2004-2005 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

U.S. Department of Education

Cover Sheet

Type of School: _X_ Elementary _X_ Middle __ High __ K-12

Name of Principal Sr. Ellen Murphy, R.S.M
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name St. Joan of Arc Catholic School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 501 S.W. 3 Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address)

Boca Raton Florida 33432-5923
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Palm Beach School Code Number*

Telephone (561) 392-7974 Fax (561) 368-6671

Website/URL www.stjoan.org E-mail ellenm@stjoan.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

_____ Date_____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Sr. Joan Dawson, O.S.F.
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Diocese of Palm Beach Tel. (561) 775-9547

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

_____ Date_____
(Superintendent's Signature)

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

I have reviewed the information in this package, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

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

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

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades K-12. (Schools with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)

2. The school has not been in school improvement status or been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's adequate yearly progress requirement in the 2004-2005 school year.

3. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, it has foreign language as a part of its core curriculum.

4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 1999 and has not received the 2003 or 2004 *No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools Award.*

5. The nominated school or district is not refusing the OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.

6. 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 the OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.

7. 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.

8. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Questions 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district: _____ Elementary schools
   _____ Middle schools
   _____ Junior high schools
   _____ High schools
   _____ Other

   _____ TOTAL

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: _____

   Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: _____

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

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

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

4. __24___ Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

   _____ If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?

5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total		Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	22	28	**50**		**7**	29	41	**70**
K	38	34	**72**		**8**	30	29	**59**
1	39	30	**69**		**9**			
2	39	31	**70**		**10**			
3	30	40	**70**		**11**			
4	29	37	**66**		**12**			
5	24	44	**68**		**Other**			
6	31	38	**69**					
			TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →					663

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school:

___86_% White
____0_% Black or African American
___13_% Hispanic or Latino
____1_% Asian/Pacific Islander
____0_% American Indian/Alaskan Native
100% Total

Use only the five standard categories in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of the school.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: ____0.9_%

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

(1)	Number of students who transferred ***to*** the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	7
(2)	Number of students who transferred ***from*** the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	1
(3)	Subtotal of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	8
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1 (same as in #5 above)	663
(5)	Subtotal in row (3) divided by total in row (4)	0.012
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1.2 %

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: ___0____%
___0____Total Number Limited English Proficient
Number of languages represented: _____
Specify languages:

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: ____2____%

Total number students who qualify: ____13___

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families or the school does not participate in the federally-supported lunch program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

10. Students receiving special education services: ____0___%
_____Total Number of Students Served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

__0__Autism	__0__Orthopedic Impairment
__0__Deafness	__0__Other Health Impaired
__0__Deaf-Blindness	__0__Specific Learning Disability
__1__Hearing Impairment	__2__Speech or Language Impairment
__0__Mental Retardation	__0__Traumatic Brain Injury
__0__Multiple Disabilities	__0__Visual Impairment Including Blindness

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

Number of Staff

	Full-time	**Part-Time**
Administrator(s)	____3___	_____
Classroom teachers	___24___	_____
Special resource teachers/specialists	____3___	____3___
Paraprofessionals	____6___	____4___
Support staff	____4___	____5___
Total number	___40___	___12___

12. Average school student-"classroom teacher" ratio: __35:1 in Grades 1 – 8
__25:1 in PreK & K__

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. The student dropout rate is defined by the state. The student drop-off rate is the difference between the number of entering students and the number of exiting students from the same cohort. (From the same cohort, subtract the number of exiting students from the number of entering students; divide that number by the number of entering students; multiply by 100 to get the percentage drop-off rate.) Briefly explain in 100 words or fewer any major discrepancy between the dropout rate and the drop-off rate. (Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates and only high schools need to supply drop-off rates.)

	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	96%
Daily teacher attendance	98.56%	95.35%	95.66%
Teacher turnover rate	19.2%	15.3%	3.9%
Student dropout rate (middle/high)	0%	0%	0%
Student drop-off rate (high school)	n/a	n/a	n/a

PART III – SUMMARY

St. Joan of Arc School is a rich and unique example of heritage, faith, and academic excellence. Each area brings a focus to education that in itself is admirable but together is remarkable. The school was founded by the Sisters of Mercy from County Cork, Ireland, in 1960, and has grown from a small warehouse school of seventy students to a modern day facility accommodating over six hundred students.

The **Mission** of St. Joan of Arc School is to prepare the students – spiritually, emotionally, socially, intellectually, and physically to be responsible, adaptable, and faithful citizens for Christian witness and action in a pluralistic, changing society.

The school stresses academic excellence. Developmentally appropriate practices are used at all levels. In kindergarten through fifth grades the emphasis is on active learning where the students assimilate information through a hands on method and an integrated approach. At the junior high level the emphasis is on critical thinking skills, and students are so well prepared that many of them are eligible for advanced courses in English, math, history, Spanish, and science at the high school level.

Several students in each class exhibit academic weaknesses but are never asked to leave St. Joan of Arc School, and we do everything possible to help them. The school also provides for families who are unable to pay the tuition. This is done through a very active **Development Program**.

The school has special reading and math teachers who help with those who have difficulty in either or both subject areas. The curriculum for all students includes physical education, art, music, computer, and library. Spanish is taught in grades three through eight. Technology is approached through thematic activities which are integrated across the curriculum.

Faculty members are available before and after school for individual extra help. There are teacher assistants in kindergarten through third grade and many volunteers also assist in the classrooms. There is a full time guidance counselor, who not only provides support and guidance for students and teachers, but who also conducts parenting programs.

The school has a very active **Stewardship Program** where the students learn to share their time, talent, and treasure. Through this program the students become conscious of the diversity among the people of the world as they help to financially support missionary endeavors. In return they receive pictures and profiles from the U.S.A., South America, and Africa of activities initiated through student support.

At the junior high level there is a **Social Justice Program** called "**That's Not Fair**" which helps the students ascertain the importance of not just giving to the poor but how to address unjust systems that sometimes cause poverty in the first place. Rights and responsibilities are emphasized. This program is integrated within social studies and religion. Outside presenters act as facilitators. It also involves field trips to places such as soup kitchens. As a culminating activity, students also make a presentation on a social justice topic to the parish community as well as to the Boca Raton City Council. This program again helps the students develop leadership skills and an understanding of rights and responsibilities.

A full array of extracurricular activities is available including sports, clubs, and service groups. An **Extended Care Program** before and after school provides a necessary service for working parents.

To promote tolerance and acceptance, the school participates in an **Interfaith Program** with the temple located next door. Lessons include instruction in the fundamentals of the Jewish faith, leading students to draw parallels with the Catholic faith. Jewish and Catholic students visit each other's synagogue or church, share meals, and witness the values of tolerance and acceptance. For the past eighteen years these

two congregations have continued and improved upon this platform, and according to the Southeast Regional Director of the American Jewish Committee, William Gralnick, it is **"the nation's most interesting and enduring interfaith program".**

The school was **reaccredited** in November, 2004 by the Florida Catholic Conference. The report commended the administration, faculty, and staff for the excellent education they provide the students. It stated furthermore that, "The Catholic identity of the school is evident in its academic and extracurricular programs and is exhibited by the administration, students, faculty, and parents." The students were commended for being well mannered, friendly, and articulate.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Question #1 – THE MEANING OF ASSESSMENT RESULTS

At St. Joan of Arc School, all students in grades 3-8 are given standardized tests called ITBS (Iowa Test of Basic Skills). The test results are all inclusive; no student's scores are excluded from the test data. The ITBS is administered to provide teachers and parents with information pertaining to student progress in areas of basic skills and critical thinking in Reading, Language, and Math. The data is used to measure growth in academic areas from year to year. By looking at the NPR (National Percentile Rank), parents are also informed as to how their child compared to students in the same grade nationwide. For example, if student X, who is in third grade, has an NPR of 60 in Reading, it means that X scored better than 60% of the third grade students tested throughout the nation.

In the past three years our standardized test scores have proven to be consistent. In the three subject areas listed above, our scores range from 71% to 91%, with the majority of scores falling between 77-88. The verbal description for scores in this range is "Above Average". An overview of the Reading, Language, and Math tests, administered this year, indicates that six of the fifty-four total scores fell between 71-76; the remaining forty-eight totals range between 77-91.

Our paramount strength is Language. Language encompasses Spelling, Capitalization, Punctuation, Usage and Expression. Out of eighteen test administrations, all eighteen Language total scores uniformly range Above Average (81-91%). Reading, which includes Vocabulary and Comprehension, is also a strength. Fifteen out of eighteen times our student Reading total scores reached the "Above Average" range. Math includes two sub-tests: 1) Concepts and Estimation and 2) Problem Math Solving and Data Interpretation. Math totals ran identical to the Reading totals; again, fifteen out of eighteen were in the "Above Average" range.

The administrators, guidance counselor, and teachers review individual student scores and data. Plans are devised, particularly for any student whose scores fall at or below the 50th percentile, to ensure student progress. Parents are notified via a "memo" from the principal and guidance counselor with suggestions that can be easily implemented at home to help their child in Reading, Math, or Language. During school hours, selected students in grades 1-5 attend the Individualized Reading Program. For further reinforcement staff members offer extra help in the mornings before school as well as after school to help raise student performance in the forenamed areas. After a period of time, if the "extra help" within school is not enough for a student to make academic gains, then parent conferences are scheduled. Tutoring and/or psychoeducational testing may be recommended.

A positive impact of the test results for the talented student is our participation in the TIP (Talent Identification Program) offered by Duke University. Based on their sixth grade scores, students in grade 7 who have scored 95% or higher in Reading, Math, Language, Science, or Social Studies are eligible to partake in the SAT and ACT high school exams. In the past three years, 37-50% of the seventh grade

class has been included in TIP.

Helping students incorporate ideas, skills, and concepts that will improve their ability to perform tasks and to solve problems is the ultimate goal of teaching. So that the "teaching-learning" process works more efficiently, the faculty utilizes the ITBS scores to re-align the curriculum. To further enhance the learning process, instructional strategies and teaching materials are constantly re-evaluated in light of these test results. Math teachers have updated manipulatives in the primary grades. On-line essay scoring further challenges our middle school students, and grades 1-8 have incorporated the computer based "Accelerated Reader" and "Expressways to Learning" programs to enhance the language arts curriculum.

Traditionally, the methods for improvement that have been implemented at SJA have proven to be successful. Our scores indicate a solid basis for learning, the drive to perform, and the willingness to work hard to succeed on behalf of SJA students, parents, administrators, and faculty. Having high expectations for our students, we will continuously and cooperatively strive to assure that no child is left behind.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Question # 2 - ASSESSMENT USE

Our school uses the ITBS scores in the following ways. Looking at the strengths and the weaknesses within each particular class, the principal, guidance counselor, and teachers review each grade's test scores. Strengths are considered scores that fall in the 70th, 80th, and 90th percentiles. Our goal is for all classes to average scores in the 80th percentile or above. Then, the teacher with the guidance counselor and the individualized reading teacher discuss each child who scored at or below the 50th percentile as well as students whose scores in a particular subsection of the test did not meet the classroom teacher's expectations. Together, they come up with a plan to help that child improve.

To help us look at weaknesses, we have created a form to record reading, math, and language scores for students who fall at the 50th percentile or lower in various sub-tests under these three main categories. Student names are listed and individual scores are noted. The forms are an efficient way to check on students and are used internally only. Discussions are held to decide upon which methods and techniques will be implemented, either at a particular grade level or school-wide, to focus on remediation and increase skills in weak areas. In certain cases, recommendations to obtain a tutor may be suggested to parents.

A second way in which we use the data is to compare the current year's building scores with the previous year's scores. This enables us to verify that our school improvement plans have been implemented, are working successfully, or may need adjusting.

A third analysis of scores involves teachers looking at their own class scores and looking at the scores of the grade above theirs. This allows teachers to review areas where they, themselves, need to place added emphasis within their own instruction. Teachers are also requested to review the scores for the previous grade so they can see, in advance, areas that may need additional concentration.

Our assessment results were also an integral part of our school improvement plan for our recent re-accreditation. The principal, assistant principal, and guidance counselor further discuss the standardized test results for the purposes of providing the necessary staff development to improve student performance and to challenge the gifted student.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Question #3 – COMMUNICATING STUDENT PERFORMANCE
The school sends home the test results to the parents in December. Along with the test results, parents receive a short letter explaining which tests were administered and the purpose of the tests. Parents are encouraged to contact homeroom teachers or the guidance counselor with any questions.

Parents of students who score at the 50th percentile or lower in any subtest of the three main categories (Reading, Language, or Math) and whose classroom performance indicates a potential learning weakness receive a follow-up letter in January. The letter makes recommendations so that parents and students can easily follow through with short supplemental assignments and learning tasks to help the child. For students with significantly low scores, the teacher and guidance counselor conference with parents and psychoeducational testing may be advised.

Other pertinent assessment data includes writing portfolios, criterion-referenced tests, teacher generated tests, homework, and exams. Teachers in all grades review and discuss weekly test and quiz results with students. In grades PreK-3 appointments are made with parents and conferences scheduled twice a year (fall and spring). In grades 4-8 progress reports are sent home quarterly at mid-term and report cards are issued four times a year. On going conferences may be held at the request of the teacher, the parent, or the student.

St. Joan of Arc's participation in the internet based **SchoolNotes Program** further facilitates prompt communication between student and/or parent and teacher and/or administrators.

The community is made aware of our academic performance through announcements at community assemblies, in the Thursday Newsletter, and on the SJA website. The test results are also announced at Home and School Meetings when it is explained to parents the school's plan to improve the weak areas as indicated by the results.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Question #4 – SHARING OUR SUCCESS

Sharing our successes goes hand in hand with sharing SJA's policy of stewardship. First of all, we acknowledge that our students, graduates, teachers, administrators, staff, and parents combined embody the success of our school. As integral members of the community they are often interviewed or featured in regional newspapers (*Boca Raton News, Palm Beach Post, Sun-Sentinel*). In turn, these acknowledgements often introduce the media and interested parties to the school. A generous gift of equipment from IBM, received as a direct result of the school's grant-writing project, brought focus to the SJA Technology Department. Our Technology Coordinator travels nationally to share our unique approach to technology through staff development. The topics of these workshops include our project based technology curriculum, the integration of video production into an elementary school, and the creation of staff development plans.

Requesting feedback on these topics and others, high schools and middle schools have observed students utilizing our closed circuit broadcast studio, computer labs, classrooms, and state-of-the art science lab. A student driven recycling program worked out between our Student Council and our maintenance staff also brought citywide focus as to what children can do to make "a better world".

Another avenue for the school to share its success is through curriculum committees at the diocesan level. SJA teachers have participated in these committees and they will continue to do so.

Diocesan level social studies and writing curriculum workshops have been given by SJA teachers and attended by several hundred diocesan staff. Several teachers have been featured in or written articles for the *Florida Catholic, Religion Teachers Journal, Family Fun*, and the *Catechist Magazine*.

Our principal and assistant principal, as members of the Florida Catholic Conference Accreditation team, travel the southeastern U.S. and relate relevant information to participating schools. The leadership and expertise of our administrators are an impetus to innovative thinking and creative curriculum within our school community. If SJA was chosen as a 2005 Blue Ribbon School, our entire staff would share in the administration's commitment to assist other schools in any way possible.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

QUESTION 1 - CURRICULUM

As part of the Diocese of Palm Beach, SJA utilizes all curriculum guidelines adopted by the diocese, and these are regularly updated by diocesan-wide committees. With the exception of religion, the guidelines rely heavily on the learning benchmarks as outlined in the Sunshine State Standards for Florida's educational system. Using these curricula as the starting point, the administration of SJA strengthens each subject's instruction by having expanded and more stringent academic goals, especially in the areas of basic skills, to ensure that students are well-prepared for their passage into high school. Religion is the most supplemented, with additional requirements ranging from parables in scripture to ecumenical concepts.

The curriculum is implemented by informing staff of the expectations and monitoring the instruction given to students. Teachers are provided with curriculum guidelines and receive in-services on how to utilize the guidelines and their instructional materials. Regular grade level and subject area meetings review academic expectations, discuss progress, and address concerns. At weekly faculty meetings one segment of the regular agenda incorporates instructional issues raised by the teachers or administrators. Evaluation of the curriculum is an on-going process.

- The Language Arts Curriculum is literature and grammar based, with a concentrated emphasis on integrating writing skills with all other content areas. Phonics is stressed as a foundation for reading skills, and the essential components include instruction in vocabulary, grammar, mechanics, and sentence structure.
- The Mathematics Curriculum gives a solid foundation in the math skills needed for everyday living. It includes computational skills, concepts and estimation, logic and reason, geometry, algebra, Algebra I, measurement and time, and problem solving processes.
- The Religion Curriculum includes the key elements recognized by the Congregation for Catholic Education as essential for the complete formation of students in the Catholic faith. These elements come from the diocesan guidelines as well as from the additional programs added by the parish and school administration.
- The Science Curriculum provides an inquiry-based approach to learn about the natural world. In the primary grades, there are thematic units, experiments, learning stations, and other hands-on activities in and outside the classroom. In the middle grades, the curriculum is fully integrated to cover all the science disciplines, with great emphasis on laboratory work, the method of scientific observation, and the inclusion of technology for research purposes.
- The Social Studies Curriculum presents students with a systematic program for all social science disciplines: history, geography, civics, and current events. The program exposes students to diverse environments, ethnic groups, and religions. Student projects allow them to acquire research skills, do written and oral presentations, and participate in cooperative learning and democratic decision-making.
- The Spanish Curriculum for grades 3-8 includes the study of the language itself and aspects of Hispanic culture: art, customs, holidays, history and geography. Grades 7-8 concentrate on learning the vocabulary and grammar of Spanish, and students in grade 8 complete Spanish 1 and many are eligible for 10th grade Spanish at the high school level.
- The Art and Music Curricula are based on the national standards for the arts in education, the benchmarks of the Sunshine State Standards, and the guidelines from the National Catholic Educational Association for Catholic schools.
- The Physical Education Curriculum is organized according to the developmental age and abilities of students. In PK- 4, the teachers concentrate on movement education and on fundamental skills, such as throwing, kicking, and catching. In grades 5-8, the skills mastered in PK- 4 are

incorporated into team sports, and emphasis is placed on learning to play and work as a team. All levels also include instruction on health, nutrition, and proper exercise.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

QUESTIONS 2a & b - READING AND LANGUAGE CURRICULUM

St. Joan of Arc's reading curriculum for kindergarten consists of a phonetic, whole language, and writing program by publishers which include Scribner-Laidlaw, MacMillan/McGraw Hill, The Wright Group – Sunshine Books and Houghton Mifflin. It is a comprehensive language arts program correlating reading, handwriting, and auditory and oral language skills for children. It is a multi-sensory program of visual, kinesthetic, and auditory activities.

Topics correlate with science and social studies and the shared tasks of everyday life. Easy skills start by using the *Beginning Letter Books* and increase in difficulty to the Houghton Mifflin series to enhance a smooth transition into the grades 1-5 reading program.

The reading curriculum for grades 1-5 is a phonetic/literature-based program published by Houghton Mifflin. It provides theme-related stories with a wealth of cross-curricular activities, links to relevant websites, and an up-to-date bibliography of supplementary readings.

The 6-8 grade program utilizes *Elements of Literature*, published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston. The premise is that literature leads to dialogue. Using stories, poems, and plays within world literature, the curriculum encourages the student to reflect upon issues that have intrigued man for hundreds of years.

All grades teach comprehension skills and strategies, vocabulary development, phonemic awareness, and phonic decoding skills. Emphasis is also placed on the ability to infer and draw conclusions. The student writing sections provide examples of the mode of writing in frequent Writer's Workshops, which are designed to help students through a writing project.

Our faculty believes this approach to reading provides our students with stories that are rich, engaging, and become more complex as the series progresses. Our literature-based reading exploration supports our young readers as it builds independence and fluency. The content of the programs hopefully leads the student to a better perception of self and the world.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

QUESTION 3 - SCIENCE CURRICULUM

St. Joan of Arc School's implementation and use of National Content Standards for Science has been in practice since 1997.

To best meet the challenge of establishing the highest levels of science literacy for all, an integrated approach, meant to be a life-long learning adventure, has been designed and adopted and ultimately defines the science curriculum. Integrated science actively engages the student with learning opportunities that cross many disciplines. Math concepts such as graphing data, measurement, and analytic problem solving are emphasized. Development of reading, writing, and social studies skills occurs with gleaning of main ideas, vocabulary, journalizing, and oral reporting.

From the early grades Pre-K-5, science learning centers provide for hands-on activities which serve to familiarize students with a variety of science topics. In grades 6-8 a state-of-the-art, well-equipped science facility provides the student with the means for a broader development of skills in scientific inquiry. By way of direct experience with exploratory equipment, technically calibrated measurement tools, data-based decision making, and the latest technological support, students are challenged in their approach to scientific discovery. To support student learning, the science department is chaired by a full time teacher with over 30 years of experience and is assisted by a part-time aide.

The curriculum is focused, coherent, and rich in content that builds cumulatively across time. It provides application to daily life thereby challenging and encouraging our diverse student population to succeed. The value-based science program includes environmental stewardship whereby the students learn about God's world and are entrusted with its care as envisioned in SJA's mission and beliefs.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

QUESTION 4 - DIFFERENT INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

St. Joan of Arc teachers are sensitive to the learning needs of their students. Teachers attend yearly workshops and seminars to assist in increasing their knowledge of student learning. In all grades, teachers use instructional procedures to accommodate different learners. Varied learning styles are enhanced through the use of videos, manipulatives, project approach learning, and technology. Teacher presentations are mixed to include small groups, one-on-one, cooperative learning and/or whole language learning. Consideration for the different learning modalities: auditory, visual, and kinesthetic is also given.

Our staff uses four methods to pinpoint the level at which the student is functioning in a subject area. These methods include classroom performance and grades, teacher input, standardized test results, and observation by the guidance counselor. Teachers have monthly grade level meetings where they discuss ways to improve student learning: enrichment participation, remedial work, and/or re-teaching of certain core areas. As data is collected, observations and interventions are then discussed and evaluated at monthly grade level Student Support Team meetings.

An Individualized Math Program is offered at the middle school level. Emphasis is placed on teacher accessibility and two teachers work with one class. The Individualized Reading Program was created to help the more challenged student. Small groups of students in grades 1 - 8 work to improve vocabulary and reading comprehension skills. The **Expressways to Learning** computer programs are also used to strengthen and enhance reading and math skills. The media center provides the **Accelerated Reader Program** that serves grades 1-8. The program currently has 450 books from which children may choose a title. This program makes reading a fun and enjoyable experience. Children read books, then take tests on school computers, collect points, and turn them in for prizes each quarter.

Generally, our educators are available for extra help three days a week; other “extra help” times may be arranged as the need arises. Taking into account the student’s perception of self and his/her total well-being, our teachers strive toward success for all.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

QUESTION 5 - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The professional development program at St. Joan of Arc is planned on a three-year cycle so that the long-range growth of teachers, assistants, and support staff may be addressed in a comprehensive manner.

Before the end of each school year, the faculty and staff are surveyed for input on topics of importance and interest to them. The administration reviews these suggestions before the program is updated each August. The program must then be submitted in its entirety to the Superintendent for the Diocese of Palm Beach Catholic Schools for approval.

During the school year, the plan may be modified or added to, depending on the needs of students and staff. For example, after student standardized test results are received, if there appears to be an area of weakness or concern, that area is targeted for teacher in-service and discussion so that strategies can be implemented to immediately address it.

The development plan is divided into four areas of faculty growth: faith formation, professionalism, instruction, and technology. Guest speakers, diocesan workshops, participation in the in-services from the local public school system, and specific programs, such as the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership's *Echoes of Faith*, are scheduled for various teacher workdays and weekly faculty meetings. By providing for multiple opportunities for the school staff to strengthen and enhance its instructional performance, the development plan is an important factor in improving student learning. The emphasis on helping teachers grow as effective educators and on ensuring that this growth also benefits students forms a solid foundation for the learning driven environment that exists at SJA.

The rationale for St. Joan of Arc's staff development is two-fold: 1) that professional educators must necessarily keep current on effective teaching practices and technological advances, and 2) that the personal faith knowledge and training of the staff is key to implementing the mission of the Catholic Church to fully evangelize the students and parents of the school.

PART VI - PRIVATE SCHOOL ADDENDUM

The purpose of this addendum is to obtain additional information from private schools as noted below. Attach the completed addendum to the end of the application, before the assessment data tables.

1. Private school association(s): Florida Catholic Conference and National Catholic Educational Association
   (Identify the religious or independent associations, if any, to which the school belongs. List the primary association first.)

2. Does the school have nonprofit, tax exempt (501(c)(3)) status? Yes __X__ No _____

3. What are the 2004-2005 tuition rates, by grade? (Do not include room, board, or fees.)

$ 4,150	$ 4,150	$ 4,150	$ 4,150	$ 4,150	$ 4,150
K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
$ 4,150	$ 4,150	$ 4,150	$_____	$_____	$_____
6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th
$_____	$_____				
12th	Other				

4. What is the educational cost per student? $ 4,635
   (School budget divided by enrollment)

5. What is the average financial aid per student? $2,600

6. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 14.3 %

7. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? __11 %

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Test – ITBS (Iowa Test of Basic Skills)

Edition/Publication Year – 2001 – 2002

Publisher – Riverside Publishing

Scores are reported here as Percentiles

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	October	October	October
Grade 8			
Reading	85	84	81
Math	83	81	79
Number of students tested	58	69	69
Percent of total students tested	98*	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Grade 7			
Reading	88	81	84
Math	79	81	79
Number of students tested	69	64	69
Percent of total students tested	99*	98*	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Grade 6			
Reading	73	78	78
Math	71	78	80
Number of students tested	69	69	68
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0

There were no subgroups.

*Percentage less than 100 due to student absences. We perform no alternate testing.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Test – ITBS (Iowa Test of Basic Skills)

Edition/Publication Year – 2001 - 2002

Publisher – Riverside Publishing

Scores are reported here as Percentiles

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing month	October	October	October
Grade 5			
Reading	82	81	84
Math	78	78	81
Number of students tested	68	69	69
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Grade 4			
Reading	83	85	77
Math	81	83	76
Number of students tested	66	67	70
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Grade 3			
Reading	74	76	79
Math	73	78	78
Number of students tested	70	64	67
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0

There were no subgroups.