

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2010 - Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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Type of School: (Check all that apply)     Charter  Title I  Magnet  Choice

Name of Principal: Mr. Vincent Procopio

Official School Name: Poland Seminary High School

School Mailing Address:  
3199 Dobbins Road  
Poland, OH 44514-2327

County: Mahoning    State School Code Number\*: IRN 030452

Telephone: (330) 757-7018    Fax: (330) 757-2305

Web site/URL: polandbulldogs.com    E-mail: vprocopio@polandschools.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.

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

Name of Superintendent\*: Dr. Robert Zorn

District Name: Poland Local School District    Tel: (330) 757-7000

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.

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

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. David Bennett

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.

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

*\*Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*  
The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. 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 2009-2010 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 Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 or 2009.
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

All data are the most recent year available.

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

1. Number of schools in the district: (per district designation)
- |          |                                   |
|----------|-----------------------------------|
| 4        | Elementary schools (includes K-8) |
| 1        | Middle/Junior high schools        |
| 1        | High schools                      |
| 0        | K-12 schools                      |
| <b>6</b> | <b>TOTAL</b>                      |

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 8400

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools)

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

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

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

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			0	<b>6</b>			0
<b>K</b>			0	<b>7</b>			0
<b>1</b>			0	<b>8</b>			0
<b>2</b>			0	<b>9</b>	98	115	213
<b>3</b>			0	<b>10</b>	98	91	189
<b>4</b>			0	<b>11</b>	94	90	184
<b>5</b>			0	<b>12</b>	99	113	212
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL</b>							798

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native  
1 % Asian  
1 % Black or African American  
2 % Hispanic or Latino  
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
95 % White  
1 % 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: 2 %

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.	9
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	9
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	18
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	820
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.022
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	2.195

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: 0 %

Total number limited English proficient 1

Number of languages represented: 1

Specify languages:

CHINESE

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 12 %

Total number students who qualify: 94

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: 7 %

Total Number of Students Served: 55

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>8</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>2</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>32</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>5</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>3</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>4</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</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>3</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>46</u>	<u>2</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>
Support staff	<u>14</u>	<u>7</u>
Total number	<u>71</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 18 :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%.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Daily student attendance	97%	95%	96%	97%	96%
Daily teacher attendance	96%	95%	95%	95%	96%
Teacher turnover rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Student dropout rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Please provide all explanations below.

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

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2009 are doing as of the Fall 2009.

Graduating class size	<u>220</u>	
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	<u>87</u>	%
Enrolled in a community college	<u>0</u>	%
Enrolled in vocational training	<u>2</u>	%
Found employment	<u>2</u>	%
Military service	<u>2</u>	%
Other (travel, staying home, etc.)	<u>4</u>	%
Unknown	<u>3</u>	%
<b>Total</b>	<u><b>100</b></u>	<b>%</b>

## PART III - SUMMARY

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The primary goal of Poland Seminary High School is to develop the academic, intellectual, emotional, physical and social potential of its students. The administration, faculty and staff are committed to creating an educational atmosphere in which all students are encouraged to achieve their potential, with the reinforcement from their home and the community. Inspired by the motivated students who enter our classrooms every day, our staff is not only committed to the education of our students, but each is individually committed to his/her own lifelong education and in many cases the practice of his/her field. This commitment illustrates to students the potential to develop their capabilities, knowledge, creativity and positive self-concept. Our academic and extracurricular programs are designed to prepare our youth to be participating, self-supporting members of a democratic society.

By teaching students to discuss critically, to think rationally and solve problems logically and creatively, the school best equips students to understand and react to a changing world. The curricula is constantly reviewed and, where necessary, modified by a staff mindful of social, political, cultural, economic, environmental, and technological changes in the community and the world. This process communicates to students the necessity of adaptation and flexibility. Ultimately, Poland Seminary High School prepares students to understand and appreciate the complex environment and dynamic, competitive society in which they will function. The culmination of this preparation equips them to participate in and enjoy a fulfilling life in our American society and in the international community. Each and every student is pushed to do his/her best, and each student, no matter the learning level, is expected to challenge him/herself. In turn, our teachers are committed to teaching challenging materials (Shakespeare, human anatomy, chemistry, theoretical mathematics, etc) at all levels, changing the pedagogy to fit the learner.

As part of a culture that looks beyond the walls of the school itself, Poland Seminary students have high expectations for themselves, their teachers, and all supporting partners in the academic community to properly prepare them for excellence. Poland students are consistently nominated for National Merit Scholar consideration, including six finalists in the past five years. We have established traditions for our Advanced Placement classes, offered in English Language and Literature, Biology, US History, and our Advanced Chemistry course, granting university credit in-house due to a partnership with Youngstown State University. In the 2008/2009 school year, twenty-two students took advantage of the post-secondary enrollment options through Youngstown State University and Kent State University while thirty-four earned credit through our Advanced Chemistry course. Thirteen percent of our current Seniors are enrolled in AP courses and will take the AP exams for those courses. Poland students also look forward to becoming a part of Poland's long standing and award winning tradition in the arts, whether visual or performing, and state recognized athletic teams. These academic, artistic, and athletic successes have only helped our staff raise the standards of excellence for all of our students and in all aspects of development.

Positive relationships among all facets of the community, the students, the teachers, the administrators and the parents are nurtured by the school. Compatibility, mutual understanding and assistance from all relationships help students to form positive images of themselves in relation to their peers, families, and the community while inspiring them to look to the future. Furthermore, the school's ability to work with a generous community that is sincerely interested in the education of its youth has been a strength and tradition on which our students depend. They are motivated by rewards that last year totaled \$2,433,988 in scholarships (\$45,650 from locally funded scholarship programs). Poland is motivated to keep these traditions alive and well.

## PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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### 1. **Assessment Results:**

Ohio uses The Ohio Graduation Test to assess sophomores in five areas: Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. The tests in each subject area are aligned with the Ohio Academic Content Standards. The Ohio Graduation Tests (OGT) superseded the Ninth-Grade Proficiency Tests as a high school graduation requirement for the classes of 2007 and beyond. The tests were developed in compliance with the requirements of Ohio Senate Bill 1, Ohio House Bill 3, and the Federal *No Child Left Behind* Act. The performance standards for the OGT were adopted by the Ohio Board of Education based on the recommendations of Ohio educators, parents and community members. The standards for the reading and mathematics tests were set after the March 2004 administration, and the standards for the remaining tests were set after the March 2005 administration. Consistent standards for later forms of the tests are maintained through a statistical process. Students must demonstrate performance at the proficient level or above (scaled score  $\geq 400$ ) in all five subject areas to meet state graduation requirements. Students may also meet graduation requirements by achieving a proficient score on four of the five tests and meeting a series of alternative criteria. The State and Local Report Card show the performance of districts and schools using four separate measures. The combination of the four measures described below is the basis for assigning state designations to each district, school building and community school. The six designations are Excellent with Distinction, Excellent, Effective, Continuous Improvement, Academic Watch and Academic Emergency. Students raw scores are categorized into five sub-categories: Advanced, Accelerated, Proficient, Basic, and Limited. Within these sub-categories, the majority of major clusters raw scores for Poland High School sophomores fall within the accelerated and advanced range. A reader not intimately familiar with the test scores and results should note that not only are we as a district meeting proficient levels, we are consistently scoring above the proficient level. The data suggests that the curriculum and instruction are meeting the standards. It is also important to note that scores falling within the limited sub-category are typically less than one percent. Over the past five years, Poland's percentages roughly fell within these ranges for each category: Advanced 35 - 40%, Accelerated 35 - 40%, Proficient 20 - 25%, Basic 0 - 3%, and Limited <1%. Poland High School's mission is to reach every student from every academic and/or socio-economic background, which has served to induce gains in performance within certain sub-categories of students, such as students with disabilities and students from economically disadvantaged environments. Every student is provided intervention and test practice across the curriculum to enhance their standardized test taking knowledge and abilities. For the class of 2009, our average test scores on college admission tests are as follows: ACT 22.8 (state average 21.7, national average 21.1), SAT Critical Reading 564 (state average 534, national average 502), Math 617 (state average 544, national average 515), Writing 556 (state average 521, national average 494). On AP testing, our average scores range between 3.0 and 3.5, allowing students to gain credit at the collegiate level.

Ultimately, the performance level that demonstrates meeting the standard is achieved within the classroom. The curriculum is designed to provide a comprehensive exposure to a particular subject area, and in setting these expectations, the classroom teachers have indirectly set standardized testing goals. Teachers have also implemented released test materials within their individual curricula and classroom activities, and students both indirectly and directly obtain the knowledge base necessary for success. Teachers have also studied the data to discern areas of anticipated difficulty in an effort to emphasize these areas in classroom activities that are both directly and indirectly related to the Ohio Graduation Test.

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

Multiple modifications and enhancements have been implemented based on the results of the assessment. One of the first and possibly the most significant instructional procedure created was the initiation of organized intervention conducted during and/or after school to improve student performance on each assessment area of

the Ohio Graduation Test. Each area, Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies have designated times and locations throughout the building designated for Ohio Graduation Test intervention. The preparation is conducted and monitored by a teacher from the specific subject discipline being addressed.

Our school created pacing guides aligned to the academic content standards and the OGT. We have used the data to reconstruct the timing that particular History classes are offered within the academic track. We were finding that our sophomores, through no fault of their own, were deficient in the knowledge base needed to be proficient within the Social Studies portion of the test. The changes that we have made served to address the delivery of topics in an effort to introduce the material at an earlier junction within their development. Mathematics teachers are also engaged in delivering geometric topics to sophomores who are enrolled in Algebra during the testing period.

We have modified classroom instruction based upon longitudinal analysis of OGT results. Based on previous assessments, classroom activities and instruction now emphasize known and anticipated areas of weakness using released test materials. Teachers were also finding that known areas of difficulty within the classroom were reflecting areas of lower raw scores on the Ohio Graduation Test. Thus, it was advantageous to predetermine areas of anticipated difficulty. For example, students were known to have difficulty in mathematics questioning utilizing short answer assessment. The teachers were then able to address this topic in class, and from the released test materials, able to provide concrete examples of answers that would receive full, partial, and zero credit.

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

Fundamental communication begins with a very open, reciprocal atmosphere created by administration and staff. Staff emails and phone extensions are readily available and utilized. Formal documentation begins with interim reports distributed to parents and/or guardians. Interim reports are fully customized by the teacher to pinpoint specific strengths and weaknesses for each individual student. Records of interim reports that are issued to each student are kept on file and readily available when an inquiry is requested. Quarterly report cards are distributed at the end of each grading period, and the issue dates of these reports are clearly stated in student handbooks and community literature.

We recently implemented an all inclusive online interface ultimately designed to promote a working transparent relationship between teacher and parent/guardian. The program, called *Parent Assistant*, allows the parent to view each class on the student's schedule and each graded assignment associated with that class. This allows the parent to have total disclosure on his/her child's performance and serves to eliminate any ambiguity in communication.

Students and parents are given comprehensive information pertaining to The Ohio Graduation Test at eighth grade orientation. Topics discussed include but are not limited to: structure, timing, online access, availability of testing procedures, and test preparation. After students are tested, parents are provided comprehensive reports on their children's performances on each of the five test subjects.

Our students, families, and community are well-informed, and it bears mentioning that peer-to-peer communication is active and open. Many students seek guidance from their peers and parents. This form of communication is beneficial to our staff, as it can serve to give authentic assessments of what we do, and can aid our staff and administration in both supporting an opinion or belief, as well as dispelling an inaccurate description or opinion of a particular event, procedure, or process

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

Like other schools in our area, Poland's relationship with Youngstown State University and other local institutions of higher education is not only a benefit to our students, but our staff collaborates with teachers

and students in other local districts as well through a number of programs. Poland Seminary High School consistently works in partnership with student-teachers from local colleges and universities, taking a leadership role in preparing professionals who often contribute to other districts. Our English teachers have participated in Ohio WINS, a program for teachers and students to improve the dialogue between the college and K-12 level concerning college-level writing expectations and best-practice. Our Science department collaborates professionally and with students, including the Physics Olympics at Youngstown State. Each of our departments also works closely with our regional Mahoning County Educational Service Center to promote dialogue in best-practice pedagogy, standard alignment, and data analysis, sharing and acquiring ideas with other districts in our valley. Our Advanced Placement teachers attend many AP conferences to better their own practice and share their successes.

Poland Seminary High School is an atmosphere of success, not just a listing of testing statistics. Our staff and students take pride in our challenging atmosphere that embraces the spirit of American competition, continuing the pursuit of excellence while encouraging our neighbors to improve with us. Examples of events Poland Seminary High School hosts, inviting students from other districts, include a speech tournament, solo and ensemble musical competition, Academic Challenge (quiz bowl) matches, and youth athletic tournaments. Such events motivate student programs from all over the Mahoning Valley. Our Student Council opens our doors to a local student-exchange day as we welcome students from other local districts to our halls and classrooms. We also host foreign exchange students at a pace of three a year.

## PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Curriculum:

In addition to the basic core courses, we offer an honors course sequence, college prep course sequence, and career training sequence. Honors or Advanced Placement (AP) courses are offered in most disciplines. Among other electives offered are four Global languages, Oral Interpretation, Graphics and Website Design, Family and Consumer Science, Art, vocal and instrumental music. These provide students the opportunity to pursue interests and skills that extend beyond the basic required standards, and prepare them for a successful transition to postsecondary education, as well as empowering them to develop their capabilities, knowledge, creativity and positive self-concept. Students must earn 21 credits to graduate, and pass all State requirements, including the Ohio Graduation Test (OGT).

Autonomy is permitted within individual classrooms which enables teachers to educate with creativity and instructional freedom. Lecture-discussion, power point, blackboard work, computer generated lessons and drills, laboratory experience, and hands-on inquiry activities are employed in the classroom. Many teachers have websites that outline lessons and provide daily homework assignments to assist absent students in keeping up with their work. These websites are also available to parents.

The diversity of the math curriculum consisting of courses such as Pre Algebra through Advanced Algebra 2, Geometry, Advanced Geometry, Pre-Calculus through AP Calculus meets the needs of students at various levels of learning. Students are empowered to advance to the next course level after successful completion of each course where they continue to problem solve and develop strong deductive and inductive reasoning skills.

The Social Studies curriculum offers World History, U.S. History, Government, Psychology, Economics, Law for Youth and History of Fine Arts. All are aligned with the state standards and teach students how to think critically and analytically. Students also learn how to write persuasively and critically, and through attendance at local government meetings (Village Council, Township, and Board of Education) students gain an understanding of how the government works and are better equipped to become participating members of our society.

The study of Global Language by seventy percent of our high school population enriches and enhances our students' understanding and knowledge of their own native language, increases understanding and tolerance for diversity within a culture, creates an interest in pursuing language at the collegiate level, and has enabled many of our graduates to receive college credit for language proficiency at the college level. Students choose from Latin, Spanish, French, or Italian. Global Language textbooks are selected that provide a strong grammatical foundation which strengthens students' knowledge of their native language. All textbooks are updated on a regular basis and incorporate current strands that are aligned with the Ohio Academic Content standards.

It is the function of our music program to develop musical standards and to impart a basis for value judgments resulting in the encouragement of sensitive musicianship with breadth, depth, and permanence. Students may participate in our instrumental music program or pursue vocal talents through our various choirs. Our music programs provide opportunities for development of the artistically talented student and also make available options for those who will consume and appreciate artistic efforts and productions. We offer participation in Concert Choir, Chamber Choir, Show Choir, and an acappella ensemble. In addition to marching band, students may audition for Concert Band, Symphonic Band, Wind Ensemble and/or Jazz Ensemble.

All divisions in art emphasize not only the fine arts, but also the useful arts. The curriculum is planned to be of general interest and value to all students rather than exclusively for those with special ability. The study of art develops originality, independent thinking, and proficiency in creative problem solving. Students are successfully involved in regional and national art competitions such as Scholastics. They learn art history with their visits to local art museums and the Met in New York City. A diverse art curriculum at Poland Seminary High School creates experiences that ensure student success in art as well as in other classes.

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

(This question is for secondary schools only)

The English curriculum is divided into three ability-based levels. Freshman and sophomore English are divided into honors, college preparatory, and basic English sections. Students may choose their level of study, but only after parental consent is obtained. Junior and senior English consist of advanced placement, college preparatory, and basic English. Advanced Placement (AP) is open to any student who wishes to experience a challenging, in-depth study of American and British Literature. AP students are required to take the national AP examination in their senior year. Scores on this test have consistently been above the norms in literature and language.

Students reading below grade level are placed into our basic English sections. These sections are kept very small, and since special education students are integrated into these classes, there is always a teacher and a special education tutor in the room. This provides for a low student/teacher ratio and allows for more individual instruction. The curriculum consists mainly of high interest reading material, and an emphasis is placed on verbal and written skills along with reading skills.

Freshman and sophomore English are considered an introduction to literature through genre. The curriculum consists of short stories, novels, poetry, drama and non-fiction. Honors and college preparatory junior and senior English are divided into six semester courses, consisting of American and English Novel, Drama, World Literature, American Literature, British Literature, and Composition and Research. All students are required to take at least four of the six offerings, but students are free to choose with the exception that all seniors must take Composition and Research where they prepare a senior writing portfolio. The portfolio is comprised of the writing required in the Composition class and a selection of their essays written from freshman to senior year. Many students elect to take more courses than are required. Junior and Senior AP English classes are year-long courses in which American literature is covered in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade, and British literature is covered in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. In addition to the AP classes, these students may elect to take World Literature and/or Composition and Research.

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

The Science Program is designed to encourage student success in meeting state science curriculum goals and to catalyze student learning by affording opportunity for advanced science studies.

The variety of course selections which center on student inquiry include: Integrated Science I, Integrated Science II, Physical Science with Earth/Space, Honors Biology (BSCS), General Biology, Anatomy and Physiology, Advanced Placement (AP) Biology, Environmental Chemistry, General Chemistry, Advanced Chemistry (Dual High School/College Credit), Astronomy, and General Physics.

The superintendent and Board of Education recently demonstrated complete support for the science curriculum with purposeful and calculated commitment for upgrading the science laboratory/classroom facilities. The science labs are quite well-equipped with materials for inquiry-based teaching and learning. The generosity of the Poland Education Foundation provided computer interfaces with a variety of probes for general and advanced learners to study real time experimentation and analysis. Several sets of Student Response Systems have been provided to assist with assessment dynamics in the science classroom.

Department facilities are ideally constructed to give science faculty frequent interaction in an informal manner regarding curriculum and pedagogical methods. Teachers are involved in effective professional development both as attendees and presenters. Given such, the science teachers model a contagious enthusiasm for embracing learning within their classrooms.

A hallmark of the science department is nurturing unique partnerships with community professionals and the Chemistry Department of Youngstown State University (YSU). Classes utilize experience and knowledge of science professionals who live in the community so that science interest and skills are highlighted as potential workforce goals and lifelong application.

For the last eight years, students who meet dual credit criteria (i.e. applies to both high school and college) may take eight semester hours of a college/university level Advanced Chemistry course taught at Poland Seminary High School campus by Poland faculty. This university partnership has brought YSU instructors to Poland to open a pathway for students to experience unique YSU facilities such as remote access to instrumentation.

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

Ohio's Academic Content Standards are the driving force behind everything we teach, but the delivery is centered on the level and ability of the student. Our first priority is to challenge every student to reach his/her potential in learning and performance. Whether the student is taking AP or our general courses, he/she is exposed to difficult materials such as Shakespeare, the nature of chemistry, and theoretical mathematics. The accommodations and/or educational choices are then made to best suit the individual learner.

Our special education population is typically educated in one of two placements. The first is full inclusion. Most of our identified students are mainstreamed into both the college-preparatory or honors courses and also report to tutoring rooms equipped with technology, rather than study hall, for an atmosphere conducive to their needs as well as for individualized assistance. All tutors maintain regular communication with classroom teachers via this technology. These students are aware of their specific difficulties and are learning strategies they can use to succeed independently. Some inclusion classes may have a classroom aide, depending on the need(s) of the child. The second placement is called a "general" (non college-preparatory) course. Our general courses follow the general curriculum of our college-preparatory courses but with modifications to instruction and evaluation. General courses are team taught by a general and special education teacher working together, and often an aide is utilized in this setting as well. General classes are very small, prioritizing the advantages of low student:teacher ratios. Students in general courses are not all identified with learning disabilities, but all are focused on exploring transition options after graduation. These strategies help us annually increase our state testing scores in Mathematics, from 50 percent proficient in 2005 to 68 percent proficient in 2008, and remain consistently successful in Reading at proficient rates of 78, 71, 67, and 74 percent from 2005-2008.

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

The leadership team at Poland Seminary High School, which includes the administrators, guidance counselors, department chairs, and a Mahoning County liaison consultant, meet monthly to communicate educational updates and changes that are occurring within their respective areas. These updates include revisions in course requirements, brainstorming more effective ways to integrate changing state mandates, and planning for in-service training in an ongoing effort to improve teaching methods and to enhance and strengthen communication.

In addition, all teachers are encouraged to participate in learning experiences that will enhance their personal areas of expertise. This is achieved by taking classes at a local university, taking courses on line, participating in clinics or other workshops that are available through universities or county offices. Some graduate work

and in-services are reimbursed by the Board of Education. In addition, some teachers serve as liaisons and meet regularly at the County Educational Service Center. Here, teachers network with other area teachers and consultants to share information about current content standards, curriculum and instructional methods. Prior to attending these county liaison meetings, teachers have studied data and best practices within their departments. Once they have networked with other teachers at the county, they return and meet with department personnel to discuss and implement any necessary changes that will enhance student learning. In the past school year, the focus of professional development by the county was on Ohio Content Standards and Revisions.

During the 2008-2009 school year, all staff received computer training to improve and streamline important data and communication between teachers, students and parents. This was largely accomplished through the implementation of our new Student Information System, or ESIS. Teachers use a program called Gradebook, which enables teachers to place grades into an online grade book which then can be accessed by parents through a program called Teacher Assistant. Although in its infancy, this has already proven to be an invaluable tool to parents and teachers. It enables teachers to provide instant updates to parents on a student's progress and will soon make the need for interim reports obsolete.

## **6. School Leadership:**

The leadership of Poland Seminary High School is a responsibility shared by the Principal, Assistant Principal, and Assistant Principal/Athletics. The Principal is the primary leader of the school whose duties are to establish and maintain an effective learning climate in the school, to direct instructional staff in the implementation of curriculum, and to foster and maintain support between our staff and community. The Principal meets monthly with the seven department chairs who represent the core content areas and the electives, as well as our two guidance counselors to review and discuss ways that will improve student achievement. Through the direction given at these meetings, department chairs then share what was learned with other staff members. Any concerns or additional ideas are then exchanged at the next meeting.

Because we believe that student achievement is solidly linked to discipline and positive self-images, discipline needs to be fair and just for all students. Our Assistant Principal and Assistant Principal/Athletics supervise student conduct and oversee all disciplinary procedures. The rules and policies that have been made with the input of staff and students are tempered with solid judgment and adaptability. Humor is deftly used in dealing with students, which softens the impact of discipline, yet delivers a message. Teachers share a major role in maintaining high expectations regarding student behavior while displaying a caring attitude that helps students to build positive self-concepts while learning personal responsibility and mutual respect.

The administration and faculty further reinforce a caring and positive atmosphere with their attendance at extracurricular activities which builds a strong feeling of community while showing support for students in various arenas.

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 10 Test: Ohio Graduation Test

Edition/Publication Year: 2008-2009

Publisher: Ohio Department of Education

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
at or above Proficient	98	94	93	94	94
at or above Accelerated	83	75	76	74	70
Number of students tested	190	229	226	228	230
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	3	1	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0	1	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
at or above Proficient	95	90	91	86	70
at or above Accelerated	71	68	71	52	20
Number of students tested	21	31	21	21	10
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
at or above Proficient	0	0	0	0	0
at or above Accelerated	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
at or above Proficient	0	0	0	0	0
at or above Accelerated	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
at or above Proficient	0	68	60	53	50
at or above Accelerated	0	32	13	24	11
Number of students tested	0	19	15	17	18
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
at or above Proficient	0	0	0	0	0
at or above Accelerated	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
at or above Proficient	98	95	94	95	94
at or above Accelerated	83	76	75	75	71
Number of students tested	182	216	216	215	222

Notes:

Largest other subgroup not listed above "white."

Ohio's achievement/graduation tests report five levels of performance: limited, basic, proficient, accelerated, advanced.

Subject: Reading  
Edition/Publication Year: 2008-2009

Grade: 10 Test: Ohio Graduation Test  
Publisher: Ohio Department of Education

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
at or above Proficient	99	97	97	98	97
at or above Accelerated	73	76	66	69	77
Number of students tested	190	230	227	228	233
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	3	1	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0	1	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
at or above Proficient	95	90	86	91	100
at or above Accelerated	52	58	48	33	20
Number of students tested	21	31	21	21	10
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
at or above Proficient	0	0	0	0	0
at or above Accelerated	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
at or above Proficient	0	0	0	0	0
at or above Accelerated	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
at or above Proficient	0	74	67	71	78
at or above Accelerated	0	32	13	18	0
Number of students tested	0	19	15	17	18
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
at or above Proficient	0	0	0	0	0
at or above Accelerated	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
at or above Proficient	99	99	97	98	98
at or above Accelerated	74	78	66	69	77
Number of students tested	182	216	216	215	222

Notes:

Largest other subgroup not listed above is "white."

Ohio's achievement /graduation tests report five levels of performance: limited, basic, proficient, accelerated, advanced.