

2005-2006 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

U.S. Department of Education

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

Name of Principal Mrs. Kathleen M. Walsh
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

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

School Mailing Address 142 E. Swoope Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address)

Winter Park Florida 32789-3298
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Orange State School Code Number* na

Telephone (407) 644-7537 Fax (407) 644-7357

Website/URL www.smmknight.org E-mail walshk@smmknight.org

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

Date December 7, 2005
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Harry Purpur
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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. Jeff Branham
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

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

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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

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

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades K-12. (Schools with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has not been in school improvement status or been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's adequate yearly progress requirement in the 2005-2006 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 2000 and has not received the 2003, 2004, or 2005 *No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools Award*.
5. The nominated school or district is not refusing the OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
6. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if the OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
7. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school, or the school district as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
8. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

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

1. Number of schools in the district: _____ Elementary schools
 _____ Middle schools
 _____ Junior high schools
 _____ High schools
 _____ Other
 _____ TOTAL
2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: _____
 Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: _____

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
 Urban or large central city
 Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area
 Suburban
 Small city or town in a rural area
 Rural
4. 2 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.
 36 yrs. If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?
5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	11	14	25	7	19	36	55
K	30	38	68	8	28	22	50
1	29	38	67	9			
2	32	32	64	10			
3	34	30	64	11			
4	25	31	56	12			
5	33	25	58	Other			
6	22	26	48				
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →							555

[Throughout the document, round numbers to avoid decimals.]

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school:
- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| 90 | % White |
| 2 | % Black or African American |
| 7 | % Hispanic or Latino |
| 1 | % Asian/Pacific Islander |
| 0 | % American Indian/Alaskan Native |
| 100% Total | |

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

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 1 %

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

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	2
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	2
(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	560
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.007
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	0.7

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 0 %
0 Total Number Limited English Proficient
 Number of languages represented: na
 Specify languages:

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 4 %
 Total number students who qualify: 21

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

10. Students receiving special education services: 5 %
30 Total Number of Students Served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>0</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>2</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>10</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>20</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	

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

Number of Staff

	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>30</u>	<u>3</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>0</u>	<u>14</u>
Support staff	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>
Total number	<u>37</u>	<u>17</u>

12. Average school student-“classroom teacher” ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers: 18:1

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

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Daily student attendance	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%
Daily teacher attendance	98%	98%	99%	99%	99%
Teacher turnover rate	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Student dropout rate (middle/high)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Student drop-off rate (high school)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

14. (*High Schools Only*) Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2004 are doing as of September 2004.

Graduating class size	_____
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	_____ %
Enrolled in a community college	_____ %
Enrolled in vocational training	_____ %
Found employment	_____ %
Military service	_____ %
Other (travel, staying home, etc.)	_____ %
Unknown	_____ %
Total	100 %

PART III - SUMMARY

Provide a brief, coherent narrative snapshot of the school in one page (approximately 600 words). Include at least a summary of the school’s mission or vision in the statement.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. **Assessment Results:** Describe in one page the meaning of the school’s assessment results in reading (language arts or English) and mathematics in such a way that someone not intimately familiar with the tests can easily understand them. Explain disparities among subgroups. If the school participates in the state assessment system, briefly explain the state performance levels and the performance level that demonstrates meeting the standard. Provide the website where information on the state assessment system may be found.
2. **Using Assessment Results:** Show in one-half page (approximately 300 words) how the school uses assessment data to understand and improve student and school performance.
3. **Communicating Assessment Results:** Describe in one-half page how the school communicates student performance, including assessment data, to parents, students, and the community.
4. **Sharing Success:** Describe in one-half page how the school has shared and will continue to share its successes with other schools.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Curriculum:** Describe in one page the school’s curriculum. Outline in several sentences the core of each curriculum area and show how all students are engaged with significant content based on high standards. Include art and foreign languages in the descriptions. (Foreign language instruction as a part of the core curriculum is an eligibility requirement in grades 7 and higher and must be taught as a whole-year subject.)

- 2a. **(Elementary Schools) Reading:** Describe in one-half page the school's reading curriculum, including a description of why the school chose this particular approach to reading.
- 2b. **(Secondary Schools) English:** Describe in one-half page the school's English language curriculum, including efforts the school makes to improve the reading skills of students who read below grade level.
3. **Mathematics, Science, Art, Etc.:** Describe in one-half page one other curriculum area of the school's choice and show how it relates to essential skills and knowledge based on the school's mission.
4. **Instructional Methods:** Describe in one-half page the different instructional methods the school uses to improve student learning.
5. **Professional Development:** Describe in one-half page the school's professional development program and its impact on improving student achievement.

PART VI - PRIVATE SCHOOL ADDENDUM

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

1. Private school association(s): National Catholic Education Assoc., Florida Catholic Conference
(Identify the religious or independent associations, if any, to which the school belongs. List the primary association first.)
2. Does the school have nonprofit, tax exempt (501(c)(3)) status? Yes X No
3. What are the 2005-2006 tuition rates, by grade? (Do not include room, board, or fees.)

\$ <u>4368</u> K	\$ <u>4368</u> 1 st	\$ <u>4368</u> 2 nd	\$ <u>4368</u> 3 rd	\$ <u>4368</u> 4 th	\$ <u>4368</u> 5 th
\$ <u>4368</u> 6 th	\$ <u>4368</u> 7 th	\$ <u>4368</u> 8 th	\$ _____ 9 th	\$ _____ 10 th	\$ _____ 11 th
\$ _____ 12 th	Other: (Pre-K) \$ <u>2900</u>				
4. What is the educational cost per student?
(School budget divided by enrollment) \$ 4840
5. What is the average financial aid per student? \$ 1735
6. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 8 %
7. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 13 %

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Public Schools

Each nominated school must show comparable results in reading (language arts or English) and mathematics for at least the last three years according to the criteria used by the CSSO to nominate the school. The school must show results beyond the first grade in the school. For example, ninth grade test results are not sufficient for 9-12 high schools. For formatting, if possible use or adapt the sample tables (no charts or graphs) at the end of this application.

If the state allows the use of the PSAT, PLAN, SAT, or ACT as part of its accountability system and at least 90 percent of the students in the appropriate classes must take the tests, schools must report the results. For these tests, schools must use national norms. The national school norms for the 90th and 60th percentiles can be found on the Department's website. If fewer than 90 percent of the students take a combination of the tests, that is, the ACT and the SAT or the PLAN and the PSAT, do not report the data.

The school must disaggregate all data for socioeconomic and ethnic/racial groups that comprise sufficient numbers to be a part of the state's assessment reports or are of sufficient numbers to be statistically significant. Show how all subgroups of students achieved at high levels or improved dramatically in achievement for at least three years. Explain any disparity among subgroups. The school must specify the number and percentage of students assessed by alternative methods.

All test data tables should be attached to the end of the application, with all pages numbered consecutively.

Private Schools

Report the school's assessment results in reading (language arts or English) and mathematics for at least the last three years for all grades tested on state tests or assessments referenced against national norms. For formatting, use or adapt the sample tables (no charts or graphs) at the end of this application. Present data for all grades tested for all standardized state assessments and for assessments referenced against national norms administered by the school.

If at least 90 percent of the students take the PSAT, PLAN, SAT, or ACT, high schools should report the data.

The school must disaggregate the data for students eligible for free or reduced-priced meals and for ethnic/racial groups if a specific group comprises 10 percent or more of the student body of the school. The school must disaggregate the data whether or not the school actually offers the federal school lunch program. Show how all subgroups of students achieved at high levels or improved dramatically in achievement for at least three years. Explain any disparity among subgroups.

The school must specify the number and percentage of students assessed by alternative methods. Attach all tables that show test data to the end of this application. Continue to number the pages consecutively.

Part III: Summary: St. Margaret Mary Catholic School

St. Margaret Mary Catholic School, located in Winter Park, Florida, was founded in 1954 by the Sisters of Christian Charity, and the initial enrollment was 252. Today, the school serves students in Pre-K through eighth grade, with an enrollment of 555. Although there have been numerous changes in facilities, personnel, and resources over the years, the school's mission remains the same. The mission of St. Margaret Mary Catholic School is to proclaim the Gospel message through word, worship, and service, to recognize that each child is a unique creation, and to promote high academic standards in a caring community. The school operates on the assumption that the parent is the primary educator of the child, and that the best interests of the students are served when parents, students, and faculty work closely together. St. Margaret Mary Catholic School is part of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Orlando and is accredited through the Florida Catholic Conference. All St. Margaret Mary teachers are Florida-state certified in the subject area in which they teach, and approximately one third of the teachers possess advanced degrees.

St. Margaret Mary Catholic School follows the curriculum standards of the Diocese of Orlando. The needs of each unique child are addressed through the school's educational program. The curriculum is rigorous, and each student is encouraged to reach his / her highest potential. Students in second grade through eighth are assessed annually through ITBS standardized testing and consistently score above the national average. Graduates of St. Margaret Mary Catholic School enroll and succeed in Honors, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate classes. St. Margaret Mary graduates are well prepared for the challenges of high school.

St. Margaret Mary Catholic School strives to teach the whole child, providing a strong academic foundation, a strong spiritual and moral foundation, exposure to the arts, and participation in an engaging physical education program and sports program. Research-based educational practices are utilized by the school's instructional staff. Teachers participate in myriad opportunities for professional development. The most current, developmentally appropriate instructional materials and textbooks are utilized. The curriculum is a balance of traditional instruction and current methods, including discovery learning and hands-on, experiential learning. Students are actively involved in their learning.

Students at St. Margaret Mary Catholic School are involved in service projects throughout the year. Students collect food and toys for local families during the holiday season each year. They collect funds for various causes, including the American Cancer Society, students in the Dominican Republic, and victims of natural disasters. Each month, students pack lunches and make cards for the homeless people of Orlando. Students in seventh and eighth grade visit, and spend time with, the children of migrant workers at the Apopka Learning Center, outside of Orlando, throughout the school year. Service to others is at the core of St. Margaret Mary Catholic School.

St. Margaret Mary Catholic School is a welcoming environment where parents are encouraged to participate in volunteer opportunities. Parents provide many daily services and spend time in the classrooms with the students. Thousands of hours of parent volunteer time are recorded each month. The school has a strong Home and School Association which is comprised of all the school parents. This parent association raises funds throughout the school year and provides daily services for the students and faculty.

The faculty of St. Margaret Mary Catholic School seeks to teach students to create high quality work, while striving for excellence in learning. Skilled teaching and high standards are utilized in a caring, Catholic community. An emphasis is placed on respect, responsibility, and reverence as students grow as learners.

Part IV: Indicators of Academic Success Assessment Results

Annually, the students of St. Margaret Mary Catholic School participate in the school's standardized testing program, as mandated by the Diocese of Orlando and the Florida Catholic Conference, by taking the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. This test provides reliable and comprehensive information about students' skill development and their ability to think critically. The test form taken by the students of St. Margaret Mary Catholic School is the most current form and reflects up-to-date curriculum, as represented in state standards and frameworks and in instructional materials. Students in grades three through eight take the test in October of each year, and second grade students complete the test in March. The student scores from this nationally normed achievement test are used to assess student understanding and knowledge of the concepts and skills tested, to inform instruction, to track student growth in learning over time, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's instructional program.

St. Margaret Mary Catholic School students who participate in the testing program historically score above the national average on all subtests of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. In reviewing test data from the last three years, each grade level's reading and math percentile scores were analyzed, and scores are attached. The reading percentile scores for the past three years have been primarily in the low 80's. The strongest overall performance in reading for the last three years of testing was in the fourth grade. The lowest percentile scores for the last three years were in the sixth and eighth grades.

The range for Math scores over the last three years is similar to the Reading scores. The math percentile scores for the last three years of testing have been in the high seventies and low eighties. The strongest scores for the last three years were in the second and seventh grades. The grade level with the lowest overall percentile scores for the last three years was the sixth grade. This relatively low performance parallels this grade's performance in reading.

In analyzing trends of student performance in both subject areas for the last three years, math and reading scores have increased or stayed the same in all grade levels but sixth grade. This observation provides valuable information for the school administration when assessing fifth grade instruction and curriculum, (the sixth grade test is taken early in the sixth grade year.) The positive trend in math scores correlates with a school-wide emphasis in mathematics instruction over the last three years. This emphasis on mathematics instruction is on-going in an effort to further increase student achievement. Additionally, the reading results provide information regarding the effectiveness of the reading text adopted in 2004. The test scores indicate that current reading instruction, employing the new texts, is effective. The school continues to strive to promote student achievement in reading.

The students of St. Margaret Mary Catholic School consistently score in the high seventies or low to mid eighties percentiles. This positive testing performance indicates that the school's instructional program is strong and promotes student learning. The results of the tests, particularly when assessed longitudinally, provide insight into areas of relative strengths and weaknesses. This information is currently being utilized in the development of a School Improvement Plan as part of the school's re-accreditation through the Florida Catholic Conference. In developing an action plan, the ITBS test results have been assessed, and it has been established that more consistent curricular alignment will promote increased student learning and improved student test scores. The faculty of St. Margaret Mary Catholic School is proud of the students' test performance and achievement, but they look forward to enhanced student learning and improved test scores in the years to come.

Indicators of Academic Success: Using Assessment Results

The results of student performance on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills are utilized to assess student understanding and knowledge of concepts and skills, to inform classroom instruction, to track student growth over time, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's instructional program. Administration and faculty review student performance on each test administered. Item analysis scores are analyzed to determine students' relative strengths and weaknesses in each subject area tested. Through item analysis data, administrators and teachers are able to determine which concepts and skills may need further reinforcement or remediation. This data also provides information regarding areas of student strength in performance.

Individual ITBS student performance scores are used to track student growth over time. For this purpose, students' Grade Equivalent scores are compared over time, reviewing longitudinal growth in learning. St. Margaret Mary Catholic School has a stable enrollment which allows for the easy tracking of individual student growth. Administrators, teachers, and the guidance counselor use this information in assessing student growth in learning, particularly students with special learning needs. ITBS results are examined and compared with student classroom performance. This information is shared with parents when determining a program of learning.

Group ITBS student performance scores are used to track the growth of a particular cohort group over time. Again, due to the stable student enrollment, group scores may be compared over time to provide longitudinal information regarding growth in learning or to determine the effectiveness of educational programs, materials, and instruction.

ITBS test results are utilized to evaluate the school's instructional program. Trends in student performance are analyzed to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction, instructional programs, and instructional materials. Careful review of trends in grade level scores provides valuable insight for school administrators. Currently, this information is being used to create a School Improvement Plan. This plan will establish stronger curricular alignment to increase student learning and to improve student test results. Additionally, test result information is utilized in creating the school's annual staff development plan in order to promote increased student learning.

Communicating Assessment Results

Annual ITBS testing results are shared with a variety of audiences. This process begins with the disseminating of the school's test results to the teachers at a faculty meeting. General information regarding test score interpretation is presented to the teachers; the meaning of each test score is discussed. Grade level test results are shared with the faculty and are discussed. Results are compared with previous years to assess whether scores have improved. Additionally, cohort group results are analyzed to determine the group's growth. Individual student scores and class scores are distributed to the teachers for their closer analysis.

Teachers distribute test score results and testing information to the parents at conference time. By meeting face-to-face, teachers are able to answer any questions that the parents may have. Parents receive a copy of the students' test results. Parents having additional questions are invited to meet with an administrator or the guidance counselor to address the questions or concerns. School test scores are published in the school's Monday Memo. Additionally, they are published on the school website and in other school publications, including public relations materials. The publication of the school's outstanding test scores provides parents with information about how St. Margaret Mary Catholic School students have performed on the ITBS tests, compared with other students across the nation.

Sharing Success

St. Margaret Mary Catholic School works closely with the other schools of the Diocese of Orlando to share its students' achievement successes and to promote the success of other schools. The school's faculty participates in regularly scheduled meetings with faculty members of other Diocesan schools at both large and small group conferences and workshops. At these meetings, best practices utilized by each school are noted and discussed. School administrators attend Diocesan administrators' meetings to share strategies, methods, and resources that have been successful in promoting student learning.

St. Margaret Mary Catholic School shares its facilities with other schools for use in professional development days to promote success in learning. School facilities are utilized, including the computer lab, when hosting staff development opportunities. Additionally, St. Margaret Mary teachers have attended staff development opportunities at neighborhood schools and have shared successful methods and strategies implemented at St. Margaret Mary Catholic School.

Faculty and students of St. Margaret Mary Catholic School share the success of the school as they visit and work with the students of the Apopka Learning Center, located outside of Orlando. The children of the Center are children of migrant workers. St. Margaret Mary teachers, students, and families work with the children on an on-going basis. They read with the children, create art projects with them, and spend time visiting. At Christmas, a party is held at the Apopka Learning Center. Art projects are created, St. Margaret Mary children sing to the students in Spanish, and they bring Christmas gifts to share. St. Margaret Mary students share their success in learning and their blessings with the children of the Apopka Learning Center.

St. Margaret Mary Catholic School will continue to seek out opportunities to share student achievement successes with other schools. As the School Improvement Plan is implemented, opportunities to share methods and strategies will be determined and planned.

Curriculum

St. Margaret Mary Catholic School strives for academic excellence across the curriculum. Curriculum standards are followed, and myriad teaching resources and research-based textbooks are utilized to provide enriched instruction. The educational program emphasizes the education and development of the whole child.

Curriculum standards for each subject area have been formulated by the Diocese of Orlando, and have been implemented at St. Margaret Mary School. These standards are used in development of school curriculum and in planning for instruction. Teachers utilize current, research-based textbooks and a wide array of instructional materials to teach students. Additionally, a rich selection of instructional materials and technology are used to provide instruction.

Developmentally appropriate religious instruction is an integral part of the educational experience at St. Margaret Mary School. Students in kindergarten are taught through the use of big books, while eighth grade students utilize Theology texts, Bibles, and computers. All students utilize current religion textbooks.

Strong emphasis is placed upon language arts instruction and mathematics instruction at St. Margaret Mary Catholic School. Current research-based materials are used to enhance language arts instruction in all grade levels. Language Arts instruction includes the teaching of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Writing instruction is utilized across the curriculum and grade levels.

Mathematics instruction includes practice in operations, problem solving, and critical thinking. Students begin their mathematics learning using concrete objects in the primary grades and then move toward abstract learning. The learning of math facts is emphasized across the grade levels. Teachers use a variety of research-based instructional methods in mathematics.

Science lessons provide students with additional opportunities for hands-on learning. Through the use of texts and ancillary materials, students learn about physical, natural, and earth sciences. Social Studies learning allows students to connect with the world around them, while learning about the past. Students learn about their community, state, and country, and ancient world cultures. Students study geography in all grade levels.

Spanish is taught in all grade levels. Students in grades 7 and 8 receive Spanish instruction three times a week. The program is part of the core curriculum. Sixth grade students receive Spanish instruction once a week and students in grades K-5 receive weekly instruction through a volunteer program. Pre-K Spanish is taught weekly by the Pre-K teacher.

Technology is an essential component of St. Margaret Mary's educational program. Technology instruction and use at St. Margaret Mary School is integrated across the curriculum. Technology is integrated across subject areas as students utilize computers as a learning tool.

Students of St. Margaret Mary School participate in physical education classes. The physical education program strives to develop well-rounded students, skilled in all physical activities.

St. Margaret Mary School values the importance of arts instruction. Students receive weekly music and art lessons. Music instruction includes opportunities for skill and theory learning. The visual arts program at St. Margaret Mary School provides instruction for students in the expressive, developmentally appropriate creation of art works, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics.

Reading Curriculum

St. Margaret Mary Catholic School utilizes a balanced, research-based reading program in all grades. Two current reading series are presently used: one in grades PreK-5 and the other in grades 6-8. Both series include selections of authentic literature of various genres. Additionally, tradebooks are read in all grade levels. Methods for reading instruction include whole group instruction, small skill-based group instruction, literature discussion groups, paired reading, and individual reading.

Students in the elementary grades receive phonics instruction connected to the reading selections. *Making Words* strategies are implemented in the early childhood and primary classrooms. This research-based method provides students with hands-on practice in making words. Phonics is also stressed through the school's spelling program, which is a component of the reading series. St. Margaret Mary Catholic School believes that a balanced program of reading addresses the varied learning styles of the students; the inclusion of phonics, reading strategy instruction, and exposure to authentic literature provide students with a strong reading foundation.

Across grade levels, the reading curriculum provides opportunities for writing in response to reading. Students in the younger grades write paragraphs and short papers in response to prompts related to the reading selections. Middle school students write analysis papers in response to the literature read. English grammar skills are taught through the students' writing, as well as through the use of the reading series grammar practice.

St. Margaret Mary Catholic School values reading, and it is a print-rich environment. Students are immersed in literature. Students participate in incentive programs, including *Accelerated Reader*. Various grade levels read together as "Reading Buddies." Reading is a priority at St. Margaret Mary Catholic School. St. Margaret Mary teachers believe that "the more you read, the better you read." They ensure that students have many opportunities to grow as readers.

Mathematics Curriculum

The math curriculum utilized at St. Margaret Mary Catholic School is research-based and promotes a balance between the development of problem solving skills and the ability to skillfully perform mathematical operations. Recognizing that each child is unique, the program addresses the learning needs of the students by demonstrating varied methods of solving problems. While the curriculum is fast-paced and rigorous, academic support is available for students. Math manipulatives are employed to provide concrete representation of the concepts and skills taught. Students are encouraged to build understanding and knowledge through discovery learning across grade levels.

Across grade levels, critical thinking, related to mathematical concepts, is emphasized. Math learning begins with Pre-K students exploring patterns, classifying, and sorting. Mathematical connections to everyday living are stressed in all grade levels, as the teachers strive to build students' number sense. The curriculum provides continual opportunity for review and reinforcement of previously taught skills. The use of a continuous research-based series in grades K-5 and a continuous series for grades 6-8 promotes curricular continuity. Improvement in student math performance has been a school goal for three years, and there have been increased opportunities for staff development for school math teachers, as a partnership has been developed with a local university mathematics professor. Currently, increased emphasis is being placed upon aligning the math curriculum to promote student learning and achievement.

Instructional Methods

The faculty of St. Margaret Mary Catholic School employs a rich array of developmentally appropriate, research-based instructional methods to improve student learning. Each child is unique, and varied methods are used to meet students' unique needs. Methods which address multiple intelligences are utilized. Students are afforded the opportunity to use their multiple intelligences in the creation and presentation of school work, particularly in project-based assignments. Differentiated instruction is used across grade levels as teachers create lessons which address the varied needs of students. Through this method, students receive instruction based upon their needs and abilities.

Cooperative learning is an effective, research-based teaching method used daily in the classrooms. Through this method, students learn the important life skill of working with others cooperatively, and they gain social skills. As they interact with the peers and teach each other, students learn the concepts and skills being taught.

Experiential learning promotes greater understanding and knowledge. St. Margaret Mary early childhood students learn through play opportunities. For example, Pre-K and kindergarten students gain language skills as they interact during center time. Opportunities for experiential, discovery learning extend through eighth grade when science students build roller coasters to study laws of Physics and the mathematics involved and then are able to ride real roller coasters.

Questioning strategies which promote higher order thinking skills are used in all grade levels. Teachers are encouraged to employ higher level questioning to extend student thinking. Students are encouraged to analyze and use critical thinking skills in their responses.

St. Margaret Mary Catholic School strives to meet the learning needs of all its students and improve student achievement through varied, research-based instructional methods. Students are scaffolded in their learning as teachers assist them in reaching their zones of proximal development.

Professional Development

Professional development is an essential component of effective teaching and increased student achievement. St. Margaret Mary Catholic School believes that teachers should be life-long learners; myriad learning opportunities are provided for teachers and funded through the school's budget. All faculty members are invited to read educational research of best practices and share findings at research meetings. Professional literature is read and discussed among the faculty. Administrators share pertinent journal articles with teachers. Teachers are encouraged to join professional organizations, and the school funds these professional affiliations.

Faculty members attend numerous professional development opportunities including: site-based staff development meetings, Diocesan conference days, national conferences, state conferences, grade-level conferences, and subject area conferences / workshops. Selected faculty members also participate in Diocesan curriculum committees and the Diocese of Orlando Master Teacher Program.

Each year, professional development needs are assessed, and a program is developed to address these needs and to improve student achievement. Current topics for staff development include: interpretation and effective use of test scores, math instructional methods, Curriculum Mapping, technology learning, and best practices in classroom management and conflict resolution.

ASSESSMENTS

Referenced Against National Norms

Subject: Reading

Grade: 2

Test: Iowa Test of Basic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2000

Publisher: Riverside

Scores are reported here as Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March	March	March
Total Score	na	84	84	85
Number of students tested	na	65	60	64
Percent of total students tested	na	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	na	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	na	0	0	0

No subgroups breakdown due to racial/ethnic data.

ASSESSMENTS
Referenced Against National Norms

Subject: Math

Grade: 2

Test: Iowa Test of Basic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2000

Publisher: Riverside

Scores are reported here as Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003
Testing Month	March	March	March	March
Total Score	na	85	82	81
Number of students tested	na	65	60	64
Percent of total students tested	na	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	na	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	na	0	0	0

No subgroups breakdown due to racial/ethnic data.

ASSESSMENTS
Referenced Against National Norms

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3

Test: Iowa Test of Basic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2000

Publisher: Riverside

Scores are reported here as Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	October	October	October
Total Score	85	81	84
Number of students tested	65	59	61
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0

No subgroups breakdown due to racial/ethnic data.

ASSESSMENTS
Referenced Against National Norms

Subject: Math

Grade: 3

Test: Iowa Test of Basic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2000

Publisher: Riverside

Scores are reported here as Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	October	October	October
Total Score	85	79	77
Number of students tested	65	59	61
Percent of total students tested	100	98	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0

No subgroups breakdown due to racial/ethnic data.

ASSESSMENTS
Referenced Against National Norms

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4

Test: Iowa Test of Basic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2000

Publisher: Riverside

Scores are reported here as Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	October	October	October
Total Score	84	87	84
Number of students tested	57	59	62
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0

No subgroups breakdown due to racial/ethnic data.

ASSESSMENTS
Referenced Against National Norms

Subject: Math

Grade: 4

Test: Iowa Test of Basic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2000

Publisher: Riverside

Scores are reported here as Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	October	October	October
Total Score	82	82	82
Number of students tested	57	59	62
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0

No subgroups breakdown due to racial/ethnic data.

ASSESSMENTS
Referenced Against National Norms

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5

Test: Iowa Test of Basic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2000

Publisher: Riverside

Scores are reported here as Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	October	October	October
Total Score	86	81	86
Number of students tested	58	57	61
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0

No subgroups breakdown due to racial/ethnic data.

ASSESSMENTS
Referenced Against National Norms

Subject: Math

Grade: 5

Test: Iowa Test of Basic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2000

Publisher: Riverside

Scores are reported here as Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	October	October	October
Total Score	79	79	78
Number of students tested	58	57	61
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0

No subgroups breakdown due to racial/ethnic data.

ASSESSMENTS
Referenced Against National Norms

Subject: Reading

Grade: 6

Test: Iowa Test of Basic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2000

Publisher: Riverside

Scores are reported here as Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	October	October	October
Total Score	74	81	79
Number of students tested	48	57	51
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0

No subgroups breakdown due to racial/ethnic data.

ASSESSMENTS
Referenced Against National Norms

Subject: Math

Grade: 6

Test: Iowa Test of Basic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2000

Publisher: Riverside

Scores are reported here as Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	October	October	October
Total Score	74	80	78
Number of students tested	48	57	51
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0

No subgroups breakdown due to racial/ethnic data.

ASSESSMENTS
Referenced Against National Norms

Subject: Reading

Grade: 7

Test: Iowa Test of Basic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2000

Publisher: Riverside

Scores are reported here as Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	October	October	October
Total Score	84	85	79
Number of students tested	55	47	54
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0

No subgroups breakdown due to racial/ethnic data.

ASSESSMENTS
Referenced Against National Norms

Subject: Math

Grade: 7

Test: Iowa Test of Basic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2000

Publisher: Riverside

Scores are reported here as Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	October	October	October
Total Score	86	85	72
Number of students tested	55	47	54
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0

No subgroups breakdown due to racial/ethnic data.

ASSESSMENTS
Referenced Against National Norms

Subject: Reading

Grade: 8

Test: Iowa Test of Basic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2000

Publisher: Riverside

Scores are reported here as Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	October	October	October
Total Score	79	74	81
Number of students tested	50	50	47
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0

No subgroups breakdown due to racial/ethnic data.

ASSESSMENTS
Referenced Against National Norms

Subject: Math

Grade: 8

Test: Iowa Test of Basic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2000

Publisher: Riverside

Scores are reported here as Percentiles

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing Month	October	October	October
Total Score	83	81	83
Number of students tested	50	50	47
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0

No subgroups breakdown due to racial/ethnic data.

