U.S. Department of Education
2011 - Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Private School

School Type (Public Schools): (Check all that apply, if any) ☐ Charter ☐ Title 1 ☐ Magnet ☐ Choice

Name of Principal: Sister Maria Goretti Baker

Official School Name: St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School

School Mailing Address: 13750 Mary's Way
Woodbridge, VA 22191-2078

County: Prince William State School Code Number:

Telephone: (703) 491-4447 E-mail: office@aquinastars.org
Fax: (703) 492-8828 Web URL: www.aquinastars.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*: Sister Bernadette McManigal Superintendent e-mail: catholicschools@arlingtondiocese.org

District Name: Arlington Diocese District Phone: (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.

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson:

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 2010-2011 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 2005.

6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 or 2010.

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 and 2 are for Public Schools only.

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

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

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

5. Number of students as of October 1, 2010 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	18	19	37		6	32	26	58
K	24	31	55		7	26	28	54
1	34	21	55		8	24	15	39
2	30	25	55		9	0	0	0
3	26	32	58		10	0	0	0
4	33	22	55		11	0	0	0
5	22	30	52		12	0	0	0
							Total in Applying School:	518

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

1	% American Indian or Alaska Native
7	% Asian
8	% Black or African American
15	% Hispanic or Latino
1	% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
56	% White
12	% 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 2009-2010 school year: 3%

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

(1)	Number of students who transferred ***to*** the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	7
(2)	Number of students who transferred ***from*** the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	7
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	14
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2009	517
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.03
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	3

8. Percent limited English proficient students in the school: 2%

Total number of limited English proficient students in the school: 10

Number of languages represented, not including English: 10

Specify languages:

Spanish, Twi, and Fanta. (Twi and Fanta are dialects of Akan, which is one of the recognized languages of Ghana).

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 4%

   Total number of students who qualify: 22

   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-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

   While Aquinas does not participate in the free and reduced lunch program, the number of eligible families is determined each year by a family survey using the criteria provided on the Federal Income Chart Guidelines for eligibility in the free and reduced lunch program. Families that currently participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) are also included in the count.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 2%

    Total number of students served: 10

    Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

2	Autism	0	Orthopedic Impairment
0	Deafness	16	Other Health Impaired
0	Deaf-Blindness	16	Specific Learning Disability
0	Emotional Disturbance	2	Speech or Language Impairment
0	Hearing Impairment	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
0	Mental Retardation	0	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
0	Multiple Disabilities	0	Developmentally Delayed

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

	Number of Staff	
	Full-Time	**Part-Time**
Administrator(s)	2	0
Classroom teachers	19	0
Special resource teachers/specialists	9	5
Paraprofessionals	11	1
Support staff	8	15
Total number	49	21

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: 16:1

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

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	96%	95%
Daily teacher attendance	97%	97%	97%	97%	99%
Teacher turnover rate	16%	26%	25%	43%	21%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

If these data are not available, explain and provide reasonable estimates.

The teacher turnover rate can be attributed to teacher pregnancy, retirement, and the transient nature of the region. The small size of the faculty may also result in a seemingly large turnover rate.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools): Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2010 are doing as of Fall 2010.

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	0%
Total	**0**%

PART III - SUMMARY

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St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School (Aquinas) is dedicated to providing a Christ-centered education that allows students to meet their full spiritual and academic potential. The school's philosophy stems from basic Catholic teaching with focus on educating the whole child through a challenging curriculum, a deepening spiritual life encouraging service to others, and an emphasis on moral virtues.

Aquinas is a regional Catholic school established in 1977 at the invitation of Bishop Thomas J. Welsh. The school is located on the grounds of Our Lady of Angels Catholic Church in Woodbridge, Virginia. Aquinas is staffed by the Dominican Sisters of the St. Cecilia Congregation and a lay faculty serving three parishes: Our Lady of Angels, Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, and Sacred Heart. Since opening its doors to 190 students in 1977, the school's student population has grown in both number and diversity. There are currently over 500 students in Pre-K through grade eight, making Aquinas one of the largest schools in the Arlington Diocese. The student population is unique in composition drawing primarily from the three parishes. Over 20% of Aquinas families speak a secondary language with 17 different languages represented. The increasingly diverse cultures and faiths in the surrounding community are also reflected in the student body. Due to the close proximity to several military bases and the quality education which is offered, many military families choose to send their children to the school. Over 21% of Aquinas families are either active duty or retired military.

The Aquinas staff consists of full-time certified grade-level teachers, as well as resource, Title I, Spanish, physical education, science lab, music, art, and algebra teachers. The resource and Title I teachers help to meet the needs of students with academically appropriate instruction that both challenges and supports the student. A librarian, technology coordinator, counselor, two part-time nurses, and administrative staff also support the mission of Aquinas. Faculty and staff demonstrate commitment beyond their regular duties by serving as coaches, club sponsors, and event committee coordinators. The professional staff is committed to ongoing professional development and continuing education classes to stay abreast of the latest developments in their field. Over half of the faculty members hold advanced degrees. In the past five years, one Aquinas teacher has been selected as the National Catholic Educational Association Regional Teacher of the Year and another was chosen as a Diocesan Teacher of the Year.

Aquinas is accredited by the Virginia Catholic Education Association and is a member of the National Catholic Educational Association. In 2009-2010, Aquinas was named a Top 100 School in the State of Virginia by the Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth based on superior academic achievement. Aquinas is partnering with Johns Hopkins to provide science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) courses taught to eligible students via online and on-site instruction. Aquinas students have attended The Joseph Baldwin Academy that offers qualified students the opportunity to spend three weeks during the summer as college freshmen. Aquinas eighth grade students succeed academically in many ways. These students average a 50% induction rate into the National Junior Honor Society, a 97% pass rate on the Spanish I high school placement test, and 89% acceptance rate into Catholic High Schools. On average, two Aquinas students are selected to attend The Governor's School for Science and Technology, Thomas Jefferson High School each year.

An award-winning advanced band attends the annual Arlington Diocesan Music Festival and has routinely received a "Superior" rating. Drama, choir, and extracurricular clubs are offered to further educate a well-rounded child. Clubs have included debate, chess, guitar, money, computer, and yearbook.

The mission of the Aquinas Athletic Department is to provide a program that fosters school spirit, good sportsmanship, character formation, a positive experience in team participation, and most importantly, an enjoyable time for students. Aquinas has the largest middle school sports program in the diocese.

Students are actively involved in service at school and in the local community. Aquinas students participate in numerous outreach activities such as food drives, toy collections, and visits to the homeless shelter. Middle school students also learn how to serve those closest to them through opportunities to work with younger students throughout the year. This variety of outreach programs provides the students opportunities to interact with the local community as well as to develop a generous and sensitive social conscience.

The Aquinas Parent Teacher Organization is an active and integral part of the school's operation and provides a wide variety of auxiliary services to the school.

St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School is whole-heartedly committed to the task of aiding parents in the education of the child. Teacher commitment and parent involvement have allowed Aquinas to maximize student learning and place in the top 10% of the norm group at all grade levels.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

Each year, Aquinas students enrolled in grades one through seven take the Terra Nova standardized test. Students complete a battery of tests that measure their level of understanding by comparison of individual scores with those of students in a nationally normed group. The results of the 2010 testing indicate that Aquinas students are excelling in math and reading.

An analysis of performance trends on Terra Nova assessments for the past five years shows that St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School students have scored above average when compared to national student groups. The data shows that class average scores in mathematics in grades four through seven are at the 78 percentile or higher; in reading, the scores are at the 86 percentile or higher.

While St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School exceeds the minimum required scores used to identify top ten percent performance, the annual analysis of data has revealed that students in the third grade scored lower than the remainder of students who completed the Terra Nova assessment. The fourth grade reading score average had a steady gain for three years beginning in 2005. In 2008-2009 there was a 12% decrease and the following year showed a significant increase of 13%.

The Terra Nova scores for third and fourth grade reading increased by an average of ten points during the five year period. The success of the third and fourth grade reading scores can be attributed to the implementation of a new reading series, as kindergarteners and first graders respectively. This was followed by a commitment and renewed spirit on the part of the faculty for addressing known areas of needed growth.

The increase in third grade math scores can be attributed to a change in math series, daily drill and skill, and more focus on problem solving methods. The fourth grade math scores from 2005-2007 had an average of 83%. In 2008-2009 there was a 22% drop with the following year showing a 23% increase.

The current sixth grade class showed a significant improvement in math scores which can be attributed to recent adjustments. The math committee analyzed the scores and implemented the Saxon Math series, the MESS (Math Enrichment and Student Support) program, and gave helpful links on the school website for Terra Nova practice increasing familiarity.

Recently, Aquinas has hired an additional resource teacher to assist in remediation and the identification of learning disabilities. In addition, the implementation of curriculum mapping has provided appropriate pacing in all curriculum areas.

Most grade levels have shown an upward trend in scores for the last five years. This positive pattern can be attributed to several factors. Teachers attended professional development courses focusing on data analysis, which provided greater clarity regarding the learning needs of students. The middle school teachers participated in a lesson study provided by George Mason University professors that gave strategies to teach students how to express problem solving techniques. The Saxon Math series, where each lesson builds upon prior knowledge, was implemented for grades five through seven.

It is important to note that all students, including those with learning disabilities or limited English proficiency, were included in the full test battery. The recent influx of students in the testing population needing academic support beyond what is available in the classroom has impacted class averages. With the expansion of the resource program more students with learning challenges attend Aquinas. While student scores may fluctuate slightly, the strong academic program of St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School will continue to serve all of its students.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Assessment data is analyzed by both the administration and grade level teachers to improve student performance. Each spring, teachers at each grade level review test results using a criterion-referenced report identifying mastery, partial mastery, and non-mastery of each test strand. This allows teachers to make adjustments in their instruction to reinforce areas of weakness. Teachers are then able to map their curriculum for the upcoming year to address areas that require additional instruction. Each fall, teachers use this data during the "Hand-Off Process" and provide subsequent teachers with an analysis of student aptitude for the upcoming grade. This process includes a discussion of instructional strategies used and student mastery.

Each winter, the administration meets individually with grade level and middle school content area teachers to review the previous year's testing data. Together, areas of deficiency are identified and a pacing guide is used to plan instruction in those areas during the winter months.

In addition to discussion data, the administration plans professional development opportunities and takes action to insure on-going school improvement. For example, after analyzing the 2009 testing data, Aquinas implemented a strategy to improve student performance in the following school year. The principal consulted with the math department at George Mason University. Several professors analyzed the school testing data and worked with the math teachers in grades 5-8 on a lesson study. In addition, the middle school math department was restructured to include the Math Enrichment and Student Support (MESS) program. By utilizing a team-teaching approach, the MESS teacher and math teacher work together to provide enrichment to students with full mastery of concepts, reinforcement for students with partial mastery, and hands-on assistance for students with non-mastery for students in grades 5-8. The Saxon Math series was also adopted for use in grades 5-8. Across all grade levels, technology was more fully incorporated into the math curriculum, enrichment activities and assignments were posted by teachers on Edline, and best practices for math instruction were shared and implemented.

In addition to the Terra Nova test, Aquinas uses the University of Virginia's Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) assessment in kindergarten. This is an early identification of areas of potential learning deficiencies. Scores are submitted online and teachers are provided individualized interventions based on each student's performance. The PALS test is re-administered in the spring to monitor the students' progress and these results are made available to the first grade teachers.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

Assessment results are communicated to the Aquinas community in a variety of ways. To assist and keep parents informed, the school utilizes Edline. Edline is a secure on-line grading system that provides parents with current information on student performance throughout the year. At the beginning of each school year, new families receive individual instruction on setting up Edline accounts. Parents have up-to-date access to their child's grades and may elect to receive e-mail notifications each time an update is made. For Terra Nova results, a detailed report including national percentile, a breakdown of strengths and weaknesses, and individual scores for each test area is mailed to parents. The principal presents the general Terra Nova results to families at Back-to-School Nights using a PowerPoint presentation followed by questions and answers.

At the most recent Back-to-School Night, the principal shared the news that Aquinas was named a top 100 school in the Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth for the state of Virginia. The school's website included this information along with a link to the press release. The school's weekly newsletter, *The Connection*, reported the information to the parent community. The quarterly newsletter, *The Crusader*, which is sent to alumni, benefactors, the school's advisory council, and grandparents reported the achievement.

During faculty in-services, the assistant principal analyzed Terra Nova scores for the past five years and presented the results to the faculty. Through this communication the faculty was able to discern areas of

weakness that were school wide. This information acted as an impetus to start the new math support program. The 2010 Terra Nova scores yielded the desired results after the implementation of the MESS program and the introduction of the Saxon Math Series. Aquinas was excited to share the positive outcomes of the testing with the community.

Each quarter, the administration hosts a parent-administration coffee. These sessions provide parents with an opportunity to receive information and discuss concerns. Several educational listening sessions are held throughout the year to inform parents and invite feedback. The administration and faculty encourage all types of honest communications with the parents to promote a meaningful dialogue that supports continued growth and progress for students.

4. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Aquinas shares successful strategies in a variety of ways. Information is published in the school's weekly newsletter, the quarterly alumni and benefactor's newsletter, the school's website, and through parish bulletins. Press releases are sent to both the local community newspapers as well as the *Arlington Catholic Herald.* Several teachers have been highlighted in local newspapers for their innovative teaching methods. Through various information sharing sessions in the diocese, Aquinas communicates successful strategies with other diocesan schools. Aquinas participates in the Arlington Academy where teachers are able to meet in groups of similar subject areas. Ideas are shared and lesson plans are created by teams of teachers from schools within the diocese. On a regular basis, the diocese provides opportunities for faculty members to meet to exchange lesson plans and teaching strategies. Also, through online curriculum mapping teachers share lesson plans, alternative assessments, and ideas to help other teachers within the diocese.

Aquinas kindergarten teachers were invited to lead a workshop at the Diocesan Institute for primary grade teachers and each year present a religion workshop for all new kindergarten teachers in the diocese. In addition, a middle school teacher presented a seminar at the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) Conference on incorporating technology into daily instruction.

Aquinas was one of two pilot schools to test and utilize an emergency notification system within the Diocese. Based on its success, the system was implemented throughout the diocese.

The Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth STEM program is a gifted and talented pilot program that will offer science, technology, engineering, and math to our qualified students. Based on tests administered by Johns Hopkins, twenty-six students in grades five through eight qualified for the program. The projected success of this program will be shared with other diocesan schools, as well as other prospective community schools. Johns Hopkins is a highly esteemed institution that will share the results of this program with other schools in the country.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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1. Curriculum:

St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School implements the curriculum designed by the Office of Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Arlington. Learning is interactive and most successful when the student fully engages in the process. Learning occurs through different modalities and on different levels of cognitive ability.

Religion: Religion classes teach prayer, doctrine, morality, and virtues and their integration into the community through service. Students actively participate in weekly Mass, various religious traditions and celebrations, and charitable actions throughout the community promoting awareness of social conscience.

Math: The mathematics curriculum from kindergarten through fourth grade focuses on number recognition, concepts, and problem-solving skills. Students in grades five through eight continue this progression with a spiraling curriculum that focuses on daily review of previously learned skills. Pre-algebra and algebra courses are offered in middle school. Students in grades 5-8 may be placed in accelerated or honor classes through a partnership with Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth. A variety of instructional techniques are used including both manipulative and supplemental technology resources.

Reading and Language Arts: The language arts program at Aquinas is literature-based with relevant, interesting, and multi-genre stories. Phonics, vocabulary, spelling, grammar, and study skills are incorporated into the instruction. Both creative and technical writing skills are developed to encourage application of skills and develop higher lever thinking skills. Students are also given the opportunity to develop oral expression and public speaking skills through the memorization and presentation of poems, prayers, speeches, and readings at Mass. Research skills are developed in middle school students through team teaching projects including the librarian, computer aide, language arts teachers and social studies teacher.

Science: The primary goal of the science curriculum is to facilitate the learning of science by engaging the student through enjoyable and meaningful scientific inquiry, while preparing these students to become life-long learners. Aquinas has a dedicated science laboratory and lab teacher. Students in grades K-5 attend weekly science lab classes in addition to the regular classroom instruction.

Spanish: Aquinas is in compliance with the program's foreign language requirements. The high school Spanish I curriculum is covered throughout the middle school years. Students learn grammar, vocabulary, and conversation skills. Culture, traditions, and prayers are also taught. Grades one through five attend Spanish classes biweekly; sixth and seventh grades meet four times per week while the eighth grade meets daily. School-wide morning prayers are prayed in Spanish one day a week. Spanish is incorporated into real-life situations through special projects such as the school-wide Spanish Mass and an exchange program with a Dominican school in Argentina.

Library: The library supports the curriculum as a resource for student research by teaching research skills about reference materials, collaborating with teachers to enhance grade-specific projects, exposing students to varied literary genres. The certified librarian collaborates with classroom teachers to create summer reading lists, suggested titles for small group reading circles, and provides teachers with monthly Accelerated Reader class reports and quarterly STAR reader reports. The school's collection holds over 12,000 volumes.

Social Studies: The Social Studies curriculum is not limited to the study of history but includes the study of current events, government, and geography. Aquinas utilizes its proximity to the nation's capital and historic Virginia landmarks to augment the curriculum through field trips and onsite presentations. Students engage in the learning process through discussion, debates, and projects such as State projects, "Taste of America" luncheon, and Public Times which is a two-day recreation of colonial life.

Music and Performing Arts: The music curriculum allows all students in grades kindergarten through eight to learn an appreciation for music of all genres and to investigate the world of music through dance, simple musical instruments, and listening activities. All students participate in performances throughout the year. Students in grades 4-8 may participate in the school choir and/or band. Both choir and band perform additional concerts and compete in local festivals. Middle schools students have the opportunity to perform in a yearly musical on a professional stage.

Computer: The technology curriculum is incorporated into the regular classroom instruction and into weekly lessons in the computer lab. Students learn basic skills such as keyboarding and formatting in addition to being introduced to advanced concepts such as web-site design, video production, and animation.

Physical Education and Health: All grade levels participate in physical education classes which promote fitness, safety, sportsmanship, and coordination. Health and nutrition instruction are provided to encourage life-long wellness. Middle school students are CPR trained and certified. Students also participate in the President's Physical Fitness Program.

Art: Students attend art class weekly where they are exposed to different styles of art and the use of various media. Students receive instruction in the fundamentals of art such as perspective, form, and the use of light and shadow. Several grants have been awarded in support of the art teacher's efforts to kindle student imagination through innovative projects.

2. Reading/English:

Recognizing the growing cultural diversity and different learning styles, the reading program reaches out to support all learners. Success in all areas of learning relies on competency of the four areas of language: reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

The Open Court reading series was selected because it is an all-inclusive language arts program that incorporates vocabulary, spelling, and reading comprehension strategies. The program includes supplemental materials to remediate struggling students and to enrich students reading above grade level. Open Court provides support materials for non-English speaking learners that are used by teachers working with students in small groups to reinforce daily lessons and pre-teach the next lesson. There are multiple options for assessment at all grade levels with an emphasis on developing writing skills beginning in kindergarten. These skills are utilized in first grade as the students write short answers to comprehension questions about the stories. Based on demonstrated skill levels, students work in small groups under the direction of a teacher or instructional assistant to either reinforce or expand upon the core knowledge of the lesson.

The Prentice Hall literature series, used in middle school, provides the framework for students to demonstrate comprehension of fiction, nonfiction, poetry and prose selections. During the course of study, students are directed to respond to questions, read a written selection orally with proper interpretations, read and learn the meaning of unfamiliar words, and increase their vocabulary through daily writing.

Title I, resource teachers, and instructional assistants are available to work in conjunction with the classroom teacher for students performing below grade level. They work with small groups reinforcing needs that are specific to the learners. Students identified as at-risk or below level by the classroom

teacher receive accommodations that may include preferential seating, one-on-one instruction, extended time for tests or assignments, and using an Alphasmart. Accommodations for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and Student Assistance Plans (SAPs) are incorporated into the daily classroom structure.

3. Mathematics:

The math program offers a variety of ways to explore the world through mathematics. Math is incorporated into almost everything the students do during the course of the day. In math classes, critical thinking skills are woven into realistic circumstances with activities such as graphing, diagramming and developing money sense. Analyzing math problems, multiple-step word problems, and requiring students to explain how they arrived at their answers help students to think critically. By exposing students to numbers in realistic circumstances, students realize practical reasons for learning math. Teachers use differentiated teaching strategies to introduce and reinforce basic math skills for all types of learners.

Students in kindergarten through grade four use the Sadlier-Oxford Progress in Mathematics series which introduces and reinforces general math concepts. Hands-on learning, manipulatives, and graphic depictions of the problems and concepts support student acquisition of presented material. Students also use word problems, timed tests, and review packets to reinforce daily lessons.

Students in grades five through eight use the Saxon math series; a spiral method of learning that ensures the students are continuously reviewing topics they have learned in previous lessons. Students who have difficulty understanding new mathematical concepts are given the opportunity to work in small groups once a week. Students in sixth and seventh grade have an additional weekly math class to work on specific problem areas. In seventh grade, qualified students are offered the opportunity to participate in a pre-algebra class. Students who participate in the standard seventh grade curriculum are given a comprehensive course intended to enhance their basic math skills. In eighth grade, students study either pre-algebra or algebra depending on the seventh grade coursework.

Students having difficulty processing mathematical concepts receive individual instruction from the teacher, resource teachers, or instructional assistant. Consistent practice helps reinforce learned concepts through timed tests, daily word problems, and computer games. The resource teachers work with students within the classroom as well. Using the expertise of the Diocesan Special Services Coordinator, an inclusion model is being developed and implemented to prepare students for independent learning in high school.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Science relates to the student's acquisition of essential skills and knowledge by nurturing and challenging each child to reach his academic promise as stated in Aquinas' mission statement. The science curriculum strives to cultivate in students a love, curiosity, respect, and stewardship for the world in which they live. Teachers utilize both theory and experimentation in teaching life, earth, and physical sciences. Technology is utilized through the use of ActivBoards, online textbook support, and electronic databases to help students acquire essential skills and knowledge.

In the elementary grades, science is taught in the classroom and is reinforced in an interactive hands-on environment in the science lab. The lessons taught by the science lab teacher reinforce classroom instruction through interactive experiments. Some examples include making ice cream, dissecting, investigating plant life, and looking at cells under microscopes.

Middle school students demonstrate scientific method skills by participating in either an individual Science Fair experiment or in a group-based Science Olympiad project. Partnering with Johns Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth (CTY), Aquinas implemented a four-year advanced Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) program for academically talented students in grades five

through eight. Students receive online math, science, and technology instruction, on-site weekly science lab and STEM course instruction directly from CTY.

Science Olympiad is a national competition among students. Students compete in events which require advanced preparation and application of advanced scientific concepts across the fields of many sciences. Aquinas teams compete at both regional and state levels. Parent community volunteers who have expertise in sciences, help as coaches.

The science fair allows students to ask questions about the natural world in which they live. They can design their own experiments utilizing the scientific method. The students are required to do a background research paper so they have a deeper understanding of their topic. The students prepare their experiments and present them at the school science fair. The top students for the school science fair then have the opportunity to participate in the county science fair as well as the Diocesan science fair.

The science lab, Science Fair, and Science Olympiad, along with the STEM program help students to achieve scientific literacy and an understanding of the role science plays in daily life.

5. Instructional Methods:

Aquinas uses a variety of instructional methods to engage students in active learning and meet their individual needs. Students learn from both teacher-directed as well as student-led activities. In each class, instruction is tailored to meet the needs of individual students by acknowledging that students learn at different rates and in different styles.

The middle school year begins with a three-week seminar to teach students study skills thereby enabling students to be active, organized learners and to be more successful in their content subjects.

Literature circles allow students to be both learners and teachers. Graphic organizers, journaling, and character studies are methods regularly used to elevate the critical thinking skills of students. Students learn the value of teamwork by working collaboratively in groups which allows them to learn from each other. Peer editing is used to strengthen the writing process. The Language Arts enrichment program is an extra-curricular class in which a small group of students hone his or her analytical reading and writing skills. This program offers instruction in creativity of thought, expression, and composition.

Students are instructed to use memorization skills for a variety of uses for example, in poetry, multiplication facts, and speeches to memorizing the 50 states and presidents through song. Teachers utilize visual aids in presentation, for example, a music class was used to demonstrate pitch, which was a unit covered in science.

One of the most engaging instructional tools at Aquinas is the use of the ACTIV Board which is utilized in all classrooms. Graphs are used to analyze and chart data in scientific observations and math analysis. The interactive electronic boards allow teachers to better address the needs of all types of learners, i.e. visual, auditory, and kinesthetic.

Differentiated instruction is routinely incorporated by the teachers based on observations and knowledge of students' strengths and weaknesses. Lessons are adjusted to maximize the students' ability to be actively engaged in the learning process. Student Assistance Teams meet regularly, coordinated by the Resource teacher, to formulate a Student Assistance Plan to address students' particular needs and discuss strategies for meeting the educational and emotional needs of students. Teachers provide parents with practical strategies for working with their children at home.

6. Professional Development:

The Aquinas faculty is dedicated to ongoing professional growth so that they, like the students they teach, might reach their full potential. Opportunities for professional development occur on the Diocesan and local level. Funding is provided by Aquinas for faculty to attend professional workshops and classes.

At the Diocesan level, whole group presentations, seminars and workshops are offered that focus on current topics of interest. Faculty and staff attend two all-day in-services each year that are sponsored by the Diocese. Also noteworthy are the Summer Seminar Programs and the Arlington Academy, a series of workshops on curriculum mapping. After attending workshops on assessing Terra Nova scores, the faculty and staff created a comprehensive plan to help improve student scores.

At the school level, there are opportunities for faculty members to meet monthly in small committees and as a whole group. There are also quarterly grade level meetings. Middle school teachers are afforded the opportunity to meet weekly to discuss all aspects of the middle school curriculum as well as student concerns. This has proven to be invaluable in keeping all concerned informed and aware of students' needs and activities.

The Emmaus/Mentor program facilitates new teachers' adjustment into the school allowing them to concentrate on lesson preparation and student instruction. The program was created to provide an additional layer in the matrix of support for teachers who may be new to the classroom or new to the school. New teachers meet with their mentors regularly throughout the year to discuss lesson plans, student learning, and normal classroom routines.

Guest speakers have addressed the faculty on current topics such as differentiated instruction, outreach to the Hispanic community, accommodations for ADHD students, and how to help students utilize effective study skills. Aquinas continues to implement plans to increase awareness and provide training in the advanced capability of the ACTIVBoard as a tool to enhance instruction.

Through multiple professional development opportunities, teachers have shared in the responsibility for greater student achievement in accordance with the school's high academic standards.

7. School Leadership:

The success of a school depends in large measure upon the leadership provided by the principal of the school. Since its foundation Aquinas has been led by a Dominican Sister of St. Cecilia. As a Dominican religious sister, the principal communicates the charism of the Order to the community and infuses the mission of the school with the spirit of St. Dominic.

The principal of Aquinas delegates responsibilities to the assistant principal, teachers, and other staff members. The willingness of the principal to share the leadership role creates an ownership among the community which facilitates the efforts to provide the best educational experience possible for all students. Additional expertise is provided by the Advisory Council.

All curricular and extra-curricular activities are under the direction of the principal. Policies and guidelines of the school are communicated through the Faculty and the Parent-Student Handbook. The principal instituted the Emmaus/Mentor program for new teachers. She meets with the assistant principal, faculty and staff bi-monthly to enhance leadership communication. Curriculum matters and student concerns are discussed when the principal meets weekly with middle school teachers. The administration has also implemented quarterly grade level meetings. The principal is kept informed of curricular progress and concerns as well as student successes through grade level coordinators' reports of the minutes of each meeting.

As part of her communication, the principal prepares a weekly newsletter to parents and an additional one to the faculty and staff. The parent newsletter includes calendar information, upcoming and completed events, test scores, and reviews policies or guidelines that need clarification.

The principal strives to build communion and consensus among the faculty and staff by hosting in-service days. She serves as a facilitator at these meetings and encourages alternative solutions to resolve issues. Faculty and staff know that they have full access to the administration for advice or guidance.

Every year the principal forms faculty-led committees to help plan school events and implement policies and procedures. The administration encourages academic advancement by posting information in the faculty room about upcoming classes and events and by using email to distribute information.

Utilizing the faculty, staff, and parents of the Aquinas community, the principal employs all available resources to ensure that Aquinas is well positioned for the future.

PART VI - PRIVATE SCHOOL ADDENDUM

11PV109

1. Private school association: Catholic

2. Does the school have nonprofit, tax-exempt (501(c)(3) status? Yes

3. What are the 2009-2010 tuition rates, by grade? (Do not include room, board, or fees.)

$4960	$4960	$4960	$4960	$4960	$4960
K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
$4960	$4960	$4960	$	$	$
6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th
$	$2865				
12th	Other				

4. What is the educational cost per student? (School budget divided by enrollment) $5744

5. What is the average financial aid per student? $1507

6. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 9%

7. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 17%

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 2 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: Second Edition 2003 Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: NCEs

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	81	82	70	70	75
Number of students tested	58	49	58	54	55
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

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NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 2 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: Second Edition 2003 Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: NCEs

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	80	84	79	81	76
Number of students tested	58	49	58	54	55
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

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NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 3 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: Second Edition 2003 Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: NCEs

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	84	82	64	68	68
Number of students tested	53	49	53	51	61
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

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NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 3 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: Second Edition 2003 Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: NCEs

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	80	84	78	79	71
Number of students tested	53	49	53	51	61
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

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NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 4 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: Second Edition 2003 Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: NCEs

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	87	64	86	82	80
Number of students tested	50	57	55	51	52
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

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NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 4 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: Second Edition 2003 Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: NCEs

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	85	72	84	83	75
Number of students tested	50	57	55	51	52
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

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NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 5 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: Second Edition 2003 Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: NCEs

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	85	81	75	69	78
Number of students tested	56	51	44	50	54
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

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NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 5 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: Second Edition 2003 Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: NCEs

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	76	82	79	78	82
Number of students tested	56	51	44	50	54
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

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NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 6 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: Second Edition 2003 Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: NCEs

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	85	80	72	79	79
Number of students tested	58	52	56	56	57
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

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NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 6 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: Second Edition 2003 Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: NCEs

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	76	80	77	84	75
Number of students tested	58	52	56	56	57
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

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NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 7 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: Second Edition 2003 Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: NCEs

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	77	79	71	73	84
Number of students tested	44	49	54	50	45
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

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NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 7 Test: Terra Nova

Edition/Publication Year: Second Edition 2003 Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: NCEs

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	79	75	86	84	86
Number of students tested	44	49	54	50	45
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

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