

# 2006-2007 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

## U.S. Department of Education

**Cover Sheet** Type of School: (Check all that apply)  Elementary  Middle  High  K-12  Charter

Name of Principal Dr. Melanie B. Verges  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name St. Rita School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 194 Ravan Avenue  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Harahan Louisiana 70123-4999  
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Jefferson State School Code Number\* N/A

Telephone ( 504 ) 737-0744 Fax ( 504 ) 738-2184

Web site/URL www.stritaharahan.com E-mail stritahar@archdiocese-no.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.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Superintendent\* Rev. William F. Maestri  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Archdiocese of New Orleans Tel. ( 504 ) 861-6235

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.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

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.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

*\*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 for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's adequate yearly progress requirement in the 2006-2007 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 2001 and has not received the No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years.
5. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
6. 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.
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

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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  
 \_\_\_\_\_ N/A TOTAL

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: \_\_\_\_\_ N/A  
 Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: \_\_\_\_\_ N/A

**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  
 Suburban  
 Small city or town in a rural area  
 Rural

4. 5 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	32	29	61	7	22	37	59
K	28	28	56	8	11	14	25
1	26	26	52	9			
2	29	23	52	10			
3	24	28	52	11			
4	25	18	43	12			
5	25	26	51	Other			
6	29	28	57				
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →</b>							<b>508</b>

*[Throughout the document, round numbers 1 or higher to the nearest whole number. Use decimals to one place only if the number is below 1.]*

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- |                   |                                  |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| 97                | % White                          |
| 1                 | % Black or African American      |
| .6                | % Hispanic or Latino             |
| .8                | % Asian/Pacific Islander         |
| 0                 | % American Indian/Alaskan Native |
| <b>100% Total</b> |                                  |

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: 45 %

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

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year	139
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year	91
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	230
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	508
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	.45
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	45

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 0 %  
0 Total Number Limited English Proficient

Number of languages represented: 0

Specify languages:

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 4 %

Total number students who qualify: 18

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:  $\frac{0}{0}$  %  
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. Do not add additional categories.

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

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

**Number of Staff**

	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>26</u>	<u>0</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>
Support staff	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>
Total number	<u>40</u>	<u>6</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 19:1

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. Also explain a high teacher turnover rate.

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Daily student attendance	98%	97%	97%	97%	97%
Daily teacher attendance	97%	96%	98%	95%	94%
Teacher turnover rate	28%	31%	32%	33%	21%
Student dropout rate (middle/high)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Student drop-off rate (high school)	N/A%	N/A%	N/A%	N/A%	N/A%

## **PART III - SUMMARY**

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St. Rita School has served thousands of families in Harahan, Louisiana since 1953. State-approved and accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), St. Rita School ministers to more than 400 families each year by providing students in preschool to eighth grade with an excellent Catholic education. St. Rita School (SRS) recognizes the shared responsibility of all stakeholders in the educational program. Several structures facilitate such co-responsibility, such as Parish Administration and Finance Committee, Advisory Board of Education, Home & School Association, Dads Club, Alumni Association, Silver Trotters, and Principal's Advisory Council/School Improvement Team. The annual St. Rita Pecan Festival affords all members of the community to celebrate their membership in the *St. Rita Family*.

St. Rita School has continued to expand since its founding. Early education programs were established for four-year olds in 1983 and three-year olds in 2001. St. Rita School received recognition as a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence in 1998. Construction of a Community Room, library, computer lab, and conference room was completed in 2000, and SRS achieved accreditation status from SACS in 2003.

Talented faculty and staff strive daily to fulfill the mission as they *celebrate Catholic tradition, promote Gospel values, and call students to love and serve God and others. The educational program nurtures students to reach their fullest potential and prepares them for the future in a positive, creative, and enriched learning environment.* Dedicated professionals include classroom teachers, teaching assistants through grade 1, technology and computer teachers, a library/media specialist, fine arts and music teachers, physical education teacher/athletic director, Title I teachers, and a foreign language instructor. Administrative support is provided by a social worker, academic assistant principal, dean of students, and principal with a doctorate in Catholic educational leadership.

St. Rita students prepare for the future through a program of study that infuses Catholic identity standards across the curriculum. Daily prayer and religion class, parish and school-wide masses, and seasonal paraliturgy services promote spiritual development and foster community. The standards-based curriculum addresses the needs of all students and advances students toward national recognition, with seventh and eighth graders accepted into highly competitive high schools each year. Students utilize state-of-the-art technology available throughout the campus, which further supports their academic accomplishment. Programs such as Gifted Study, Fast ForWord reading, Title I math, and Accelerated Reader provide support for student populations at various levels. Following the spirit of No Child Left Behind, the Individual Needs Committee ensures that classroom and testing accommodations are implemented based on educational evaluations.

Students enjoy a variety of support services as well as extra-curricular, athletic, and co-curricular activities that expand horizons and foster responsibility in preparation for future success. The expansive club program includes National Junior Honor Society, prayer group, science, technology, drama, student council, newspaper, scouting, altar servers, cheerleading, quiz bowl, chess, library and cultural essay. Boys and girls participate in several athletic sports such as baseball, softball, flag football, basketball, volleyball, golf and swimming. Co-curricular offerings include guitar, instrumental music, liturgical music, visual art, performance choir, musical production, safe and drug free program, ROPES training, peer tutoring, and daily middle school service corps. Auxiliary services include bus transportation, breakfast, lunch, extended care, holiday care, and parenting classes.

As the first school to re-open in Jefferson Parish, St. Rita graciously welcomed 139 students displaced by Hurricane Katrina. Accommodations to curriculum, instruction, assessment, guidance, and services were made as the entire school community solidified in the effort to support new students. Parent and student feedback characterized St. Rita as a loving, caring, and supportive school community. The silver lining to the cloud of Katrina was the opportunity to demonstrate flexibility and commitment to best meet the needs of students and their families.

## PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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### 1. Assessment Results

St. Rita School follows archdiocesan guidelines in administering the **Stanford Achievement Test (SAT)** in April each year to students in grades 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7. Additionally, St. Rita first and second graders participate in SAT to provide data useful in planning instruction. Eighth graders are not tested because a significant number of students are accepted into competitive high school programs following their seventh grade year. The Stanford Achievement Test provides a battery of tests that sample skills and concepts across content/curriculum areas. The tests are norm-referenced so that student scores can be compared with other students across the nation. St. Rita School replaced the SAT9 edition when archdiocesan schools adopted the SAT10 in April 2005.

The SAT10 multiple-choice instrument assesses student progress toward high academic standards. Normed in 2002, the test contains items that reflect an extensive review of national and state instructional standards, content-specific curricula, and educational trends as developed by national professional education organizations. To evaluate the yearly progress of student achievement and make comparisons to a national reference group, SAT10 provides current, empirically derived normative information from a vast scope of sub-tests. In the reading content area, students are tested on word study skills, word reading, sentence reading, reading vocabulary, and reading comprehension. In mathematics, students are tested on both problem solving and procedures.

Tables of test results for St. Rita School (see Part VII: Assessment Data) indicate that SRS students in grades 1 - 7 consistently score above-average in core subject areas as compared to national norms, though admission requirements for the school are not academically exclusive. Further, even though the school is located in the New Orleans area significantly affected by Hurricane Katrina, scores continue to indicate a significant percentage of students in the **top quartile** for core subjects in the past five years, with 43% scoring in the top quartile for reading, 51% in mathematics, 50% in language, 40% in spelling, 43% in science, and 41% in social studies. Normally, 25% of a school's students would be included in the top quartile; therefore, it is evident that St. Rita School students score well above expectations even through they come from a non-exclusive "normal" population.

Grade equivalency results indicate that a significant portion of St. Rita School students function well above the expected grade level for all subjects tested. The **median grade level equivalency scores** for the past five years reflect that students in third grade function at a 5.4 grade level in reading, 5.6 grade level in mathematics, and 6.1 grade level in language. Students in fourth grade operated at grade equivalency levels of 6.1 for reading, 6.2 for mathematics, and 7.5 for language. Fifth grade student scores indicated grade equivalency levels of 7.2 for reading and language and 8.1 for mathematics. Median equivalency scores for sixth grade students averaged 8.6 in reading, 9.4 in mathematics, and 9.3 in language. Similarly, seventh graders merited high equivalency level scores, with 9.6 in reading, 11.0 in mathematics, and 11.2 in language.

St. Rita School faculty members review SAT results each year as a measurement of success and an indicator for future planning. Results of such analysis for grade levels over the past five years as well as longitudinal results for cohort classes provide data upon which to reflect so that instructional adjustments can be made to meet the needs of all St. Rita Students. Further, test data are used to create heterogeneous class groupings for grades 4 and below as well as to level students for advanced courses in grades 5 and above.

Displaced students following Hurricane Katrina were noted as a sub-group in Part VII. As the first school re-opened in Jefferson Parish, St. Rita welcomed 139 students without records, which were lost as homes and schools were destroyed. Without these records, data analysis and tracking could not be accomplished, though teachers utilized pre-assessment to target instruction for these temporary students.

## **Using Assessment Results**

At the end of each year, the entire faculty meets to discuss school performance and identify trends in SAT10 scores. Comparisons are made with previous years' scores for the same grade level as well as scores for each cohort class. The faculty celebrates exceptional growth and identifies areas to address the following school year. Reports of disaggregated data are provided, including Grade-level, Longitudinal Historical, Quartile, Below 50-Perentile, NCLB Top 10-Percentile, and Sub-test Analysis.

During the summer, individual scores are reviewed to schedule students into advanced classes for grades 5- 8 math and language arts and to identify students for Title I math, Fast ForWord reading, and gifted study. Grade equivalency scores are utilized to determine independent reading parameters in the Accelerated Reader program. The Individual Needs Committee reviews test scores of students with accommodations to determine intervention effectiveness.

The following August, faculty meet again to analyze test scores in pairs, clusters and large groups. Teachers utilize student progress folders containing Report Cards, SAT scores and the Longitudinal Summary Sheet for each student. Teachers review progress folder data to tailor curriculum and instruction in support of student learning. SAT10 grouping sheets enable targeted classroom instruction, and the Classroom Profile Worksheet includes strategies for differentiated instruction. The Individual Longitudinal Progress Worksheet provides an historical perspective to identify trends in individual student growth, and the Group Report of Sub-test Categories indicates strengths and weaknesses of classes.

Utilization of assessment results is on-going at St. Rita School, with vertical team cluster meetings held each week to utilize results and discuss curriculum and instructional issues. Mid-quarter progress reports indicate the need for extra study hall classes and peer tutoring, Fast ForWord reading daily completion data prompts students to move ahead or repeat skill sets, and classroom teacher grades and anecdotal records provide data needed for consideration by the Individual Needs Committee.

## **2. Communicating Assessment Results**

Written and verbal reports of school performance are furnished to stakeholders during the year. In August and September parents, advisory board, and parish finance committee receive results of school-wide standardized tests and perceptual surveys. In the first quarter, grade-level parent *Coffee Talks* promote communication. Throughout the school year, parents receive a weekly folder of graded work. Quarterly computerized interim progress reports are coupled with parent/teacher conferences, and computerized quarterly report cards indicate regular assessment of academic progress. The annual conference for parents, students and teachers following first semester provides a qualitative meta-cognitive review of student performance. The guidance department communicates student performance among parents, school and outside agencies. Results of spring SAT10 testing are provided to parents at the end of the school year along with an administrative letter of explanation and contact information.

Honor roll, Accelerated Reader, and other academic news is published monthly in the *Trotter Tracks*. Honor roll students enjoy quarterly honor roll breakfasts, publication in the local newspaper, and listing on the school foyer bulletin board. Title I math students receive interim and quarterly reports of progress, and Fast ForWord participants receive weekly email reports of progress and participation.

The community learns of assessment results through the annual Open House in January, Trotter Tours in January and February, local television station interviews and video spots, stories in the local newspaper, and the school website. The academic awards ceremony in May for all students, parents and stakeholders recognizes both highest average and effort in each subject, Presidential Academic Excellence, National Junior Honor Society membership, Duke Talent Search status, qualification for university sponsored gifted programs, and high school scholarships.

### **3. Sharing Success**

St. Rita School actively collaborates with other schools in the archdiocese through professional development planning and the standards-based education initiative (SBE). The principal and dean serve on the steering committee to organize workshops and institutes. These administrators also share successful ideas from school experiences during presentations for archdiocesan teachers. Faculty members share their expertise in curriculum, instruction and assessment with other schools as they work within a cohort of schools and participate in the summer institute each year. The guidance department also participates in the crisis team for the archdiocese and presents workshops to educators on topics relating to student social and emotional growth.

The principal serves on the elementary executive committee of National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA), which provides professional development resources. By presenting workshops and writing articles for that association, the principal shares successful practice with schools across the nation. The principal has also taught on the college level and works with numerous schools in the archdiocese as they conduct self-study for accreditation. Whether conducting a faculty workshop, chairing a quality assurance review team, or working with leadership on accreditation protocol, the principal is able to share information that assists schools seeking accreditation status. As a fellow in the School Leadership Center and member of the advisory board, the principal is able to network with both public and non-public administrators. Ideas are shared freely, especially during week-long summer institutes that promote school improvement.

Several representatives from other schools have visited St. Rita School. Faculty from other elementary schools, early education program directors, administrators, and university students visit the school each year as they search for information about educational improvement.

St. Rita School will continue to be actively involved in national, regional and local professional organizations. As programs are implemented and success documented, St. Rita School will continue to demonstrate collaborative leadership in sharing best practice.

## PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Curriculum

St. Rita School embraces the archdiocesan standards-based curriculum, which correlates with state and SAT10 standards. The **core curriculum** includes religion, language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, Spanish, fine arts, computer, and physical education. Additionally, high school credit for qualifying 8<sup>th</sup> graders is available in Algebra, Physical Science, English and Geography. While textbooks support the basis of the core subjects, teachers supplement the curriculum with various resources such as video streaming, internet websites, outside reading, and field trips. St. Rita adopts textbooks according to the state adoption cycle to ensure that current and auxiliary materials are readily available. Students in grades 5- 8 are placed in advanced classes for math and language arts based on SAT10 scores, report card grades and teacher recommendation.

The school mission calls for the celebration of Catholic tradition, promotion of Gospel values and creation of school community based on love. The **religion** curriculum includes daily instruction, weekly liturgy and sacrament preparation. Each school day begins and ends with prayer in support of the school's mission. The Assessment of Catholic Religious Education instrument is utilized annually to determine growth in knowledge for students in grades 5 and 8.

The **language arts** program consists of reading, language, spelling and vocabulary. A detailed description of the reading program can be found in Part V, Question 2. Preschool and kindergarten teachers introduce writing to students with take-home journals. Older students participate in journal writing, as well as the Six-Trait Writing Program to develop writing skills. Various language projects are employed to further writing skills, including letters to pen-pals and extended family as well as story and poetry composition. Through oral presentations, students develop competence in speaking and listening as tools for learning and communicating.

The **mathematics** curriculum employs manipulatives and computers at all grade levels, and calculators are used beginning in fourth grade for problem solving. Mathematics instruction emphasizes computation skills, problem solving and critical thinking. Students in kindergarten through grade 8 who are not achieving at grade level participate in the Title I math program.

Students study **social studies** in all grade levels, with areas of study including geography, civics, economics, American history and world history. St. Rita School participates in the regional social studies fair and in civic projects such as the Loyalty Day essay contest sponsored by the local VFW. Social studies field trips include visits to the National World War II Museum and Louisiana State Capitol.

The **science** curriculum in all grade levels includes the scientific method in the study of life, physical, and earth science topics. Hands-on activities and experiments promote higher level thinking skills to develop theories, explore hypotheses and perform experiments. Students participate in an annual science fair and engage in activities such as roller coaster design, radioactive decay calculations, and blood typing.

St. Rita School students enjoy learning about **Spanish** culture as well as developing Spanish language skills. Songs and games are employed in preschool through grade 2 classes, while older students also focus on the acquisition and development of vocabulary. Middle school students are encouraged to write and speak in Spanish. While written and oral tests are given, students also participate in projects, such as a cognate poster, a fashion magazine and a fashion show, to promote language development.

The **fine arts** curriculum addresses four main strands: instrumental music, vocal music, visual art, and drama. Students participate in weekly fine arts classes in all grades, liturgical choir for grades 1 to 3, and performance choir for grades 4 to 8. Before-school guitar classes are offered to students in grades 3 through 8. An annual spring play is produced, and students participate in a talent show held during the school's fall festival.

**Physical education** and health curriculum addresses the growing concern with childhood obesity. All students attend physical education classes that emphasize health issues, motor skill development, agility and fitness. Students participate in the President's Physical Fitness Program, intramural sports and games during class. Additionally, students are afforded the opportunity to participate in an extensive athletics program after school.

## 2. Reading

St. Rita School (SRS) recognizes reading as the key to success in all areas of learning. Beginning in preschool, developmentally-appropriate activities that lay a firm foundation for reading skills are offered. A literature-based program is embraced in higher grades, which ensures a steady progression in a curriculum aligned with archdiocesan/state standards. Reading texts are supplemented with outside resources, classroom instruction is differentiated for skill-level, and computer-assisted instruction is provided to triangulate for success.

Early education and kindergarten classes are introduced to letters, sounds and words through active learning experiences such as art projects, cooking projects, dramatic play, music, and classroom centers. First, second and third grade students benefit from hands-on class activities that are supplemented with phonics instruction, and students make informal book reports in preparation for more formal reports that begin in third grade when students read their first novel. Weekly library storytelling sessions further enhance the love of reading, and all students are able to visit the library during library class and extended hours each day. Fourth and fifth graders hone their skills through a curriculum focused on decoding, fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension, and students present oral and written reports on outside reading. Middle school students are challenged with an advanced curriculum that demands higher levels of critical thinking as they analyze novels, plays and short stories for plot, theme, character development, symbolism, and literary devices. Reading skill development continues in the summer through required and suggested summer reading for first through eighth graders.

Accelerated Reader (AR) and Fast ForWord (FFW) programs provide individualized learning. Each student reads independently in AR, choosing books within the parameters determined by the SAT10 grade equivalency score. Prizes are awarded for accomplishment, and the number of points earned each year increases as students discover the love with reading. FFW provides a specific protocol based on neurological research proven to improve reading skills. Targeted students complete two FFW products each year, working at their own pace.

## 3. Additional Curriculum Area: Technology

Technology is integral to fulfilling St. Rita School's mission, which calls us to prepare students *for the future in a positive, creative, and enriched learning environment*, and has been an area of tremendous growth and accomplishment for the school, especially during the past five years as the school community embraced technological advancement with opened arms. The school network allows high speed internet access for all computers across campus and system-wide use of software programs.

The construction of the downstairs computer lab and upstairs library/media center signaled the beginning of the quest for technological advancement at SRS. Furnished with 36 internet-connected computers, an LCD projection system, scanner, and color laser printers, the lab services all students as they utilize educational software, learn skills such as keyboarding, power point, spread sheets, and word processing, and conduct research in various curricular areas. The library/media center houses video materials in VHS and DVD formats and coordinates visual equipment such as overhead projectors and televisions used in support of essential skill development in all classrooms and subjects areas.

The Fast ForWord program, which provides students with individualized targeted reading skill instruction on a daily basis, is available to students in the computer lab and second floor resource room. Three areas on the second floor house wireless laptops used by students and teachers for doing research, writing reports, and making classroom presentations throughout campus.

All classrooms have computers connected to the internet. Many classrooms are also equipped as presentation rooms with built-in LCD projectors, DVD players, computers with smart board systems, and cabling to provide full access to technology/media as part of the educational curriculum. Teachers utilize video streaming and educational websites to enhance lessons and increase student learning.

Technological advancement has been made possible through several sources. In addition to expenses budgeted each year for technology, donations from individual stakeholders and support groups such as the Home & School Association as well as equipment received through competitive and block grants have provided St. Rita School students with exceptional technology resources in support of improved student learning.

#### 4. **Instructional Methods:**

St. Rita School *nurtures students to reach their fullest potential*, and teachers employ various instructional methods in fulfillment of that mission goal. With the foundation of a standards-based curriculum and the continual assessment of all aspects of student work, teachers utilize a multitude of instructional methods to enable all students to achieve success.

Research-based principles of best practice provide direction as teachers choose instructional methods that promote increased learning. Classes in all grade levels address the developmental level of the student and strive to be student-centered, involve hands-on experiences, employ holistic approach to learning, present material in real-world applications, provide opportunities for varied learning styles, promote student reflection of learning, create opportunity for student interaction, utilize cooperative learning groups, promote democratic classroom climate, foster higher-order thinking, and allow students choice and responsibility in their own learning.

Teachers vary instructional methods to meet the needs of students and deliver curriculum effectively. Individual, small group and large group instruction are utilized depending on purpose, and differentiated instruction techniques are employed to promote student growth within lessons. Centers, workshops, and cooperative grouping allow scaffolding of learning as students interact. Bloom's taxonomy is utilized as teachers develop instructional units, and multiple intelligence theory reminds teachers to include varied approaches to teaching each week. Technology is employed as an effective instructional method in building individual skill in subject areas. Community resources, such as field trips, community speakers and guest performers, provide authentic experiences from which students draw as they build concepts.

St. Rita School teachers receive support to improve instructional methods. Collaborating with grade-level partners and within cluster groups, teachers focus on instructional methods as they continually assess student progress and adjust their methods of instruction to meet the needs of all students.

#### 5. **Professional Development:**

*Educational change depends on what teachers do and think – it's as simple and as complex as that.*

Fullan, M. (1982), *The meaning of educational change*, p. 107

Based on the belief that teachers hold the key to school improvement, St. Rita School (SRS) offers a comprehensive professional development program that relates to improved practice, with emphasis on data-driven instruction to meet the needs of all students. Each year classroom teachers participate in national, regional and local workshops that align with the school's improvement goals and support student learning. The school-based program provides job-embedded opportunities for growth, and all weekly level meetings and monthly faculty meetings focus on professional development components as part of the agenda. SRS dedicates significant grant and budgeted resources for professional development.

Teachers attend the NCEA conference each year. These educators then present short summaries of the information learned during a "table hop swap." SRS is involved in the archdiocesan Standards-Based Education Initiative. Topics related to curriculum, instruction, and assessment are presented throughout the year to increase understanding related to that initiative. Teachers also participate in the SBE Summer Institute, during which they collaborate with other schools as they design an aspect of the SRS school improvement plan.

Believing that we have experts among us, SRS teachers learn from each other. Teachers visit classrooms each quarter through the Classroom Connection program. After the visit, teachers provide valuable written feedback that becomes part of the teacher professional portfolio file. Teachers also present reflection on professional reading and best practice ideas during meetings. The Faculty Workshop Series program offers teachers the opportunity to self-select professional development. Based on feedback from a survey conducted in the summer, topics are offered on Wednesday afternoons throughout the school year. Teachers attend at least six workshops each year on topics such as *Internet Teaching Resources*, *Time Management Skills*, and *Differentiated Instruction*, and they provide reflective feedback on the workshops.

## PART VI - PRIVATE SCHOOL ADDENDUM

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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. Delete if not used.

1. Private school association(s): Archdiocese of New Orleans, 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 2006-2007 tuition rates, by grade? (Do not include room, board, or fees.)

\$ <u>2875</u> K	\$ <u>2875</u> 1 <sup>st</sup>	\$ <u>2875</u> 2 <sup>nd</sup>	\$ <u>2875</u> 3 <sup>rd</sup>	\$ <u>2875</u> 4 <sup>th</sup>	\$ <u>2875</u> 5 <sup>th</sup>
\$ <u>2875</u> 6 <sup>th</sup>	\$ <u>2875</u> 7 <sup>th</sup>	\$ <u>2875</u> 8 <sup>th</sup>	\$ <u>N/A</u> 9 <sup>th</sup>	\$ <u>N/A</u> 10 <sup>th</sup>	\$ <u>N/A</u> 11 <sup>th</sup>
\$ <u>N/A</u> 12 <sup>th</sup>	\$ <u>3075</u> PreK				

### 2006-07 Tuition Rates for Supporting Families

Grades K – 8                      \$2875 for 1 child; \$5031 for 2 children; \$6469 for 3 or more children  
Pre-Kindergarten              \$3075 per child, No Family Plan

4. What is the educational cost per student? \$ 3574  
(School budget divided by enrollment)
5. What is the average financial aid per student? \$ 420
6. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 1 %
7. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 5 %

# **PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

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## **ST. RITA SCHOOL** **ASSESSMENTS REFERENCED AGAINST NATIONAL NORMS**

Subject READING Grade 7

Test: Stanford 9 Edition/Publication Year: 1996 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Test: Stanford 10 Edition/Publication Year: 2003 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs  Scaled scores  Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Test	SAT 10	SAT 10	SAT 9	SAT 9	SAT 9
Testing month	April	April	April	April	April
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Total Score	74	75	69	65	70
Number of students tested	56	39	68	58	62
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.Hurricane Displaced Score	59	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	9				

# **PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

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## **ST. RITA SCHOOL** **ASSESSMENTS REFERENCED AGAINST NATIONAL NORMS**

Subject MATH Grade 7

Test: Stanford 9 Edition/Publication Year: 1996 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Test: Stanford 10 Edition/Publication Year: 2003 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs \_\_\_\_ Scaled scores \_\_\_\_ Percentiles X

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Test	SAT 10	SAT 10	SAT 9	SAT 9	SAT 9
Testing month	April	April	April	April	April
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Total Score	80	81	76	81	75
Number of students tested	56	39	68	58	62
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.Hurricane Displaced Score	65	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	9				

# **PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

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## **ST. RITA SCHOOL** **ASSESSMENTS REFERENCED AGAINST NATIONAL NORMS**

Subject READING Grade 6

Test: Stanford 9 Edition/Publication Year: 1996 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Test: Stanford 10 Edition/Publication Year: 2003 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs  Scaled scores  Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Test	SAT 10	SAT 10	SAT 9	SAT 9	SAT 9
Testing month	April	April	April	April	April
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Total Score	70	77	75	71	68
Number of students tested	52	56	41	69	60
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.Hurricane Displaced Score	68	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	12				

## **PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

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### **ST. RITA SCHOOL** **ASSESSMENTS REFERENCED AGAINST NATIONAL NORMS**

Subject MATH Grade 6

Test: Stanford 9 Edition/Publication Year: 1996 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Test: Stanford 10 Edition/Publication Year: 2003 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs  Scaled scores  Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Test	SAT 10	SAT 10	SAT 9	SAT 9	SAT 9
Testing month	April	April	April	April	April
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Total Score	66	76	80	75	77
Number of students tested	52	56	41	69	60
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.Hurricane Displaced Score	67	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	12				

# **PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

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## **ST. RITA SCHOOL** **ASSESSMENTS REFERENCED AGAINST NATIONAL NORMS**

Subject READING Grade 5

Test: Stanford 9 Edition/Publication Year: 1996 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Test: Stanford 10 Edition/Publication Year: 2003 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs  Scaled scores  Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Test	SAT 10	SAT 10	SAT 9	SAT 9	SAT 9
Testing month	April	April	April	April	April
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Total Score	70	72	70	68	68
Number of students tested	50	47	47	35	64
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.Hurricane Displaced Score	70	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	2				

# **PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

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## **ST. RITA SCHOOL** **ASSESSMENTS REFERENCED AGAINST NATIONAL NORMS**

Subject MATH Grade 5

Test: Stanford 9 Edition/Publication Year: 1996 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Test: Stanford 10 Edition/Publication Year: 2003 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs \_\_\_\_ Scaled scores \_\_\_\_ Percentiles X

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Test	SAT 10	SAT 10	SAT 9	SAT 9	SAT 9
Testing month	April	April	April	April	April
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Total Score	71	64	70	66	70
Number of students tested	50	47	47	35	64
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.Hurricane Displaced Score	92	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	2				

# **PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

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## **ST. RITA SCHOOL** **ASSESSMENTS REFERENCED AGAINST NATIONAL NORMS**

Subject READING Grade 4

Test: Stanford 9 Edition/Publication Year: 1996 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Test: Stanford 10 Edition/Publication Year: 2003 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs  Scaled scores  Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Test	SAT 10	SAT 10	SAT 9	SAT 9	SAT 9
Testing month	April	April	April	April	April
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Total Score	72	70	66	67	63
Number of students tested	40	50	51	47	41
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.Hurricane Displaced Score	80	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	4				

## **PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

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### **ST. RITA SCHOOL** **ASSESSMENTS REFERENCED AGAINST NATIONAL NORMS**

Subject MATH Grade 4

Test: Stanford 9 Edition/Publication Year: 1996 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Test: Stanford 10 Edition/Publication Year: 2003 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs  Scaled scores  Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Test	SAT 10	SAT 10	SAT 9	SAT 9	SAT 9
Testing month	April	April	April	April	April
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Total Score	78	71	75	72	73
Number of students tested	40	50	51	47	41
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.Hurricane Displaced Score	87	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	4				

# **PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

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## **ST. RITA SCHOOL** **ASSESSMENTS REFERENCED AGAINST NATIONAL NORMS**

Subject READING Grade 3

Test: Stanford 9 Edition/Publication Year: 1996 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Test: Stanford 10 Edition/Publication Year: 2003 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs  Scaled scores  Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Test	SAT 10	SAT 10	SAT 9	SAT 9	SAT 9
Testing month	April	April	April	April	April
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Total Score	78	71	69	70	70
Number of students tested	48	49	53	50	51
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.Hurricane Displaced Score	78	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	11				

## **PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

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### **ST. RITA SCHOOL** **ASSESSMENTS REFERENCED AGAINST NATIONAL NORMS**

Subject MATH Grade 3

Test: Stanford 9 Edition/Publication Year: 1996 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Test: Stanford 10 Edition/Publication Year: 2003 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs  Scaled scores  Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Test	SAT 10	SAT 10	SAT 9	SAT 9	SAT 9
Testing month	April	April	April	April	April
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Total Score	81	71	84	86	80
Number of students tested	48	49	53	50	51
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1. Hurricane Displaced Score	92	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	11				

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

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## ST. RITA SCHOOL ASSESSMENTS REFERENCED AGAINST NATIONAL NORMS

Subject READING Grade 2

Test: Stanford 9 Edition/Publication Year: 1996 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Test: Stanford 10 Edition/Publication Year: 2003 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs \_\_\_\_ Scaled scores \_\_\_\_ Percentiles X

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Test	SAT 10	SAT 10	SAT 9	SAT 9	SAT 9
Testing month	April	April	April	April	April
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Total Score	62	68	72	68	69
Number of students tested	46	54	59	52	59
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.Hurricane Displaced Score	59	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	9				

## **PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

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### **ST. RITA SCHOOL** **ASSESSMENTS REFERENCED AGAINST NATIONAL NORMS**

Subject MATH Grade 2

Test: Stanford 9 Edition/Publication Year: 1996 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Test: Stanford 10 Edition/Publication Year: 2003 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs  Scaled scores  Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Test	SAT 10	SAT 10	SAT 9	SAT 9	SAT 9
Testing month	April	April	April	April	April
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Total Score	59	67	80	72	72
Number of students tested	46	54	59	52	59
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.Hurricane Displaced Score	47	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	9				

# **PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

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## **ST. RITA SCHOOL** **ASSESSMENTS REFERENCED AGAINST NATIONAL NORMS**

Subject READING Grade 1

Test: Stanford 9 Edition/Publication Year: 1996 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Test: Stanford 10 Edition/Publication Year: 2003 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs  Scaled scores  Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Test	SAT 10	SAT 10	SAT 9	SAT 9	SAT 9
Testing month	April	April	April	April	April
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Total Score	72	47	75	74	68
Number of students tested	49	55	56	55	55
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.Hurricane Displaced Score	52	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	6				

# **PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

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## **ST. RITA SCHOOL** **ASSESSMENTS REFERENCED AGAINST NATIONAL NORMS**

Subject MATH Grade 1

Test: Stanford 9 Edition/Publication Year: 1996 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Test: Stanford 10 Edition/Publication Year: 2003 Publisher: Harcourt, Inc.

Scores are reported here as (check one): NCEs  Scaled scores  Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Test	SAT 10	SAT 10	SAT 9	SAT 9	SAT 9
Testing month	April	April	April	April	April
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Total Score	76	61	73	65	65
Number of students tested	49	55	56	55	55
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
1.Hurricane Displaced Score	58	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of students tested	6				