

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

12PV124

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 2011-2012 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 foreign language courses.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2006.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 or 2011.
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

12PV124

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: 14
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2011 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	39	51	90		6	25	29	54
K	26	26	52		7	23	28	51
1	26	23	49		8	32	21	53
2	29	28	57		9	0	0	0
3	32	28	60		10	0	0	0
4	23	30	53		11	0	0	0
5	24	27	51		12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:								570

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
3 % Asian
4 % Black or African American
6 % Hispanic or Latino
1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
78 % White
8 % Two or more races
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2010-2011 school year: 4%

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

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	11
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	8
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	19
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2010	533
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.04
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	4

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 2%

Total number of ELL students in the school: 10

Number of non-English languages represented: 3

Specify non-English languages:

Spanish, Korean, Kirundi

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 3%
 Total number of students who qualify: 14

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: 3%
 Total number of students served: 16

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

<u>0</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>3</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>4</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>6</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>2</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

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

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>18</u>	<u>6</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>7</u>	<u>10</u>
Total number	<u>38</u>	<u>26</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1: 27:1

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Daily student attendance	96%	95%	96%	95%	96%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

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

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2011 are doing as of Fall 2011.

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%**

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

No

Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

As a school established in the tradition of St. Francis de Sales, Holy Cross Academy is committed to each child in its care. The school's vision reflects this in its watchword, 'It's About the Children!' Each child is seen as a precious gift from God, entrusted to the faculty and staff of Holy Cross. Working alongside parents, teachers discover and develop the gifts of each individual in an environment enlivened by the Gospel of Christ.

Holy Cross Academy was founded by St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish in 1998 to provide a Catholic elementary education for children in the Fredericksburg area. It currently serves 565 students in preschool through eighth grade. From its earliest days, the school has been known for its family spirit, academic excellence and community service. Teachers and parents work together to inspire and guide each child to reach his or her highest potential. Over 100 parent and community volunteers contribute their time and talent to the school throughout the year.

The school serves a broad geographic area including the city of Fredericksburg and several counties: Stafford, Spotsylvania, King George, Caroline, Fauquier, and Orange. Although most of the students come from middle class families, the school serves economically needy families and several refugee families from Burundi, as well as foreign exchange students from Korea.

The Holy Cross community is blessed by a group of dynamic, dedicated professionals who are making a difference daily in children's lives. The faculty is composed of a principal, assistant principal, preschool director and 31 teachers, including a librarian, resource teacher, computer specialist, and teachers in Spanish, art, music and physical education, as well as five classroom assistants. The students are also served by a full-time counselor, a part-time school nurse, a certified school chef and a dedicated support staff. All Holy Cross teachers and administrators maintain current certification.

The community of Holy Cross is best served when each individual - students, faculty and staff - can utilize his or her particular gifts for the good of all. Teachers at Holy Cross are encouraged to pursue their individual interests and incorporate them into the school's curriculum. Although the faculty must adhere faithfully to the curriculum established by the Diocese of Arlington, teachers are encouraged to do this in creative and innovative ways. This has led to high levels of professionalism and excellence in teaching. These benefit the students greatly both during their years at Holy Cross and as they move beyond. This gifted faculty has been acknowledged by the Diocesan Teacher of the Year program three times during the programs' five years of existence: two Middle School Teachers of the Year and one Elementary Teacher of the Year. One teacher was also recently named an ING Unsung Hero for her creative project in 3rd grade. The effort which parents put into preparing nominations of faculty members for recognition each year is a testimony of the high esteem in which they hold the faculty.

The faculty monitors the Terra Nova test scores very carefully to identify areas of strength and weakness. Students' test scores tend to rise as they go through the grades at Holy Cross Academy. This is just one sign of the students' success. They are consistently accepted into Governor's School and Advanced Placement courses where their teachers consider them the best prepared and most advanced students. Holy Cross graduates have been asked by their instructors to identify themselves in class at their local public high schools and their classmates have been encouraged to seek their assistance and guidance.

Holy Cross Academy is dedicated to academic excellence. Students are expected to adhere to 'Final Product Guidelines' which require particular care and attention to the work that they produce. The school adheres to a program of continuous growth and improvement for all students and cultivates a sense of pride in the students for their achievements.

Since its opening, Holy Cross Academy has been committed to developing a spirit of service in its students. This includes the annual Giving Tree for needy babies, weekly lunches for the homeless, food drives, Christmas family sponsorships, classroom 'Hope' projects for groups in need and a Catholic Schools Week school-wide fundraiser. Middle School students provide leadership in service in Student Council and the Young Catholics Service Group, whose programs have included working on a farm to harvest food for the poor and providing support for Homes for Our Troops.

Holy Cross Academy is a leader in the Fredericksburg area and is well respected for its commitment to academic excellence and maintaining its Catholic character of fidelity and service. As a Blue Ribbon School, Holy Cross would continue to serve its families with distinction and would strive to foster a spirit of partnership among all the schools in the area.

1. Assessment Results:

A.

Terra Nova tests are administered to students in grades 2 through 7 each Spring. As students of varying abilities are admitted to the school, there is a range of scores on the standardized tests. The school maintains a philosophy of continuous progress for classes and individual students.

Classes tend to score between the 70th and 80th percentiles. Spring 2011 was the first time that the 3rd edition of this test was given and the scores were slightly lower than previously.

The faculty works to increase scores by addressing areas of weakness through systematic evaluation of test scores. Administrators and teachers strive for an 80th percentile class average and consider that proficient for the class as a whole. Any class average below a 70th percentile is not acceptable and is an area of specific focus for the coming year. Recent examples include Spelling and Problem Solving which were identified as areas of weakness on the tests. Various programs were investigated and are currently being implemented to address these concerns.

Classroom teachers, administrators and the resource teacher assess individual scores of students annually. If a student scores below the 50th percentile, the student is evaluated by the resource teacher. Students who fall between the 50th and 70th percentiles are monitored for continuous progress. When a student's scores are a cause for concern, previous scores and report cards are viewed to create a complete picture. Although the school has only one resource teacher, many parent and community volunteers work with students needing extra assistance.

Students in kindergarten and 1st grade are assessed by the Virginia PALS. Teachers perform these assessments throughout the year and provide or request assistance for students who are not making sufficient progress. Teaching assistants in these classes make it possible for these children to receive extra help daily.

B.

The most significant performance trend at Holy Cross Academy is the progress of students over time. By comparing 3rd grade and 7th grade scores, one sees that the class as a whole has improved approximately eight percentile points in both reading and mathematics. This gain, along with the students' notable success in all area high schools, speaks to academic excellence throughout the school.

Each Spring when test results are returned to the school, they are used to diagnose students' strengths and weaknesses and to aid in revision of the curriculum and planning of instruction.

Holy Cross Academy adopts the diocesan practice of *Teacher handoff/action plan day*. At the beginning of each new school year, teachers meet with the prior year's teachers. This provides the current teacher insight into each student's performance level. Subsequently, curriculum plans are targeted to fit the upcoming class, with individual accommodations as required.

An action plan is then created by each teacher for improving his/her instruction. Again, using the Terra Nova results, teachers assess mastery, partial mastery, or non-mastery in components of reading, language arts and math for each individual student. By comparing and contrasting these results, teachers establish

significant goals based on the degree of mastery. School-wide test results are used by the principal with input from all the teachers to establish Holy Cross's yearly goals.

All students at Holy Cross Academy participate in the Terra Nova testing program. This includes English language learners, students from disadvantaged backgrounds and students with identified learning disabilities. None of these groups is large enough to form a subgroup and they do not receive alternative testing; therefore, there is no gap between groups. However, the individual test scores of these students are evaluated carefully to discern their learning trends and needs.

Students who are English language learners and do not have any learning disabilities tend to score lower in all tests except mathematics computation for the first two or three years they are in the school. With time, the reading and other test scores improve. If these tests do not improve within three years, the resource teacher evaluates the situation carefully to make sure that the students are making sufficient progress in reading and acquiring the English language.

Individual students with learning disabilities tend to score lower than the class average throughout their years at Holy Cross. These students' scores are studied carefully to ensure that they are making continuous progress. Most of these students also undergo outside testing, often through the public school system, and this information is also used to evaluate their progress. In these instances, the emphasis is on student progress and continuous improvement and achievement.

All students in 2nd and 3rd grades are evaluated very carefully, particularly in reading. Any student not reading on grade level at this time is provided with resource assistance. The teachers focus on this age group so as to avoid a larger gap in achievement occurring over time.

Holy Cross Academy has a stable, experienced faculty. Many have been with the school since it opened in 1998. On average, one or two teachers turn over each year. This stability contributes to the school's consistent test results.

The school's motto, "It's About the Children," is evident in daily instruction, a motivated faculty, and the students' notable success as they move on from Holy Cross Academy.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Teachers at Holy Cross Academy perform many different types of assessment throughout the school year. Utilizing both formal and informal assessments, as well as formative and summative evaluations, teachers work to create an effective picture of the performance of each student and class. When all of this information is put together, it provides valuable material for gauging the performance of the entire school.

Data that is gathered from outside sources provides an objective component to the entire assessment process. Holy Cross Academy utilizes two specific programs to glean this information. Primary grade teachers use the Virginia PALS (Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening) assessments in kindergarten and 1st grade. Terra Nova tests are administered in 2nd through 7th grades. The 8th grade students do not participate as they take high school placement tests.

Kindergarten and 1st grade teachers use the PALS assessment to learn more about each child's strengths and weaknesses within the phonological umbrella. This test is used as a screening mechanism to ensure students are meeting the benchmarks given in the diocesan curriculum guidelines. It also allows teachers to determine if a child would benefit from receiving extra instruction from the school's resource teacher.

Within the classroom, teachers maintain flexible groups of students for instruction based on their academic needs. For example, one small group may be working on beginning and ending consonant sounds in the beginning of the year and another group may be reviewing short vowels and working with

consonant blends. The assessments give teachers an idea of each student's reading level and comprehension skills. Naturally, the small groups change frequently throughout the year since the children master new phonics, reading, and comprehension skills, at different paces.

The fall test results are discussed with the parents during parent -teacher conferences, so that they too understand their child's strengths and weaknesses. The spring test results are also given to the parents for them to see the progress their child has made throughout the school year. Parents are very happy to see their child's progress and also know what areas they can practice more with their child over the summer. The results are shared with the teachers in the next grade so that they can tailor their lessons for optimum learning for each child.

The Terra Nova tests are administered in the spring for students in 2nd through 7th grades. These tests show the teachers which skills were mastered during the school year. This aids teachers in the planning for instruction and setting goals for the following year. The results are sent to the families. Each family receives its own child's report as well as a school report. A detailed explanation of the results and how to read them is mailed home along with the report. The principal shares with the parents the goals teachers have set based upon the testing results.

At the end of each school year, each teacher generates a report based upon the Terra Nova test scores. In addition to the national percentiles, the score reports contain a criterion-referenced section. This allows the faculty to see where students have attained mastery, partial mastery or non-mastery of the curriculum. Teachers comment on the extent to which the objectives have been taught with suggestions for further instruction.

In the weeks before school opens, teachers meet together to discuss the achievement of the students. The previous year's teacher provides insight for the coming year's teacher into the level of achievement of each child. In this way, teachers can focus on the needs of the class and how each student can best be challenged to even higher levels of achievement in the coming year.

In addition to planning for instruction for individual students, the school uses the testing data to evaluate its programs and resources. For example, the teachers recently surfaced Spelling and Word Analysis as weaknesses in the school. These testing scores were lower than others and students were not exhibiting strong skills in the classroom. Teachers evaluated various resources and have moved into a Word Study program to improve student achievement in this area. Word Problems in Mathematics is the next area being targeted by the faculty for improvement.

Holy Cross Academy uses these formal assessments as a resource in its efforts to improve the academic progress of the students. The test results assist teachers in knowing their students' needs and planning to meet those needs for a successful school year and the academic progression of their students. The communication of the testing results not only keeps the line of home and school communication open, it supports the continuum of learning at both school and home. Holy Cross Academy posts test results on its website so that both current school families and those interested in the school can evaluate the school's progress.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Holy Cross Academy administrators and teachers strive to share successful strategies with schools and teachers at the local and state level. Teachers readily share ideas with colleagues at diocesan meetings, during professional development days and workshops, as mentors, and by request.

The Diocese of Arlington's Office of Catholic Schools holds a professional development institute each year. Teachers actively share strategies at these sessions. The principal has provided sessions at the institute on working with parents as partners in educating their children. She has also given workshops at

nearby schools on topics including integrating Salesian spirituality into classrooms and final product guidelines to improve the quality of student work.

Holy Cross's principal and teachers are called on frequently by the Diocese of Arlington to lead sharing sessions on instructional strategies. The principal serves on several diocesan committees which further the educational mission of diocesan schools, such as teacher and principal evaluation revisions, school accreditation requirements and strategic planning. Teachers serve the diocesan schools on curriculum review committees.

Two Holy Cross elementary teachers are members of the Northern Virginia Writing Project, where they shared best practices with colleagues during a summer internship. One of the teachers is now a teacher consultant with the project. One of the middle school science teachers is a member of the Diocesan Science Fair committee where she collaborates on strategies for the Science Fair.

The technology coordinator shares technology related ideas and lesson plans at diocesan quarterly meetings, highlighting those that were especially successful. The art teacher is a member of the Virginia Art Educators Association and presents workshops to art teachers throughout the state. The guidance counselor meets with other counselors several times a year to share best practices and lesson plans. The school librarian attends the Virginia Educational Media Association regional and state conferences each year, where she shares ideas with her peers. She also shares best practices for teaching and learning at diocesan meetings. The resource teacher mentors other resource teachers in the diocese and gives demonstrations of the reading systems she uses with struggling readers.

At Holy Cross Academy, teachers and administrators work to educate the whole child and mold students into well-rounded individuals who are able to share their ideas with others. Through active participation in professional organizations and other learning communities, they share their successful strategies with peers and thus are committed to the continuous improvement of student achievement.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

Holy Cross Academy is committed to forming a partnership with parents and the community in the education of its children. Parents make an active choice to send their children to Holy Cross and the principal and teachers are grateful for the trust parents place in them. Parents and members of the community enrich the education of the students by giving their time and talent to the school.

Teachers maintain open lines of communication with parents through classroom websites linked to the school's main site. Many teachers contact parents weekly to discuss curriculum goals, provide volunteer opportunities and keep parents abreast of student progress and challenges.

The school has a state of the art communication system that allows teachers to engage with parents via voice mail directly from their computers, giving them immediate access to parents' needs and concerns. It is commonplace to see teachers and parents speaking and working together before and after school.

The principal maintains an open door policy for all in the community to express their concerns or receive assistance. She sends out a weekly newsletter to all parents and writes an article each week for the church bulletin. The school's marketing director passes this information on to local and diocesan newspapers.

Parents and community members are invited formally twice a year to volunteer at Holy Cross. These generous volunteers tutor children under the direction of the school's resource teacher. Parent volunteers work closely with teachers to submit grant applications, implement cooperative learning groups, and serve as aides in the faculty workroom. Holy Cross has an active PTO which works steadfastly to enhance the learning environment, supplying Activboards to the classrooms, computers, books, a kiln for the art room and soundproofing for the music room.

Before any important decision is made at the school, parental input is sought, and given, through online surveys or PTO meetings. Recent topics included summer homework, the length of the school day, incorporation of an online Latin course, and student safety.

The school takes advantage of local resources such as performances by the Virginia Opera, a local theater and the local Catholic high school to give students an opportunity to widen their cultural awareness. The Stafford County Public Schools provide workshops for teachers on topics such as ADHD and referrals for educational testing. The Catholic Business Network connects with Holy Cross Academy to adopt classrooms each year, contributing money for classroom resources.

1. Curriculum:

Holy Cross Academy follows the learning standards designed by the Diocese of Arlington. Each curriculum area implements and goes beyond these guidelines. To ensure that the standards are met, curriculum mapping and curriculum monitoring sheets are utilized.

The Religion curriculum teaches the truths of the Catholic Church and guides students' daily participation in their faith, as well as their moral development.

Language Arts integrates Reading, Grammar, Spelling, Composition and Handwriting. Teachers coordinate these skills and enrich their classes with extended activities which emphasize literature. The Library curriculum encourages reading and research, and introduces students to the Accelerated Reader program.

The Math program emphasizes the solid mastery of basic skills and comprehension of advanced mathematical concepts. The school is currently concentrating on problem solving and higher level thinking skills. Pre-Algebra and Algebra are offered to qualified candidates in 7th and 8th grade.

Science is taught primarily through hands-on learning experiences. Through 6th grade students study general science, focusing on scientific methods and validated inquiry. In 7th and 8th grade, students study life and physical science respectively. Throughout the school year, they design and implement a research project.

Social Studies incorporates learning about communities, customs and cultures from near and far. Students learn map skills and participate in the National Geography Bee each year. The 7th and 8th grade program is an intense study of United States history.

The Art program is interdisciplinary, supporting the other curriculum areas. Students learn about great artists of the world and many art techniques. They are encouraged to explore their creative genius and apply it in new ways.

Students in Music classes learn theory, play instruments, experience dance and participate in theatrical programs. Chorus (grades 5-8) and instrumental lessons (grades 3-8) are also open to students.

The Physical Education program emphasizes lifelong personal fitness. All students have a weekly Physical Education class, as well as daily recess periods. The nurse and chef assist in promoting health and wellness.

The Technology program teaches computer literacy, information management, writing and desktop publishing. Technology assignments are typically based on curricular objectives of the other disciplines.

Holy Cross Academy is in compliance with the program's foreign language requirements. Spanish instruction begins in kindergarten for all students and exposes students to the language and culture of Latin America. In 6th grade, students begin an intense academic program which allows them to complete Spanish 1 by the end of 8th grade. Students in grades 6 – 8 are offered the opportunity to take an online Latin course instead of, or in addition to, Spanish.

To provide students with an awareness of careers that are available and the choices they will have to make, a career study program is taught in 6th grade. Students research all aspects of careers and present a career of their choice to the school community.

A Writing Program was designed by the faculty and is implemented school-wide. The objective of this program is to ensure that students develop lifelong writing skills.

The testimonies of alumni, parents and secondary teachers tell of the high success rates of Holy Cross graduates in high school and beyond. The Governor's School director stated last spring that Holy Cross students are the best prepared candidates because of their excellent academic and study skills.

A parent of an alumnus who recently attained his Master's degree said that his son's success was due to his preparation at Holy Cross. Many parents of former students comment on the success of their children in college and how it is due to the solid academic foundation and excellent study skills which they received at Holy Cross Academy.

2. Reading/English:

Holy Cross Academy utilizes an eclectic approach to reading that combines phonics, multi-sensory instruction and sight word vocabulary. The school chose this approach so that the needs of all learners can be met. The teachers believe that most students learn well with a strong phonics-based program. Those who do not learn in this way often need a multi-sensory approach and one that teaches sight word vocabulary.

The Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening provides benchmarks for teachers to identify student abilities and provide early intervention when needed. It also helps teachers identify students who are ready for a more challenging and rich reading environment to encourage them in their journey to become independent, life-long readers. The PALS testing helps with program design so that the needs of all students may be identified and met at the earliest possible level.

Holy Cross uses the *Reading A-Z* program for the primary grades. This approach motivates early learners with both decodable and leveled books. The primary and intermediate grades also incorporate the *Open Court* series by Harcourt-Brace which combines phonics instruction with quality literature and writing experiences. Middle school students read from the EMC Masterpiece series, *Literature and the Language Arts*, and *Literature* by Prentice Hall. Higher order thinking skills are incorporated into literature circles through trade books. Writing skills are developed throughout the curriculum. Through this combined approach, students learn to brainstorm their own questioning.

For struggling students performing below grade level, the school's resource teacher and classroom teachers work together to identify the best program for each student. *The Wilson Method* is a multi-sensory phonetic approach to reading which is used for students who are not successful in the regular classroom. *Read Naturally* is a fluency program used to improve reading through modeling, repeated reading, and progress monitoring. The *Kurzweil* computer program reads texts and tests to students in all grades. *Raz-Kids* is a computer program that monitors fluency and comprehension at home and at school and allows teachers to track student progress.

Students performing above grade level are given the opportunity to excel through *Accelerated Reader* by getting bonus points for reading extra books, free choice reading books with projects, and higher level thinking activities including artwork and drama, challenge vocabulary words, and advanced spelling words such as those on the Scripps Spelling Bee list. Teachers design many different activities that encourage students to read at higher levels and become lifelong readers.

3. Mathematics:

Mathematics instruction is a priority at Holy Cross Academy. The curriculum includes an early emphasis on basic fact and skill acquisition, as well as clearly defined concept development. The school is currently concentrating on improving students' problem solving skills, which require both of these strands, as part of its focus on educating students for the twenty-first century.

Holy Cross's rigorous curriculum begins in kindergarten with basic numerical concepts along with practical applications such as telling time and maintaining a calendar. Grades K-5 use a variety of manipulatives to introduce and reinforce new concepts. Learning stations and flexible groups allow for differentiated instruction. Continuing these concepts through Middle School, classes begin with warm-ups designed to foster problem solving and review basic concepts.

In 7th and 8th grades, the school adds an additional Math section to provide flexibility in meeting students' needs. Students are placed into the classes based on their mathematical aptitude, allowing them to move through the material at a comfortable pace. Depending on the needs in any particular year, the additional class can provide more one-on-one assistance to struggling students or math enrichment to advanced students.

Although the math textbooks are up-to-date, much of the data in them is not, so teachers opt for real-time data collection by the students, including sports scores and statistics, movie receipts and clothing manufacturing. This enhances integrated curriculum activities and shows real world connections. Holy Cross is moving into the use of mobile electronic devices, such as iPads and student devices for the ActivBoards.

Teachers offer additional Math help during noon recess and before and after school. National Junior Honor Society members provide tutoring to students via homework help, math facts drills and computer math games. The resource teacher coordinates volunteers to work with struggling students during and after school. Students in all grades complete summer work using the online *IXL Math* program to review math skills and prepare for a new year.

Middle School students can participate in *Math Olympiads*. Motivated 7th and 8th graders meet after school to practice math skills and compete in contests with other schools throughout the year.

Mathematics instruction is not limited to the Math classes. Special area teachers utilize computer programs and math websites. The art teacher incorporates measurement and patterns in her tessellations lesson. Of course, the application of mathematics in science is ongoing. Math will always be a priority throughout the Holy Cross curriculum.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

With the goal of promoting health skills across the curriculum, Holy Cross teachers have assigned each identified health skill to a specific discipline. The school health team is made up of the school counselor, nurse, technology and physical education teachers as well as the religion and science teachers at each grade level. To support this instruction, Holy Cross purchases subscriptions to Scholastic Magazine's *Choices*, *Weekly Reader's Health Kids* and the websites *Learn to Be Healthy*, *BrainPop* and *Discovery Education*.

The body systems are taught as part of the science curriculum. During this instruction, correlations are made between the body systems and how and why they should be kept healthy. Discussions are led regarding the effects of abusing these systems. In 8th grade, guidance classes draw from the *Life Skills Preparing Students for the Future* curriculum that encourages students to make healthy decisions. The school nurse teaches asthma and allergy awareness to students and staff, and encourages sun safety and

hand hygiene through classroom visits, the school newsletter and a hallway bulletin board. Each year speakers are engaged to promote internet safety, anti-bullying, drug and alcohol awareness and related topics.

The school's Wellness Program promotes healthy lifestyles through nutrition and physical fitness. Family involvement is encouraged by nutrition tips in the newsletter. The school employs a licensed chef who encouraged a team of students to enter the "Recipes for Kids Challenge." Their healthy, kid friendly recipes have been added to the lunch menu. A salad bar is available daily to middle school students, faculty and staff, and is extremely popular. The kitchen staff maintains an herb garden and garden beds which are available for classes to grow their own vegetables.

An Eagle Scout added a fitness trail to the school campus. The trail is available to classes and families year round. The PTO provides regular support for the upkeep and enhancement of the playground, purchasing equipment such as jump ropes, Frisbees and various balls to give students more options for an active recess. There is a middle school sports program, and a parent volunteer recently started a running club for all grades.

The health and physical education curriculum provides the students with a well-rounded approach to living. Holy Cross faculty and staff work to infuse the belief that all people must care for their minds and bodies as well as their spirits, acknowledging reverence for God's great gift of life.

5. Instructional Methods:

Holy Cross Academy welcomes students with diverse learning abilities, including those with learning challenges, those newly arrived from foreign countries, and those with giftedness. The school is committed to the ideal of providing a superior education to all. Teachers design and present lessons in a variety of ways to accommodate student strengths and individual learning styles. All students are challenged by higher level thinking questions and objectives. To insure the use of higher level skills, teachers highlight objectives in their lesson plans which correspond with levels 3 and above of Bloom's Taxonomy.

Students work regularly in small groups to allow for the sharing of ideas and the blending of student strengths. The school resource teacher gives additional support to students with learning difficulties and those learning English as their second language. Teaching assistants, parent and community volunteers, and peer tutors also help students who need additional support. Many teachers make themselves available during recess and after school for extra help and tutoring. Student Assistance Teams guide teachers in meeting needs of students who struggle in the classroom.

In the primary grades, students are placed into Word Study spelling groups based on initial assessments. They are reassessed throughout the year and change groups accordingly. Students read from a variety of leveled texts throughout the elementary grades and are placed into flexible reading groups by skill. *Accelerated Reader* tests are strongly encouraged throughout the grades to give strong readers an extra incentive to read books at a higher level. In middle school, students are placed in math classes based on their aptitude.

Teachers utilize interactive whiteboards and other online resources to engage students actively through technology. Students are encouraged to use online resources such as vocabulary games, math practice and map work.

Holy Cross faculty members make lessons engaging for students through their attention to twenty-first century learning styles. Teachers use up-to-date data and collaborative activities in place of textbook exercises, thus engaging even the most reluctant learners. Active learning is encouraged and students are given many opportunities to showcase their ideas and work products. For students who quickly master

what is taught, teachers frequently provide extension learning activities like web-quests, reports, and projects.

Holy Cross Academy teachers strive to meet the needs of all students. Children come to school with various skill levels and backgrounds, and all teachers do their best to put these individual needs first and foremost.

6. Professional Development:

The principal of Holy Cross Academy plans annual professional development seminars and workshops based on the needs of the students, current educational research, and diocesan initiatives. The principal conducts spirituality classes for the teachers. Opportunities for professional staff development are provided on a continuing basis. They are communicated by internal email, posted flyers in the faculty lounge, and notices in mail boxes. Teachers and staff are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities as they become available. In-service training is a priority for the entire staff.

Faculty members are frequently asked to take on leadership roles in professional development by conducting in-services, heading up committees or implementing new initiatives in the school. Topics have included training in catechetical theory and methodology, interactive whiteboards and other technology, school health and safety, children with special health care needs, classroom management, curriculum mapping, working with special needs students, and certification in first aid and CPR.

Funds are made available for professional development seminars such as *Math Problem Solving*, *The Writing Process*, *Homework That Gets Done*, *Connecting Boys and Books*, *Twenty-First Century Learning*, *Tools for Teaching* and *Dealing with Self-Injuring Behavior*. In addition, presenters are invited to the school to provide professional development programs and enrichment opportunities.

When teachers attend professional development workshops, they are encouraged to share their knowledge and insights with the entire faculty at meetings or by disseminating the information electronically. In this way, many teachers and their students can benefit from the professional development.

Current research supports the use of technology to enhance learning across the curriculum. This allows faculty, staff, and students to collaborate on projects and share resources. The use of interactive whiteboards is an integral part of the teaching and learning process at Holy Cross, affording teachers the opportunity to integrate software and web resources seamlessly into lessons. To maintain proficiency, instructional classes in the use of interactive whiteboards are available through the diocesan summer seminars and on-site workshops.

So as to provide more effective teaching and learning, Holy Cross Academy, in partnership with the diocese, has been implementing Curriculum Mapping. Design and improvement of the curriculum and instructional practice are in direct correlation with state standards and are the major elements of curriculum mapping. Continuing professional development in this area allows teachers to collaborate within both the school and the diocese to meet students' needs and ensure academic standards alignment.

7. School Leadership:

The philosophy of the leadership team of Holy Cross Academy is centered upon discovering the gifts of each individual and creating a milieu where these can be developed. The principal emphasizes both the Catholic character of the school and its academic mission. The faculty and staff are encouraged and assisted in their charge of educating each child, spiritually, academically, physically and emotionally.

As a parish school, Holy Cross is under the direction of the pastor of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish. The pastor entrusts the leadership of the school to the principal who also seeks

direction and implements policies from the Office of Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Arlington. Both the pastor and the diocesan staff contribute to the good of the school community, although the day-to-day operations are left in the hands of the principal and those who assist her.

The principal is assisted by an assistant principal, a preschool director and experienced faculty members and support staff. The parents of the students are the primary educators of their children and, as such, their thoughts and ideas are valued.

The principal proposes annual goals for the school community, based upon the current needs of the students and relevant educational research. These may also be generated from test score analysis, faculty input, or parent feedback. The faculty discusses how these goals can best be implemented for the good of the students. In all decisions made by the school's leadership team, the ultimate question is how it will benefit the students.

Some recent initiatives proposed and led by the school principal include the focus on twenty-first century learning, final product guidelines for student work, a school-wide writing program, a revised discipline program, adding a 2nd world language through an online academy, implementing an online Math review program and a change in the lunch and recess schedule. These initiatives were based upon sound educational research and were implemented for the good of the children.

The academic program at Holy Cross is strong as is demonstrated by the success of its graduates and the students' above average standardized test scores. Each year, the faculty evaluates and updates textbooks, teaching methods and classroom materials. At Holy Cross, the principal communicates the ideal that the school must continually renew and revitalize its academic program in order to provide its students with the best education possible.

PART VI - PRIVATE SCHOOL ADDENDUM

1. Private school association: Catholic

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

3. What are the 2011-2012 tuition rates, by grade? (Do not include room, board, or fees.)

<u>\$4930</u>	<u>\$4930</u>	<u>\$4930</u>	<u>\$4930</u>	<u>\$4930</u>	<u>\$4930</u>
K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
<u>\$4930</u>	<u>\$4930</u>	<u>\$4930</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>
6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th
<u>\$</u>	<u>\$2745</u>				
12th	Other				

4. What is the educational cost per student? (School budget divided by enrollment) \$5500

5. What is the average financial aid per student? \$1400

6. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?
8%

7. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 28%

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3

Test: Terra Nova 3

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd Edition Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	71	72	71	69	72
Number of students tested	51	51	49	47	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:					

12PV124

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3

Test: Terra Nova 3

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd Edition Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	72	79	82	71	78
Number of students tested	51	51	49	47	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:					

12PV124

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4

Test: Terra Nova 3

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd Edition Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	70	75	64	72	70
Number of students tested	48	52	46	57	58
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:					

12PV124

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4

Test: Terra Nova 3

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd Edition Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	73	78	76	73	75
Number of students tested	48	52	46	57	58
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:					

12PV124

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5

Test: Terra Nova 3

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd Edition Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	69	72	74	74	63
Number of students tested	53	48	53	59	58
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:					

12PV124

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5

Test: Terra Nova 3

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd Edition Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	69	83	78	75	79
Number of students tested	53	48	53	59	58
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:					

12PV124

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 6

Test: Terra Nova 3

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd Edition Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	71	72	78	67	76
Number of students tested	50	49	60	52	50
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:					

12PV124

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 6

Test: Terra Nova 3

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd Edition Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	78	70	76	77	75
Number of students tested	50	49	60	52	50
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:					

12PV124

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 7

Test: Terra Nova 3

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd Edition Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	79	78	63	74	75
Number of students tested	46	57	47	46	56
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:					

12PV124

NATIONAL NORMS-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 7

Test: Terra Nova 3

Edition/Publication Year: 3rd Edition Publisher: McGraw-Hill Scores reported as: Percentiles

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Average Score	80	85	79	83	85
Number of students tested	46	57	47	46	56
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:					

12PV124