

# 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 Mrs. Suzanne Bacot  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

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

School Mailing Address 1201 Alma Drive  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Plano Texas 75075-7114  
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Collin State School Code Number\* NA

Telephone ( 972 ) 578-0610 Fax ( 972 ) 423-3299

Web site/URL www.stmarkcatholicsschool.com E-mail sbacot@stmarkplano.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\* Dr. Charles LeBlanc  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Catholic Diocese of Dallas Tel. ( 214 ) 528-2360

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. Diana Liese  
(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**

**[Include this page in the school's application as page 2.]**

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:      NA   Elementary schools  
      NA   Middle schools  
      NA   Junior high schools  
      NA   High schools  
      NA   Other
- NA   TOTAL
2. District Per Pupil Expenditure:          NA
- Average State Per Pupil Expenditure:   NA

**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.   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	NA	NA	NA	7	41	39	80
K	42	27	69	8	41	40	81
1	32	32	64	9	NA	NA	NA
2	29	48	77	10	NA	NA	NA
3	38	36	74	11	NA	NA	NA
4	42	36	78	12	NA	NA	NA
5	42	36	78	Other	NA	NA	NA
6	32	43	75				
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →</b>							<b>676</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:
- |                   |                                  |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| <u>79</u>         | % White                          |
| <u>02</u>         | % Black or African American      |
| <u>09</u>         | % Hispanic or Latino             |
| <u>09</u>         | % Asian/Pacific Islander         |
| <u>01</u>         | % 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: .03

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

<b>(1)</b>	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year	4
<b>(2)</b>	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year	17 *
<b>(3)</b>	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	21
<b>(4)</b>	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	696
<b>(5)</b>	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0
<b>(6)</b>	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	.03

\* 12 of these 17 students were Katrina students who returned to Louisiana.

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 0 %  
0 Total Number Limited English Proficient  
 Number of languages represented: 10  
 Specify languages: Spanish, Portuguese, Farsi, Hindi, German, French, Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, Tagalog
9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 0 %  
 Total number students who qualify: 0

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.



## **PART III - SUMMARY**

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From its inception in 1982, St. Mark Catholic School has embodied the essence of learning. The faculty and staff are dedicated to the spiritual, intellectual, and physical development of each student.

Fundamentally, it is the mission of St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic School to educate each student in a spirit of faith and Gospel values according to Roman Catholic principles. Spiritual education for each student focuses on religious studies based upon the teachings of Jesus Christ. Daily prayer, Bible study, and instruction in Catholic doctrine develop the conscience of each child in order to provide a firm foundation for moral decision-making. St. Mark students are encouraged to make responsible choices in their daily lives as well as allowing and encouraging others to do so.

It is also the mission of St. Mark's to encourage students to become knowledgeable, creative persons who achieve academic excellence. Teachers stimulate students' intellects through daily activities based upon a challenging curriculum and plan lessons that encourage higher-level thinking. Instructors meet the individual needs of students through hands-on activities, differentiated instruction, and enrichment. After school clubs encourage involvement in art, chess, band, history, math, and writing. Instruction in art and music during the school day inspires students' innate creativity and allows self-expression. Ultimately, academic and fine arts instruction culminates in our annual participation in the Private School Interscholastic Association (PSIA) academic competition in March.

Next, it is the mission of this school to uphold and teach respect for others as unique individuals and as members of the body of Christ, members who are active participants within Church, local, and global communities. Students attend weekly Mass and participate as cantors in the choir, as lectors, as acolytes, and as prayer partners to younger students. The school participates in meeting the socio-economic needs of our neighbors through school-sponsored service projects such as HUGS truck, Thanksgiving Food Drive for the Allen Food Pantry, Easter baskets for Children's Medical Center, and a book drive for New Orleans' schools. Teachers also involve students at all grade levels in awareness and discussion of current events and issues affecting the global community.

It is the mission of this school to be a caring, disciplined community that is truly a partnership of Church, school, and home. The school depends upon the contributions of parent volunteers in its daily routine as library aides, lunchroom aides, administrative aides, and coordinators for the annual auction. The school web page and access to grades, lesson plans, and assignments on Renaissance Web, the school's internet-based management system, allows parents to be partners in the academic success of their children.

Ultimately, St. Mark Catholic School's aim is to graduate students who are well versed in our Catholic faith, academically prepared to continue their education, Christian in attitude and outlook, and prepared to give service to the world-at-large. Members of the wider community recognize St. Mark graduates as capable, hard-working, sincere, and caring people who are ready to contribute to making the world a better place.

## **PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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### **1. Assessment Results:**

The St. Mark Catholic School assessment program contains two components. The Terra Nova standardized test measures achievement while the Inview exam assesses cognitive abilities. Students in first through eighth grades participate in this standardized testing program every year. Review of test results provides all

teachers an opportunity to conduct ongoing assessments by which to develop strategies, instructional methods, and materials.

The Terra Nova exam is administered in the fall in order to use the test results for the current school year. The results are graphed, providing a personal continuum of each child's growth while at St. Mark's.

Students in second, fourth, sixth, and eighth grade also take the Inview exam in the fall. The Inview exam provides an academic indicator measured against actual achievement. The results of this test help teachers, students, and parents evaluate whether or not a student is working to his or her full potential.

The 2006-2007 Terra Nova test results reflect the strong math and language arts instruction students receive at St. Mark Catholic School. The curriculum features such as Mad Minutes, manipulatives, Power Writing, and the Six Traits of Writing have contributed to the effectiveness of the program. The current eighth grade class has improved their reading test scores by fifteen percent over the past two years. Eighth grade math scores have improved by seven percent during the same time frame.

In September 2006, students in the eighth grade scored in the 83<sup>rd</sup> percentile for reading and in the 88<sup>th</sup> percentile for math. These percentiles are higher than the National Percentiles of 77 percent for both reading and mathematics. This places St. Mark Catholic School in the top 10 percent of all schools in the nation.

## **2. Using Assessment Results:**

The school administrator utilizes the assessment results to keep the school community informed of on-going excellence. The school community includes students, teachers, parents, and the school advisory council. Student assessment allows administrators to place students in appropriate instructional groups where students will be continuously challenged. Teachers review individual student performance to determine student strengths and weaknesses. Instruction is then aimed at meeting the needs of individual learners rather than focusing solely on whole-group instruction. Student grouping is rotated throughout the school year based upon individual successes and needs for remediation.

St. Mark has incorporated the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) into the reading program. This program consists of continuous assessment of reading fluency in young children and adjustment of reading instruction based upon the student's skill level. Teachers are able to regularly monitor the development of pre-reading and early literacy skills and provide students with appropriate yet challenging reading material.

Teachers and students in all grade levels utilize the assessments built in the Accelerated Reader program to monitor and challenge reading comprehension. Students are able to use this information to choose books at a comfortable reading level and teachers are able to tailor their instruction based on assessments that show exactly where the children excel or struggle.

Student assessment enables teachers to match teaching methods to student needs, allowing the school to reach its goal of meeting the needs of every child.

## **3. Communicating Assessment Results:**

At St. Mark Catholic School, parents have complete and daily access to the teachers' grade books through Renaissance Web, the school's management system. Through this system, parents are able to view weekly lesson plans, long-term projects, homework assignments, and grades. Parents and teachers can also communicate through personal e-mail. In addition, teachers make personal phone calls regarding significant changes in a student's progress. Teachers and parents meet in the fall to

review standardized test scores and to identify goals for each student and meet again in the spring to reassess the student's progress and reformulate goals.

In addition, middle school students conference with their homeroom teacher seven times a year to review progress reports and report cards. The teachers aid students in identifying individual goals for each quarter and to reflect upon past performance.

Student achievement is celebrated at both the school and community levels. Awards and accomplishments in academics and sports are communicated through our weekly school newsletter. The school's public relations committee relates student achievements to local newspapers such as the Texas Catholic, Plano Star Courier, and Dallas Morning News.

#### **4. Sharing Success:**

St. Mark Catholic School actively shares its successes with other schools. St. Mark Catholic School firmly believes that collaborating with other schools serves to strengthen the whole community. The principal works closely with all of the other Diocesan principals, sharing strategies and resources that have proven successful. Teachers from across the Diocese meet to share best classroom practices. Members from St. Mark have served on accreditation teams and have provided feedback to schools throughout Texas on ways to improve their programs.

Because St. Mark Catholic School is blessed with many resources, donations of computers and teaching resources are made to Our Lady of Perpetual Help, which is a Dallas inner-city school, and Immaculate Conception School in Grand Prairie. As the school receives technology advances on a three-year cycle, these schools will continue to receive resources from St. Mark Catholic School on a regular basis.

As St. Mark Catholic School continues to benefit from a variety of resources, the school will continue its commitment to share knowledge, technology materials, and collegiality with fellow Catholic schools.

## **PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Curriculum:**

Many programs exist within the school that develop a general attitude of and expectation for academic success. Teachers enhance the curriculum by implementing thematic units, and utilizing innovative programs in phonics, math, reading, spelling, social studies, science, health, and computer literacy, creative arts, music appreciation, foreign language, and physical education. The language arts curriculum develops students' verbal and linguistic skills through phonics-based reading strategies. Power Writing and Six Traits of Writing instruction begin in Kindergarten and are expanded through middle school, with emphasis on the publishing of student writing in the upper grades.

The math curriculum encourages students to explore math beyond the realm of the standard curriculum features, while fostering higher-level thinking. Teachers promote verbal and symbolic math skills by applying real-life situations through differentiated activities.

Scientific reasoning through inquiry is implemented in science lessons through inferring, investigating, and using hands-on activities to learn about the world. Science fair participation is an integral part of the curriculum.

Students are first introduced to foreign language in Kindergarten. Students in primary and intermediate grades receive a firm foundation in the basics of Spanish. Students in middle school may select either Latin or Spanish as they continue with their foreign language requirements.

The fine arts program promotes the appreciation for the visual arts and creative personal expression through a variety of media. Performance skills are exhibited through music presentations, composing, arranging, and reading music. The art program incorporates art history and hands-on activities to foster a life-long learning of the arts.

Physical education at St. Mark's strengthens the energies of the body, focusing on healthy lifestyle choices and contributes to self-confidence, and promotes a cooperative team spirit. Presbyterian Hospital of Plano sponsors health fairs for students, addressing personal safety and healthy choices. The staff of the cafeteria service encourages healthy eating through the Catch a Healthy Meal program, allowing students to easily choose foods, which are color-coded, based on their nutritional value.

Several academic activities are offered outside the classroom setting. Children have an opportunity to participate in math club, chess club, choir, and band as well as the national Math Fax competition, spelling and geography bees, Scholastic Art and Writing Awards, Letters About Literature, and science fairs. Students are also encouraged to compete in area contests such as Private School Interscholastic Association (PSIA) and Diocesan speech tournaments.

## **2a. (Elementary Schools) Reading:**

The components of the reading curriculum are two-fold: 1) instruction that develops students' ability, to read fluently and appreciate great literature and 2) instruction that promotes students' ability to express themselves through writing.

Literature appreciation begins in the earliest stages of literacy at the Kindergarten level and continues through the eighth grade year. Students learn to read through literature-based programs that teach basic word attack, comprehension, and fluency skills. Teachers then differentiate students' learning through a wide variety of enrichment and remediation techniques, using both whole-group and small group instruction.

Teachers use two complementary systems to teach writing. First, students learn how to organize their thoughts on paper using Power Writing. Through a number system, children learn how to place their topic, supporting, and detail statements in an order that promotes clarity for the reader. Second, students learn the Six Traits of Writing. Teachers in grades 1-8 use materials and activities in the writing kit, which teach students to improve their writing style.

## **3. Additional Curriculum Area:**

Religious education at St. Mark Catholic School fulfills the school's mission to develop in its students the desire to practice living the gospel values through understanding the call of servant leadership. Students play an active role in weekly Mass by serving as lectors, ushers, acolytes, cantors, and musicians. Living by example is a prominent focus as the students observe their teachers and classmates taking time to pray throughout the day and to discuss values and church teachings as the occasion arises. An integral part of Mass is the incorporation of the prayer partner program. Middle School students mentor elementary school children as they model prayerful respect, reverence and participation at church services.

Along with the inclusion of curriculum designed to celebrate Gospel values and virtues as a monthly theme, religion is integrated into the curriculum in the areas of language arts, social studies, and health. The addition of prayer tables in the classroom sets an atmosphere conducive to a spiritual invitation. All members of the school community are invited together to pray the rosary for the month of October. An essential part of middle school is Confirmation. Throughout the Confirmation process the students gain an understanding of God's call to serve others and are required to accumulate service hours in the areas of home, school, and community.

An extension of the religion program is the inclusion of guidance lessons called Second Step. Also, Faith, Family, and Friends program is used as a guidance tool to foster self-esteem and decision-making strategies. In middle school, students are placed in a homeroom mixed with sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students in order to foster a vertical community. The homeroom essentially becomes a school family incorporating interpersonal skills among fellow students and the homeroom teacher. Homeroom teachers set aside a day every quarter to individually conference with students as part of the advisory program. The religion and guidance programs complement each other; the concepts of each program promote Christian values and treatment of others as a way of life.

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

Students are children first, and children learn best when their developmental levels and learning styles are taken into consideration. Classroom teachers choose instructional methods that address each child's preferred learning style thus maximizing his or her success. Most importantly, the more abstract concepts in each subject are first introduced in a concrete/kinesthetic way through song, rhymes, performing arts, and manipulatives. The faculty is mindful in incorporating visual, auditory, and kinesthetic components as an integral part of every unit of study.

With regard to particular curricular areas, the students at St. Mark's have a rich abundance of resources to aid them in learning. Teachers use learning centers, PowerPoint presentations, virtual labs and much more to vary instruction. The computer instruction lab includes a smart board for whole group instruction and a computer for each child in the class. Moreover, the computer applications lab includes a wide variety of instructional games in the core subjects of reading, writing, grammar, spelling, and math. Students have access to research materials through Digital Knowledge Central, a web portal with research materials such as Ebsco, Student Britannica, and Newsbank. Teachers have access to audio/video materials from the library/media center for use in the classroom. In middle school, Schoolpad technology is utilized for daily presentations and instruction. With the onset of the 2007 school year, each classroom will have a digital projector and screen to integrate technology with instruction.

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

The faculty at St. Mark is trained to meet the daily physical, emotional, and academic needs for each student.

First, St. Mark faculty member are certified annually in Red Cross CPR and First Aid. Each teacher and staff member undergoes training in procedures for treating student injury and accidents.

Second, to meet the emotional/behavior needs of each child, each faculty member has been trained in the Love and Logic program. In addition to the training, a handbook is kept in each classroom for easy access and reference. Teachers partner with parents to share the Love and Logic philosophy, techniques, and procedures. The Second Step guidance program is used to help students learn strategies for addressing topics such as bullying, peer pressure, and social interaction.

Finally, St. Mark faculty is always learning new techniques to meet the academic needs of their students. All teachers obtain eight hours of on-going professional development of their choice. This is in addition to professional development provided at both the campus and diocesan levels throughout school year. Training sessions in the past have centered on enrichment for academically gifted students, Six Traits writing, Intel teacher training, faith formation and retreats, conferencing with parents, classroom survival for new teachers, learning disabilities, and safe environment training.

## **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): National Catholic Education 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>\$ 4,328</u> K	<u>\$ 4,328</u> 1 <sup>st</sup>	<u>\$ 4,328</u> 2 <sup>nd</sup>	<u>\$ 4,328</u> 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<u>\$ 4,328</u> 4 <sup>th</sup>	<u>\$ 4,328</u> 5 <sup>th</sup>
<u>\$ 4,328</u> 6 <sup>th</sup>	<u>\$ 4,328</u> 7 <sup>th</sup>	<u>\$ 4,328</u> 8 <sup>th</sup>	<u>\$ NA</u> 9 <sup>th</sup>	<u>\$ NA</u> 10 <sup>th</sup>	<u>\$ NA</u> 11 <sup>th</sup>
<u>\$ NA</u> 12 <sup>th</sup>	<u>\$ NA</u> Other				

4. What is the educational cost per student? \$ 4,478  
 (School budget divided by enrollment)

5. What is the average financial aid per student? \$ 2,000

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

7. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 4%

## **PART VI I – Assessment Results**

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Saint Mark Catholic School

Terra Nova

Form C, 2001

CTB/McGraw-Hill

Scores are reported as percentiles.

No students are excluded from the test.

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	September	September	September
<b>Grade 8</b>			
Reading	83	84	80
Mathematics	88	87	85
Number of students tested	81	74	80
Percent of students tested	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0
Percent of students excluded	0	0	0
<b>Grade 7</b>			
Reading	83	77	83
Mathematics	89	82	84
Number of students tested	80	79	68
Percent of students tested	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0
Percent of students excluded	0	0	0
<b>Grade 6</b>			
Reading	83	78	72
Mathematics	87	88	82
Number of students tested	75	82	73
Percent of students tested	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0
Percent of students excluded	0	0	0
<b>Grade 5</b>			
Reading	78	77	83
Mathematics	77	78	82
Number of students tested	78	78	77
Percent of students tested	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0
Percent of students excluded	0	0	0

Saint Mark Catholic School

Terra Nova  
 Form C, 2001  
 CTB/McGraw-Hill

Scores are reported as percentiles.  
 No students are excluded from the test.

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	September	September	September
<b>Grade 4</b>			
Reading	82	78	79
Mathematics	86	82	82
Number of students tested	78	78	75
Percent of students tested	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0
Percent of students excluded	0	0	0
<b>Grade 3</b>			
Reading	82	78	83
Mathematics	82	81	82
Number of students tested	74	81	74
Percent of students tested	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0
Percent of students excluded	0	0	0
<b>Grade 2</b>			
Reading	81	75	84
Mathematics	76	70	75
Number of students tested	77	78	80
Percent of students tested	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0
Percent of students excluded	0	0	0
<b>Grade 1</b>			
Reading	86	87	82
Mathematics	67	68	68
Number of students tested	64	74	77
Percent of students tested	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0
Percent of students excluded	0	0	0

