

U.S. Department of Education
2023 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. Steffany Congelio
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Incarnate Word Academy
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 6620 Pearl Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Parma Heights State OH Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 44130-3808

County Ohio (OH)

Telephone (440) 842-6818 Fax (440) 888-1377

Web site/URL https://www.incarnatewordacademy.org/ E-mail aflinn@incarnatewordacademy.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.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Frank O'Linn E-mail folinn@dioceseofcleveland.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Diocese of Cleveland Tel. (216) 696-6525

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.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. John Biernacki
(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.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

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, leave blank.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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.

1. 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, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2023 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.
3. The school configuration must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2018 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2022.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 or 2022.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

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.

The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the current school year (2022-2023) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools. For charter schools: If a charter school is part of the public school system, information should be provided for the public school district. If a charter school is considered its own district or part of a charter district, the information provided should reflect that.)

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

 - 0 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. **Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not for the district.**)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- ☐ Urban (city or town)
☒ Suburban
☐ Rural

3. Number of students in the school as of October 1, 2022 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

Grade	# of Students
PreK	27
K	39
1	35
2	24
3	38
4	34
5	42
6	47
7	29
8	34
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	349

*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 15 % Asian
 - 3 % Black or African American
 - 4 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 72 % 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 2021 - 2022 school year: ≤1%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain:

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 <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	1
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	2
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	3
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	354
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	<.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	<1

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: 11 %

Total number students who qualify: 39

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 3 %
Total number of students served 9

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. All students receiving special education services with an IEP should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

<u>0</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>0</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>3</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>6</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 4 %
Total number of students served: 14

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 2

11. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	4
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	21
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	8
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	2
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

12. 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 17:1

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

Required Information	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	97%	98%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

14. **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 2022.

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%

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

Yes X No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2013

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

As a community of learners filled with the Spirit of the Word-Made-Flesh, we are committed to living the Gospel values and inspiring academic excellence.

17. Provide a URL link to the school's nondiscrimination policy.

IWA's nondiscrimination policy can be found at the bottom of the school website. Please follow this link and scroll to the bottom: <https://www.incarnatewordacademy.org/>

18. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Founded in 1935, Incarnate Word Academy (IWA) is a Premier Independent Catholic School serving a diverse group of young learners from preschool to eighth grade. The Sisters of the Incarnate Word built our school with a commitment to delivering a superior education in an environment rooted in faith with the highest ethical values and conduct. Nationally recognized, IWA has grown to become a Model of Educational Excellence. We strive to inspire and support each student to achieve academic and personal success through advanced classes, enriching clubs, and team athletics. Our students learn to think for themselves, practice their faith, exercise responsibility, and become leaders in a safe, dynamic environment. They commit themselves to their classes and develop a strong work ethic, which prepares them for the next stage of their academic lives. With our strong community of families, faculty, staff, and Sisters, we guide our students to engage the world with faith, compassion, courage, and commitment. Our goal is for our students to become life-long learners, reach their fullest potential, be prepared for the future, and be engaged members of our Catholic community and world.

The Mission Statement, which IWA students recite every day from memory, reminds everyone that they are committed to living the Gospel values in word and deed. Students are nurtured spiritually through religion class, school Masses, and prayer services. IWA also provides spiritual formation through innovative retreat and prayer partner programs and service opportunities. At IWA, we are called to “Learn, Love and Serve,” and we use this motto to guide us in creating a unique experiential learning environment. Students of all faith backgrounds feel welcome at IWA, and our diverse student population is celebrated.

Unique to our school is the presence of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word. They are engaged members of the school community, welcoming students in our Early Care program, serving as lunch monitors, substitute teachers, and as special visitors to our classrooms. They serve as models of our faith, living a life devoted to living the Gospel values. Their constant love and support provide a strong foundation, touching the lives of all who have been, are, or will be a part of the Incarnate Word Academy community.

Incarnate Word Academy offers a variety of specialized curriculum areas, all of which support student growth and achievement. Students at IWA enjoy taking specialized classes including art, music, physical education, etymology, world cultures, Latin, and technology, as well as a variety of other programs that challenge our students to apply their knowledge and abilities to help the world around them.

Our curriculum infuses STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) through problem-based learning where students can learn, create, collaborate, and solve authentic, real-world problems by adopting design-thinking. STEAM learning also encourages faculty collaboration as they develop cross-curricular projects that tap into different student interests and preferences for learning.

Academic excellence extends beyond the classroom, as IWA recognizes the importance of developing well-rounded students. Our students have opportunities to experience clubs and activities in academics, athletics, arts, and service. The Sean P. Bush '09 Technology Center ensures that students are learning 21st century skills to enhance their education and prepare them for high school, college, and beyond. Available technology includes laptops with dual monitor screens, 3D printers, a laser engraver, drawing tablets, digital embroidery and sewing machines, and coding and programming opportunities. Coupling a challenging curriculum with extracurricular activities engages students and fosters a life-long passion for learning.

Incarnate Word Academy is a proud 2013 recipient of the National Blue Ribbon award. When visitors arrive at our school, they will see our National Blue Ribbon banner proudly displayed next to the school's front doors. Our National Blue Ribbon has strengthened our reputation in the community as a leader in academic excellence. IWA has continued to grow to challenge students in new ways. Since 2013, our students have become more aware of the impact they can have on the world and have been given opportunities during the school day, in after school clubs, and even on the weekends to use their gifts and talents to help others. Some examples include our students visiting and singing to the elderly in nursing homes, honoring veterans during our annual military walk, adapting toys for children with disabilities, and sewing quilts for hospice

patients. The strong focus on academic excellence and a commitment to living the Gospel values has strengthened our school community by bringing our mission statement to life for our students.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Reading/English language arts curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The Superkids Reading Program is introduced in kindergarten and used through second grade. Units of study focus on the adventures of the Superkids, while weaving in social studies, science, and character-building concepts. Students love learning letters and sounds through the introduction of relatable characters, and they develop skills in grammar, usage, blending, handwriting, comprehension, story structure, parts of speech, and sentence writing. Both whole group and small group instruction are used to meet the needs of all learners.

Our primary grade literacy program provides systematic, explicit instruction and practice in the foundational skills students need to be successful readers and writers—print concepts, phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency. Additionally, handwriting, spelling, word analysis, and vocabulary help students build the essential foundation for fluent reading and comprehension. The NWEA MAP test is used three times a year as a benchmark assessment. This test allows teachers to use data-based instruction to provide enrichment and intervention in each lesson. In addition, students are assessed daily using Superkids formative assessments and end of unit summative assessments. The Accelerated Reading program is used to challenge students to read at their independent reading levels, while gradually offering more complex texts as the students' reading fluency increases. This program is used in grades 1-5.

When students move into our intermediate school as fourth and fifth graders, they have both reading and language arts daily in a 90-minute block of time. This allows the teacher the flexibility to develop concepts in a meaningful way. A love of reading is the focus in the intermediate level, as novel studies are immersed with other subjects. A strong focus on identifying and using the parts of speech is developed as student writing becomes more complex and increases in length. Speaking and listening skills are continually developed through class presentations and problem-based learning.

In the Preparatory Academy, the English Language Arts course is focused on challenging standards-based instruction; our ELA program includes literature, composition, research opportunities, grammar, vocabulary development, and public speaking. Each day, our students interact with high-quality classic and contemporary selections that are rigorous as well as culturally diverse; they are often invited to respond to fresh ideas through a variety of writing assessments including journal entries, Exit Tickets, formal essays, and research papers.

Our students tackle dynamic and complex texts, engage with selections through questioning, make observations and predictions, and find personal relevance in meaningful topics through real-world assessments. Teachers regularly incorporate the Socratic Method into classroom activities which allows for lengthy, student-directed discussions where they are expected to analyze multiple texts, cite the texts to support their analyses, and connect classroom content to real-world issues and situations. Used daily, the Membean online vocabulary program focuses on differentiated instruction, prioritizing higher order thinking over rote memorization; this, in turn, provides long-term success for incorporating a wide variety of new words into students' writing and interpersonal dialogue. Furthermore, English Simple Solutions offers daily grammar skill-building; parts of speech and mechanics are also reinforced through writing, engaging games, and gallery walks.

1b. Mathematics curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The kindergarten math program develops skills in establishing early algebraic concepts, solving word problems, addition and subtraction problems, creating sets, identifying shapes (two and three dimensional), formulating concepts of values and money, and understanding positional words, ordinal numbers, and pattern recognition. Students work with math concepts in a variety of ways, including the use of math games, center work, art projects, and real-life applications.

Math instruction in our primary grades builds numerical reasoning, operational skills, and problem solving skills necessary for success that advances from basic functions toward beginning algebra. Students entering first grade build a strong foundation using base ten to add and subtract. This knowledge is applied in second and third grade as students begin to add and subtract multi-digit numbers, multiply, and divide. In the primary grades, math instruction is assessed and reinforced through daily spiral reviews. Fact fluency is a priority across the primary grades and is assessed daily.

Fourth grade math dives deeper into multiplication and division concepts as fractions, mixed numbers, and decimals are explored. Students in 5th grade are placed into an on-track or an honors math class, which covers fifth and sixth grade curriculum. In addition to nightly homework, students complete weekly online work that offers a spiral review of previously taught lessons. Beginning in fourth grade, math clubs and competitions are offered for students desiring more math development and challenges.

The goal of Incarnate Word Academy's Preparatory math department is to provide challenging and developmentally appropriate courses for all students. IWA is proud to offer students in seventh and eighth grade the opportunity to take high school Algebra 1 and Geometry. All math courses have a focus on problem solving and critical thinking. Students in grades 5-8 are required to complete summer math work, which has an emphasis on word problems and application skills. Technology is used to enhance the curriculum; Desmos and Get More Math are two programs that are used consistently in all math courses.

Students participate in two STEAM and problem based-learning projects throughout the year to connect and apply their learning. The honors and accelerated math courses compete in various math contests to strengthen and challenge their problem solving abilities. The main assessments that are used in all preparatory math courses are MAP testing and formative class assessments. In addition to this, the high school courses have a midterm and final. Data from these assessments are used to ensure correct placement of students and to drive instruction to ensure content is being taught rigorously and appropriately.

1c. Science curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Students in grades K-5 are immersed in learning experiences in the content area of science through classroom lessons, cross-curricular connections, and weekly visits to our primary STEM lab. Our students visit the STEM lab once a week for dynamic, hands-on science lessons. Beginning in fourth grade, students can join the Science Olympiad Club, furthering their STEAM skills through participation in competitions at a local university.

Our approach to science instruction in grades 6-8 is an integration of Life, Physical, and Earth/Space Science through direct instruction as well as cross-curricular activities. The science classroom space in the Preparatory Academy is connected directly to the newly renovated science lab which includes new flooring, student lab work stations, goggle sanitizer, dishwasher, grow lights, vent system, built-in cooktop, teacher workstation, new sink and countertops, a microwave, refrigerator, stools, cabinetry, and various tools and equipment.

Current science topics are supplemented with age-appropriate publications to keep students engaged in all branches of science. Foundations in science are established by providing a historical framework to understand the circumstances under which new scientific discoveries are/were made, as well as the men and women responsible for advancements. Deliberate attention is given to acknowledging the women of science whose names and contributions are typically absent from textbooks. Differentiated instruction incorporating all modalities is commonplace. We utilize both hard copy and digital textbooks, hands-on labs, You-Tube and BrainPop videos, and lectures accompanied by Google Slides. Both formative and summative assessments of student learning are measured through traditional assessments, practical assessments, and field assessments, all of which support a balanced approach for our diverse learners. Support is provided to all science enthusiasts who wish to enter science competitions with students advancing to the State Science Fair each year.

1d. Social studies/history/civic learning curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

In kindergarten through third grade, students at IWA begin to explore the world around them during Social Studies classes. Students begin by learning about the community that they live in, the community helpers that keep them safe, and how they can be good citizens. Teachers bring these lessons to life by inviting various community helpers into the classroom. In the primary grades, students also learn about important historical events and people in the course of a school year.

Social Studies lessons in fourth grade focus on how ideas and events from the past have shaped Ohio and the United States today. In fifth grade, students study the Western Hemisphere and begin to develop their understanding of the relationship between markets and available resources.

The Social Studies department in the Preparatory Academy is dedicated to bringing history to life. Experiential learning is a focal point, and throughout the three years, students enjoy the learning process by doing. Lessons provide students with firsthand experiences that link to the text, and they focus on different types of historical writing. In sixth grade, students dissect the textbook's perspectives, understand all sides of events, and then produce projects and written summaries of those same events through others' eyes. In seventh grade, students work on thesis creation followed by MLA research. Finally, in eighth grade, students tackle primary sources, utilize their knowledge of analyzing primary sources, and start writing Document Based Questions.

IWA is a Purple Star Designated School through the Ohio Department of Education, recognized for its commitment to students and families connected to our nation's military. Seventh grade students are paired with a Veteran and correspond throughout the school year, enhancing their respect for their community and country.

1e. For schools that serve grades 7-12:

Incarnate Word Academy has put a strong emphasis on exposing seventh and eighth grade students to potential career paths. This fall, we hosted the second annual career event. Determined by student input, we invited parents, IWA board members, and community members to act as career presenters. Students were given the opportunity to listen to three presentations based on their interests. In addition, our morning, digital announcements include a weekly segment that focuses on a different career each week.

Our Videography Club is made available to students in seventh and eighth grade. Students in this club have the opportunity to interview parents and alumni to learn about their various careers. These short, five-minute videos are collected and made into a digital library for students to utilize when they want to learn about a career. This club also frequently visits local Cleveland area businesses to learn about STEAM careers.

IWA has worked with the Saint Ignatius High School Entrepreneur Academy and has competed in AlphaJump! to continue to foster an interest in entrepreneurship. Seventh and eighth grade students from IWA consistently finish in the top three positions of the competition.

Leadership opportunities are made available to seventh and eighth grade students in various ways. Our seventh grade students are charged with organizing a pop tab collection. This act of service helps support the Ronald McDonald House. In addition, students have the opportunity to plan and lead events for the student body when they join the IWA student council.

1f. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:

Incarnate Word Academy's Kindergarten Preparation (Kinder Prep) is a uniquely designed preschool program for four and five-year-old students who may benefit from a more robust academic program to prepare them for success in kindergarten.

Kinder Prep is a preschool program that bridges the learning gap that often exists between a more traditional preschool experience and kindergarten. All lessons follow the Ohio Early Learning and Development Standards as well as all safety precautions and procedures.

Incarnate Word Academy's Kinder Prep program uses Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's Big Day for Pre-K curriculum. This theme-based academic curriculum integrates Ohio Early Learning and Development Standards. It also provides comprehensive teaching materials that support instruction that is taught throughout eight themes. Students are assessed on their readiness for kindergarten using the benchmarks provided in the Ohio Early Learning Assessment. This Early Learning Assessment is provided twice a year. The recorded data drives differentiated instruction within the classroom, along with goals that are created between the teacher and parents or guardians.

The Kinder Prep Program prepares students academically, socially, and emotionally for kindergarten. Lessons include STEAM projects, problem-solving techniques, academic vocabulary, emergent reading and writing, and higher level thinking activities.

Kindness and compassion are just two of the many virtues the preschoolers learn along with important saints and stories from the Bible.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

The art curriculum at Incarnate Word Academy includes analyzing and responding to artwork and creative expression. Students develop a broad range of artistic skills including processes related to STEAM, drawing, painting, sculpting, and construction. Eighth grade students can participate in Portfolio Club to build an art portfolio, which allows them the opportunity to apply for high school art scholarships and placement in advanced art courses.

Music is celebrated in many ways at IWA through singing, dancing, and playing instruments. Students focus on the soprano recorder for three years. Upon entering the Preparatory Academy, they focus on bucket drumming and two years of ukulele. All students participate in music concerts throughout the school year.

Incarnate Word Academy partners with a local high school to allow students in grades 4-8 to participate in band and orchestra. Weekly lessons are held during the school day in our newly renovated music lab. Students perform concerts at the end of each quarter at the high school. These concerts are a collaborative experience, as IWA students play alongside other local Catholic school musicians.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Physical Education aims to develop the physical competency of each student. The curriculum teaches a variety of skills using movement and activity, and it incorporates a wide range of activities associated with the development of an active and healthy lifestyle. Students in PE develop fitness goals and track their progress throughout the year.

Physical Education provides students with many opportunities for character growth. They continuously practice skills of being a good sport and supporting each other's unique gifts and talents.

2c. Foreign language(s), if offered (if not offered, leave blank)

Students in Kinder Prep through 4th grade participate in Etymology, the study of the origin of words. This class helps students with critical skills needed when learning how to read. This includes the development of phonemic awareness, vocabulary acquisition, and the process of encoding and decoding words.

In fifth grade, students attend World Cultures, which explores various cultures around the world, as well as their languages, foods, customs, and religions. World Cultures was strategically chosen for fifth grade, as this is the transition year from the intermediate to preparatory grades. It is an appropriate age to have open discussions about diversity, and it is an opportunity to understand and appreciate each other's cultural

differences.

Students in our Preparatory Academy attend Latin class for one semester each year. Latin was chosen as the foreign language at Incarnate Word Academy because it provides a strong foundation for the various languages students go on to take in high school.

2d. Technology/library/media

In technology class, students participate in a wide variety of activities. Some unique programs offered in technology classes at IWA include programming Finch robots with Python, building a computer, troubleshooting common computer problems, and building and programming a Hummingbird robot. Students enjoy these unique opportunities while also learning typing skills and how to be a good digital citizen.

Students in seventh and eighth grade have the opportunity to enhance their video editing and digital design skills through our digital media and design programs. Students work on editing videos and various digital design projects.

IWA students from K-8th grade visit the library one time per week. Students in grades 1-5 participate in the Accelerated Reader program. This program continually assesses a student's comprehension relative to the level of book they are reading. This applies to the reading of both fiction and nonfiction books. For students in our Preparatory Academy, library visits are used to explore books of their interests to continue to foster the love of reading.

2e. Any other interesting or innovative curriculum programs you would like to share

IWA students have the opportunity to join the Drama Club beginning in fourth grade. The club is designed as an educational theater experience providing opportunities to design costumes, build props and sets, and perform on stage.

Students in grades 1-8 have Chromebooks, which means there is often the need to repair devices. Our students were encouraged to learn how to repair the devices themselves. Our technology teacher helped them establish an official IWA Tech Club, which was featured this past September on PBS's NewsDepth.

At the primary level, we have infused computer science lessons into the classrooms. Through a grant, we were able to purchase Bee Bot robots. With this purchase, students are able to learn both programming and the importance of directional language.

Our fifth grade students have started a partnership with the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo and have been commissioned to create prototypes of a mobile animal habitat. In the months to come, the students will learn about the specific animals, their habitats, and then present their designs to zoo officials with the hope that one or more of the designs will be chosen to be used as an actual mobile habitat at the zoo.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

The use of the Response to Intervention (RTI) is a process in which early identification and support of students with academic and behavioral needs are addressed. The RTI process begins by using a universal screener, three times a year, which assesses all students in the general education classroom. Teacher teams and the intervention specialist meet to discuss the results. Students with less intensive needs are provided interventions in the classroom, via small group instruction. Progress is monitored every month. Students with more intensive needs meet with the intervention specialist for specific, individualized daily instruction, for 15-30 minutes. This time is spent with the intervention specialist either in or outside of the general classroom. Progress is monitored weekly to continually assess the student's response to intervention.

Student intervention groups are discussed and analyzed every 8-10 weeks. This provides fluidity within our student intervention groups. Student support can be continued, increased, decreased, or terminated.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Through classwork, assessments, and NWEA MAP testing results, students at Incarnate Word Academy can be identified as performing above grade level. At the primary and intermediate level, small group instruction is utilized, as well as problem-based learning, as a way to develop grade level standards in a deeper and more meaningful way for these students. In addition, individualized goals are set for all students in the areas of math fluency, reading fluency, reading comprehension, and personal growth goals on NWEA MAP testing. This allows the teacher to plan differentiated lessons and work for students that address individual academic goals. Beginning in fifth grade, advanced classes in math and ELA are offered for those students who are performing above grade level.

Unique to our school are the vast amount of enrichment opportunities offered through clubs. These clubs are facilitated by our faculty, who are experts in that field of study. Some of the clubs that offer enrichment to our students include various math competitions, Young Authors Club, robotics, sewing, Science Olympiad, Brain Brawl, Classroom of Champions, Chess Club, Entrepreneur Club, Spelling, and the Science Fair Competition.

3c. Students with disabilities:

We currently have nine students who are on academic plans (ISPs). These students have been identified as having a specific learning disability or a speech impairment. The intervention specialist works with students with goals in reading, math, and writing. These students stretch across multiple grades and work with the intervention specialist on academic goals. In addition, we have 14 students who have accommodation plans. The intervention specialist meets and works with these students weekly, providing test accommodations, daily check-ins, help with organizational skills, behavior management, and other areas. Bi-weekly reports from the intervention specialist are provided for all parents who have a child receiving services.

3d. English Language Learners:

Incarnate Word Academy has no English Language Learners at this time.

3e. Other populations, if a special program or intervention is offered:

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

The Incarnate Word Academy kindergarten program prepares students for a successful and smooth transition to 1st grade. Our teachers launch positive study habits and foster growth and readiness skills in reading and math. Kinder Lane, a special area in our building, is devoted exclusively to our young learners. It is occupied by two kindergarten classrooms and individual lockers, allowing our students to feel safe, while building independence. Our kindergarten teachers work as a team to plan various exciting activities throughout the school year that complement units of study, providing more authentic learning experiences. At various times during the year, Kinder Lane has been known to transform into a pumpkin patch, the North Pole, and a camping ground.

The Incarnate Word Academy primary grade experience begins in first grade and continues through third grade. Students in the primary grades look forward to completing the second grade animal habitat project each year. In addition, our primary teachers work to make holiday celebrations memorable for our young learners by planning activities such as Christmas Around the World and Charlie Brown Thanksgiving. Our primary school teachers strive to build on the math and literacy skills taught in kindergarten in addition to preparing students for the transition into the fourth and fifth intermediate grades.

Students in grades four and five are a part of our Intermediate School. While they are no longer a part of the primary grades, they are growing and working toward the transition of becoming Preparatory students at IWA. With this transformation comes a focus on students becoming more independent and accountable for their learning and organizational skills, all with the support of a small group of specialized teachers. Our intermediate students enjoy participating in Lemonade Day Club as well as The Pitch Challenge each year.

The Preparatory Academy experience at IWA prepares students with an extremely rigorous curriculum, engaging and developing each student to his or her fullest potential. Through a comprehensive and collaborative curriculum, students commit themselves to their academics and develop a strong work ethic. Students in grades 6-8 have many opportunities available to them, such as career exploration through career day and weekly career highlight interviews, boys STEM day and girls STEM day, and the girls running and confidence club.

Each month we emphasize what it means to be an IWA Warrior by recognizing one student (per grade) and one teacher that exemplifies the traits of an Incarnate Word Academy Warrior. The word WARRIORS is an acronym for the traits representing Wise, Accountable, Respectful, Resilient, Intellectual, Open-Hearted, Reverent, and Service Driven.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The IWA student body represents four counties, twenty local communities, twenty-five countries, and fifty places of worship. With such a diverse population, engaging families and our community is a top priority.

Our faculty and administration work closely with our PTSU (Parent Teacher Student Union) to develop various activities throughout the year that invite our families to get to know one another, as well as to serve the community. Other ways our families can be involved include volunteer opportunities in the classrooms as a lunch monitor, as a chaperone on field trips, assisting with after school clubs and CYO (Catholic Youth Organization) sports, as career speakers, and with holiday parties. Our annual Warrior Weekend is held to celebrate current and past IWA families through a variety of community building events.

In 2021, we started a new tradition called Legacy Week, striving to ensure that the history of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and their order is passed along to future IWA generations. The Legacy Week is held during the first month of school with special events planned all week. This year, our students had the opportunity to tour the Sisters' Chapel, the Heritage Room, and even the convent. We included parents in this Legacy Week by holding an evening tour of our outdoor sacred spaces led by the Sisters of the Incarnate

Word.

We work hard to develop strong community partnerships to provide our students with unique learning opportunities. In the past year alone, our students have worked with zookeepers from the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo to design mobile habitats for their animals; partnered with the City of Bay Village and a renowned local artist to design and paint a mural to beautify the bridge and walkway at Huntington Beach; collaborated with a local architect firm to redesign the Sean P. Bush Technology Center; and engaged with speakers from the Young Entrepreneurs Institute to develop new ideas to bring to market.

Our intermediate science teacher has developed a relationship with a community business partner who owns a store that specializes in hydroponic gardening. The owner is providing materials and education to assist our teacher with utilizing our hydroponic Grow Wall, located in our primary STEM lab.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Incarnate Word Academy strives to attract and retain the best teachers to educate and care for our students. It is very common for visitors to point out how calm and relaxed they feel when visiting IWA. We credit that “feeling” not only to the presence of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word, but also to our highly qualified, dedicated, and compassionate teachers.

Incarnate Word Academy was named a 2022 Top Workplace by the Plain Dealer and cleveland.com. With this award, IWA joined an exclusive list of employers in the Greater Cleveland area and very few educational institutions made the list. We are most honored to have been named a Top Workplace because the award is based solely on the input from our valued employees.

We pride ourselves on having a culture of continuous learning for our teachers. In 2020, thanks to the generous support of two anonymous donors, the St. Thomas Aquinas fund was established. The goal of the Fund is to cover 75% of tuition costs for faculty members who choose to pursue an advanced degree. To date, this Fund has successfully covered 75% of one faculty member's graduate school tuition and continues to allow teachers to pursue continuous education.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy ties directly to the mission statement: As a community of learners filled with the Spirit of the Word-Made-Flesh, we are committed to living the Gospel values and inspiring academic excellence.

Bringing the Gospel values to life for all stakeholders of the Academy is the single most important responsibility of the leadership team. As we bring the Gospel values to life, we naturally create an environment where everybody feels loved, valued, appreciated, and encouraged to do their best, knowing that sometimes we all fall short, but that’s okay. We also strive to inspire excellence not just for our students, but for every teacher, staff member, administrator, and board member, all for the glory of God.

Incarnate Word Academy utilizes a President/Principal model with the President reporting to a very active and engaged Board of Directors, which includes three of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word. The administrative team is comprised of the President, Principal, Assistant Principal, and Director of Admissions & Advancement, as well as a part-time CFO utilized on a consultative basis for key financial decisions and budgeting.

The President serves as the spiritual leader of the school community and works diligently to ensure the academy carries on the storied legacy of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word. The President works closely with the Board of Directors to develop and implement a strategic plan and serves as a liaison with the administrative team to ensure the plan is put into action.

The Principal serves as the academic leader of the academy and is responsible for hiring, managing, and most importantly, developing the faculty and staff. The Principal manages the day-to-day operations of the

academy and, in consultation with the Assistant Principal, teachers, and level leaders, chooses curricula, academic programs, and extracurricular activities to ensure student growth and success.

Examples of the leadership team's focus on student achievement include: 1) Detailed MAP score analysis and the corresponding development of individualized learning goals and strategies for every student. 2) Weekly level meetings to ensure a focus on grade level standards and preparation for the following year's standards. 3) An annual review of curricula and extracurricular offerings to ensure the best learning experience for students. 4) Utilization of the Danielson Framework for faculty development and evaluation to ensure we are providing students with the best possible faculty.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

At Incarnate Word Academy, we are proud to have over twenty-five different countries represented in which the student or parent is a first generation American. In addition, IWA students speak nineteen different languages. We celebrate this diversity in many ways throughout the school year and continuously welcome new ideas to highlight our diversity. In front of IWA is a banner that reads "Many Cultures, One School" and includes flags from the twenty-five countries represented by our students. The cultures of IWA were celebrated in the Spring of 2021 with an event entitled "A Taste of IWA." During this event, families were invited to join us for a carnival-like celebration of cultures. We had food trucks with food selections from around the world. Dessert was provided by families who were proud to bake some of their favorite cultural dishes. Entertainment was provided by students and community members who belong to cultural dance groups.

During Catholic Schools Week, we highlight our diversity through culture day. One day during Catholic Schools Week, we take time to complete a "Unity Walk" where students walk in each classroom and experience the many cultures of IWA.

In addition to annual events that highlight our diversity, the IWA diversity is celebrated daily through prayers in various languages on morning announcements and recognition of holidays celebrated around the world. Students in our fifth grade participate in World Cultures over the course of one semester. This class takes students around the world to learn about various cultures, languages, foods, customs, and religions.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

One practice that has been most instrumental to the success of Incarnate Word Academy has been implementing a growth mindset amongst our faculty and students.

A faculty growth plan was created and is used to respond to individual needs. First, teachers are asked to reflect and identify one area of growth that they will focus on throughout the year. The faculty member determines action steps that will be followed as they work towards meeting the goal. Throughout the year, they conference with the principal to discuss the process. Next, our faculty has one formal observation that utilizes the Charlotte Danielson Framework. This instrument includes a rubric with clear descriptions of the level of competency of the teacher pertaining to various criteria. Professional development is provided for our faculty so that they feel confident using the Charlotte Danielson Framework. Last, our faculty members are given the opportunity to choose additional professional development based on their interests and goals.

As a school community, we have implemented a STEAM culture, which has required developing a growth mindset in our faculty and with our students. This implementation encouraged our faculty to collaborate more with one another, to develop and infuse problem-based learning in the classroom, and to further develop relationships with our parents, the community, businesses, and higher education.

With problem-based learning, our students are encouraged to think about real world problems and to develop ways to address these needs in our community. They have worked on projects addressing the needs in our community: redesigning our Preparatory Academy entrance to create a welcoming space; redesigning the 8th grade end of the year event; creating an upcycle carnival; developing a Kindness Project; collecting pop-tabs to raise money for local children's hospitals; and developing a Design Thinking logo specific to our school.

We are very proud of our student achievement and culture for learning. We believe that our strong emphasis on developing a growth mindset has allowed us to continue to enrich the faculty and students of Incarnate Word Academy.

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 X No
3. What is the educational cost per student? \$8325
(School budget divided by enrollment)
4. What is the average financial aid per student? \$4486
5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 5%
6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 42%

PART VIII – NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL ASSESSMENT RESULTS

FOR NORM-REFERENCED TESTS

Non-public schools must report norm-referenced test (NRT) results in reading and mathematics for students tested in grades 3 and higher in the most recent administration of the test within the most recently completed school year (2021-2022)¹. Each school must obtain grade level summary reports from the test publisher for students tested in reading and mathematics for each of these grades.

These reports must include:

1. the number of students tested;
2. the average student scale score or the national percentile equivalent of the average scale score in reading and mathematics **for all students in each tested grade; and**
3. the average student scale score or the national percentile equivalent of the average scale score in reading and mathematics **for each sufficiently large subgroup² in each tested grade.**

Please make notations on these reports to explain results that represent fewer than 95 percent of the students enrolled at the time of testing (e.g., the number of students who took alternative assessments³).

A copy of these reports (in a PDF file) must be uploaded through the National Blue Ribbons Schools Portal.

Also, one hard copy of these reports must be submitted by mail to CAPE with two hard copies of this application.

¹ Because of school closings due to COVID-19, schools may use test results obtained in the fall or spring of 2019 or the fall of 2020.

² Possible subgroups are those identified in Items 4, 6, 7, and 8 in Part II of this application (racial/ethnic groups, ELL students, students eligible for free or reduced meals, and students receiving special education services). A sufficiently large subgroup is one that represents at least 10 percent of the school enrollment as reported in these items.

³ Alternate assessments are used to evaluate the performance of students who are unable to participate in a school's norm-referenced test (NRT) even with accommodations. These assessments are based on the grade-level content covered by the NRT, but at reduced depth, breadth, and complexity. (adapted from National Center on Educational Outcomes)