U.S. Department of Education
2017 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[ ] Public or [X] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [ ] Title I   [ ] Charter   [ ] Magnet   [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Mrs. Karen Marie Smith
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name St. John Regional Catholic School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 8414 Opossumtown Pike
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Frederick   State MD   Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 21702-2408

County   Frederick

Telephone (301) 662-6722   Fax   (301) 695-7024

Web site/URL   http://www.sjrcs.org   E-mail   ksmith@sjrcs.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

_____Date_____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Barbara Edmondson   E-mail bedmondson@archbalt.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Archdiocese of Baltimore   Tel.   (410) 547-5387
I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

_____Date_____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Chris Currens
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

_____Date_____
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

1. The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)

2. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.

3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2017 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be 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.

5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2011 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.

6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016.

7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.

8. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.

9. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.

10. The 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.

11. 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.

12. 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

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2016-2017) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district   0 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   (per district designation):   0 Middle/Junior high schools
                                        0 High schools
                                        0 K-12 schools

                                        0 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

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

   [ ] Urban or large central city
   [ ] Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
   [X] Suburban
   [ ] Small city or town in a rural area
   [ ] Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2016 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	20	33	53
K	16	25	41
1	31	23	54
2	17	24	41
3	19	34	53
4	22	25	47
5	25	30	55
6	29	25	54
7	42	43	85
8	24	24	48
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	245	286	531

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

    0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
    4 % Asian
    8 % Black or African American
    7 % Hispanic or Latino
    0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
    75 % White
    6 % Two or more races
    100 % Total

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report 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.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2015 – 2016 school year: 6%

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred *to* the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	20
(2) Number of students who transferred *from* the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	8
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	28
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	493
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.057
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	6

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
    0 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 2 %

Total number students who qualify: 9

8. Students receiving special education services: 5 %
    27 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

2	Autism	0	Orthopedic Impairment
0	Deafness	0	Other Health Impaired
0	Deaf-Blindness	9	Specific Learning Disability
0	Emotional Disturbance	13	Speech or Language Impairment
1	Hearing Impairment	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
0	Mental Retardation	2	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
2	Multiple Disabilities	0	Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: <u>12</u>

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	23
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	7
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	20
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1   <u>23:1</u>

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

Required Information	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	96%	95%	96%	92%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**
    Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2016.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.
    Yes <u>X</u>   No

    If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. <u>2009</u>

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

To provide a learning environment rooted in the Catholic Church's Gospel tradition that will develop 21st century leaders through academic excellence, service, and Christian values.

Generations of children from Frederick and its surroundings have begun their academic and spiritual education at St. John Regional Catholic School (SJRCS). Founded by Jesuit Father John McElroy in 1829, the school located on Second Street in Frederick, began as a school for boys. This building housed both elementary and high school students until 1958 when, due to crowded conditions, the high school moved to a historic mansion called Prospect Hall. In 1991, the elementary school was officially designated as a regional school to serve the educational needs of seven Catholic parishes in Frederick County.

As enrollment increased, the foundation was laid for the need for a new school that would be able to accommodate more students. In the fall of 2005, that dream became a reality when SJRCS moved its campus to 8414 Opossumtown Pike in Frederick. The new school building shares 27 acres with the newly established St. Katharine Drexel parish which has just completed building a brand new church on the property.

The new building has a capacity of 750 student that includes newly formed Pre-K classes for both three and four year olds. Currently, there are 531 students from Pre-K to 8th grade who attend the school. Students come from three states and thirty-five different zip codes. St. John Regional Catholic School is the only Archdiocesan school in Frederick County. The school is accredited by AdvancED and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI).

SJRCS is a legacy school for many of its families. Parents and grandparents of current students can be counted among its alumni. Each year at graduation, a former student is chosen to receive the Distinguished Graduate Award. Past recipients include a Frederick pediatrician; the Chief Marketing Officer of Sweet Frog Enterprise; a past commander of Fort Detrick; and a Frederick judge. SJRCS believes that the foundation that these individuals built at the school has been a strong basis for their success.

Students in all grades participate in service projects that benefit both local and global initiatives. Students are taught the importance of giving back to the community and how one person working for a positive outcome can have far-reaching effects. Student organizations like Student Council, National Junior Honor Society, Wildcat Morning News, and Light of Hope help to develop the leadership potential of our students. Students in these organizations act as ambassadors for our school to the wider community.

Some key initiatives that have recently been added include a Positive Behavior Intervention Program (PBIS). Last year, SJRCS was recognized at the Bronze Level, and this year the school was awarded the Silver Level. PBIS recognizes schools that try to take a positive approach to student behavior.

In 2014, SJRCS was named a Maryland Green School. The Maryland Green Schools Award Program allows schools and their communities to evaluate their efforts in environmental sustainability. Participating schools empower youth to make changes to reduce environmental impact and foster environmental literacy.

SJRCS has added additional academic programs since receiving the National Blue Ribbon in 2009. The school now offers a PRIDE program for students with learning differences. SJRCS continues to offer and improve its QUEST program, which is for gifted and talented students. The school has also initiated a 1:1 computing program in its 7th and 8th grade classes. It started with an iPad program that has evolved into a program that currently utilizes Chromebooks. SJRCS is also one of only seven schools designated as a STEM school by the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

SJRCS has added a MakerSpace to enhance its STEM program that is used by all students in grades PK-8. This space, that encourages creativity and hands-on learning, houses three 3-D printers and Little Bit technology to teach coding. The 3-D printers are also used as part of our science program by utilizing the STEAMtrax curriculum that integrates real-life problem solving with 3-D projects for grades 3-8.

When SJRCS received the National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence Award in 2009, it was based on the standardized test scores of the highest grade tested, which at the time, was our 8th grade. It is gratifying to

know that this time the school was able to meet the required test scores at ALL grade levels tested. Being able to say that SJRCS was a Blue Ribbon School was, and still is, a source of pride for our school community. The school had a yearlong celebration that began with a prayer service that was attended by members of the Department of Catholic Schools, civic leaders, and representatives from the Office of Non-Public Education. SJRCS also received commendations from state and local leaders. Throughout the year, celebrations continued with faculty, parents, and students with a variety of "blue" inspired events. The faculty and staff were proud and honored to be recognized for their dedication and commitment to our students' academic achievement.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Core Curriculum:**

The school follows the course of study for the Archdiocese of Baltimore, which is based on National Standards. Over the past few years, math and language arts have been revised with a critical eye on the common core curriculum in those subject areas. Science was also recently rewritten and is based on the NGSS standards.

The core curriculum includes Religion, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Students in grades K-8 also receive weekly instruction in art, music, physical education, and technology. A Foreign Language Experience Program (FLEX) is offered to students in Grades 5-8. The goal of our FLEX program is to introduce students to foreign languages as well as cultures.

Religion is taught on a daily basis to all grade levels. Students are taught prayers, Bible Stories, how to use a Bible, the parts of the Mass, the importance of God in their lives, and the basic teachings of Jesus Christ. The Grade 8 students at SJRCS attain an appreciation for the history of their faith through a church history course. Students continue to grow as Christian individuals as they examine morality and how to apply it in their everyday lives. Civic responsibility is taught in Religion classes at all grade levels through service learning projects rooted in social justice. They reach out to those less fortunate than themselves to fulfill their obligation to those Jesus speaks of when he said: "Whatsoever you do to the least of my people, you do unto me."

In a typical school day, approximately an hour and a half is devoted to instruction in language arts in each classroom. Content areas include: grammar, handwriting, reading, spelling, vocabulary, and writing. Primary grade students build a strong phonics foundation that helps them with decoding. Fluency and automaticity are also emphasized in the primary grades. Students read a variety of genre with approximately a 50/50 balance between fiction and nonfiction. Students are taught to use close reading strategies and how to analyze literature.

Students in Grades K-6 use a basal reading series. Grades 7 and 8 use a literature-based approach where students use an anthology as well as contemporary and classic novels. Eighth grade students write research papers using the MLA format.

The math curriculum encourages primary grade students to manipulate and experience number concepts before being expected to perform paper and pencil tasks. Intermediate through middle grade students study both concrete and abstract mathematical concepts. Students' math performance is assessed through the standards of concepts, computation, and problem solving. Each lesson and activity addresses these specific standards to gain a well-rounded picture of the student's progression through the math curriculum. In middle school, accelerated students are offered pre-algebra in the seventh grade and then have the potential to take high school algebra in the eighth grade. Students who successfully complete the Algebra I course can receive high school credit from Frederick County Public Schools.

Science is integrated with instruction focusing on all key areas of science. Hands-on activities within the classroom are encouraged. Through close examination of life, earth, and physical science, students at SJRCS are given the opportunity to learn about the world around them. Across the grades, students begin to establish core knowledge in science as they study topics such as the food chain, plant cycle, sources of energy, weather, the solar system, rocks, land forms, and simple machines. The scientific method is taught at all grade levels. Middle school students regularly use our state-of-the-art science lab. Teachers work collaboratively to plan integrated STEM lessons. The school has an annual STEM Fair that encourages participation by all students from Pre-K to Grade 8. Students in Grades 7 and 8 use a digital textbook.

Social Studies at SJRCS combines elements of history, geography, economics, civics, and political science. Through a variety of instructional methods, students attain a conscious awareness of themselves as individuals and the community and culture in the world around them. All grades deal with the development

of map skills, interpretation of graphs and chart data, and cause /effect. SJRCS students are extremely fortunate to attend a school located in an area of the country rich in history, which causes topics in this area to come alive. Students in Grades 7 and 8 also use a digital textbook for social studies.

SJRCS offers Pre-K programs for both 3 and 4 year olds. The Pre-K program has a Letter of Compliance from the Maryland State Department of Education and has reached Level 3 with the Maryland EXCELS program. Pre-school students are assessed at the beginning of the school year using the Brigance Early Childhood Screen. This helps to determine school readiness and identify possible developmental delays.

A theme-based integrated curriculum is utilized that aligns with the kindergarten curriculum. The curriculum includes: literacy and language, hands-on math, science exploration, and technology. This is supplemented by classroom celebrations and art instruction. Students attend PE and music classes and visit the media center once a week. They also visit our MakerSpace on a regular basis.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

All students from kindergarten to eighth grade participate in non-core subjects once a week. This includes art, music, physical education, and computer. Students in grades K-4 receive instruction in the media center once a week while students in grades 5-8 receive foreign language instruction. Students in Pre-K receive weekly instruction in music and physical education and visit the media center once a week. Participation in non-core subjects helps to provide our students with a well-rounded education that helps to develop the whole person: mind, body, and soul. All non-core subjects follow the curriculum as outlined by the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

St. John Regional Catholic School is in compliance with the National Blue Ribbon program's foreign language requirements. The foreign language curriculum standards reflect the Five C's for foreign language learning in the 21st century. These standards include: communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities. Students are asked to communicate in oral and written form. They experience other cultures that leads to a better understanding and appreciation of our global society. Fifth grade studies American Sign Language; seventh grade studies Italian. The languages studied also make connections to other subject areas. For example, in sixth grade, when students are studying about ancient civilizations in social studies, they are also learning Greek and Latin root words and the connections and similarities they have to other languages. Students analyze the similarities and differences between languages. And they expand their own local community to a more global perspective. The Mandarin Chinese curriculum studied by eighth grade students also has a STEM component that connects with science that includes units on water, engineering, transportation, and plants.

Instruction in the Visual Arts helps students to understand and apply a variety of processes and techniques. Students are taught principles of design as well as fundamental art concepts. They are also taught the relationship between art and history. And they learn to make connections between the visual arts and other disciplines. Art lessons are often connected to topics taught in social studies, math, and literature; such as, African masks, fraction quilts, tessellations, storyteller dolls, scrimshaw, and cave art. The art room is equipped with a kiln which makes it possible to include pottery lessons in our art program.

The Music curriculum teaches students to perform alone and with others. Students learn to analyze and describe music. They are also taught the relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts. Students learn to understand music in relation to history, culture, liturgy, and our Catholic identity. Upper grade students create their own music using an app called Garage Band. All students in Grade 3 learn how to play the recorder. Students in Grades 4-8 can participate in weekly instrumental music lessons and can participate in the school band. Students in Grades 4-8 can also be part of the school bell choir and/or chorus.

The Physical Education curriculum applies movement concepts and principles to the learning and development of motor skills. Students learn that a physically active and healthy lifestyle is a moral responsibility. They are challenged each month with a different Healthy Wildcat Challenge. Challenges include eating fruits and vegetables daily, eating more grains, and eating a healthy breakfast. Students who

complete the challenge receive a "brag tag" to display. During physical education classes, students practice a variety of movement forms. They learn the importance of teamwork that carries over into their regular classes.

Students can use the skills learned in physical education by participating in a variety of after school sports. SJRCS has teams for all grade levels that include soccer, basketball, golf, volleyball, cheerleading, and lacrosse. SJRCS also offers a Girls on the Run program for girls in grades 3-5.

When they visit the media center, students meet standards in information literacy, independent learning, social responsibility, and media literacy. They learn how to access and evaluate information. Students review journalism in American society and are exposed to the art of storytelling.

The Technology Curriculum teaches students how technology tools can help them to collaborate, communicate, and interact with others as global citizens. Students learn how to use technology for problem solving and how to augment critical thinking skills in cross-curricular activities. They also learn to apply Christian values to social, ethical, and human issues related to the application of technology in their daily lives.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

At SJRCS, identification of students who need remediation or enrichment starts at the kindergarten level. The school administration and school counselor meet on a regular basis with classroom teachers at all grade levels to identify students who are in need of interventions. Formative assessments are used in both reading and math. The school has a reading specialist who assists students who need additional help in phonics and reading. It also has a teacher who oversees our gifted and talented program, called QUEST.

The mission of the QUEST Program is to provide various types and levels of enrichment opportunities for SJRCS students – recognizing that all children are gifted and talented in some areas. The classroom teachers, in collaboration with the QUEST specialist, determine which resources best meet students' needs. The SJRCS QUEST enrichment program began in 1991 and is based on the Renzulli Schoolwide Enrichment model.

A reading specialist and the QUEST teacher use a Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI) to determine students who need extra help; as well as, students who need to be challenged. The QRI can identify a student's frustration, instructional, and independent reading levels.

Students who need interventions for fluency use the Read Naturally program. Teaching assistants are trained in how to facilitate the program under the direct supervision of the classroom teacher. This auditory program guides students through the steps to develop fluency and phonics skills, support comprehension, and improve vocabulary. Students who need interventions for phonemic awareness meet with a reading specialist who is trained in the Orton-Gillingham method. This is a language-based, multi-sensory, program for teaching phonics that is sequential and cumulative. The reading specialist uses a program called the Road to the Code that helps primary grade students who are having difficulty with early literacy skills. This teacher also delivers the Title-I program to our students in Grades K-5 who have been identified as needing additional reading supports.

Students in Grades kindergarten through Grade 6 who are identified as needing enrichment in reading meet on a weekly basis to participate in the Junior Great Books program. A matrix is used that tracks standardized test scores, teacher recommendation, and Language Arts grades to determine the students who will participate in the program. Junior Great Books promotes reading, thinking, and the sharing of ideas.

SJRCS offers the PRIDE program (Pupils Receiving Inclusive Diversified Education) for students in Grades 3-8 who have an identified and documented learning disability. The program is taught by a certified special education teacher who provides specialized instruction in language arts and math coupled with inclusion in general education classes within the larger student body. Students are given accommodations, as needed, along with what are called the PRIDE 5.

PRIDE allows the community as a whole to learn more about the diversity of learners and learning styles and to appreciate what each student brings to our school. A Personalized Progress Plan (PPP) is developed for each PRIDE student. PRIDE serves the mission of Catholic schools to educate the whole child, affirm their unique gifts, and nurture them to reach their full potential.

Language Arts and Mathematics texts include resources for differentiating instructions. Teachers can meet the needs of students who are in need of additional assistance as well as students who need to be challenged within the regular classroom. From Grades 4-8, students in Language Arts and Math classes are grouped in on grade or above grade level classes. While the curriculum taught is the same, these homogenous groupings allow teachers to differentiate expectations for independence and pacing of the delivery of instruction.

At the end of Grade 6, a teacher-created matrix determines math placement for Grade 7. Standardized test scores, end of the year average, cumulative end of year exam, and the Orleans-Hannah Algebra Readiness Prognosis Test are used to rank students. Students who are ranked near the top, take Pre-Algebra in 7th grade followed by Algebra I in 8th grade. The rest of the students take Math 7 followed by Pre-Algebra in 8th grade. The Algebra I course offered is a high school level course. Students who enter a Frederick County public high school can receive high school credit for the Algebra course they complete at SJRCS.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. **School Climate/Culture:**

SJRCS has both a full-time school counselor and registered nurse. These personnel help to ensure the social and emotional well-being of our students. School spirit is strong at SJRCS whether it be on the sports field, at an academic competition, or at a school-wide event. Everyone cheers for the SJRCS Wildcats, our school mascot.

Students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities like the History Bee, It's Academic Team, Stock Market Game, and Chess Club. After school activities help boost academic performance, behavior, and attendance. They also promote a positive, student-centered culture. All extracurricular activities are for multiple grade levels and encourage student comradery. Special activities like 8th graders reading to kindergarten students happen regularly at SJRCS. It is heartwarming to watch how the older students interact with the younger ones, and how the younger ones look up to the older students.

Team building is an important part of the school culture. Teachers participate in activities throughout the year to help build collegiality. The school has an annual faculty retreat which is part professional development – part fun! There is also an annual staff Christmas party along with events like the Holiday Bake-Off and Ugly Sweater Competition. Throughout the year, special breakfasts for the staff and contests to help build staff morale are planned.

In 2015, the Washington Post named SJRCS a Top Workplace. For the past two years, the school has also been recognized as a Healthy Workplace. Including things like Fitbit challenges and monthly salad bars at lunch help to make everyone feel like they are part of a winning team.

One of the most anticipated events of the year is the Faculty/Staff Basketball Game against the 8th grade students. The bleachers are filled with cheering SJRCS families. This is one of the many events that help to build a positive environment at SJRCS.

SJRCS has several ways to recognize our outstanding faculty members. Every year, a teacher is nominated to be considered as a teacher of excellence, an award given by the Archdiocese of Baltimore. Faculty members select one of their peers to be recognized as the Friends of Catholic Education Teacher of the Year.

A positive environment at the heart of a school can only help to make it a great place to be and learn. When staff and students feel good about their joint efforts, it makes everyone want to work that much harder for continued success.

2. **Engaging Families and Community:**

SJRCS families are at the heart of our school. SJRCS is always telling parents, "We couldn't have done it without you." Without their willingness to volunteer, the school would not be as strong as it is. The students love to see their parents in the school. They learn valuable lessons about the joy of helping others as they watch their parents give so willingly throughout the school day and in a variety of ways.

Parent volunteers serve on committees and plan special events that the whole school community can enjoy. Our Home School Association (H.S.A.) helps to plan a school wide Halloween event, a Breakfast with St. Nicholas, and a school fair. These are all fun events that help build community at our school. Parent volunteers also help to plan our annual Catholic Schools Week celebration that always has a service component that helps the students of SJRCS help those in need in our community. The school has sponsored collections for homeless students in Frederick County, prepared tote bags for pediatric patients at Johns Hopkins Hospital, and collected nursery items for a local pregnancy center.

Parents, faculty members, and students provide feedback through annual school satisfaction surveys.

Results of the surveys are shared with stakeholders and are used to develop our continuous improvement plan each year. The school administration also hosts several "coffee talks" during the year to engage parents in conversations about their ideas for school improvement. For example, parent suggestions about healthier lunch choices in our school cafeteria menu have been implemented.

The school also sponsors a Great-4-Business program that encourages local businesses in Frederick County to support the school in a variety of ways. This includes a partnership with the US Army Medical Research and Materiel Command (USAMRMC) at Fort Detrick that has helped to enhance our STEM curriculum.

Family involvement and volunteerism helps SJRCS to be able to raise the necessary funds to purchase additional technology to help improve student learning. They also provide funds so that we can continue to offer innovative programs that lead to student success. For example, they help to subsidize the annual trip for our 6th graders to spend a week at North Bay, an environmental camp located on the Chesapeake Bay. This is an opportunity that our students do not soon forget. It gives them a hands-on experience in real world problem solving.

3. Professional Development:

SJRCS is committed to the professional development of its teachers, strongly encouraging them to become life-long learners and self-reflective practitioners. During the school year, days are regularly set aside for professional development. Some of this time is mandated and planned by the Department of Catholic Schools and others are carried out by SJRCS.

This year the school has partnered with Notre Dame of Maryland University and its Academy of Catholic Educators (ACES) to implement Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) within the school. Teachers have been grouped by discipline and/or grade taught, and meet regularly to share expertise, discuss current research, and work collaboratively to improve teaching and learning. Some topics include mathematical reasoning, critical reading for both fiction and nonfiction texts, and incorporating technology into the non-core subject areas.

SJRCS has also been a long time Professional Development School (PDS) with Mount St. Mary's University in Frederick, Maryland. SJRCS works collaboratively with the university to help prepare teacher candidates with both academic and clinical experiences. The focus of the PDS partnership is improved student performance through research-based teaching and learning. Additionally, professors from the Mount have given workshops for our teachers and our teachers have been invited to participate in workshops at the Mount and other Maryland universities. At the conclusion of each student teaching experience, SJRCS is provided a course voucher to be used by one of the teachers at no cost.

All full-time teachers are required to maintain teacher certification within the state of Maryland. This requires them to renew their license every five years by taking six credit hours of approved coursework within their discipline. Many teachers seek learning opportunities beyond this requirement through webinars and teacher conferences.

Professional development is primarily funded through money that is allocated in a line item of the school's yearly budget. Beyond that, the school applies for Title II-A funds through Frederick County to obtain additional funds that can be used to cover teacher conferences, as well as books and resources used by teachers in their professional learning communities.

Last year, some funds were used to purchase a new observation software that was used to supplement observation tools required by the Archdiocese of Baltimore. The ELEOT, or Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool, is a learner-centric observation tool that primarily focuses on student engagement and equitable learning. The teachers use this tool to conduct peer observations.

4. **School Leadership:**

The daily operations of the school are managed by the principal and assistant principal in a spirit of collaboration with faculty and staff. The principal is directly responsible to several stakeholders including the school board, parents, faculty, regional pastors, and the Department of Catholic Schools. School administrators are assisted by an administrative team that includes a full-time school counselor, a nurse, director of marketing and development, and an admissions director. The principal and assistant principal meet each Monday to discuss concerns and initiatives. This is in addition to meeting with the entire administrative team at weekly staff meetings.

During the past year, SJRCS transitioned to an Archdiocesan Collaborative School (ACS) model within the Archdiocese of Baltimore. This is a shared governance model that includes several key school stakeholders, including the school principal, superintendent, school board, and the canonical representative. These stakeholders work together to make decisions that best address the needs of our students and our school community.

Strong communication and transparent decision making are a priority of the school administration. Faculty meetings with the teachers are held bi-monthly, and teaching assistant meetings are held once a month. Every Friday, each staff member receives the Friday Focus. This is a weekly newsletter from the principal that offers specific suggestions for student success.

Teachers are encouraged to take on leadership roles by serving as grade level coordinators. They also serve as club moderators as well as members of committees such as the PBIS and Green Teams, STEM Cohort, and Student Advocacy Team. A teacher also serves as our STEM coordinator. Many of our teachers take on supervisory roles by mentoring student interns from nearby universities.

The principal and school counselor meet monthly with teachers to discuss students of concern so that necessary interventions can be put into place. They also facilitate communication with parents regarding student progress and expectations. The school counselor works closely with the administration to discuss issues that might be interfering with student success. This also includes issues like bullying and home concerns that can often interfere with student performance.

School leadership reviews teacher lesson plans on a weekly basis. Subject specific meetings are held regularly to monitor adherence to mandated curriculum. Additionally, all final decisions regarding textbook adoptions are made by the school leadership in collaboration with the faculty to ensure alignment of the curriculum across the grades. All of the above contribute to successful student learning.

PART VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The analysis of yearly standardized test scores remains one of the most effective strategies for influencing the school's success. For the past ten years, the Archdiocese of Baltimore has chosen to use the Stanford 10 Achievement Test and the OLSAT 8 Ability Test. It is mandated by the Archdiocese that all students in 3rd through 8th grade take these standardized assessments every spring. It has been the decision of the school to also test second grade students in order to gather as much data as possible so we can better understand them as learners.

PART VII – NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

1. Non-public school association(s): __Catholic__

   Identify the religious or independent associations, if any, to which the school belongs. Select the primary association first.

2. Does the school have nonprofit, tax-exempt (501(c)(3)) status?   Yes <u>X</u>   No

3. What is the educational cost per student? $<u>7215</u>
   (School budget divided by enrollment)

4. What is the average financial aid per student? $<u>1760</u>

5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to   <u>3</u>%
   scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?

6. What percentage of the student body receives
   scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction?   <u>27</u>%

PART VIII – ASSESSMENT RESULTS FOR NORM-REFERENCED TESTS

REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Math
Edition/Publication Year: 2002

Test: SAT-10th Edition
Publisher: Pearson Education

Grade: 3
Scores are reported here as: Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	640
Number of students tested	46
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

Subject: Math   **Test:** SAT-10th Edition   **Grade:** 4
Edition/Publication Year: 2002   **Publisher:** Pearson   **Scores are reported here**
                                      Education   **as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	662
Number of students tested	41
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

Subject: Math
Edition/Publication Year: 2002

Test: SAT-10th Edition
Publisher: Pearson
Education

Grade: 5
**Scores are reported here
as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	683
Number of students tested	40
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

Subject: Math
Edition/Publication Year: 2002

Test: SAT-10th Edition
Publisher: Pearson Education

Grade: 6
Scores are reported here as: Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	690
Number of students tested	72
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

Subject: Math   **Test:** SAT-10th Edition   **Grade:** 7
Edition/Publication Year: 2002   **Publisher:** Pearson Education   **Scores are reported here as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	707
Number of students tested	40
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

Subject: Math
Edition/Publication Year: 2002

Test: SAT-10th Edition
Publisher: Pearson Education

Grade: 8
Scores are reported here as: Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	720
Number of students tested	58
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

Subject: Reading/ELA   **Test:** SAT-10th Edition   **Grade:** 3
Edition/Publication Year: 2002   **Publisher:** Pearson Education   **Scores are reported here as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	658
Number of students tested	46
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

Subject: Reading/ELA   **Test:** SAT-10th Edition   **Grade:** 4
Edition/Publication Year: 2002   **Publisher:** Pearson Education   **Scores are reported here as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	675
Number of students tested	41
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

Subject: Reading/ELA
Edition/Publication Year: 2002

Test: SAT-10th Edition
Publisher: Pearson Education

Grade: 5
Scores are reported here as: Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	683
Number of students tested	40
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

Subject: Reading/ELA
Edition/Publication Year: 2002

Test: SAT-10th Edition
Publisher: Pearson Education

Grade: 6
Scores are reported here as: Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	703
Number of students tested	72
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

Subject: Reading/ELA   **Test:** SAT-10th Edition   **Grade:** 7
Edition/Publication Year: 2002   **Publisher:** Pearson Education   **Scores are reported here as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	712
Number of students tested	40
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES:

Subject: Reading/ELA   **Test:** SAT-10th Edition   **Grade:** 8
Edition/Publication Year: 2002   **Publisher:** Pearson Education   **Scores are reported here as:** Scaled scores

School Year	2015-2016
Testing month	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES	
Average Score	717
Number of students tested	58
Percent of total students tested	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0
SUBGROUP SCORES	
1. Other 1	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
2. Other 2	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	
3. Other 3	
Average Score	
Number of students tested	

NOTES: