

# ACCREDITATION DOCUMENTS

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## **School Profile**

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Insert narrative report in the space provided. The Word table will expand to accommodate your school's report. The template is protected and set so that only the space provided can be amended.

### **History of the School**

***A brief history of the school that highlights improvement initiatives and important change decisions including building projects and consolidation efforts:***

Before Minnesota became a state, there were Catholic schools in Northeast Minneapolis, and it is out of this tradition, began by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, that our school operates. In 1969, the parish schools in this neighborhood were consolidated into the Northeast Regional Catholic School, the name by which we operated until March 2003. Our name change to Pope John Paul II Catholic School signaled a deliberate move to more visibly proclaim our Catholic identity and to become the primary choice for Catholic elementary education in Northeast Minneapolis. Yet, at this same time, the financial wherewithal of our school was extremely precarious. We continued to operate only because of the intervention and support of Archbishop Emeritus Harry Flynn who, among other things, requested that the neighboring parishes consider support of our school as one of their highest priorities.

Beginning in the summer of 2004, the school administration and faculty embarked on the challenging journey of transforming our educational program, under the new leadership of Principal Debbie King and Canonical Administrator Father Glen Jenson. Notwithstanding enrollment and financial challenges, multi-age classrooms were established, and extensive professional development in the areas of differentiated instruction and multiage classroom philosophy and methodology were undertaken. This focus on professional development continues today.

In October 2010, a strategic planning process instigated by the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis resulted in additional consolidation among the parishes in Northeast Minneapolis. While the base of parish support is smaller, the goal of the planning process was to create a more vibrant and effective Catholic community in Northeast Minneapolis, and we continue to partner with parishes to deliver on our educational mission.

In 2014, our name was changed to St. John Paul II Catholic Preparatory School to reflect the canonization of Pope John Paul II. Today, we are a member of the Ascension Catholic Academy, a consortium of schools that provides centralized leadership and governance for three archdiocesan inner city Catholic schools: Ascension Catholic School (North Minneapolis); St. John Paul II Catholic Preparatory School (Northeast Minneapolis); and St. Peter Claver Catholic School (St. Paul's Rondo District). Resources and guidance provided by the Academy enable us to continue to strive to provide a relevant and thriving Catholic school program to our constituents. Support for this program continues to grow with the assistance of our new principal, Edgar Alfonzo, our new canonical administrator, Father Dale Korogi, and our new chaplain, Father Kevin Finnegan, who have developed several partnerships with volunteers, the Our Lady of Grace Catholic community (Edina), and local businesses.

## Overview of the Broader Community

### ***An overview of community (parish and beyond) in which the school is operating:***

St. John Paul II Catholic Preparatory School is the only remaining Catholic elementary school located in Northeast Minneapolis, a community of thirteen neighborhoods whose street addresses end in "NE". The area lies across the Mississippi River from Downtown Minneapolis. Today, the community includes commercial districts, industrial centers, new residential high-rises, suburban cul-de-sacs, big-box retail, and a popular art scene.

Northeast Minneapolis is approximately 7.5 square miles in size, with a population of over 40,000 people, most of whom are Caucasian, with significant numbers of individuals with Hispanic, African American and mixed race backgrounds. In 2013, the community's median household income was \$50,638. The median age in the community is 35, and the average household size is 2.3 people, with more than 40 percent of these households considered to be "cost burdened" (i.e., households paying 30% or more of their gross income for housing). Nearly 38 percent of the households in Northeast Minneapolis include families, and 82.8 percent of K-12 students in the neighborhood are enrolled in private schools. Nearly 16 percent of the residents in Northeast Minneapolis were born in a foreign country, 27 percent were born in a state other than Minnesota, and nearly 57 percent were born in Minnesota. 7.4 percent of these residents are non-English speaking. Approximately 28 percent of residents in Northeast Minneapolis have not attained a high school degree (compares to 10.6 percent in Minneapolis generally), and 17.2 percent live below the poverty line (compares to 21.2 in Minneapolis generally). Most married couples (85.7 percent) in the community include two working parents.

## Overview of Students and Families Served

### ***An overview of the students and families served by the school:***

Since 1853, Catholic schools have been educating students in northeast Minneapolis. Continuing this tradition, St. John Paul II Catholic Preparatory School welcomes all students without regard to academic level, home situation, language skill, religious belief or financial resources. Our school serves the children of working families of all ethnicities residing in Northeast Minneapolis. This includes families who work in downtown Minneapolis as well as new immigrant families from Ecuador and Mexico who have moved into the community.

Two-thirds of our student population is multicultural, and sixty-two percent of the students come from families for whom English is not the first language. Approximately fifteen percent of our families have the financial means to pay the full annual tuition of \$2,500. In addition, more than eighty percent of our enrolled students meet the eligibility requirements for the free and reduced price school meal program.

This past year, we experienced growth in our student body. In a multiage learning environment, our students are performing at level which is 22-55% higher on standardized tests than their public-school counterparts in the community.

## Enrollment Trends and Expectations for the Future

**Describe enrollment trends over the past ten (10) years including current enrollment and future projections based on the community being served:**

Current year enrollment at St. John Paul II Catholic Preparatory School, as well as a decade of historical enrollment using selective representative years, is as follows:

	2006-07	2010-11	2011-12	2015-16	2016-17
Kindergarten	14	17	19	13	14
1 <sup>st</sup>	10	9	22	4	12
2 <sup>nd</sup>	17	14	11	15	7
3 <sup>rd</sup>	10	10	20	18	17
4 <sup>th</sup>	7	14	19	10	17
5 <sup>th</sup>	5	8	17	8	13
6 <sup>th</sup>	10	13	11	11	9
7 <sup>th</sup>	6	12	14	7	11
8 <sup>th</sup>	8	8	15	12	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	87	105	148	98	107

In the preceding decade, the highest enrollment was 148 students in 2011-12, and the lowest enrollment was 87 students in 2006-07. Ninety percent of our current students are Catholic; sixty percent are English Language Learners; eighty-nine percent are students of color; and seventy percent are students of Hispanic heritage. With the support of the resources and expertise provided by the Ascension Catholic Academy, we anticipate modest continued growth through our focused enrollment efforts.

## Executive Summary of the Survey Results

**Parent, student, and sponsoring agency's perceptions and attitudes about the school:**

At the beginning of this school year, we held a few focus group events for families to share their attitudes and opinions about our school community. Overall, families appreciate our affordable, faith-based program, where students are safe and teachers really know their students. We have a strong sense of community at our school, and the shared respect for all community members helps build that sensibility. Parents also appreciate our school uniform as well as the high expectations we have for their children, expressed in our homework requirements. There is a desire for continued improvement in communications, including internal communications—what's going on and how to get involved, and external communications—raising awareness of the school's identity in the broader community.