

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2017 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[ ] Public or [X] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. Matthew Thomas McGrath

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

Official School Name Hoboken Catholic Academy

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 555 7th Street

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Hoboken State NJ Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 07030-6326

County Hudson

Telephone (201) 963-9535 Fax (201) 963-1256

Web site/URL http://www.hobokencatholic.org E-mail info@hobokencatholic.org

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

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

Name of Superintendent\*Dr. Margaret Dames E-mail damesmar@rcan.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Newark Tel. (973) 497-4260

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

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

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

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

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

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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1. The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2017 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2011 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
9. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
10. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
11. 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.
12. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2016-2017) unless otherwise stated.

**DISTRICT** (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

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

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
  - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
  - Suburban
  - Small city or town in a rural area
  - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2016 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

| Grade                 | # of Males | # of Females | Grade Total |
|-----------------------|------------|--------------|-------------|
| PreK                  | 34         | 35           | 69          |
| K                     | 29         | 27           | 56          |
| 1                     | 22         | 18           | 40          |
| 2                     | 15         | 16           | 31          |
| 3                     | 13         | 19           | 32          |
| 4                     | 15         | 11           | 26          |
| 5                     | 18         | 13           | 31          |
| 6                     | 12         | 13           | 25          |
| 7                     | 7          | 10           | 17          |
| 8                     | 7          | 6            | 13          |
| 9                     | 0          | 0            | 0           |
| 10                    | 0          | 0            | 0           |
| 11                    | 0          | 0            | 0           |
| 12 or higher          | 0          | 0            | 0           |
| <b>Total Students</b> | 172        | 168          | 340         |

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 21 % Asian
  - 1 % Black or African American
  - 10 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 52 % White
  - 16 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2015 – 2016 school year: 1%

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

| Steps For Determining Mobility Rate  | Answer |
|--|--------|
| (1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year   | 1      |
| (2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year | 3      |
| (3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]  | 4      |
| (4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015   | 344    |
| (5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)   | 0.012  |
| (6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100  | 1      |

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %  
0 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 0 %  
 Total number students who qualify: 0

8. Students receiving special education services: 8 %  
27 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 conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <u>0</u> Autism                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness              | <u>4</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness        | <u>10</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>14</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 | <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed               |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 4
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

|  | <b>Number of Staff</b> |
|--|------------------------|
| Administrators   | 1                      |
| Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects   | 16                     |
| Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.  | 5                      |
| Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.  | 3                      |
| Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc. | 1                      |

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 21:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

| <b>Required Information</b> | 2015-2016 | 2014-2015 | 2013-2014 | 2012-2013 | 2011-2012 |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Daily student attendance    | 96%       | 97%       | 96%       | 92%       | 97%       |
| High school graduation rate | 0%        | 0%        | 0%        | 0%        | 0%        |

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**  
Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2016.

| <b>Post-Secondary Status</b>                  |    |
|---|----|
| Graduating class size                         | 0  |
| Enrolled in a 4-year college or university    | 0% |
| Enrolled in a community college               | 0% |
| Enrolled in career/technical training program | 0% |
| Found employment                              | 0% |
| Joined the military or other public service   | 0% |
| Other   | 0% |

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.  
Yes  No

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

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

To educate the mind, encourage the growth, and enhance the spiritual development of each child emphasizing the Gospel message of love and service.

## PART III – SUMMARY

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In communities in New Jersey and across the country, many Catholic schools have closed over the last several decades due to changing demographics, financial constraints and a variety of other reasons. At one time there were five Catholic, parish schools serving Hoboken and Weehawken, New Jersey. Over time they began to merge and Hoboken Catholic Academy became the lone Catholic school to serve the co-sponsoring parishes of St. Ann's, Ss Peter and Paul, St. Francis, Our Lady of Grace and St. Joseph in Hoboken, and St. Lawrence in Weehawken. Recently, an exciting new initiative by the Archdiocese of Newark called Lighting the Way, allowed for a restructuring of the financial support provided to all archdiocesan schools. No longer co-sponsored by the five parishes, Hoboken Catholic Academy still maintains strong ties and serves families from each of the parishes. In addition, HCA welcomes students from parishes in surrounding communities. Non-Catholic students also attend HCA and make up approximately 10% of the student population.

Hoboken Catholic has served the working class families in the area since the early nineteen nineties and has evolved with Hoboken as the city has gentrified and grown in real estate development and wealth. The school currently serves both long-time Hoboken and Weehawken families and people new to the area. In the fall of 2011, HCA successfully completed the arduous task of Middle States Accreditation. The report commended the school on a number of areas and identified some areas needing to be addressed. While the principal and her staff began to implement suggestions for improvement, the unthinkable occurred. In late October 2012 Super Storm Sandy ravaged parts of New Jersey, including the city of Hoboken.

Beyond the flooding caused by the massive storm surge that filled the boiler room and the gymnasium, the surge emptied an abandoned oil tank adjacent to the boiler room of several thousand gallons of heating oil. The contaminated water poured under the school building and into and under the boiler room. What began as a flood causing extensive water damage had evolved into a catastrophic environmental disaster. The immediate impact was the need to relocate the 400 plus students to alternate sites for the balance of the school year and continue to function as a school. The long-term impact was the need to remediate the site and reopen the school as soon as possible.

Students in kindergarten through grade eight were bussed each day to another Catholic school in neighboring Jersey City and over one hundred PK students were housed at another private Hoboken school. The yearlong odyssey was very difficult and certainly took its toll. The school staff transported students, lunches and supplies to two sites while keeping a makeshift office on site, in a modular classroom. A number of families left the school and everyone wondered if the school would ever reopen.

Through the grace of God and a lot of hard work by the school staff, the resiliency and perseverance of the students and their families and support from the Archbishop and archdiocesan staff, HCA not only completed the school year, but also reopened at the Hoboken site in September. With a new principal starting on July first, more than one hundred tons of contaminated soil and hundreds of thousands of gallons of tainted ground water removed, a new boiler room, gym floor, and plumbing throughout the building, students were welcomed back to their school for the 2013-2014 school year!

Since the grand reopening, HCA has thrived. The school boasts a proud tradition of academic rigor, strong Catholic values, an emphasis on service projects and robust athletic and choir programs. HCA is a Professional Development School through William Paterson University with a Math Professor in Residence (PIR) to work with teachers throughout the school year. With STEM training by Stevens Institute of Technology and a dedicated STEM support teacher, students work in teams to use math, science and technology to design and build artifacts and tools to solve real world problems. By utilizing guided and close reading strategies, emphasizing an integrated writing program, hands on mathematics and utilizing technology to enhance instruction across the curriculum, HCA teachers provide outstanding instruction from Pre-K through grade eight. This is further evidenced by the 2016 standardized test results, which are well above the Blue Ribbon School cut scores.

Through the National Junior Honor Society, Campus Ministry and Student Council, students participate in a

number of service projects throughout the school year. Those projects include food and clothing drives for Catholic Charities sponsored organizations and the Hoboken Homeless Shelter, toy drives for children in area hospitals, phone cards for troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, support of Catholic missionaries, breast cancer and autism awareness projects and support of St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital, and serving as wait staff for the annual Grandparents' Dinner Dance.

## PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Core Curriculum:

Hoboken Catholic Academy is part of the Archdiocese of Newark and utilizes the Archdiocesan curriculum guidelines to develop curriculum in all content areas. Over the last several years, the mathematics, reading and language arts curriculum have been revised through an archdiocesan wide curriculum mapping process. Each of these areas has been standardized, sequenced and aligned to the Common Core Standards.

In the area of reading/English language arts, teachers incorporate a balanced literacy approach to address common core literacy standards. Guided Reading is used in the primary grades and close reading strategies are utilized in all grade levels. Primary teachers work with small groups of students on fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension. At all grade levels, teachers help students internalize close reading strategies to allow them to read even complex text in all content areas, deeply and with purpose. They utilize anchor charts and tiered word walls and emphasize multiple targeted readings of text. Students are required to provide text evidence to support answers to comprehension questions. A literacy support teacher is assigned to first and second grade classes to work with small groups and individual students as needed.

Primary teachers stress phonics and decoding skill development through whole and small group instruction. At all grades, teachers emphasize the writing process, providing appropriate and detailed writing prompts, scoring rubrics aligned to those prompts and standard proofreading and editing strategies. Teachers provide effective feedback and guidance on the first draft and have begun to incorporate components of Writers' Workshop with publishing parties for parents. Teachers emphasize speaking and listening skills to facilitate students' ability to participate effectively in a range of conversations and present information with supporting evidence per the Speaking and Listening Anchor Standards.

In the area of mathematics, teachers incorporate a varied instructional approach that includes whole and small group instruction, the use of manipulatives and an emphasis on algebraic thinking and the problem solving process. Students are trained to think, write and speak mathematically. Teachers display math vocabulary anchor charts at each level and routinely utilize their Smart Board to enhance their instruction. A math support teacher is assigned to each class in grades one to four to work with groups or individual students as needed and the Professor in Residence (PIR) from William Paterson University works with math teachers at all grade levels. In addition to this embedded support, the (PIR) provides in-service training to staff and along with the middle school math teacher, facilitates an after school Math Enrichment Program for middle school students.

To enhance a hands-on science curriculum, Hoboken Catholic Academy has a dedicated STEM Activities Support Teacher who works with all classroom teachers to develop and implement STEM activities aligned to their respective curriculum. Following co-taught group lessons to introduce the topics, students work in small groups to design and create artifacts to solve the identified problem. Grade level projects range from bridge design and building to cleaning up an oil spill to making barometers to forecast the weather. At the middle school level, the teacher employs teaching modules in Earth, Life, Physical and Environmental Sciences for students in grades seven and eight, supplemented with Internet based resources. As part of HCA's participation in the archdiocesan STEM Expo initiative, middle school students work in teams to develop solutions to the challenges identified in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, such as eradicating world hunger. The culminating STEM Expo will bring students from across the Archdiocese together to share their research-based projects.

The Social Studies curriculum in kindergarten through grade 4 moves students outward from the family to the community to the city and state. Beginning in grade five, students begin to learn about our geographical world and trace world events leading to the formation of our nation and its development. As students move through middle school they explore those topics in greater depth utilizing the Internet to supplement their text, gaining insights into the events that shaped our country and world from multiple perspectives. They learn about the role of government and that the rights we enjoy come with the responsibility of good citizenship. Students learn about our elected officials and the branches of government at the local, state and



federal levels.

HCA includes a Pre-K program for three and four year olds. The curriculum is language based and is aligned to the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards. Routines are established and students develop self-confidence in a learning atmosphere that encourages exploration and cooperation. The classes are rich with movement, music and opportunities for creative play and artistic expression. Students are read to daily and have opportunities to share stories and respond to questions. Children develop an understanding of letters and their sounds, and demonstrate math readiness skills through number recognition, counting, sorting and identifying shapes. Students leave the Pre-K program well prepared for kindergarten.

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

In addition to the core academic program, students receive instruction in religion, art, music, physical education, world language and technology.

HCA is a Catholic, Christian school and all students in Pre-K through eighth grade receive religion instruction each day. Students learn about the tenets of the faith, sacred scripture, the sacraments, the liturgical calendar, and the customs, rituals and ceremonies of the Catholic faith. Each day begins and ends with prayer and students attend monthly school Masses.

In the area of fine and visual and/or performing arts, students in Pre-K through grade eight have an art class with the art teacher, one period per week. The teacher provides an age appropriate, spiraling art curriculum in which students are actively engaged in creating a wide variety of two and three dimensional art projects, utilizing multiple styles and mediums. They also learn about the artists who represent the various styles. The teacher provides exemplars for the children to emulate and models each step of each project to allow students to learn how artists work. Student work is continually displayed throughout the school and during an Art Show each spring.

Beginning in Pre-K, students receive music instruction one period per week. Again, the curriculum spirals to have students grow in their understanding of the various types of music and the musicians and conductors typifying each period and genre. Students actively participate, learn to read music and sing songs of different types and styles. An outgrowth of the music program is the school choir. Sixty students from grades two through eight participate in the choir program. They perform throughout the school year at concerts, Sunday Masses, and special programs. They take part in the annual archdiocesan competition and have been rated “Superior,” by the experts who judged the competition.

A dedicated physical education teacher provides instruction to students from Pre-K through grade eight. Students in Pre-K and Kindergarten attend physical education class two times a week and students in grades one to eight have physical education one period per week. The physical education program provides age appropriate activities to develop fine and gross motor skills, coordination, speed and stamina. Students participate in games and activities to emphasize cooperation, skill development, movement and life-long cardio-vascular health. The school boasts a strong afterschool athletic program, which includes track, volleyball and basketball. Over 250 students participate in the school’s athletic program.

Teachers from Pre-K through grade eight teach health to the students in their respective classes. Students learn about living a healthy lifestyle that involves personal hygiene, good nutrition, physical activity and avoiding contaminants like drugs, alcohol and tobacco. They learn about various communicable diseases and how healthy habits and smart decisions will in many instances, protect them from harm.

Hoboken Catholic Academy is in compliance with the program’s foreign language requirements. Students receive Spanish instruction from the Spanish teacher beginning in Pre-K. Students from Pre-K through grade six have one class per week and students in grades seven and eight receive instruction for two forty-minute periods per week. The Spanish curriculum spirals through the grades and focuses on vocabulary development and speaking in Spanish. Internet resources are used to help students learn about Spanish culture and the customs from Spanish speaking countries around the world. Students complete the equivalent of Spanish I by the end of eighth grade.

Each classroom has a Smart Board and all Pre-K and Kindergarten classes also have Smart Tables. Teachers have Mac Books and there are two twenty-five unit mobile Mac Book carts at the school. A computer teacher provides instruction one period per week to students in grades one to six. Teachers in grades Pre-K and K utilize their Smart Tables to introduce computer skills to their students and to foster independence through its use as a learning center. Beginning in grade one, in addition to the formal instruction, teachers “sign-out,” the mobile cart to have their students work with the Mac Books in various capacities in all curricular areas. Students in seventh and eighth grades conduct safe Internet searches, create and use spread sheets, Power Point and other multi media presentations and utilize technology to submit assignments. Students participate in “First in Math,” an online math skill reinforcement program.

### **3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:**

Teachers at Hoboken Catholic employ a variety of teaching strategies to meet the diverse needs of their students. They work with whole and small groups and individual students and employ learning centers to differentiate instruction, particularly for students performing below or above grade level. Students with an individual service plan (ISP) and non-classified, underachieving students receive additional support through Title 192 and 193 services. A literacy support teacher works with all primary reading classes. Teachers employ guided and close reading strategies, an integrated writing program and an emphasis on the development of speaking and listening skills as part of a balanced literacy program.

In mathematics, teachers at all grade levels emphasize the process of problem solving as well as the answer. Teachers utilize whole and small group instruction as well as math centers. A math support teacher works with classroom teachers to facilitate small group instruction and to work on targeted areas with groups or individual students. The PIR from William Paterson University provides ongoing, embedded professional development and support. Teachers at all levels utilize manipulatives to allow for hands on learning, giving abstract concepts a concrete base.

A STEM Activities teacher, participation in the archdiocesan middle school STEM Expo program and an afterschool Engineering enrichment program offered in collaboration with Stevens Institute of Technology allows for a rich, hands on science experience for all HCA students. The Student Council and National Junior Honor Society reinforce the school’s strong social studies curriculum, which progresses from families to communities, to cities and states, to our nation and the world and emphasizes responsible citizenship and the structures of government. Student leaders plan and run service projects to help people in need and programs to enhance the school. Teachers at all levels infuse technology to enhance their instruction. Utilizing the Internet allows for virtual field trips to scientific, historical and cultural sites in science, social studies and Spanish classes. Students are adept in the use of Power Point for enhanced presentations in all content areas.

In all content areas at all levels, teachers include formative and summative assessment practices to evaluate students and to inform instruction. Tests, quizzes, reports, essays and projects as well as anecdotal assessments through observation and informal assessments are used to monitor student learning. The use of individual dry erase boards or computer based electronic signaling allow for on-the spot assessment. Teachers utilize scoring rubrics and provide effective feedback and guidance in evaluating student writing. In mathematics, students are required to show their work when solving problems and teachers are able to assess student understanding of the process of problem solving and make necessary adjustments to instruction. Benchmark, unit and level assessments are used in Kindergarten through grade five as part of the Reading Street basal reading program. Parents receive mid trimester progress reports and report cards at the end of each marking period. Parent conferences are held in October and February, but teachers are available at any time to address areas of concern or to provide information about student progress. Parents have access to student grades on a continuous basis through the “Parent Portal,” of the school’s student information system. Students with diagnosed learning issues are given additional time for tests and are often tested individually and/or orally, depending on their need.

Students in grades two through eight take part in Terra Nova, standardized testing each March. Students at

all levels are tested in reading, language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. In grades two through seven, students are also tested to determine their cognitive ability to allow for anticipated scores in addition to actual scores in each area tested. The teachers and principal analyze the results to locate areas of concern, identify possible causes and develop plans to address those areas of concern. Teachers look at individual test results and compare students' achieved scores to their anticipated scores. That data serves as the catalyst to examine teaching practices, pacing and curriculum alignment. Parents receive reports detailing their child's test results and the school publishes results by grade level, comparing the school's results to national and archdiocesan results. Test data for the last three years remains on the school website for parents to track testing data over time.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### **1. School Climate/Culture:**

Hoboken Catholic Academy is a happy place. An atmosphere of mutual love and respect among students, parents and staff permeates the school. The teachings of love and service, which define the Catholic faith, are the guiding principles that also define the school. Students feel safe and are guided by a caring and dedicated teaching and support staff through their daily routines. With programs in place to have older students assist younger students before and during school, it is expected that as in a family, children learn how to behave from those who go before them. With constant reminders of God's love, such as daily prayers, prayer services to commemorate important days and events like 9/11 and Veterans' Day, school masses and numerous school-wide service projects, HCA students develop an understanding that everyone is called to serve and is responsible for his or her actions.

HCA parents not only support the school and its mission, but they enthusiastically participate in all activities. Their respect for HCA's teachers is evidenced by their generous funding of the "Teachers' Wish List." At last year's Spring Gala the Home and School Association raised \$12,000 for items on the "Teachers' Wish List!" Parents serve as chaperones for field trips, coaches for our athletic teams, volunteers at open houses and speakers on career day. The partnership between home and school is strong and contributes greatly to the school's positive climate and culture.

HCA's wide array of extra-curricular clubs, sports and activities contribute to the school's positive climate and the personal growth of each participant. The National Junior Honor Society recognizes students who demonstrate scholarship, leadership, service and citizenship, and currently has thirty-five members. The Campus Ministry program has more than sixty participants. They collect food and clothing for Hoboken's homeless, toys for sick children in local hospitals and host HCA's annual senior citizen dinner dance. The school choir has sixty participants and performs at concerts, masses, assemblies, and in the archdiocesan competition each spring. More than 250 students participate in the school's athletic program, which sponsors track, volleyball and basketball teams. A partnership with a local high school brings students after school one day per week to serve as tutors and coaches for the STEM and Academic Bowl programs. By participating in extra-curricular activities, students learn teamwork and cooperation, working toward a common goal and the practical skill of how to budget their time.

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

Engaging families and members of the community starts with ongoing communication. HCA has developed an informative school website and established multiple ways to communicate with parents. Utilizing an email blast system, parents are alerted to emergency and important information as needed. The school's Facebook page includes photos and information about the wide variety of school and parent association events. Teachers maintain individual webpages, with regular updates about what is happening in their classes as well as information about clubs and sports teams.

The HCA Advisory Board consists of the pastor, members of the business community and local educational institutions. They work closely with the principal to prepare the annual budget, develop long and short-term goals through strategic planning and identify potential funding sources. HCA has begun an alumni outreach program and hosted its first social last spring. Through the Home and School Association, HCA's parent community works closely with the school's administration, faculty and staff to provide support to enhance every aspect of the school's operation.

HCA has established partnerships with local colleges and a high school to enhance the school's academic, service and athletic programs. Designated as a Professional Development School through William Paterson University (WPU), HCA teachers have access to dozens of workshops and classes on the WPU campus. HCA has established multiple connections with Stevens Institute of Technology. HCA's middle school science teacher was trained at Stevens to facilitate a Waterbotics Unit for eighth graders. Engineering students teach two, six-week afterschool courses for HCA students on a variety of engineering

topics. HCA participates in Steven's annual STEM-a-thon with other schools in Hoboken. In two of the last three years, the Men's and Women's Basketball teams from St. Peters University conducted basketball clinics for HCA students. The Prep connection brings students from St. Peters Preparatory High School to HCA to tutor and serve as coaches for the STEM and Academic Bowl programs. Campus Ministry has joined with Felician University to collect toiletries to be distributed to homeless in NYC and Newark during their "Midnight Runs." HCA is a sponsoring member of the Hoboken Family Alliance and participates in the All School Open House and the Ben and Jerry's School Spirit Night. HCA hosts and participates in the annual Hoboken Rotary Spelling Bee and has been recognized by the Hoboken Chamber of Commerce as a finalist in the Educational Institution of the Year category at their annual awards dinner.

### **3. Professional Development:**

Over the last several years, teachers at HCA have participated in multiple school and archdiocesan level professional development initiatives aligned to professional teaching standards, which have resulted in improved student achievement. During that time, school and individual improvement plans have focused on the areas of reading and mathematics.

HCA is a professional Development School through William Paterson University and hosts a math Professor in Residence one day per week. The PIR observes teachers and provides non-evaluative feedback and guidance through an ongoing dialogue. She has conducted workshops on the use of math manipulatives and ways to better engage students in their learning. Mathematics was an area identified in the 2012 Middle States report as needing improvement. In 2016 the HCA scores on the Terra Nova assessment, exceeded the Blue Ribbon cut scores by an average of 17 points.

Teachers were trained in the inclusion of close reading strategies to improve reading comprehension and vocabulary development. Teachers learned about anchor charts, tiered word walls, multiple, and targeted readings of text with annotations and have incorporated those strategies in their teaching. The use of close reading strategies has contributed significantly to improved student achievement in reading as evidenced in a comparison of year-to-year Terra Nova reading scores with the latest results exceeding the Blue Ribbon cut scores by an average of 14 points.

The principal and teachers were trained on the use of the Danielson Framework for Teaching for walk through observations, two and four domain observations and summative evaluations, with an emphasis on Marzano's Nine High-Yield Instructional Strategies and Bloom's Taxonomy. Teachers engaged in curriculum mapping of mathematics and language arts, reading and literacy programs and have aligned the respective curriculums to the NJ Core Content Standards and formalized pacing protocols. Teachers have been trained in the use of Rubicon Atlas for the development and sharing of unit plans.

Teachers have taken part in a two-year program to develop and implement an integrated writing program. The presenter provided a series of workshops during the first year and embedded professional development in the second year of the program. She emphasized the development of a common editing language, the development of effective writing prompts, the use of scoring rubrics and providing effective feedback and guidance.

Teachers have been trained in the use of formative assessment, differentiated instruction, and how to analyze standardized test data to inform instruction and improve student achievement.

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

The leadership philosophy at HCA is inclusive and collaborative, with multiple stakeholders playing a vital role.

Hoboken Catholic Academy operates under the authority of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Newark. The superintendent, the assistant superintendents and their staff(s) provide invaluable guidance and support to the principal and the school. Curriculum and program initiatives, professional development for teachers and principals, standardized testing and regulatory oversight is provided and coordinated through the

Archdiocesan Schools' Office.

The pastor provides spiritual guidance to the school community and is an ex-officio member of the school Advisory Board. The School Advisory Board provides guidance and support to the building principal and works closely with the principal to develop the annual budget and provide input on marketing, development, capital projects, and strategic planning.

The principal is responsible for the school's daily operations, insuring compliance with state and federal statutes and maintaining safe and secure environment for students and staff. He oversees the hiring of all teachers and staff, the maintenance of the physical plant and the school's systems, implementation of the curriculum and the delivery of instruction. He is responsible for teaching assignments and the creation of all schedules. He works with the leadership of the Home and School Association to provide support for teachers and students. Together with the teachers and staff, he establishes a school climate that fosters mutual respect, embodies the school's mission statement and encourages academic rigor.

Teacher leaders provide valuable counsel and feedback to the principal, serve as subject area and standardized test coordinators, oversee extracurricular activities and serve on Middle States and other school and archdiocesan professional committees.

The recommendations for growth provided by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools following their 2012 site visit became a blueprint for school improvement. Areas identified as needing improvement have been addressed. Mathematics instruction has improved significantly and a number of supports have been put in place. As a result, standardized test scores in mathematics have improved dramatically, exceeding the Blue Ribbon cut scores. Efforts to improve the middle school program include the creation of a science lab and an emphasis on hands on learning, expanded use of technology, improved Spanish instruction, an after school enrichment program, robust Campus Ministry and Student Council Programs, and improved Catholic Identity. Teachers have assumed leadership roles in helping to bring about that growth. As a result, student enrollment in the middle school grades has improved, with more students remaining through graduation.

## PART VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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The practice that has most contributed to Hoboken Catholic Academy’s academic success has been the emphasis on improving mathematics and language arts/literacy instruction through staffing and targeted professional development.

## PART VII – NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

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1. Non-public school association(s): Catholic

Identify the religious or independent associations, if any, to which the school belongs. Select the primary association first.

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

3. What is the educational cost per student?      \$7988  
(School budget divided by enrollment)

4. What is the average financial aid per student?      \$986

5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?      18%

6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction?      76%



**PART VIII – ASSESSMENT RESULTS FOR NORM-REFERENCED TESTS**

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**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math

**Test:** Terra Nova, Third Edition

**Grade:** 3

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2012

**Publisher:** McGraw Hill

**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| School Year                                | 2015-2016 |
| Testing month                              | Mar       |
| <b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>                       |           |
| Average Score                              | 93        |
| Number of students tested                  | 31        |
| Percent of total students tested           | 100       |
| Number of students alternatively assessed  | 0         |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 0         |
| <b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>                     |           |
| <b>1. Other 1</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>2. Other 2</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>3. Other 3</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math

**Test:** Terra Nova, Third Edition

**Grade:** 4

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2012

**Publisher:** McGraw Hill

**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| School Year                                | 2015-2016 |
| Testing month                              | Mar       |
| <b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>                       |           |
| Average Score                              | 80        |
| Number of students tested                  | 38        |
| Percent of total students tested           | 100       |
| Number of students alternatively assessed  | 0         |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 0         |
| <b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>                     |           |
| <b>1. Other 1</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>2. Other 2</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>3. Other 3</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math

**Test:** Terra Nova, Third Edition

**Grade:** 5

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2012

**Publisher:** McGraw Hill

**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| School Year                                | 2015-2016 |
| Testing month                              | Mar       |
| <b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>                       |           |
| Average Score                              | 80        |
| Number of students tested                  | 28        |
| Percent of total students tested           | 100       |
| Number of students alternatively assessed  | 0         |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 0         |
| <b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>                     |           |
| <b>1. Other 1</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>2. Other 2</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>3. Other 3</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math

**Test:** Terra Nova, Third Edition

**Grade:** 6

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2012

**Publisher:** McGraw Hill

**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| School Year                                | 2015-2016 |
| Testing month                              | Mar       |
| <b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>                       |           |
| Average Score                              | 83        |
| Number of students tested                  | 16        |
| Percent of total students tested           | 100       |
| Number of students alternatively assessed  | 0         |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 0         |
| <b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>                     |           |
| <b>1. Other 1</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>2. Other 2</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>3. Other 3</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math

**Test:** Terra Nova, Third Edition

**Grade:** 7

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2012

**Publisher:** McGraw Hill

**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| School Year                                | 2015-2016 |
| Testing month                              | Mar       |
| <b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>                       |           |
| Average Score                              | 86        |
| Number of students tested                  | 13        |
| Percent of total students tested           | 100       |
| Number of students alternatively assessed  | 0         |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 0         |
| <b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>                     |           |
| <b>1. Other 1</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>2. Other 2</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>3. Other 3</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Math

**Test:** Terra Nova, Third Edition

**Grade:** 8

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2012

**Publisher:** McGraw Hill

**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| School Year                                | 2015-2016 |
| Testing month                              | Mar       |
| <b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>                       |           |
| Average Score                              | 91        |
| Number of students tested                  | 20        |
| Percent of total students tested           | 100       |
| Number of students alternatively assessed  | 0         |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 0         |
| <b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>                     |           |
| <b>1. Other 1</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>2. Other 2</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>3. Other 3</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Reading/ELA

**Test:** Terra Nova, Third Edition

**Grade:** 3

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2012

**Publisher:** McGraw Hill

**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| School Year                                | 2015-2016 |
| Testing month                              | Mar       |
| <b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>                       |           |
| Average Score                              | 87        |
| Number of students tested                  | 31        |
| Percent of total students tested           | 100       |
| Number of students alternatively assessed  | 0         |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 0         |
| <b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>                     |           |
| <b>1. Other 1</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>2. Other 2</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>3. Other 3</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Reading/ELA

**Test:** Terra Nova, Third Edition

**Grade:** 4

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2012

**Publisher:** McGraw Hill

**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| School Year                                | 2015-2016 |
| Testing month                              | Mar       |
| <b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>                       |           |
| Average Score                              | 78        |
| Number of students tested                  | 38        |
| Percent of total students tested           | 100       |
| Number of students alternatively assessed  | 0         |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 0         |
| <b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>                     |           |
| <b>1. Other 1</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>2. Other 2</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>3. Other 3</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |

**NOTES:**



**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Reading/ELA

**Test:** Terra Nova, Third Edition

**Grade:** 5

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2012

**Publisher:** McGraw Hill

**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| School Year                                | 2015-2016 |
| Testing month                              | Mar       |
| <b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>                       |           |
| Average Score                              | 78        |
| Number of students tested                  | 28        |
| Percent of total students tested           | 100       |
| Number of students alternatively assessed  | 0         |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 0         |
| <b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>                     |           |
| <b>1. Other 1</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>2. Other 2</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>3. Other 3</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Reading/ELA

**Test:** Terra Nova, Third Edition

**Grade:** 6

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2012

**Publisher:** McGraw Hill

**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| School Year                                | 2015-2016 |
| Testing month                              | Mar       |
| <b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>                       |           |
| Average Score                              | 88        |
| Number of students tested                  | 16        |
| Percent of total students tested           | 100       |
| Number of students alternatively assessed  | 0         |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 0         |
| <b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>                     |           |
| <b>1. Other 1</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>2. Other 2</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>3. Other 3</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Reading/ELA

**Test:** Terra Nova, Third Edition

**Grade:** 7

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2012

**Publisher:** McGraw Hill

**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| School Year                                | 2015-2016 |
| Testing month                              | Mar       |
| <b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>                       |           |
| Average Score                              | 76        |
| Number of students tested                  | 13        |
| Percent of total students tested           | 100       |
| Number of students alternatively assessed  | 0         |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 0         |
| <b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>                     |           |
| <b>1. Other 1</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>2. Other 2</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>3. Other 3</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

**Subject:** Reading/ELA

**Test:** Terra Nova, Third Edition

**Grade:** 8

**Edition/Publication Year:** 2012

**Publisher:** McGraw Hill

**Scores are reported here as:** Percentiles

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| School Year                                | 2015-2016 |
| Testing month                              | Mar       |
| <b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>                       |           |
| Average Score                              | 95        |
| Number of students tested                  | 20        |
| Percent of total students tested           | 100       |
| Number of students alternatively assessed  | 0         |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 0         |
| <b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>                     |           |
| <b>1. Other 1</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>2. Other 2</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |
| <b>3. Other 3</b>                          |           |
| Average Score                              |           |
| Number of students tested                  |           |

**NOTES:**