

**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: Dr. Aurelia Montgomery

Official School Name: St. Joseph School

School Mailing Address:  
1810 Howard Drive  
Knoxville, TN 37918-2819

County: Knox    State School Code Number\*: 9135

Telephone: (865) 689-3424    Fax: (865) 687-7885

Web site/URL: www.sjsknox.com    E-mail: sjsprincipal@hotmail.com

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. Sherry Morgan

District Name: Diocese of Knoxville    Tel: (865) 584-3307

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. Bruce Knudsen

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

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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. 4 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	10	11	21	6	14	11	25
K	11	11	22	7	15	7	22
1	4	14	18	8	8	20	28
2	10	11	21	9			0
3	13	7	20	10			0
4	9	10	19	11			0
5	9	12	21	12			0
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL</b>							217

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native  
3 % Asian  
3 % Black or African American  
3 % Hispanic or Latino  
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
83 % White  
8 % 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: 3 %

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.	4
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	2
(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.	208
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.029
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	2.885

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: 9 %

Total number limited English proficient 20

Number of languages represented: 4

Specify languages:

Spanish, Vietnamese, Chaldean, and Swahili

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 16 %

Total number students who qualify: 34

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: 19

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>2</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>5</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>11</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>1</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</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>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>14</u>	<u>5</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>
Total number	<u>22</u>	<u>7</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 13 :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	96%	97%	96%	95%	96%
Daily teacher attendance	92%	91%	90%	84%	86%
Teacher turnover rate	4%	8%	8%	12%	21%
Student dropout rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Please provide all explanations below.

Daily Teacher Attendance: With a small teacher faculty population, when one teacher is out, the daily attendance percentage drops approximately 4%. Other factors that have contributed to a seemingly-high percentage of teacher absenteeism include multiple maternity/paternity leaves and several with catastrophic illnesses requiring teachers to be out for extended periods of time.

Teacher Turnover Rate: In March of 2005, an announcement was made that the St. Joseph School administration would be changing. Several members of the teaching faculty chose that opportunity to seek new directions also. The principal named at that time (the current principal) immediately initiated a proactive process whereby the academic, professional, and spiritual standards of the school would be raised. Because of this, it was necessary to make further adjustments to the faculty. Since that time, the teacher turnover rate has continued to decline.

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

## PART III - SUMMARY

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St. Joseph School strives to adhere to its school motto and be a place “where we are committed to holiness as a way of life.” The school enjoys a long and proud tradition in historic North Knoxville. Along with its governing parish, Holy Ghost Church, St. Joseph School celebrated 100 years of service to the community in the fall of 2008. Today, St. Joseph School thrives in a facility that has sheltered students since 1963. Daily Mass marks the beginning of the school day, and each Friday, students unite in prayer at an all-school Mass. The school community practices a selected virtue each month and strives to model the “virtue of the month” in all areas of school life.

Thousands of young people have experienced superior Catholic education during the school’s first century. The school community is rooted in a family atmosphere. Its current population of 217 represents many students who are fourth generation.

Tantamount to the success of St. Joseph School is its state certified, dedicated faculty and staff and its superior parent involvement. A well-organized parent group, consisting of both current and former parents, assists the school in several areas from volunteering in the classroom to special events. Volunteers support three major events throughout the school year in order to foster community awareness and fund special projects.

St. Joseph School boasts a broad curriculum for a school its size and differentiates curriculum and instructional strategies to meet the needs of students with various learning styles, learning needs and multiple intelligences. Particular emphasis is placed on improving reading skills through the implementation of Ticket to Read and Accelerated Reader and on improving math skills using Math Facts in a Flash. Student progress is systematically monitored through STAR Reading, STAR Math and AIMSWeb assessments. The Learning Center provides support services to those students with special learning needs through pull-out and inclusion programs. The study of science is enhanced through the use of a certified outdoor classroom, where students have an opportunity to explore the environmental and biological sciences in a natural setting. Students are encouraged to participate in a rigorous Fine Arts program. Those pursuing the visual arts have often been acknowledged for superior work and have had work featured at the Knoxville Museum of Art.

Improvements in technology at St. Joseph School have allowed for its integration into the curriculum as an enhancement to learning and are evident in every classroom and every subject area. SMART Board and Promethean interactive whiteboards are used extensively in intermediate and middle school settings, with Promethean boards to be added in the primary grades in 2010-2011.

Students engage in a wide variety of extracurricular and enrichment activities intended to assist in the education of the whole child. The school community is committed to a climate of service and participates in a large number of projects throughout the school year, some of which include food, clothing and toy drives, nursing home visits, service to the elderly in their homes and peer tutoring.

The commitment of the community is evidenced in the volunteer and financial support enjoyed by St. Joseph School. Sacrificial giving by the parish communities and the school’s other constituents has provided resources for a new 13,000 square foot gymnasium and performing arts center that will be ready for use in early 2010.

St. Joseph School is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The school’s mission continues, in cooperation with parents and parish communities, to teach and nurture the Catholic faith, to be dedicated to academic excellence through a curriculum that promotes the growth of the whole child and service to others, and to be a place “where we are committed to holiness as a way of life.”

## PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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### 1. Assessment Results:

St. Joseph School administers the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) each year to students in grades one through eight. The ITBS is a norm-referenced test published by The Riverside Publishing Company. St. Joseph School utilizes the ITBS as a summative assessment to measure student performance and to identify the strengths and weaknesses of individual students, groups of students and the instructional program.

AIMSweb, STAR Reading and STAR Math tests, along with the Criterion On-Line Writing Evaluation, are used three to five times each year as formative assessments for reading, language arts and mathematics. Students who score below average on these tests are placed in the Response to Intervention (RTI) program. These students are provided targeted intervention and are either strategically monitored monthly or progress monitored every two weeks.

The data tables display the Percentile Rank of Average SS: National Student Norms. This score compares the achievement of a group of students to the achievement of a national sample of students who were in the same grade and who were tested at the same time of the year. St. Joseph School uses this score to evaluate student strengths and weaknesses. Each year, home-schooled children from the area take the ITBS at St. Joseph School. While the "Number of Students Tested" line on the ITBS Assessment Verification includes the home-schooled children, their scores are coded out of the results and are also not included in the data tables in Part VIII.

With only two exceptions, the assessment results displayed in the tables show that each grade level has scored above or well above the national average in both reading and mathematics over the past five years. Because the St. Joseph School population performs in the above-average range, it is often necessary to drill down into subtests and even into individual skills tested on the ITBS to find areas targeted for improvement.

Although the Math Total scores in Spring 2009 demonstrated above-average performance, analysis of the Math Computation subtest revealed a weakness in those skills at all grade levels. These skills have been targeted for improvement during the 2009-2010 school year. STAR Math assessments and the Math Facts in a Flash program are being used to help students build and maintain math computation skills. Algebra I students typically score as Advanced when the Tennessee Algebra I End of Course Test is administered.

The sixth grade scores from Spring 2009 represent some of the lowest scores for students currently in St. Joseph School. The Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), also published by The Riverside Publishing Company, is another assessment used by St. Joseph School to measure the ability of students to learn certain skills. The CogAT scores are used to compare the abilities of individual students or groups of students to actual achievement on the ITBS to predict performance on the ITBS. In 2008, this class took the CogAT as fifth graders. When comparing Predicted National Percentile Rank (PNPR) scores in reading and math to the actual National Percentile Rank (NPR) scores, the class, on average, outperformed the predicted reading score, but did not meet the predicted score in math. Several of the students in this group qualify for accommodations to/differentiation of instruction and assessments in the classroom as noted on their individualized Student Support Plans (SSP - 504 Plan equivalent).

Longitudinal analysis of individual class data for the last five years reveals relatively stable National Percentile Rank scores in reading and math. During the same five years, PNPR scores in reading and math compared to actual NPR scores for students in grades three, five and seven reflected, in most cases, the classes, on average, outperformed their predicted scores.

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

The faculty uses a variety of assessments to identify strengths and weaknesses, monitor growth and guide instruction. The *Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning-Third Edition (DIAL-3)* Kindergarten Readiness test is used to screen children to determine readiness for Kindergarten. Middle school math placement is determined using the Orleans-Hanna Algebra Prognosis Test/Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test, ITBS scores, math grades and teacher recommendations.

Teachers use diagnostic tests and pre-assessments to determine areas of focus and skills needing review. These tests also help group students heterogeneously by level for cooperative team learning and homogeneously for differentiation of instruction, enrichment and re-teaching. The National Spanish Exam is administered at the end of eighth grade and determines achievement and proficiency in the Spanish language.

Formative assessments are used in a variety of ways. Teacher-made assessments are used to decide what to re-teach or review before summative assessments such as unit tests, midterms and final exams. The Criterion On-Line Writing Evaluation gives instant feedback on grammatical and stylistic errors made in each writing sample. AIMSWeb, STAR Reading and STAR Math tests monitor student progress. STAR Reading and STAR Math tests are given five times each year. The STAR Reading test tracks growth and determines reading levels that are used to choose appropriate reading materials. Both the STAR Reading and STAR Math tests provide feedback on individual strengths and weaknesses. The AIMSWeb assessments are given three times a year to gauge student capabilities in reading comprehension and fluency. This test is used for RTI in order to determine student placement, make decisions about reading intervention and chart growth.

The ITBS achievement test is administered in March. Teachers analyze the scores each spring to identify areas of group and individual weaknesses and determine specific skills needing intervention for the next school year. The ITBS scores also help teachers determine if classroom programs have been successful during the prior school year.

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

St. Joseph School strives constantly to communicate student performance to parents, students and the community. The school utilizes a web-based computer program called RenWeb, through which parents and students are informed of class assignments and activities. RenWeb allows parents and students to view the student's progress and grades in real time.

Report cards and results of each student's STAR Reading and Math assessments are sent home every nine weeks. ITBS results are included in the final report card. Additionally, teachers convey student progress to parents through newsletters, email, written notes, phone calls and weekly folders with students' graded papers and tests.

Parent-teacher conferences are held at the end of the first quarter. At these conferences, fall AIMSWeb reading assessment results are presented and discussed with parents. Updated AIMSWeb results are also disseminated to parents in January and May.

Parents or teachers may request additional conferences any time throughout the year. About ten percent of the students at St. Joseph School meet diocesan eligibility for an individualized SSP. Formal meetings are held with the parents of each of these students at least once a year.

Students and parents are kept informed of progress through ongoing feedback such as graded papers and tests, individual teacher-student conferences and Accelerated Reader TOPS Reports. Teachers utilize checklists and create rubrics as a means for communicating performance expectations. Student work is displayed in the

school hallways and updated regularly. Students and parents receive instant feedback on student writing through the Criterion On-Line Writing Evaluation and through traditional teacher and peer editing.

The St. Joseph School community is kept informed on a regular basis through the Office of School Advancement. The director submits articles and pictures to the diocesan and community newspapers and church bulletins. The community is invited throughout the year to attend special events such as the Advent Program, spring play, student art show and Saint Albertus Magnus Science Fair Night.

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

St. Joseph School takes pride in sharing its successes with families, other schools and the community at large in a variety of ways.

Teachers share successes in the classroom through pictures and written communication in weekly newsletters, emails and announcements using the web-based communication system, RenWeb. This system provides a wealth of information to parents and students including grades, homework, lunch menus and financial information. The school community also utilizes the school website, which is currently being upgraded.

School-wide parent-teacher conferences, which are held at the end of the first quarter and as needed thereafter, provide other opportunities for teachers to communicate with parents.

The principal attends monthly meetings with diocesan principals to exchange ideas and share the successful programs and practices that have been implemented at St. Joseph School. At the State of the School address, the principal highlights test results, opportunities for growth and successes such as awards and honors that St. Joseph School has received.

Awards and honors are also showcased in the community through local newspapers such as the *Halls Shopper News*, the *Knoxville News Sentinel* and the *East Tennessee Catholic*, as well as highlighted on local television news stations.

The parish priests and church communities who support St. Joseph School play an important role in communicating the programs that St. Joseph School offers and the successes achieved both academically and spiritually. Through posted materials, church bulletins and word of mouth, the church community is kept well informed regarding the life of the school.

Perhaps one of the most effective ways of communicating the successes of St. Joseph School is through the actions of the students themselves, as they go out into the community and present themselves as intelligent, independent learners who demonstrate real world applications from the lessons they have learned, and who model the school's motto "holiness as a way of life."

## PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Curriculum:

Curriculum is based upon diocesan, state and national standards. Curriculum maps are being developed to ensure continuity and promote collaboration. Students are consistently exposed to material within and beyond this curriculum. Christian Doctrine is incorporated into each core subject area, and Religion is also taught as a separate discipline. Teachers differentiate instruction to meet the needs of individual students. Writing is incorporated across the curriculum, and the faculty collaborates regarding the interdisciplinary multi-sensory writing curriculum. Teachers regularly use both formative and summative assessments. Professional development, rooted in current research, updates teaching methods and the curriculum.

Math instruction is data driven. Formative assessments include STAR Math and Math Facts in a Flash. This data is used to differentiate instruction and guide planning throughout the year. Students engage in real world math applications using a variety of methods/materials such as manipulatives, Houghton-Mifflin and McDougal-Littell textbooks, Saxon-Mathematics, EDC Calendar Math and PowerPoint presentations using both SMART Board and Promethean software. Students are also required to work in cooperative learning structures to discuss and analyze math concepts, which promote higher-order thinking.

The social studies curriculum supports religious education as both subjects strive to teach students to be productive, caring citizens. Lower grade students are encouraged to make personal connections to the units studied. Upper grade students are asked to analyze the Christian morality of historical and current events. Students participate in elections, map making and creating classroom compacts/rules across grade levels. Music is incorporated by learning patriotic songs. Technology is used as both a research and publishing tool.

Science is taught using an investigative approach. Students explore scientific principles using hands-on inquiries through literature, music and independent project-based learning. Cooperative learning structures are also used.

Along with regular reading/literature classes, reading is incorporated throughout the curriculum. Students are guided to make connections to the material read in both fiction and non-fiction selections. Reading strategies based on Tennessee state standards are taught and integrated within other subject areas.

All students are exposed to an outstanding Related Arts program. The program consists of library skills, music, physical education, visual arts, Spanish and technology, each following diocesan, state and national standards. Reading and writing skills are incorporated into Related Arts lessons. St. Joseph School is in compliance with and exceeds the Blue Ribbon School's foreign language requirements. Eighth grade students take the National Spanish Exam through the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese as part of graduation requirements.

Physical Education offers Bulldog Power and Performance Training™. Students are tested based on Presidential Physical Fitness Standards. The music program strives to achieve music literacy and helps prepare and inspire students to be church musicians and choir members. The visual arts program uses the multi-sensory creative lab environment as a strategy to provide exposure to a multitude of mixed media forms. Art students have exhibited and received awards at local, state and national competitions.

Technology is an evolving discipline. Students learn keyboarding and research skills using Internet sources in a new state-of-the-art computer lab installed in 2009. Software ranges from sequential ordering of data to basic web design. Instruction is through lecture, modeling, multi-disciplinary projects and cooperative learning. Beginning in fourth grade, benchmarks are set to monitor progress in keyboarding.

Our library supports the Accelerated Reader program. The library curriculum engages students by combining reference and technology skills.

Students are provided a dynamic enrichment program. Middle school electives include band, strings, speech, audio/visual, creative writing/poetry, prop design/art, sign language, Irish dancing, academic skills,

photography, creative problem solving, art lab, sports dynamics and guidance. Students in grades three through five are also eligible for band and strings. After-school opportunities include The Legion of Mary, service learning program “Caritas in Veritate,” dramatic arts, track, cross-country, softball, volleyball, tennis, golf, basketball, soccer and cheerleading.

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

(This question is for elementary schools only)

The St. Joseph School reading curriculum employs a variety of multi-sensory and multiple intelligence approaches to academically challenge students and meet individual needs. Cross-curricular units, literature and author studies and comprehensive independent activities are intended to foster the love of reading.

The elementary program creates a balanced approach through the use of the Scott Foresman basal series and is enhanced with the C.A.R.E. (Children Achieving Reading Excellence) program. These incorporate a highly structured phonics-based approach with multi-sensory activities. Skills such as decoding, comprehension and vocabulary building are emphasized across all content areas. In addition, novel studies are introduced in elementary grades to prepare students for more in-depth middle school analysis of literature.

Middle school students attain mastery and refine reading comprehension through the Glencoe McGraw-Hill series. This series is leveled within each grade and also includes support materials for various reading abilities. Support materials include classroom-leveled libraries, reading guides, literary graphic organizers, vocabulary activities, ITBS test preparation and discussion topics for guided reading. Genres and literary elements are presented in a spiral pattern, allowing multiple learning opportunities throughout middle school. Study of the classics expands the students’ knowledge of different literary periods.

Technology is prevalent throughout the school. Utilization of programs like STAR Reading, Accelerated Reader, AIMSweb, Criterion On-Line Writing Evaluation and Ticket to Read provides teachers current data on students’ ability. Teachers react quickly to address concerns related to student performance.

All students are surrounded with reading opportunities. Younger students are assigned middle school “reading buddies” and read with them monthly. All students participate in the Accelerated Reader program; they are encouraged to meet or exceed individual goals through recognitions including announcements from the principal, quarterly rewards and an end-of-year celebration. Cross-curricular activities, such as the school-wide participation in the research and appreciation of Saint Paul’s writings and the elementary grades’ collaboration with Related Arts to celebrate Where the Wild Things Are, engage all students.

### 3. Additional Curriculum Area:

The science curriculum at St. Joseph School adheres to the National Science Education Standards. At the pre-K level, science instruction is integrated with thematic units. The elementary grades (K-5) use the research-based text *Scott Foresman Science, The Diamond Edition*, which correlates with the instructional reading text, *Scott Foresman, Reading Street*. Skills taught during reading instruction are applied when reading and interpreting the science text. Middle grades (6-8) utilize various supplemental resources including informational and real-world texts in order to analyze and apply information to hands-on labs.

All grade levels deliver developmentally appropriate instruction through kinesthetic activities, hands-on experimentation, cooperative learning and direct instruction. Technology is incorporated using interactive white boards. This use of technology encompasses a variety of multimedia tools that enhance curriculum instruction and, in turn, helps meet the various learning needs of each student. Making connections between current and previously acquired knowledge also enhance new material retention. Integral to the science curriculum is the implementation of the scientific process, which develops higher-order thinking skills. Social skills are also a vital part of the science curriculum, as students must learn to work together to think critically and solve problems.

The science curriculum is strengthened through various programs, such as Camp Greenville's Project Worth, during which eighth grade students learn to work cooperatively and support each other in team challenges while developing leadership skills. Fifth grade students attend Camp Wesley Woods to increase environmental awareness through educational classes. In addition, seventh and eighth grade students are

required to conduct a controlled experiment as part of the science curriculum. The culminating product includes a lab report, display and oral explanation of the experiment process to University of Tennessee science professor judges at the school's annual Saint Albertus Magnus Science Fair. In addition, students and their families participate in a school-wide science fair night where hands-on activities are performed to encourage excitement and curiosity for science.

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

St. Joseph School differentiates instruction and meets the needs of each student by delivering content through a variety of instructional strategies and practices. Teachers use these strategies to convey content in kinesthetic, auditory and visual modes through the use of interactive whiteboards, hands-on experiments, manipulatives, cooperative learning and open-ended discussions. Exploration beyond traditional textbook learning is vital in challenging and extending students' knowledge of content. Such explorations include multimedia games and websites, trade books, news articles and real-world applications.

The teachers place emphasis on higher-order thinking. Activities and questioning techniques that access domains and categories within Bloom's Taxonomy are incorporated across all disciplines and grade levels. Bloom's Taxonomy allows teachers to challenge and scaffold students' learning. It also allows students at the middle school level to engage in abstract thinking versus concrete knowledge of concepts. Teachers in grades K-5 incorporate Robert Marzano's research-based teaching strategies in reading instruction. Students generate and test predictions when they read. Graphic organizers are used to analyze written ideas and make connections between concepts. Pictures and symbols are used to help students visualize concepts and vocabulary.

The middle grade teachers (6-8) recognize the developmental changes, both physically and mentally, occurring with these students. This awareness gives way to varied instructional methods providing a solid foundation for every student to succeed. Students are often given choices in assignments, including options in project presentations, which help foster student autonomy. Cooperative learning is integral to instruction in middle school. Students of this age are drawn to learning that occurs in a social environment rather than direct instruction.

The St. Joseph School Learning Center provides students access to support services that can be delivered in small groups or through inclusion in the regular classroom. Services include remediation in content, organizational strategies and one-on-one instruction for students whose learning styles or challenges inhibit learning in a whole group setting.

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

Professional development, an integral part of the culture of continuous improvement at St. Joseph School, provides a conduit for the establishment of a professional learning community. The teachers are models of life-long learning. At a national convention, the curriculum coordinator will present a treatise on the use of curriculum-based measurement in private and parochial schools. One teacher is a candidate for the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards. Forty-seven percent of the teachers have Masters degrees and the principal and curriculum coordinator hold a Doctor of Education degree. Membership in professional organizations is encouraged. The school holds membership in various professional organizations, such as the National Catholic Education Association and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Sixty percent of the teachers have memberships in professional organizations.

The Curriculum Committee selects an area of instructional focus each year. This year, through a partnership with Trevecca Nazarene University (TNU), the teachers receive monthly staff development focused on research-based practices for teaching reading and writing across the curriculum. This training, delivered by a university professor, instructs teachers on the most current educational practices.

Teacher collaboration is critical to an effective learning community. Teachers have the opportunity to discuss and work with other teachers from across the Diocese of Knoxville at the annual in-service and through service on diocesan committees. The K-2 teachers received training from a licensed public school reading specialist, which includes ongoing observation and resultant feedback. Teachers visit local schools to observe

exemplary teachers in their respective grade or content area. At the school level, teachers ensure vertical planning and dialogue through regularly scheduled unit meetings and curriculum committee meetings. Parent education classes are also provided by teachers and staff to instruct parents regarding school programs.

Participation in staff development focused on meeting personal professional improvement goals is encouraged. Teachers have chosen on-line staff development through webinars and enrollment in on-line courses, national conferences and one-day local sessions to enhance professional skills.

#### **6. School Leadership:**

While incorporating the collaborative management style, the principal holds primary responsibility for the administration of St. Joseph School in conjunction with the pastor of Holy Ghost Catholic Church. The principal meets weekly with the pastor to discuss issues related to school life and seeks the pastor's counsel as deemed appropriate.

Through the partnership with TNU, the principal has access to the dean of the School of Education for collaborations.

The principal convenes monthly meetings with the school's Advisory Board to communicate school progress. These meetings also provide the principal with opportunities to seek contributions from this diverse group of parent and community leaders in order to effect the overall development of the school. The Advisory Board members are presently focused on the school's five-year strategic plan.

The principal of St. Joseph School meets weekly with the school's administrative staff consisting of the admissions director, athletic director, curriculum coordinator, director of school advancement and finance officer.

Monthly meetings with faculty offer opportunities for frank discussions regarding school life. The principal also convenes regular meetings with eighth grade class officers to entertain student perspectives. The principal meets on a regular basis with the Principal's Advisory Committee, which consists of faculty and staff members selected for broad representation.

The principal of St. Joseph School seeks input from representatives of the entire school community in order to serve all constituents. To this end, the principal enjoys a productive relationship with a well-organized parent group, the Home and School Association, meeting with the association officers on a monthly basis.

Through leadership, the principal strives to encourage a greater appreciation of Catholic school education; encourage and cultivate high standards; promote understanding of the mutual educational responsibilities of parents and staff; foster the political action of parents as advocates regarding national, state and local legislation that effects Catholic schools; and encourage families in the participation of the spiritual, intellectual, social and physical development of their 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 2009-2010 tuition rates, by grade? (Do not include room, board, or fees.)

<u>\$5485</u> K	<u>\$5485</u> 1st	<u>\$5485</u> 2nd	<u>\$5485</u> 3rd	<u>\$5485</u> 4th	<u>\$5485</u> 5th
<u>\$5485</u> 6th	<u>\$5485</u> 7th	<u>\$5485</u> 8th	<u>\$0</u> 9th	<u>\$0</u> 10th	<u>\$0</u> 11th
<u>\$0</u> 12th	<u>\$0</u> Other				

4. What is the educational cost per student? \$ 6325 (School budget divided by enrollment)
5. What is the average financial aid per student? \$ 1840
6. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?  
33 %
7. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction?  
77 %































