2007-2008 No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools Program

U.S. Department of Education

Cover Sheet Type of School: [X] Elementary [X] Middle [ ] High [ ] K-12 [ ] Charter

Name of Principal _____Mrs. Lynn Abboud_____

Official School Name _____Sacred Heart Catholic School_____

School Mailing Address _____1003 Turnbull Street_____

New Smyrna Beach_____Florida_____ 32168-6229_____

County _____Volusia_____State School Code Number ____N/A_____

Telephone (386) 428-4732_____Fax (386) 428-4087_____

Web Site/URL www.sacredheartcatholic.com_____E-mail labboud@sacredheartcatholic.com_____

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

_____ Date_____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent _____Dr. Harry Purpur_____

District Name _____Diocese of Orlando_____Tel. ____(407) 246-4900_____

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

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson ___Mr. Lou Bartos_____

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

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

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 correct, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II – DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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

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

                                         _____ TOTAL

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: ___N/A_____

   Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: ___N/A_____

SCHOOL

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
   [X] Small city or town in a rural area
   [ ] Rural

4. __1__ Number of years the principal has been in his/her position at this school.

   __9__ If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?

5. Number of students as of October 1, 2006 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
K	14	12	26
1	10	9	19
2	7	8	15
3	11	11	22
4	8	18	26
5	12	14	26
6	13	13	26
7	7	14	21
8	14	13	27
TOTAL STUDENTS	IN THE APPLYING	SCHOOL	208

6. Racial/ethnic composition of   _90_ % White
    the school: _1_ % Black or African American
                                          _5_ %Hispanic or Latino
                                          _4_ % Asian/Pacific Islander
                                          _0_ %American Indian/Alaskan Native
                                          100% Total

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year (2006-2007):__6 %___

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

(1)	Number of students who transferred *to* the school after October 1 until the end of the year 2006	6
(2)	Number of students who transferred *from* school after October until the end of the year 2006	8
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	14
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2006	227
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	.0616
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	6.16

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: __0 %_
                                                        ___0__ Total Number Limited English Proficient
    Number of languages represented: __0__
    Specify languages: N/A

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: ___9%__(current year 2007-2008)

              Total number of students who qualify: ____19___

Clarification Note: Although the school does not participate in the federally supported lunch program, the number represented reflects those students who would meet the eligibility requirements if they were enrolled in the public school system.

10. Students receiving special education services: ___15_%

                                     ___31__ Total Number of Students Served

Number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

__1__ Autism	__0__ Orthopedic Impairment
__0__ Deafness	__0__ Other Health Impaired
__0__ Deaf-Blindness	__22_ Specific Learning Disability
__3__ Emotional Disturbances	__5__ Speech or Language Impairment
__0__ Hearing Impairment	__0__ Traumatic Brain Injury
__0__ Mental Retardation	__0__ Visual Impairment Including Blindness
__0__ Multiple Disabilities	

11. **Number of Staff**

	Full-time	**Part-time**
Administrator(s)	1	0
Classroom teachers	9	0
Special resource teachers/specialists	4	2
Paraprofessionals	2	2
Support Staff	2	4
Total Number	18	8

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio: 16:1

13. Attendance patterns of teachers and students:

	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Daily student attendance	96%	97%	95%	95%	94%
Daily teacher attendance	98%	98%	98%	98%	97%
Teacher turnover rate *	7%	7%	13%	20%	13%
Student dropout rate (middle)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

*Sacred Heart Catholic School is administrated and partially staffed by a religious order of sisters who are regularly moved to different teaching assignments at other schools within their jurisdiction. This would account for a higher teacher turnover rate for some years reported above.

PART III – SUMMARY

Sacred Heart Catholic School is an elementary school for grades K through 8, with one class of each grade level represented. In grades K-3, the classrooms are self-contained. Kindergarten and grades 1-2 have full-time instructional assistants and grade 3 has a part-time instructional assistant. Grades 4-8 share a part-time instructional assistant. Although primarily self-contained, grades 4 and 5 homeroom teachers alternate between these two levels in order to take advantage of particular individual teaching strengths. At the middle school level, a middle school or departmental design is followed with students changing classes and teachers teaching their own particular subject areas of expertise.

Founded in 1961 by the Redemptorist order of priests and first accredited in the 1972-1973 school year, Sacred Heart Catholic School is the only private, accredited elementary school in New Smyrna Beach, Florida, and serves the needs of those in the community who wish to educate their children in a faith-filled environment. Through the years, the Sisters of Mercy from Belmont, NC, the Sisters of Notre Dame from Toledo, OH, and numerous dedicated lay men and women have molded and shaped the identity of Sacred Heart Catholic School. The school accepts students from all faiths and has graduated approximately 825 students to date who go on to make their mark in local public and private high schools. The student body generally reflects the demographics of Southeast Volusia County in which it is located. According to the most recent census data, the average household income for this area was $35,372.

The philosophy of Sacred Heart Catholic School reflects its mission to create a challenging, supportive academic environment where faith is integrated in all aspects of learning, where each child is recognized as possessing unique talents, capabilities and strengths, and where education is seen as a means by which the children will go on to serve others and best use the talents with which God has gifted them. The school's belief is that education empowers students to develop their own potential, which glorifies God and subsequently transforms the world in which they live.

The concern for individuals as persons is reflected in the identity of Sacred Heart Catholic School. Students are encouraged to witness their faith through their words and their actions. The dignity of each person is daily recognized. Students' talents and abilities are the main focus and students are encouraged to gain confidence and build their potential. An enriching and challenging variety of academic courses and extra-curricular activities provides opportunities for Sacred Heart students to capitalize on their uniqueness. Sacred Heart Catholic School also impacts the community beyond the school. The expression of faith and concern for the students' families is demonstrated through liturgical experiences, the school's social and academic activities and its athletics. Active participation in a variety of religious, secular and service activities maintains the school's highly visible presence in the parish and local community. Various age-appropriate mission projects and awareness programs exhibit a commitment to global awareness. Through these experiences, students are called to meet the needs of the less fortunate, both locally and globally, to seek alternatives to violence and to pursue awareness of multi-cultural issues in order to raise their global consciousness.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. **Assessment Results:**

    Sacred Heart Catholic School administers the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) annually to grades 3-8. This is a nationally norm-referenced test that provides data on the academic performance of our students compared to other students of the same grade level who took the test across the nation.

    The Reading test assesses students' capabilities at different stages of their reading development. In addition to testing factual comprehension of questions based on stated text, inferential and interpretive skills are also assessed. High level thinking skills such as analysis of author's viewpoint and generalizations about text are also determined through the use of the ITBS. Overall scores are reported as well as subject-specific skill scores in vocabulary and comprehension.

    The Math portion of the ITBS is intended to assess skill at solving numerical problems, performing quantitative reasoning and thinking mathematically in a variety of contexts. The three tests that are administered require students to compute numerical operations, demonstrate understanding of the fundamental ideas of number properties and operations, be able to solve word problems involving one or more steps and use data tables and graphs to obtain information, compare quantities and determine relationships and trends.

    Results data for the ITBS are reported in terms of National Percentile Ranking. This indicates each student's standing within the group of students in the same grade who were tested at the same time nationwide. The group is representative of schools throughout the nation. Riverside Publishing Company, the publishers of the ITBS, provides data regarding the student percentile equivalent for the 90th percentile of national school norms. (The Riverside Publishing website is: http://www.riverpub.com/) Students who have achieved scores at, or higher than, this level are designated as performing in the top 10 percent nationwide. Sacred Heart School students have achieved this designation in reading and/or math for many of the grade levels tested. The reading scores surpass the math scores, but both reading and math scores are significantly above the national average.

    No subgroups are reported in our testing data. Because the total number of students who would qualify for the federally supported lunch program is so small (less than 10% of our student population), disaggregating the assessment results data for this group would be so limiting as to make it possible to identify individual students.

2. **Using Assessment Results:**

    Assessment data are used as part of a battery of assessment tools which help improve student performance and guide instructional decision-making. Results of the ITBS serve to identify students' individual areas of relative strengths and weaknesses in subject areas, monitor year-to-year growth in basic skills to identify learning trends, and describe each student's developmental level within a specific subject area. Whereas standardized testing has value and is an important part of any assessment package, it is used in balance with the professional judgment of the experienced educators. The ITBS is a means to guide improvement, not an end in itself, and therefore not so much pressure is focused on the test as to cause undue stress on the students and possibly create adverse effects in performance. Results data are analyzed each year and compared with previous years to assess adequate growth or identify gaps in student learning. Any gaps are investigated and appropriate measures taken. These measures may include changes in instructional techniques, adjustments to the curriculum, or targeted staff development. Students in the middle school graph

their own assessment results each year so they can personalize their own learning. This awareness empowers them to target their energies toward improvement in specific areas and gives them measurable goals to work towards. Assessment practices should serve but not determine the performance standards and should be based on the belief that all students can succeed.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

Reports of student performance are sent home weekly in all grade levels. Each grade level has academic progress folders that are sent home weekly and include all the papers and assignments that the student has completed during the week, notes or comments from the teacher regarding academic progress or behavior, and notations regarding any assignments that may be missing. Parents must sign the folders and return them on Monday with the student. At the midpoint of each academic quarter, students receive a progress report to indicate how they are doing in specific subject areas. Grade report cards are distributed approximately four weeks later, at the end of each quarter. Mandatory parent/teacher conferences are conducted at the end of the first quarter to assess student progress and set goals for the remainder of the year. After that, parent/teacher conferences can be conducted at any time at the request of the teacher or the parent. Specific academic successes, such as science fair winners and writing contest winners are communicated to the school community in the principal's weekly newsletter. The local newspapers are also notified of student successes and often feature stories to this effect. Riverside Publishing Company produces very comprehensive, detailed, individual score reports for the ITBS and parents receive this information as soon as the school receives it from the publisher, usually in the first part of December. Overall school performance data is communicated in the school marketing brochure and is part of the open house presentations each year for prospective school families. Summaries of assessment data are also posted on the school website.

4. Sharing Success:

Everyone benefits when success is shared. At the diocesan level, the principal of Sacred Heart Catholic School and heads of academic departments share with peer counterparts in other schools information and program discoveries that have been successful at the school. For example, the technology curriculum that the diocese has recently developed was spearheaded by Sacred Heart's technology teacher who shared her research with the other diocesan schools. Recent gains that Sacred Heart students have made in math computation have been communicated to other schools who have identified themselves as having the same problem. Copies of the school improvement report were shared with other schools which were progressing through the same process that Sacred Heart had already completed so that they could benefit from having a model to follow. As part of a consortium of diocesan schools that have contracted with Catholic Schools Management to help market and develop our schools, significant give and take of ideas in these areas with other schools takes place.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

The academic program is built upon the core classes of religion, English, science, math and social studies, which are taught at each grade level in progressively challenging units. The program is based upon the curriculum standards set forth by the Diocese of Orlando and integrates the Florida Sunshine State Standards, which govern the curriculum of all Florida public schools. By doing this, we are able to achieve a consistency of instruction for our students who may move into the public school environment when they graduate from our school. Sacred Heart School's standards of achievement are set high and students consistently work a grade level above their actual grade. This is documented by the national grade equivalent section of the standardized test results.

The core of the religion curriculum is the Gospel and the teachings of the Catholic Church. Topics are studied which imply application to daily life. These applications can be affirmed by the students as life choices. Teachers use these life choices as a basis for writing, for reflection and for discussion and examination of the students' lives.

The Language Arts curriculum is designed to allow students to encounter ideas, events, and materials in real-world context. Reading, writing, listening, viewing, speaking, language development, and literature study are purposeful, integrated experiences in which students develop a variety of strategies, behaviors, and attitudes in order to fulfill their educational and individual goals.

The science curriculum is designed to enable students to become citizens who are actively engaged in the world around them, make well-reasoned, data-based decisions, continue to ask thoughtful questions and explore possible responses, and clearly communicate those questions, responses and findings to those around them. Nurturing curiosity is one goal of engaging students in multiple science experiences. Through these experiences, they can explore the nature and tools of science, the processes that shape the Earth and life, the interaction of living things with the environment and the respect that is inherent in all life.

The overall goal of social studies is to teach young people how to become informed citizens focused on the public good in a democratic society. Through the study of history, geography, civics, government and economics, students learn to dignify the rights of all human beings and appreciate the differences among all persons while recognizing the interaction between individual and societal goals in our interdependent world.

The math curriculum challenges students to become logical thinkers and analytical problem solvers. Real-life problems are explored in order to infuse meaning into the study of math. Through activities such as Pi Day and making a real-life budget, students are encouraged to see math as an integral component of our daily lives. The math curriculum offers the high school credit Algebra I course to high performing 8th graders.

In addition to the core subjects, students from kindergarten through 8th grade take computer, music, physical education, library skills, art and Spanish language instruction weekly. The foreign language curriculum meets the requirements of the NCLB-BRS program. The band program begins in the fourth grade. Academic Assist classes provide more personalized help for those students who need it. A mentoring program is in place for individual instruction of students who struggle with learning disabilities. Sacred Heart School has also partnered with Florida Virtual School to provide on-line course offerings for high school credit to middle school students who surpass the academic expectations of their chronological grade year. Literature extension, where students are enriched with the study of classic novels, is provided for high-achieving readers in grades 4 through 8. Additional curricular strengths are subject integration taught through thematic units and writing across the curriculum, where expressive or interpretative writing is required in every core academic subject.

2a. Reading:

The Open Court product is a main resource to help satisfy the reading curriculum goals in grades K-5. It is a comprehensive program that incorporates letter recognition, phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension and fluency. It is a strongly phonics based program and was chosen because of an identified weakness in spelling and word recognition in the lower grade levels and a lack of vertical alignment in curricular planning. Open Court continues into the intermediate levels (grades 4 and 5) to reinforce skills learned and provide consistency in vertical curriculum alignment. Reading skills and reading strategies are integrated and the program allows for differentiated instruction through activities geared for each level of need: remediation, review, and challenge. Furthermore, the children can employ their skills in various writing experiences.

The middle school reading curriculum is literature based. With the increased maturity of the middle school student comes the ability to interpret symbolism and create personal meaning from their experiences. Literature enables students to imagine and experience other people's lives, other places cultures and times. The human record is expressed in literature and students develop a personal sense of meaning by exploring, discussing and responding to common experiences. Through this personal connection, a life-long love of reading and learning is fostered. Utilizing methods such as literature circles allows students to choose literary selections of varying difficulties and succeed at their own personal reading level. Literature extension classes are offered in grades 4 through 8, where students who excel significantly in reading skills are pulled out of regular literature classes and challenged with studies of classic novels.

3. Additional Curriculum Area:

Technology is an ever-evolving curricular area, yet one that is becoming embedded in the lives of students and increasingly more important to their academic success. The school has made significant strides in the development and implementation of the technology curriculum over the past couple of years. All subject areas process information of one kind or another and therefore have technological components. One of the Desired Results for Student Learning identified by the National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE) was "Expanding and Integrating Knowledge." No other single curriculum area has the capacity to accomplish this better than technology. The students learn to research using the benefits of the internet yet also learn to discern quality sources and protect themselves from inappropriate messages. Students produce professional documents for all classes and for a variety of purposes. Students are challenged to be creative with digital art and photo manipulation and incorporate these into printed products and digital presentations. Students learn basic web design and create web pages and newsletters which can be posted on the school website. Individualized learning is enhanced through the use of the Accelerated Reader Program, a reading comprehension and diagnostic software. Students can also reinforce skills in an individualized environment through interactive websites accessible at school or at home. Sacred Heart classes have joined with partner classes in other parts of the United States and even in other countries to work on joint projects via the internet. If a task can not be accomplished in real-time, the next best thing is the virtual environment, and virtual science labs and virtual tours of faraway destinations connect our students to places and activities they would never otherwise be able to experience. Sacred Heart School faculty engages in continuous professional development in technology to keep abreast of innovations in this ever-changing field.

4. Instructional Methods:

All of Sacred Heart School's teachers are certified by the State of Florida and are well-versed in a variety of instructional methods. Sacred Heart's mission clearly states that each student is treated as a unique child of God. Recognizing different learning styles, therefore, complies with our stated mission

and allows teachers to assess each situation individually and employ the most appropriate teaching method to that particular situation. Capitalizing on strengths and holding high expectations for the students is a primary focus. Whether through direct teaching, small groups, peer to peer learning or project learning, the students are empowered to challenge themselves to their fullest potential. Subjects are integrated as much as possible with real life in order to create relevance for students. Through professional development in brain-based teaching techniques, faculty have learned that students will remember information that has meaning to them or is relevant to their lives, so a fundamental task is to construct lessons that create connections to their lives. Writing is integrated across the curriculum because in real life, good writing skills are necessary in all professional careers. Another method of creating meaning is through experiential learning. Through carefully designed high-interest projects and off-site educational experiences, students attend classrooms without walls. Inside the classrooms there is active, hands-on learning, students working and learning cooperatively, and multiple methods of differentiation and accommodation of individual needs, whether developmental or cognitive. As students mature, they create more of their own knowledge and work independently or cooperatively in small groups. Multi-curricular assignments are encouraged at all levels.

5. **Professional Development:**

All staff members attend a spiritual retreat day each year and teachers attend catechetical classes to earn the required basic and advanced religious education certification. Staff members attend in-service days sponsored by the Diocese of Orlando and attend professional development seminars on a variety of topics offered by Volusia County schools. Teachers keep current on educational research, trends and their own teaching skills by attending various seminars and conferences like the National Middle School Conference and the Florida Educational Technology Conference. Information and skills obtained through these professional development opportunities are brought back and incorporated into the classroom, resulting in a favorable impact on student learning. Faculty receives a number of educational journals for professional reading. In-house professional development is valuable because it focuses on a specific articulated need. One of the most valuable professional development experiences, and the one that probably has the greatest impact on student learning, is when the faculty researches best practices and shares these best practices during professional development days or in faculty mentoring situations. Two faculty members have received the Master Teacher designation and they provide a wealth of knowledge for modeling teaching techniques. The technology teacher has conducted numerous small group training sessions to bring all teachers' technology skills into the 21st century and help them incorporate technology into lesson plans. These in-house professional development sessions are so valuable to teachers because they target specific needs that have been identified and the hands-on aspect of it allows teachers to take immediate and specific action that will produce discernible results on student achievement.

PART VI – PRIVATE SCHOOL ADDENDUM

1. Private school association(s): <u>National Catholic Education Association (NCEA), Florida Catholic</u>

   <u>Conference, Notre Dame Educational Association (NDEA), Diocese of Orlando</u>

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

3. What are the 2007-2008 tuition rates, by grade? <u> $3100 – All grade levels   </u>

4. What is the educational cost per student?   <u> $5146   </u>

5. What is the average financial aid per student?   <u> $1832   </u>

6. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to

   Scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?   <u>   32%   </u>

7. What percentage of the student body receives

   Scholarship assistances, including tuition reduction?   <u>   91%   </u>

PART VII – ASSESSMENT RESULTS

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Iowa Test of Basic Skills
Form A 2000
Riverside Publishing

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

	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	October	October	October	October	October
Grade 8					
Reading	87	80	79	77	78
Mathematics	80	77	74	71	63
Number of students tested	27	27	21	20	19
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0
Grade 7					
Reading	71	79	83	78	79
Mathematics	70	76	76	67	68
Number of students tested	21	28	30	26	23
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0
Grade 6					
Reading	71	64	75	79	80
Mathematics	72	58	67	68	63
Number of students tested	26	29	28	32	25
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0
Grade 5					
Reading	83	79	75	83	83
Mathematics	69	65	58	70	72
Number of students tested	26	25	25	24	26
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0
Grade 4					
Reading	80	78	81	72	79
Mathematics	77	74	73	58	74
Number of students tested	26	29	28	27	25
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0
Grade 3					
Reading	70	78	77	79	78
Mathematics	76	78	77	68	70
Number of students tested	22	22	32	27	31
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students excluded	0	0	0	0	0