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 Carolyn Sieg, O.S.B.

Official School Name: St. Joan of Arc School

School Mailing Address: 4913 Columbia Avenue
Lisle, IL 60532-3503

County: DuPage State School Code Number: 19022024x10

Telephone: (630) 969-1732 E-mail: stjoanofarcschool@sjalisle.org

Fax: (630) 353-4590 Web URL: www.sjalisle.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*: Reverend John Belmonte Superintendent e-mail: jbelmonte@dioceseofjoliet.org

District Name: Diocese of Joliet District Phone: (815) 725-1527

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: Mrs. Mara Cooney

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

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

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: 43

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	24	12	36		6	33	31	64
K	22	25	47		7	28	32	60
1	27	32	59		8	32	44	76
2	25	39	64		9	0	0	0
3	27	34	61		10	0	0	0
4	25	34	59		11	0	0	0
5	28	37	65		12	0	0	0
							Total in Applying School:	591

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

0 %	American Indian or Alaska Native
5 %	Asian
1 %	Black or African American
3 %	Hispanic or Latino
1 %	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
86 %	White
4 %	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: 1%

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.	2
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	9
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2009	639
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.01
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	1

8. Percent limited English proficient students in the school: 0%

Total number of limited English proficient students in the school: 0

Number of languages represented, not including English: 0

Specify languages:

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 2%

   Total number of students who qualify: 11

   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.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 5%

    Total number of students served: 29

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

0	Autism	1	Orthopedic Impairment
0	Deafness	1	Other Health Impaired
0	Deaf-Blindness	4	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	1
Classroom teachers	22	1
Special resource teachers/specialists	1	6
Paraprofessionals	3	11
Support staff	4	0
Total number	32	19

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: 25:1

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	97%	96%	97%	98%	96%
Daily teacher attendance	97%	98%	98%	98%	97%
Teacher turnover rate	2%	3%	3%	2%	5%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

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

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:	_____
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	_____%
Enrolled in a community college	_____%
Enrolled in vocational training	_____%
Found employment	_____%
Military service	_____%
Other	_____%
Total	**0**%

PART III - SUMMARY

St. Joan of Arc School is located in Lisle, Illinois, about 30 miles west of Chicago. Founded in 1927 as a parish school, SJA continues to draw a majority of its students from parish families. The school has strong parish support to create a family-oriented school community. It is not unusual for alumni to return to the area to enroll their children as members of the SJA family.

The school's mission is to provide students with a firm foundation in the Catholic faith as they grow to become responsible individuals, fully aware of and capable of fulfilling their roles in society as Catholic adults.

St. Joan of Arc values both tradition and innovation with a motto of "Tradition with Vision." A member of the Joliet Diocesan School System, SJA has a fully accredited, comprehensive and challenging curriculum from pre-school to 8th grade. Morning and afternoon extended care includes a MindBlast enrichment program offering activities for nurturing creativity. Junior high students are challenged in exploratory classes such as nutrition, fitness, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, media literacy, etiquette, team building, and cultural diversity.

The philosophy of the St. Joan of Arc staff is to embrace the whole student academically, emotionally and socially, and to affirm the uniqueness and dignity of each student. Religion classes provide a foundation for Christian living with parents as faith partners in their children's faith formation. The staff strives to be life-long learners, always seeking new ideas to enhance learning and create a Christ-centered environment.

Moving into the 21st century, teachers are committed to designing lesson plans that include critical thinking, analysis, team building and technology to focus on higher level thinking skills in core subjects. Yearly tests designate SJA as placing in the top 10% in the Joliet Diocese. Most of the students are admitted to Catholic high schools of their choice. Many test into high school honors classes. Three former SJA students were chosen as their high school valedictorian this past May.

In1985, President Ronald Reagan and the U.S. Department of Education recognized St. Joan of Arc School as a model of excellence.

Demonstrating their strong character and leadership skills, junior high students responded to the 9/11 attacks by planning a teen-directed ceremony at Lisle Village Hall. Wishing to give teens a forum for continued character-building opportunities, the mayor and village board enthusiastically agreed to inaugurate the Character Counts program in all Lisle schools. The SJA Character Counts program includes enrichment classes in the pivotal 5th and 7th grades.

St. Joan of Arc's partnership with Benedictine University (BU) Education Department has taken a huge step forward this year. BU education and graduate students come four times a week to grades K-5 to work alongside aides in small group or one-on-one instruction. BU students have reported that such extra student contact has helped immeasurably as they moved into their student teaching experience.

Traditions abound at SJA from an all-school end-of-year picnic to annual class field trips. One annual tradition is a 7th grade social studies trip to Cantigny Memorial Park to witness the naturalization ceremony. At the conclusion of the event, students present their hand-written congratulation cards to each new citizen. Other traditions anticipated each year are the 8th graders' presentation of the Living Stations of the Cross during Lent, the May Crowning, and All Saints' Day Liturgy, where 1st graders, dressed as their favorite saints, give a short speech. A special school event to raise money for the Adopt-a-Student

fund occurs during Catholic Schools Week. A highly anticipated fund raiser is an annual basketball game in which the 8th graders challenge members of the Lisle Police Department.

Learning to live the Catholic faith is practiced daily. The principal opens each school day with a prayer and a one minute meditation. Lectio Divina in the upper grades, visits to the Adoration Chapel, special Sunday Masses for each grade level plus yearly retreats help involve students in life-long faith practices. Service projects include collection of food for Harvest Sunday and sending comfort items to Lisle soldiers serving overseas. Once a year, students collect medical and dental items to supply parishioners who participate in medical missions in Haiti and Jamaica. Pictures of smiling children and the thank you notes posted in our hallways remind students of their roles in helping others.

Continuity in administrative and instructional personnel has created a unique family-oriented school community where devoted parents unite to assist in school goals. Volunteer parents devote their talents and expertise to coaching positions in academics and sports activities. They organize school spirit days and assist teachers in activities for holiday seasons as well as giving extra clerical support.

Every day the school community realizes that school life is a journey and that opportunities, challenges and rewards exist around every corner.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

Students at St. Joan of Arc School have a record of achieving high scores on standardized tests. The Joliet Diocese requires students in grades 3, 5, and 7 to be tested. Until the fall of 2007 the Terra Nova Test was used. In the 2007-08 school year, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) was chosen as the required test. St. Joan of Arc scores continue to affirm its academic excellence.

Historically, scores at SJA have improved from the 3rd to 7th grade, reflecting teachers' commitment to excellence. Over the past five years, the results for reading and math have remained fairly steady. Although our scores are among the highest in the diocese, SJA continually strives to prepare each class to its maximum potential. When even a slight decline was noted in testing data, the administration took immediate steps to address the situation. For example, in 2007-08, reading results for 7th grade showed a class average of 81 with 47 in the 1st quartile and 29 in the second. Responding to various sources such as "best practices" seminars, the 7th grade literature teachers instituted the Lit Log, in which students report from three outside novels per trimester. More books were ordered for the Accelerated Reader program. In the first testing year with ITBS, 3rd grade math results showed a decrease in math computation, while analytical skills were maintained. More drills on computation skills were added to their daily math classes with the use of the Accelerated Math program. Junior high math students are challenged by a Problem of the Week found each weekend on the SJA blog and due on the following Thursday.

Test results are reviewed and analyzed by the administration who then convene a faculty meeting to identify trends and discuss strengths and weaknesses. The staff looks for patterns and discusses ways to improve student performance. One goal and two measurable objectives are agreed upon in the areas of concern. Teacher in-services are planned as a follow-up to track student improvement. In January a reassessment faculty meeting is held to review student performance in light of the targeted goals and objectives. Modifications are made to them if student performance doesn't meet expectations. The principal, ever mindful of her role as instructional leader, looks for ways to assist in targeted improvement areas. In one case a part-time teacher was hired to break down class size, which allowed a teacher to give more individual attention to those who needed it. In other cases, hiring a substitute teacher allowed the lead teacher to attend an objective-defined workshop, and in the second a lead teacher had two half days to research ideas and materials for improvement. Staff sectional meetings are also held to discuss and plan for any additional concerns, while the Supplementary Learning Program (SLP) teacher holds monthly meetings with elementary teachers who track the work habits and gains of the students in the program.

Along with the ITBS results, teachers use data from other formal testing, (Gates-McGintie, Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy Screen (DIEBELS) and AIMSweb) and from informal testing (computer generated and teacher-designed tests) to align the curriculum with students' needs. The principal designates standards coordinators in each of the curriculum areas. Monthly data collection is forwarded to the diocesan office at the end of the school year to verify that the students have met the diocesan standards for their grade levels. This is an added tool to track student progress in all core subjects.

2. Using Assessment Results:

The Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) assists the teachers and administrators with instructional planning and tracking of student performance. The scores are used to analyze the strength and weaknesses of individual students and assist teachers in monitoring their progress. The staff looks for ways to track student improvement with AIMSweb online system, where class and individual reports can be printed and given to teachers and parents.

The principal, teachers and SLP department track ITBS scores to pinpoint students with consistently lower achievement who need help. Modifications are then planned and reviewed at a faculty

meeting. The scores also help to identify students for Project Eagle, an accelerated language arts program. Finally, test results also identify students who may not qualify for an accelerated program, but need further creative challenges to supplement their learning.

Data from formal and informal testing is a key source of information to align curriculum with students' needs. It detects both gifted and struggling students. Special accommodations for some students are necessary. In extraordinary cases, the special education teacher partners with the local school district for wider assessment tools.

St. Joan of Arc intends to have all students perform to the best of their ability. The ITBS results in September, 2009, show that of the student population tested, only seven did not achieve up to potential. Two of them had transferred to St. Joan two months prior to testing, and one already has an Individualized Educational Plan. The principal then designated the SLP teacher to re-test these seven students and to assess their individual needs so they can be encouraged to work to their ability level.

Technology has helped to boost student improvement. The Accelerated Reader program enables all students to enjoy reading for pleasure at their ability level. Computer generated questions about plot, character and setting help students to improve analytical skills. SJA purchased Accelerated Math because the 2010 ITBS test results indicate a need for improvement in computation skills. The program challenges students to practice problems on computation at their level. As skills improve, students can challenge themselves to move to higher levels. All math teachers this year are emphasizing computation skills.

The principal always includes stipends in the yearly budget for teacher requests of small, additional learning aids to increase individual student achievement.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

Technology simplifies communication including the reporting of test data to parents. Prior to 2007-08, the SJA principal spent hours explaining test results individually to parents. With the adoption of the ITBS in the 2007-08 school year, students' test results are accessible to parents on-line. Parents receive log-on information with a signature sheet acknowledging access to Riverside Publishing. The website provides information and a clear explanation of the test results so that most of the parents are able to interpret their own children's test scores. If not, the signature sheet also contains space for parents to request a one-on-one conference with the principal, who then makes appointments for the limited number of requests she receives. Students are still invited to consult with individual teachers if they want specific information about increasing their test scores.

At a regularly scheduled teachers' meeting, Sr. Carolyn devotes time to explain the scores and compare the current year's results with the previous year. She encourages teachers to analyze data for their individual classes and to ask questions or make suggestions. Teachers are also a resource for parents who might have questions about their children's scores in specific classes.

The principal reports the overall test results to the parents at the next Parent-Student Organization (PSO) meeting. Reports of the test scores are also given to the St. Joan of Arc School Board. Questions from the board members are answered at that time

As an expert in analyzing data, the St. Joan of Arc principal has presented workshops to diocesan principals on utilizing test results to improve instruction. Overall, SJA never views testing and its results in a vacuum. Test results are always used to develop the curriculum to meet the needs of all learners.

In the Joliet Diocese, individual ITBS test scores are not published in the media, but we can celebrate our achievements with our parish community.

4. Sharing Success:

Sr. Carolyn and the staff have always welcomed staff members from other schools, Catholic or public, to visit, observe and dialog about successful programs. Benedictine University and North Central College students, involved in pre-clinical and practice teaching, value their experiences seeing SJA programs first-hand. Their professors praise the differentiated curriculum and strong academic atmosphere of the school.

Within the diocese, Sr. Carolyn is known as a very successful principal who encourages creative and innovative programs which she shares with other schools. For example, she helped solve the problem of full and half-day kindergarten classes for two Catholic schools in nearby neighborhoods where space was a premium, but an increase in revenue was needed. SJA established an after-school extended day program over 20 years ago to meet the growing needs of families with two parents working full time. Many requests for information on beginning this type of program have always been cheerfully addressed by the administration.

From word of mouth to media outlets, SJA is proud to share success. Teachers and administrators often participate in local and national workshops. Sr. Carolyn participates yearly at the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) Principals' Forum. Sharing lessons with other principals within the Joliet Diocese raised awareness of the value of the Forum. This year, she was instrumental in increasing the number of principals from the Joliet Diocese attending the meeting.

The fact that SJA continues its traditional strong curriculum while staying within budget is another opportunity to share success. SJA serves as a model to surrounding schools in unique fund-raising activities spawned from the creative imagination of many parents. The funds derived are applied to various school needs such as maintaining the science or tech lab, purchasing books for the library, or remodeling projects. A special fund-raising project is Adopt-a-Student program which collects funds to apply to tuition grants for needy families. Sr. Carolyn has often described the workings of this original concept at regional Joliet Diocesan meetings.

If St. Joan of Arc were to be awarded Blue Ribbon School status, its success would be fully shared with other schools in the community and the diocese. Our parish families would be anxious to celebrate with all kinds of exciting plans including assemblies, the blog, website, local newspaper stories and coverage by our student news team.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

The curriculum at St. Joan of Arc School is firmly rooted in the Joliet Diocesan Curriculum Guidelines including the Illinois Learning Standards. Teachers collaborate when needed to modify or change instructional groups and styles of presentations to encourage all students to work up to the best of their abilities.

Religion. A strong Catholic identity is shown throughout the school with our religious theme of the year posted on each classroom bulletin board and walls throughout the building. Daily meditations are read by the principal over the intercom to begin each day. Grades 6-8 use the Loyola Press daily three- minute presentations on the Smart Board to begin each religion class. Understanding the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the life of Jesus begins in pre-school and culminates with 8th graders receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. Constant application of Christian values in daily school life and service projects are reinforced by our Character Counts program.

The nucleus of the **language arts curriculum** is parallel decoding and interactive comprehension skills. Basic comprehension in non-fiction is followed by analysis of text, critical thinking and creative response. Teachers form flexible groups based on observation and incorporate learning centers to expand independence. Interpreting academic reading culminates in a research paper in junior high. Delving into various fictional and non-fictional genre begins to prepare them for high school demands. Writing workshop classes employ the Six Trait Writing Method and concentrate on standard grammar usage. Enrichment language arts classes are scattered throughout the week in all grade levels. Students apply writing and usage skills across the curriculum.

The **science** program emphasizes hands-on inquiry based on activities designed to elicit observation and questioning abilities. Increasingly, students are taught to “think like a scientist” and to utilize scientific concepts and reasoning. Grades K-5 have a Hands-on Science lab once a month developed by parent volunteers. Taking field trips, doing research, writing notes and reports, and interacting with guest speakers all increase inquisitiveness. Grades 6-8 add science process skills, theorizing and model building and creating an original project for the Science Fair, with the best submissions winning at the State finals. One weekly lesson is held in the science lab. The science program integrates critical thinking and problem-solving techniques that are transferable to many areas of the curriculum and life in general.

The goal of the **social studies** curriculum is to develop in students a solid citizenship based on an understanding of communities, their function, organization and laws. Early project work accentuates diversity of cultures. Games, quizzes, laptop research, and videos add to the students’ knowledge of ancient civilizations and European societies. Collaborative teams investigate topics in American history from exploration, to revolution, to slavery and war. A milestone for the 7th graders is passing the Federal and State Constitution tests.

The **Spanish** course facilitates the students’ eventual transition to high school Spanish classes. Students in grades 2-5 take a 30-minute Spanish class weekly. This year, junior high Spanish increased to 90-minute classes weekly for a trimester. This includes vocabulary, pronunciation skills and grammatical concepts that lead to the students’ ability to present written projects and oral presentations. Additionally, a goal is for students to have an appreciation for a new culture and broaden their understanding of world cultures.

St. Joan of Arc is in compliance with the program’s foreign language requirements.

All students from grades 1-5 participate in a 30-minute **art and music** class each week. Grades 6-8 participate in a trimester each of art, music and Spanish. In music, they prepare songs for special

liturgies, holidays and celebrations. Diocesan guidelines are the basis for art lessons. Creative work is displayed throughout the buildings and contest winners receive display throughout the Lisle area. A parent volunteer program called Arts Alive brings the story of the masters to all classes. Eighth graders culminate their experiences with a field trip to the Art Institute of Chicago. Drama Club meets once a week and culminates in an end-of-the-year production open to the public. The band program introduces students to musical instruments, and they perform a concert with the choir for Christmas and at the end of the academic year. Visiting performing arts groups are scheduled each year sponsored by the PSO.

The **physical education, health and nutrition** program emphasizes whole-body conditioning, healthy living, sportsmanship and team building. Students grades 2-8 participate in the exacting Presidential Fitness Test, and awards are given to those who successfully meet the challenges. SJA uses the "Let's Move" initiative to meet or exceed daily physical activity requirements. All students in K-8 participate in and enjoy games and activities from parachute fun to junior high indoor roller skating classes. The 7th and 8th graders learn social dancing in an 8-week class taught by a professional dance instructor. Sixth and 7th graders have nutrition classes once a trimester. All students have health units for everyday living, including parent-child collaboration in choosing healthy brown-bag lunch and snack choices. A school sports program for grades 5-8 is very active after the school day is over. Teams are formed for bowling, track, cross-country, cheerleading, volleyball, football and basketball, all based on a no-cut policy.

2. Reading/English:

Pre-school uses the Jolly Phonics program while grades kindergarten through third utilize the Harcourt Story Town Reading program. This program provides our students with a balanced literacy approach. The components include phonics, spelling, comprehension, robust vocabulary, fluency, grammar and writing. Students are instructed in small groups ensuring that the needs of all learners can be met. Ongoing assessments and benchmark assessments are used in order to monitor the progress of students thus allowing teachers to provide enrichment and support.

Story Town is filled with a variety of fiction and nonfiction literature. Fiction offerings include narratives, poems, plays and fantasy while nonfiction features contemporary news articles, biographies and research materials. The program includes robust vocabulary that helps to create a rich learning environment through carefully selected words. Students learn to think critically and make connections in their verbal and written responses.

As the students advance grade levels, the MacMillan-McGraw Hill series, the Glencoe Course for elementary school and the Prentice-Hall series for junior high are used as core texts. The goal is to enhance reading skills so that demands of high school reading are met. The Accelerated Reader program places a student at an ability level so that texts are easily comprehended and reading for enjoyment is encouraged. Also, books in the school library are coded to Accelerated Reader numbers so students can be directed to read books at their level. Reading for pleasure is well in place by junior high when students report on three outside reading books per trimester.

Accomplishing the complex task of reading with comprehension and enjoyment is facilitated through small group, flexible instruction in the lower grades. Activities may engage visual, auditory and tactile senses as the children read aloud, listen to a story or build a model of something in the story. Lively discussion evolves as children work together to visualize the setting of a story or take various roles in literature circles.

Students employ questioning skills, drawing more and more on prior knowledge to evaluate texts from a literary standpoint. Personal preference promotes critical thinking and interpersonal communication skills. As depth of understanding develops, cooperative groups use laptops to research an author's life or build a project illustrating a facet of the literary work.

As skills increase, more and more cross-curricular reading is expected. By 8th grade, students actively search for project ideas that showcase their particular interests and skills.

3. Mathematics:

The St. Joan of Arc elementary mathematics program is a core curriculum for kindergarten through grade 5 using the Houghton Mifflin math series. This program offers a research-based approach which is designed so that all students can achieve success in meeting and exceeding their grade level standards. Inherent in this approach are high interest activities which engage children to think about math and how they use it in their everyday lives. Through the use of effective instructional strategies based on best practices, the children work in collaborative groups focusing on the concepts of basic skills development, problem solving, and vocabulary expansion. Teachers differentiate instruction and are involved in on-going assessment in order to meet the needs of all their learners. Students practice math daily through the use of instructional software, enrichment activities, manipulatives, and textbooks in order to reach students of all learning styles. AIMSweb is used to track some students' progress, and the Accelerated Math program challenges students.

The St. Joan of Arc middle school mathematics program is one that occurs at a critical time in students' development and is designed for all students to achieve success. The Holt Mathematics series is used along with Holt Pre-Algebra and Algebra texts. Throughout these three years, students focus on problem solving, computation, mastery of basic skills, logical reasoning, and consumer math. Students work independently and in collaborative groups towards an algebraic way of thinking. Traditional paper and pencil skills are emphasized throughout the program but are supplemented with technology, manipulatives, and math labs. Teachers differentiate instruction in order to meet the needs of all learners. In junior high, students' ability determines courses from grade level texts to pre-algebra, algebra and geometry labs. Periodic tests and observation help teachers move students within flexible groups. About 20% of the graduates are able to place out of algebra I at the high school level, allowing them to take honors algebra or go directly to geometry.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Using the internet for research and communication is an integral part of the lives of today's students. Teachers and staff of SJA accept the important mission of teaching students to use technology responsibly, mindful of the priority of a Christ-centered life.

Students are taught the importance of respecting privacy, as well as the work of others, in the online community. Information literacy classes teach them the skills they need to navigate the online world with a discerning eye. The American Academy of Pediatrics recently recommended that schools teach media literacy, which SJA has done for the past fifteen years. These classes help students examine how they are influenced by today's media culture.

Technology is vital to the 21st century classroom. Each year, it is an expressed faculty goal to extend and further integrate technology into the educational experience. All computers are networked, so students can access and print their files from any computer in the building. All classrooms have Interactive Smart Boards, making learning more dynamic and engaging. Teachers are issued laptops, which they use to develop and plan lessons, to communicate with parents and others in the school community, to post on the school blog, and to record and publish grades online.

The school has one main technology center, where students learn computer skills and work on class projects. Two satellite centers offer classes in spreadsheets, programming, presentations, word-processing and video production. In addition, two mobile laptop labs are used constantly in classrooms across the school.

Junior high students take a three-year video production course culminating in eighth grade with a live weekly news show broadcast shown to all the junior high classrooms over closed circuit TV. Sixth graders begin in post production with tasks such as editing video and adding sound and special effects. Seventh graders work in teams to create original videos. They write scripts, then film and edit their projects which are used on the news broadcast or shown to other audiences.

On the news show, students rotate job responsibilities for each news broadcast allowing them to work both in front of the camera and behind the scenes. They learn how to meet deadlines, work together as a team, and take ownership of the final product. Occasionally, the pastor appears as a live guest to discuss parish and liturgical topics, making religious instruction more meaningful to students.

5. Instructional Methods:

Differentiated instruction is a hallmark of SJA. Teachers use a variety of instructional methods to meet the needs of their students in a positive environment of moral, academic and social education.

In the primary grades, students who need to be further challenged with critical thinking and creativity are placed in a Project Eagle program. A language arts teacher and a librarian work together to develop lesson plans based on Bloom's Taxonomy. Students who need special help with daily challenges are enrolled in a Supplementary Learning Program under the direction of a special education teacher. A certified teacher works with small groups for remediation, and Benedictine University pre-clinical students engage in one-to-one instruction for enrichment challenges.

In grades 4 and 5, students are grouped into six reading and four math groups. Quarterly testing and teacher assessment indicate when students should be regrouped.

Junior high classrooms are located in a separate building that contains a science lab and a tech lab for hands on activities. Students are not ability grouped except in math, with geometry offered to advanced students. Teachers provide students with lessons that are challenging and stimulating by differentiating instruction to maximize the potential of each student.

Instructional groups are formed that align with the Illinois Standards and the federally mandated RTI (Response to Intervention) with the inclusion of various strategies. Flexible grouping is an important part of differentiated instruction. Student groups work together to solve problems and share ideas. Teachers in all subjects collaborate on curriculum to meet students' needs. They give reports to parents through Ed-line, an on-line performance tracker. Technology enables teachers to bring multi-sensory techniques across the curriculum. All classrooms have interactive Smart Boards which assist teachers to challenge students with visual or kinetic learning styles using online incentives, word templates, writing lesson helpers and extenders, and visual field trips. Besides an inter-active Smart Board, every classroom has at least two computers and access to two 20-laptop carts. This facilitates both remedial and enrichment activities. Online learning enables students to continue classwork at home or during before and after school extended day programs.

6. Professional Development:

Teachers at St. Joan of Arc are dedicated to staying informed about the latest techniques and tools available for teachers. The SJA school budget always includes monies for teachers to attend conferences, workshops and lectures. Forty-nine percent of the faculty has a Master's Degree or is in the process of obtaining one.

Requests from teachers for workshops and seminars are encouraged and reviewed by the principal. Sometimes a request comes as a result of the principal's suggestion on a teacher evaluation form. Diocesan standard setting workshops are on-going for all staff members.

Last spring the staff agreed that use of interactive Smart Boards has enhanced student learning at all grade levels. To make full use of them, an elementary and a junior high teacher attended a workshop demonstrating innovative methods to utilize them in a classroom. Excited by the creative prospect of cutting-edge educational practices, they worked with three other staff members to devise specific strategies for further integration of Smart Boards within the SJA curriculum. This new technology enabled teachers to have students more actively engaged in the learning process at all levels.

This is the third year that two faculty meetings a month are based on *Into the Fields* – a catechist and teacher formation for the whole staff – that combines spirituality, theological content and teaching skills. It is rooted in Scripture, liturgy and the Catechism. On a rotating basis, two staff members present the material. The program gives a step by step guide to deepen the faith of the staff through 30 powerful spiritual exercises. They are given concrete teaching methods that will work in the real faith foundation settings in the parish and school.

One example of spiritual growth occurred when the head of the junior high religion department participated in a spiritual cruise that involved over 1,000 people. Max Lucado, Matthew West and Natalie Grant performed throughout the seven days. He has enriched religion classes with lively inspirational stories from the trip.

7. School Leadership:

There was so much excitement at SJA last spring when principal, Sr. Carolyn Sieg, O.S.B., was selected to receive the first diocesan Bishop Kaffer Outstanding Principal Award. She also received a congratulatory certificate from the Illinois House of Representatives acknowledging her contribution to the education of students in the State of Illinois. Her staff agreed with the accolades that describe her as one with a listening ear and a warm heart.

SJA school is a parish school headed by the pastor, principal, assistant principal and administrative assistant. A ten-member school board meets monthly with the pastor and principal. Each board member heads a committee that assists the principal with long-range planning and marketing. An endowment committee was formed in 1984 to ensure the future of SJA.

Daily operations of the school, implementation of policy, management of the staff and formation of the curriculum are all responsibilities of the principal. Using Joliet Diocesan guidelines, she works with the pastor, school board, and faculty to promote excellence in a Catholic school. With sound budget management, yearly fund raisers and the Adopt-a-Student program, she keeps that education affordable.

The principal has responsibility for teachers' goals and lesson plans that align with the Joliet Diocesan Guidelines. She provides outstanding leadership in early intervention strategies to promote student success. Each teacher receives a gift certificate to a local teacher store where they can purchase relevant supplementary materials. Policy initiatives in the budget give highest priority to on-going teacher education for classes, seminars and workshops that enhance strategies for improving student performance. To successfully respond to the demands of the 21st century classroom, the principal attends the NCEA Principals' Forum every year.

The principal ensures that the special education teacher reviews accommodations with teachers. The Teacher Assistance Team meets weekly to address academic or behavior concerns noted by the elementary teachers. With assistance from the school counselor, a plan of action is devised and carried out. RTI, a federally mandated program, is a monitoring tool focused on achievement, or lack of it, after scientific and systematic researched methods have been put in place.

The school administrative team, under the direction of the principal, works closely with the School Board, Parent-School Organization, Athletic Association and parent volunteers to establish a strong parish community that makes St. Joan of Arc School a happy and fulfilling place to be.

PART VI - PRIVATE SCHOOL ADDENDUM

11PV119

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.)

$2840	$3144	$3144	$3144	$3144	$3144
K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th

$3144	$3144	$3144	$0	$0	$0
6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th

$0	$0
12th	Other

4. What is the educational cost per student? (School budget divided by enrollment) $5128

5. What is the average financial aid per student? $1965

6. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 21%

7. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 83%

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 3 Test: Iowa Test of Basic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2005 Publisher: Riverside Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Sep	Oct	Oct	Feb	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	86	81	79	87	86
Number of students tested	54	65	63	58	61
Percent of total students tested	92	88	95	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	5	8	3	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	8	12	5	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:					

11PV119

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 3 Test: Iowa Test of Basic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2005 Publisher: Riverside Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Sep	Oct	Oct	Feb	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	89	89	82	81	81
Number of students tested	54	58	63	58	61
Percent of total students tested	92	88	95	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	5	8	3	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	8	12	5	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:					

11PV119

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 5 Test: Iowa Test of Basic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2005 Publisher: Riverside Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Sep	Oct	Oct	Feb	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	77	85	81	80	85
Number of students tested	63	63	71	72	74
Percent of total students tested	89	95	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	8	3	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	11	5	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:					

11PV119

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 5 Test: Iowa Test of Basic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2005 Publisher: Riverside Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Sep	Oct	Oct	Feb	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	80	84	83	82	88
Number of students tested	63	63	70	72	74
Percent of total students tested	89	95	99	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	8	3	1	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	11	5	1	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:					

11PV119

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 7 Test: Iowa Test of Basic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2005 Publisher: Riverside Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Sep	Oct	Oct	Feb	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	84	85	93	85	87
Number of students tested	71	81	71	81	78
Percent of total students tested	96	100	99	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	0	1	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	4	0	1	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:					

11PV119

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 7 Test: Iowa Test of Basic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2005 Publisher: Riverside Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Sep	Oct	Oct	Feb	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	84	80	88	79	86
Number of students tested	71	80	71	81	78
Percent of total students tested	96	99	99	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	2	1	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	4	2	1	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:					

11PV119