	89	82
Number of students tested	73	74	71	73	71
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics                      Grade: 5    Test: Terra Nova  
Edition/Publication Year: 1997    Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill  
Scores are reported here as: NCEs

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Sep
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	91	90	90	91	85
Number of students tested	70	70	73	71	71
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Subject: Reading                      Grade: 5   Test: Terra Nova  
Edition/Publication Year: 1997   Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill  
Scores are reported here as: NCEs

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Sep
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	87	88	85	85	83
Number of students tested	70	70	73	71	71
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics      Grade: 6    Test: Terra Nova  
Edition/Publication Year: 1    Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill  
Scores are reported here as: NCEs

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Sep
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	91	87	88	90	87
Number of students tested	66	72	66	75	70
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Subject: Reading                      Grade: 6   Test: Terra Nova  
Edition/Publication Year: 1997   Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill  
Scores are reported here as: NCEs

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing month	Apr	May	Apr	Apr	Sep
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	90	86	85	87	87
Number of students tested	66	72	66	75	70
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics                      Grade: 7    Test: Terra Nova  
Edition/Publication Year: 1997    Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill  
Scores are reported here as: NCEs

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	87	89	90	88	90
Number of students tested	72	67	75	73	59
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Subject: Reading                      Grade: 7   Test: Terra Nova  
Edition/Publication Year: 1997   Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill  
Scores are reported here as: NCEs

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Sep
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	86	88	91	89	88
Number of students tested	72	67	75	73	59
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. (specify group)</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

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