

***U.S. Department of Education***  
***2023 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program***

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[ ] Public or [X] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Lakewood Catholic Academy  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 14808 Lake Avenue  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Lakewood State OH Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 44107-1352

County Cuyahoga

Telephone (216) 521-0559 Fax (216) 521-0515

Web site/URL https://lakewoodcatholicacademy.com/ E-mail bwarrell@lcsaints.com

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. Brian Sinchak  
(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

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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

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**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	119
K	55
1	48
2	56
3	43
4	49
5	56
6	51
7	48
8	44
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	569

\*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):
- 0.3 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 1 % Asian
  - 0.5 % Black or African American
  - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0.2 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 90 % White
  - 5 % 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	2
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	3
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	5
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	536
(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: 5 %

Total number students who qualify: 28

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 5 %  
Total number of students served 26

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>2</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>5</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>16</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>3</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: 2 %  
Total number of students served: 14

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 7

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.

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	7
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	29
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	10
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

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 24:1

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	94%	93%	95%	95%	95%
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 ☐ No ☒

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

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

To educate tomorrow's global leaders by providing an international, concept based curriculum expressed in contextual learning experiences. We instill in each student a lifelong commitment and ethical responsibility to the Catholic principles of peace, justice, equality, service and respect for all life.

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

<https://lakewoodcatholicacademy.com/admissions/>

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

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Lakewood Catholic Academy (LCA), located in Lakewood, Ohio, opened its doors in 2005 as a consolidated Catholic school, joining together three existing Lakewood parish schools. It was a joint ministry of the schools of St. Clement, St. James, and St. Luke. It was founded in response to changing demographics in the City of Lakewood and dwindling enrollment in our parish schools. More importantly, however, it was founded as a result of the commitment to a strong Catholic elementary school presence in the City of Lakewood. In 2010, LCA welcomed the newly merged Transfiguration Parish when the church's affiliated elementary school, Saints Cyril and Methodius, was faced with closing.

Over the past 17 years, the four merged schools have become one cohesive and successful school that has the support of each of the parishes. LCA currently has 119 students enrolled in our pre-K program, and 450 students enrolled in kindergarten through eighth grade. LCA's campus is vibrant, containing an early childhood program that cares for children as young as six weeks old. Many children are on campus from the time they are an infant until they graduate at 14 years old. We educate and care for children and their families through many milestones, joyful celebrations, and challenging times in their lives. It is an incredible opportunity to see young babies and children grow into extraordinary young men and women.

The staff at LCA is dedicated to helping all students grow and succeed, with 100% of the members of our eighth-grade class being accepted into their first-choice Catholic high schools each year. We focus on instruction that meets the diverse needs and abilities of all learners. We also recognize the importance of relationships in the learning process, and the culture of LCA is one in which all students are welcomed, respected, and loved. Academic enrichment and support are provided across grade levels, with a full-time intervention specialist and reading specialist, as well as a part-time speech pathologist, a school psychologist, and an enrichment specialist. Our intervention team services the academic and social-emotional needs of students, working with them on content skills, peer interactions, and study strategies. In our primary grade levels, our teachers use a balanced literacy approach infused with phonics instruction. Implemented six years ago, this reading program facilitated an incredible amount of differentiation in the classroom. In math, students at all levels are encouraged to solve real world problems, and our middle school students are able to accelerate and earn high school credit by taking Algebra I during their eighth-grade year. In science classes, we have partnered in our fifth and sixth grade years with a program called Amplify, a research-based approach that engages students in the investigation of science. In seventh and eighth grade, we have partnered with LabLearner, which allows our students to complete a full, hands-on, science lab each week.

At LCA, we strive for excellence. Our teachers create memorable learning experiences that help students to think critically, collaborate with peers, and solve real world problems. Simultaneously, we stress the importance of being of service to our local, national, and global communities. Within our self-authored social justice curriculum, students at each grade level learn about a specific need in our local and global community. With the help of our teachers, classes implement projects to help fill the need. For example, seventh grade health students investigate innovations in the field of prosthetics and biomedical engineering. Through two design challenges, they engineer working "limbs" and are assessed on aesthetics and functionality. Finally, students raise money for Limbs International, an organization that provides prosthetics to those in need throughout the world.

In the spring of 2017, LCA was honored to be named a U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School. While our building is 100 years old, we have made many environmentally conscious upgrades, like LED lighting, energy efficient boilers, and low flow toilets. Teachers utilize the beautiful lakefront public park adjacent to our campus for outdoor classes, and they emphasize sustainability and responsibility. Also in 2017, LCA received accreditation as an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School in the Middle Years Programme, which spans sixth through eighth grade. We are the only Catholic elementary school in the State of Ohio to be honored with this designation. As an IB World School, we teach students to think globally, and we stand behind the IB mission statement that the ultimate purpose of an education is to help create a better and more peaceful world. While IB does not dictate content standards, it does raise the bar on how we teach and assess. Students experience units grounded in broad, timeless concepts. Teachers are



challenged to link all content to global contexts, such as personal and culture expression or scientific and technical innovation. Finally, all teachers recognize that we must promote the skills needed for students to become their own best teachers as they evolve into lifelong learners. Our IB designation is strengthened by our partnership with Saint Edward High School, which offers the Middle Years Programme to students in ninth and tenth grade. Through this partnership, teachers and administrators communicate to reflect upon and respond to best practices in vertical articulation of skills and knowledge.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.**

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

The English curriculum encompasses reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary. Students receive direct instruction in phonics, spelling, grammar, vocabulary, and reading. Writing instruction is cross-curricular and emphasizes quality sentence structure, fluidity, explanation of ideas, word choice, organization, and proper mechanics. Our students experience a comprehensive and scaffolded writing program that gives them experience with a variety of writing styles, ranging from professional letters and website content to expository writing and research papers.

In our primary grades, LCA uses a balanced literacy program supplemented with phonics instruction. Students are benchmarked three times a year to determine their instructional reading levels. All students in a class will work on the same skill at the same time but will do so while reading texts at their own ability. Guided reading blocks are usually an hour and a half long and consist of multiple centers. Students rotate between centers that consist of activities such as word sorting, spelling, independent reading, and close reading. The last center is the teacher center, where students work in small groups on that week's skill with the text that matches the students' instructional reading level.

In our middle school, students are introduced to a variety of diverse pieces of literature from around the world. Students work to develop and deepen their critical thinking and inferencing skills, while also making connections to other texts and the real world. Discussions are primarily student-led, held in both small and large groups.

Literature instruction in all grades uses a variety of sources, including, but not limited to, novels, textbooks, and informational texts. Technology also plays an important role in the differentiation of skills. In our primary grades, teachers use an iPad app called Epic, which allows students to independently read a book that matches their instructional level. Newsela is a computer program that allows informational texts to be delivered to students at their reading level and is used in multiple subjects throughout the day. Finally, seventh and eighth grade students use Membean, a vocabulary program that identifies each student's level through an assessment that is taken throughout the year. Students then work to explore words in a way that leads to long-term retention.

Students also experience fun and unique experiences to help enhance their love and appreciation for literature. In second grade, students become published authors and illustrators when their class creates a book with a publishing company. Our third and fourth grade students experience an immersive day of reading when they participate in Camp Read-A-Lot and a read-a-thon.

At LCA, we work closely with our local library's manager, who facilitates experiences and activities for our students. Through author visits, students learn first-hand how books are published, which includes an explanation of the lengthy editing process. Most recently, our library hosted a professor from Kent State University, who visited our eighth-grade classes and helped the students examine poetry from and about Ukraine. The students then composed their own poetry for the global initiative titled, "Dear Ukraine."

In addition to formative and summative assessments, students are evaluated by standardized tests. Students in first through eighth grade take the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test three times a year, where they are assessed in reading and language arts. Students in kindergarten through third grade are also assessed using the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) system.

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

Mathematics instruction is intentionally scaffolded to align with the Ohio Learning Standards. In general, these standards evolve from concrete mathematics to abstract (algebraic) concepts, and naturally build skills

sequentially while connecting mathematics to the real world.

In all grades, technology is used to assist, support, and enrich students. Khan Academy Mappers and IXL create individualized learning paths for students based on their math sub scores on the MAP tests. In middle school, students are exposed to Desmos, an online graphing program, where they learn to create linear equations. The culminating activity of Desmos occurs in eighth grade, when our students use their knowledge of equations to design their own Christmas cards that are delivered to residents in a local assisted living facility.

In the primary years, students learn math skills with the goal of building numeracy and cardinality. Number operations, basic geometric concepts, and early algebraic properties are introduced and reinforced. The math programs of Bridges and Math Expressions are used because they incorporate hands-on learning using manipulatives. Teachers differentiate instruction, providing both support and enrichment for students. Many primary classrooms incorporate centers into their math blocks to differentiate work and expose students to a variety of approaches to master the skills being taught. Teachers and students are assisted by an enrichment specialist and intervention specialist, as needed. Math is also connected to cross-curricular, project-based learning.

As students transition to the middle years, algebraic concepts take on increased focus, providing a gateway to higher math. Students continue to practice operations, particularly with integers and rational numbers, while increasing their use of technology, including graphing calculators and online graphing systems. Mathematics is an IB course, and students are assessed in four broad categories: knowing and understanding, investigating patterns, communicating, and using math in real world contexts. A reasonable amount of individualized practice is assigned each week. Again, mathematics is supported by an enrichment specialist and an intervention specialist.

In the later middle years, all students take Pre-Algebra, followed by either Introduction to Algebra or Algebra I. Students who take Algebra I can obtain high school credit for the course. Occasionally, there are students who show superior math skills and present with test scores that are significantly above their grade level and peers. When this happens, those students are hyper accelerated, taking math with the grade level above their current grade. Hyper accelerated students will take Geometry in eighth grade, which will set them on a path to be able to take Calculus in high school.

Standardized math assessment is achieved by MAP testing. Beginning in third grade, students learn how to interpret MAP scores and how to set a goal set for the next testing session.

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

Our approach to science is inquiry-based, offering students the opportunity to explore and understand the world around them. Our curriculum includes life sciences, Earth and space, physical sciences, the scientific method, and a variety of STEM experiences. Our students learn science through a series of laboratory experiments that identify and incorporate national science, math, and ELA standards, as well as the Next Generation Science Standards from the National Research Council.

Our primary grades cultivate our inquiry-based approach through STEM lessons and activities. Beginning in kindergarten, teachers have STEM bins that allow students to explore and build. Students also participate in STEM challenges that require them to think critically and to problem solve. Teachers conduct classroom labs for students to learn about the scientific method, how to create a hypothesis, and how to carry out an experiment. For example, in third grade, students hypothesize what will happen to an M&M when it is placed into a glass of water.

In middle school, LCA uses two programs that enhance the science curriculum. In fifth and sixth grade, students use a program called Amplify. Students in fifth grade participate in the Science Olympiad, held each year at John Carroll University, where they compete against students from the Greater Cleveland area. In seventh and eighth grade, we are fortunate to have a high school level laboratory with clinical laboratory equipment for our student scientists. Using a program called LabLearner, students conduct lab experiments

every week. Labs range from solubility to electric currents to crystallization. For example, to learn about crystallization, students create their own edible rock candy. All students also have the opportunity to participate in a Diocesan competition called the X-STREAM games, where they compete in STEM challenges against students from other Diocesan elementary schools.

Our science program integrates various assessments throughout the span of the curriculum from lab-based performance assessments to traditional written assessments. Each assessment is designed to draw upon each student's hands-on experiences within the laboratory units. Our science program integrates various assessments throughout the span of the curriculum from lab-based performance assessments to traditional written assessments. Each assessment is designed to draw upon each student's hands-on experiences within the laboratory units.

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

The social studies curriculum uses several resources that allow students to experience the standards. In social studies, students learn about communities, geography, early Ohio history, Western civilization, and American history. Students in all grades learn history from a variety of traditional and inquiry-based approaches, like textbooks, informational texts, and technology programs like Newsela, BrainPop, and Discovery Education. Students learn to identify primary and secondary sources and to explain the importance of primary sources in our understanding of history. Students are assessed through various formative and summative assessments.

Social studies in kindergarten through second grade is taught in self-contained classrooms. Beginning in third grade, social studies is departmentalized. The curriculum in all grades is enhanced through a real world, hands-on approach to the standards. In second grade, students learn about Colonial America and then visit the historical Hale Farm and Village to experience a simulated colony. In third grade, students experience Christmas Around the World, where they receive plane tickets and boarding passes in the beginning of December. Each day, the students "visit" a new country to learn about their culture, and specifically, their Christmas traditions. Students in sixth grade experience an interdisciplinary unit, where they build a putt-putt hole that is themed like one of the UNESCO World Heritage sites.

Seventh grade students take a class once a week where they learn about the United Nations and prepare for a Junior Model United Nations summit. In class, students read background guides on the issue that is being addressed by their committee, and they learn how to research their assigned country's position on the topic. Students then write a position paper that explains the country's perspective. In January, along with over 300 Cleveland-area middle school students, our seventh graders participate in the JMUN summit that is hosted by the Cleveland Council of World Affairs.

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

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

Our preschool curriculum is designed to promote growth in all curricular areas, including math, language arts, social studies, science, and religion. We provide opportunities for cognitive, social-emotional, physical, language, and spiritual development. A child's day includes independent and group activities, as well as time for outdoor exploration on our nine-acre, lakefront campus. Enrichment programming for children is planned throughout the year and includes, but is not limited to, library story time, physical education sessions, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd religious instruction, music classes through a partnership with The Beck Center for the Arts, and components of the nationally-recognized Brain Gym program.

We utilize the Diocese of Cleveland's pre-K Curriculum, which reflects Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards, along with the Catholic Standards and Catholic Identity elements. To ensure alignment, opportunities are provided for teachers and administrators to meet to discuss educational strategies, concepts, and student progress. At LCA, we value opportunities for teachers to meet and discuss

the needs of each learner.

As our students transition to elementary school, they do so with a love for learning and a firm foundation. We incorporate Phonics in Motion and the Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Program to introduce the pre-reading skills that are necessary for success in reading. We also use Creative Curriculum to teach higher level critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Non-academic skills such as social competence and self-regulation are vital to a child's future success. The Conscious Discipline program has been an integral part of our program in developing a child's social-emotional skills. Students are assessed twice per year using the Brigance, which measures early development and kindergarten readiness. Our early childhood program students are ready for their continued growth and development as they advance to our school's primary grades.

## **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

### **2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)**

In kindergarten through fourth grade, art classes meet once per week in our dedicated art room. Our fifth and sixth grade students meet twice a week, and our seventh and eighth grade students have a full semester of art, with classes four days per week. Students learn a variety of age-appropriate skills that build upon each other from year to year. As students move into the older grades, their work includes sculptures, perspective drawings, artist studies, and the use of a kiln for clay creations.

In addition, our kindergarten through sixth grade students attend music class once per week in our music department wing, while our seventh and eighth grade students have class four days per week for a semester. Our music program focuses on vocal music. Our middle school students are introduced to a variety of different genres of music and artists. They have unique opportunities to write and perform their own operas, creatively modify musicals, and explore cultural and societal trends that were concurrent with significant developments in music. Students in fourth through eighth grade also have the option of participation in an instrumental band program inclusive of beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels. Our seventh and eighth grade students also have a communications class that meets once per week and focuses on rhetoric, interpersonal communication, and professional presentation skills.

### **2b. Physical education/health/nutrition**

Students in pre-K through eighth grade participate in physical education classes. They engage in a variety of different activities and games to learn skills and gain knowledge that will allow them to enjoy a healthy lifestyle. Our school is located adjacent to a beautiful lakefront park, and our physical education classes take advantage of the many opportunities that this space provides for outdoor exercise and activity. In addition, our third through eighth grade students also engage in health class, where they learn about different parts of the body and their functions, diseases, and developments in public health. Our students also learn about the importance of healthy nutrition through our school lunch program that provides a variety of freshly made, quality foods that are not processed. There are no food dyes, corn syrups, artificial ingredients, or unhealthy preservatives included in our dining program's meals.

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

Spanish is the primary language offered, with students first introduced to the language in kindergarten. We partner with a program called Viva Spanish, which provides a teacher to work with our kindergarten through second grade students twice per week. For our older students, we have a full-time Spanish teacher who meets with our third and fourth grade students once per week, with our fifth and sixth grade students twice per week, and with our seventh and eighth grade students four days of the week. There is a natural progression of material across the curriculum, helping students to increase their knowledge of the language and to build an appreciation for the culture. In the middle years, students are assessed on reading, listening, speaking, and writing. In eighth grade, students may choose between continuing to take Spanish, or to take a

high school level French 1 course. Students who choose to switch to French meet with their teacher four days a week. Students also explore French culture through excursions to the Cleveland Museum of Art and French restaurants.

## **2d. Technology/library/media**

Technology is integrated throughout every class on LCA's campus. Kindergarten through fourth grade classrooms have sets of iPads that are used for lessons across all curricular areas. Apps allow students to read books, to code, and to practice math skills. Students in fourth through sixth grade have Chromebook carts available for teachers to sign out in order to use technology during a lesson. Students in seventh and eighth grade are 1:1 with Chromebooks and use them in most classes throughout the day.

Students in second through eighth grade take a dedicated technology class as part of their school day. Technology classes meet once per week in our primary grades, while students in fifth through eighth grade meet four days per week for a full semester. Students learn basic keyboarding skills, coding, Google classroom, and email use. Additionally, we use a program called Neptune Navigate that teaches students about online safety and proper use of technology.

In addition to classroom technology, we have a state-of-the-art innovation lab. The lab features 3D printers, a laser cutter machine, a wide format printer, a TV production studio, as well as podcasting technology.

Our school library features over 14,000 volumes. Library is offered as a class for students in preschool through fourth grade. Classes visit the library and experience a read aloud lesson with our librarian. Our librarian is a certified teacher and incorporates reading standards into her lessons.

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

We incorporate unique and exciting learning experiences for our students. For example, in sixth grade, students participate in the "Great Lake Shake," which is a soft skills competition that focuses on interpersonal communication. Students learn how to shake hands, introduce themselves, make conversation, and have a professional breakfast meeting. On the day of the competition, students experience various rounds of activities with community leaders. Six finalists are chosen after the morning rounds, and those six travel off-campus for the final round of competition. The final round has taken place at the Cleveland Brown's training facility, Playhouse Square, and our local NBC news station, to name just a few.

In seventh grade, students learn in the community when they experience the "Best Day of School Ever." Teachers plan curricular activities in unique settings throughout the city. Students have studied economics in the Federal Reserve Bank, statistics on the Cleveland Browns football field, and theatre on a Broadway-tour set. Also in seventh grade, students take part in the "Saints Start-Up" entrepreneurship program. Students design a business, complete with product information and a website. Students then present their final product to a panel of accomplished business leaders who serve as judges.

## **3. Academic Supports**

### **3a. Students performing below grade level:**

To identify students performing below grade level, LCA uses a multi-criteria report. Each student in kindergarten through third grade is rostered on the report. The multi-criteria report looks at standardized data from MAP scores and Dibels testing. Once students are identified as needing support, classroom teachers are consulted and add their own data and observations. Classroom data includes, but is not limited to, guided reading benchmarks, running records, and subject grades. In fourth through eighth grade, students will continue to be tested using the Dibels assessment if they had historically been below grade level. To support students, LCA uses Response to Intervention, adding accommodations and supports to help ensure success in the classroom. Response to Intervention tiers support so that students receive the help that they need without receiving too much assistance, which can hinder a student's independence and growth. In addition to classroom interventions, students may qualify for small group reading intervention through an

auxiliary and Title I tutor or a classroom aide. Students also may qualify for assistance from our speech language pathologist. All teachers hold weekly, walk-in office hours whereby any student can receive individualized or small group instruction as needed. This allows students to seek additional help and receive individual support.

### **3b. Students performing above grade level:**

Students performing above grade level are also identified through MAP testing and classroom data. Teachers give pre-tests to determine which students may have already mastered a skill, which students are ready to learn at grade level, and which students need support. Teachers differentiate instruction using small group instruction, individualized instruction, and assignment choice boards to challenge students and push them to grow. Students may also be given extra assignments or work to challenge them, while using the same skill or concept as the rest of the class. For example, a student doing well with one digit multiplication will work on multi-digit multiplication. If that student masters the extension work, they will be assigned a project that requires application of the material.

In addition to classroom differentiation, LCA has an enrichment program, where students are pulled out for three periods each week by our enrichment specialist. Students are identified by MAP testing, and students who score in the 95th percentile in reading and math tests enter the pull-out program. Students then apply their knowledge and skills to complete problem-solving projects. One such unit requires students to use their math and physics skills to build spaghetti noodle bridges that will hold a certain amount of weight.

### **3c. Students with disabilities:**

Approximately 5% of our student population receives special education services. These students have IEP goals, and work with our intervention specialist and/or speech language pathologist. The majority of instruction and support takes place within the general education setting, with the intervention specialist pushing into those classrooms. Follow-up instruction and additional help is provided to these students in a one-on-one or small group setting with the intervention specialist at various times throughout the week. Together, the grade level teachers, along with the intervention specialist, work to best assist students and address individual IEP goals.

Students who are identified to have a disability will also receive accommodations in the classroom and on standardized tests. In the classroom, accommodations range from being seated at the front of the room, to chunking longer assignments or reading tests aloud. We tailor accommodations to each student, trying to balance the level of support so that a student maintains the ability to be as independent as possible. Our goal is to be able to teach students the skills and strategies needed to be successful in the next part of their educational journey, which in our case is their high school of choice.

### **3d. English Language Learners:**

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

## **PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE**

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### **1. Engaging Students:**

Each morning, students arriving at LCA are greeted at the door with a fist bump and a smile from the school president or the principal. From that moment on, students are made to feel at home in an environment of high expectations, joy, and support. Students are the top priority at LCA, and their growth is fostered through high academic standards, inquiry projects, our House Leadership System, and our International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme.

Teachers maintain high standards while striving to engage students in hands-on experiences. All grades provide ample opportunities for project-based learning, inquiry, and collaboration.

Twice per year, the school is transformed to reflect a common theme. All teachers work to connect content and environment to that day's school-wide theme. Some past examples are Disney Day, Superhero Day, and Characters in Literature Day. On these days, classrooms are decorated and turned into a different environment, such as The Magic School Bus, Ursula's Garden, or Willy Wonka's Toy Shop, to name a few. These theme days are examples of a consistent, collaborative effort to maintain the joy of childhood while holding high standards for learning.

Our House Leadership System consists of six houses. Students are sorted into a house on their first day of middle school. They spend the next four years of middle school with the same House, forming connections that extend across grade levels and beyond graduation, which makes each House more like a family than a classroom. Each house is overseen by three staff members, creating long-lasting relationships between those students and teachers. Eighth grade students serve as leaders, guiding their houses through competitions that include volleyball games, a Christmas tree decorating contest, and an epic lip sync battle.

Service learning at LCA is structured to focus student engagement on a specific social justice theme each year. Kindergarten students focus on food insecurity and hold a "scare away hunger" food drive during Halloween week. Fourth grade students focus on access to clean water and connect curriculum and service in their lemonade stand and water walk. Sixth grade students reflect on and raise money for homelessness in their hunger banquet simulation. Service learning culminates in eighth grade, where students identify an issue close to their heart. They spend time in theology class connecting that issue to Catholic Social Teaching through research, advocacy, and action, ultimately completing their International Baccalaureate Community Project.

Beyond the classroom, students challenge themselves athletically and artistically. Each year, over 200 students participate in at least one sport, and students in fifth through eighth grade can choose from extracurricular activities such as art club, choir, band, and theater. In addition, student led clubs include Lego Creator Club and Chess Club.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

LCA engages families and the community in a multitude of ways. Families receive weekly newsletters informing them of school news and activities, and social media is regularly used to share information about special projects, events, and/or initiatives. Families are invited to join our parent-run Saints Service Organization (SSO), which plans events and contributes to special school projects. Additionally, our athletic program relies heavily on both parent and community volunteers. Events such as Grandparents' Day, grade-level unit exhibitions, our fifth grade Christmas Market & Tree Lighting, and the first day of school celebration invite families to join in campus activities.

Teachers communicate with families regularly through PlusPortals, ClassDojo, and parent emails. School report cards include narratives, which teachers personalize for each student.

During the spring and summer of 2020, following the abrupt closure of school, we engaged the community



in a special way. Talented members of our team designed and broadcasted a daily morning show entitled, Saints TV. Like all great morning shows, it had a theme song and a multitude of special segments. Each family's day began with Saints TV and continued with a robust remote learning program that was cross-curricular and highlighted heroes from history. We remained together even while apart.

Since 2017, LCA has partnered with Saint Edward High School (SEHS) to grow our International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (IB MYP). This crossover program provides opportunities for teachers to meet and reflect on the transition from grade school to high school, as well as the importance of fostering skills in a vertically planned way. It has even provided opportunities to team up on student projects. SEHS students meet with LCA eighth graders to peer edit community project essays, and sixth graders visit the Innovation Lab at SEHS to launch their World Heritage Site Mini Golf Course unit.

Other community partners include the Beck Center for the Arts, a local non-profit that offers music classes to our students, Drink Local Drink Tap, a non-profit that works with our fourth-grade students on their service project, Saint Ignatius High School, Lakewood Public Library, and Lago Dining Services.

### **3. Creating Professional Culture:**

LCA prides itself on nurturing a supportive workplace for its faculty and staff. Through the Cleveland Plain Dealer, LCA earned the designation of a top workplace in Northeast Ohio in 2019. Our excellent professional culture is best demonstrated by our high employee retention rate. The average years of service of our faculty is over 10 years.

Administrators maintain an ongoing goal to foster professional growth in a collaborative atmosphere. Teachers have regular access to high quality professional development through IB workshops, local and national training sessions, and our very own Spark Conference. The LCA Spark Conference is a professional development event held each summer that attracts more than 450 educators to our campus to highlight innovative opportunities in education and to celebrate teachers. LCA teachers serve as presenters at this conference and share their best practices with fellow elementary educators in the State of Ohio.

LCA provides classroom teachers with excellent instructional support for their students by way of reading specialists, intervention tutors, enrichment tutors, a speech language pathologist, and a school psychologist. These professionals enhance the school's team-based approach to holistic care and instructional excellence.

The Saints Service Organization ensures teachers receive special monthly lunches, periodic bonuses, and other teacher appreciation gifts. The LCA Board of Directors hosts a holiday and end of year appreciation party for LCA teachers and staff members, and the LCA Athletic Board makes an annual contribution to support the upkeep and improvement of campus facilities. Of special note, the Board of Directors has committed budgetary resources to ensure staff salaries remain above the local average, and, for nine consecutive years, has provided increases in faculty/staff pay.

Quarterly school-funded teacher outings build camaraderie and community, with recent outings including bowling, shuffleboard, yoga, and spin cycling. In addition to these planned outings, LCA regularly invites teachers to join together for dinners, prayer services, and retreats.

Teachers are encouraged to take initiative, and to do so with the confidence that they have the support of administrators. Teachers regularly spearhead curricular projects that foster inquiry, working in teams and partnering with administrators to exhibit learning outcomes in unique ways that include parents and members of the community. Teachers are encouraged to take risks and grow each year.

Collaborative planning meetings are scheduled monthly in the primary years and weekly in the middle years. This offers teachers an opportunity to work together on units and projects, and to find creative solutions to challenges. All teacher schedules include ample planning time, ensuring that there is collaborative planning for teachers in the same grade level(s) and subjects. By honoring teachers' time and need for collaboration, LCA fosters a positive team atmosphere that promotes ongoing growth.

#### **4. School Leadership:**

School leadership at LCA consists of an intentionally built team with diverse skills and perspectives. The team includes the following: a president, a principal, an assistant principal, a dean of students, a dean of the IB program, a vice president of the early childhood program, and a vice president of advancement. Administrative team meetings occur weekly, and they regularly include administrative assistants, to honor and reflect on views from the front office.

A unique aspect at LCA is that administrators teach at least one class daily. This includes the principal and president. By remaining in the classroom, at least part time, administrators strengthen their partnership with teachers and remain cognizant of the daily challenges teachers face. This adds an authenticity to the consistent attempts to support teachers as they practice their craft. This also ensures that administrators are in touch with students on a regular basis. LCA, at its core, exists for students, and it is important to consistently take into consideration the perspective of our learners.

The team approach to administration enhances LCA's environment, both inside and outside of the classroom. While each administrator has specific portfolios of work, there is intentional crossover. For example, while the principal and dean of IB often address curricular questions, they are also often joined by the dean of students and assistant principal in behavior modification meetings and student support meetings. Each member of the team regularly checks in with one another to optimize outcomes and to consider all perspectives.

Student leaders emerge through our House Leadership System. Eighth grade house leaders meet regularly with house guardians (teachers and administrators), as well as the headmaster and headmistress of the House System (teacher and president).

Finally, the president, vice presidents, and Board of Directors meet regularly. The Board of Directors and board committees consist of community experts, parents, and church leaders, all with the common goal to enthusiastically and consistently pursue excellence.

#### **5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:**

LCA fosters an open and accepting environment for its entire community. We celebrate our diversity, our multiple perspectives, and our range of viewpoints. While we are a Catholic school, we do not discriminate in our admissions process, and we have families at our school from many different religions, family structures, and walks of life.

The school's president completed a diversity, equity, and inclusion program through Cornell University, and works closely with a team of teachers on school issues of diversity and justice. The school's president has also presented nationally to Catholic schools on diversity, equity, and inclusion and how LCA incorporates these into the school's mission.

Staff members have been trained in culturally responsive teaching methods using a book titled "Heart: A Journey Toward Cultural Humility by James L. Knight." The school has curated extensive resources for ongoing professional development regarding cultural awareness, as well as a suggested middle school reading list. Additionally, LCA has dedicated significant funding to diversify the books in our 14,000-volume school library, ensuring that the materials reflect a variety of global cultures and international perspectives.

LCA has celebrated World UN Day and Catholic Schools Week by inviting multilingual students to share prayers in their second language. Students have shared prayers in Russian, French, Spanish, and Arabic, to name a few. In addition, language teachers intentionally include culturally diverse reading selections and promote culturally diverse reading lists for reading choices.

International service is incorporated into our middle school at LCA. Students have the opportunity to apply for immersion experiences where they connect with people very different than themselves in places as far

away as Ecuador (2019) and Nicaragua (2015). These educational travel programs help students realize that ‘their’ world is not ‘the’ world. Students who participate in these trips often become school leaders who inspire their classmates to take local action to help those in our neighborhood.

Finally, LCA intentionally fosters a joyful culture of childhood. We take time to thoughtfully reflect on how societal trends and issues affect children. For example, we designed a thoughtful approach to technology policy called LCA Looks Up: Student Engagement in a Wired World. While we take great pride in our ability to provide students with access to the latest technology, LCA is committed to fostering eye to eye, real time, in person relationships. Technology is used as an intentional supplement to, rather than a replacement of, human focused classrooms.

## **PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE**

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While there are many educational practices that have contributed to the success of LCA, an investment in professional development and training has been the foundation for all of our school improvement strategies. Professional development is critically important for educators because it helps them improve their skills and stay current with the latest advances in the field. Through professional development, educators learn new teaching methods, gain a better understanding of the subjects they teach, and develop new ways of engaging their students. While these benefits seem obvious, investing in high quality professional development has also helped our educators stay motivated and engaged in their work. This has led to increased job satisfaction and greater staff retention, even through the difficult pandemic years and the country's great resignation era.

At LCA, professional development has taken many forms, such as workshops, conferences, and online courses, as well as peer training and coaching. It has focused on a wide range of topics, including student inquiry and project-based learning, international mindedness and global education, approaches to learning, subject-specific content, the use of technology, as well as diversity, equity, and inclusion. As the State of Ohio's only Catholic elementary school with the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme designation, LCA has committed significant budgetary resources to sending its educators to some of the very best professional learning conferences locally, nationally, and globally.

As mentioned earlier, LCA created the Spark Educator Conference in 2018 to further demonstrate its commitment to high quality continuing education. This annual, one-day, professional development event strives to reignite creativity and innovation in elementary education. It brings over 450 elementary school educators from across Northeast Ohio to the school's campus to learn from national leaders, as well as from our very own LCA educators, who share their best practices with their colleagues from other schools. This collaborative training not only strengthens the other elementary schools in our region, but also improves our own efforts in creating engaging classrooms that are inquiry-based and service oriented.

Longitudinal measures of student achievement and growth, as evidenced by MAP scores, indicate that our commitment to professional development has made a significant difference in the lives of our students, but the greatest impact may very well be the positive example of our educators as they demonstrate and model the value of lifelong learning.

## PART VII - NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

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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?      \$9598  
(School budget divided by enrollment)
4. What is the average financial aid per student?      \$4780
5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to      4%  
scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?
6. What percentage of the student body receives      25%  
scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction?

## PART VIII – NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL ASSESSMENT RESULTS

### FOR NORM-REFERENCED TESTS

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*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)<sup>1</sup>. 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 subgroup<sup>2</sup> 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 assessments<sup>3</sup>).

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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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)