



# **Executive Summary**

**Saint Rose of Lima School**

**Diocese of Trenton**

Sr. Patricia Doyle  
51 Lincoln Avenue  
Freehold, NJ 07728

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## **Introduction**

Every school has its own story to tell. The context in which teaching and learning takes place influences the processes and procedures by which the school makes decisions around curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The context also impacts the way a school stays faithful to its vision. Many factors contribute to the overall narrative such as an identification of stakeholders, a description of stakeholder engagement, the trends and issues affecting the school, and the kinds of programs and services that a school implements to support student learning.

The purpose of the Executive Summary (ES) is to provide a school with an opportunity to describe in narrative form the strengths and challenges it encounters. By doing so, the public and members of the school community will have a more complete picture of how the school perceives itself and the process of self-reflection for continuous improvement. This summary is structured for the school to reflect on how it provides teaching and learning on a day to day basis.

## **Description of the School**

**Describe the school's size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced in the last three years. Include demographic information about the students, staff, and community at large. What unique features and challenges are associated with the community/communities the school serves?**

St. Rose of Lima School is currently located on Lincoln Place in Freehold, New Jersey. It is a Pre-K through Grade Eight Catholic elementary school serving families from several surrounding parishes or areas. St. Rose of Lima School is a parish school within the Diocese of Trenton with a newly-formed School Board headed by the pastor, Rev. James Conover. The Principal, Sr. Patricia Doyle, OSF, is responsible for the daily operation of the school; the Vice-Principal, Mrs. Alison Segreto, assists in the day-to-day operation of the school by fulfilling specific responsibilities. The teachers, individually or as members of committees, also share in the management of the school by accepting routine tasks.

St. Rose of Lima School, the first Catholic school in Monmouth County, has served the community in Freehold, NJ for over one hundred thirty-five years. In 1878 the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia opened the "one room schoolhouse" on Randolph Street with sixty students and one lay teacher. By 1907 the enrollment outgrew the original building and the one hundred twenty-five students were moved to a larger facility on McLean Street. Most of the students, at the time, lived in the town or on surrounding farms. By 1956 the administration recognized the need to build a larger facility to meet the increasing enrollment and the educational needs of the students. As the desire for Catholic education grew in the Freehold area in the 1960's, the enrollment necessitated additional space for a combined gymnasium/auditorium and library. Enrollment peaked in the 1960's to nine hundred five students.

While the student body is multicultural, the majority of the students are Caucasian. Recently, a few international students with student visas have enrolled. The administration recognizes the changing demographics of the area and is investigating ways to increase enrollment among other ethnic groups moving into the area.

Currently, the school has both single grade classes and double grade ones. Aware of the students' educational and creative needs, the faculty and staff provide a rigorous academic curriculum along with classes for Technology, Library, Physical Education, Art, Music and Spanish. The cafeteria, gym, and library are spacious and well utilized. The school building has large, well-lit classrooms that provide adequate space for learning equipment and for flexible grouping within the classroom. The design of the building and the arrangement of classrooms allow for collaboration among the faculty and staff. The Pre-K Unit is located on the lower level and is designed to accommodate the physical and educational needs of young students.

Teachers are certified and assigned to grade levels and curriculum areas that correspond with their certification. They follow the Diocese of Trenton Curriculum Guidelines as they instruct and assess the students' needs and mastery of content and skills. Class size varies (12 - 26); however, students are instructed in flexible groups as well as whole classes according to specific subjects. A support staff is available for students who need individualized instruction or specific learning accommodations.

The maintenance and custodial staffs provide a safe, clean environment for students and faculty/staff members. Members of both staffs are visible and available throughout the day to address any need that may surface; one staff member monitors the arrival and dismissal of students in the parking lot to assure their safety.

The school environment fosters a sense of family and community. Generations of families recognize the value of St. Rose of Lima School as

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a Catholic school and how educational, personal, spiritual, physical, and social values are enforced. Parents express their appreciation that their children are being formed as Catholics with very human qualities. They recognize that the students are respectful, responsible, and compassionate because the teachers and other students model those values. Although St. Rose is a Catholic school with the highest percentage of students who are Catholic, students of all faiths are welcome.

## **School's Purpose**

**Provide the school's purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs. Describe how the school embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students.**

The mission and purpose of St. Rose of Lima School is "to provide a Gospel-centered education which will empower all students to become responsible and productive members of Church and society." This mission statement clearly conveys the purpose of the educational and religious programs, expresses expectations for quality, and serves as the foundation for daily operational and instructional decision-making. It also expresses the goal of a Catholic education, "students will become responsible and productive members of the Church and society."

The mission statement emphasizes the importance of the Catholic identity of the school. The school community: faculty, staff and students, proclaim the Good News of Jesus and follow God's commandments, especially the two greatest, to love God and one another. Jesus is the center of all that occurs within the school day and students learn to value themselves and others as unique creations of God. Christ's message permeates not only the curriculum and religious celebrations but the entire school atmosphere. The school community joins together in liturgy, prayer, and Christian service to give witness to a faith that is active and living.

Since the individual student is the center of the academic program, the faculty and staff create an environment that is conducive to the intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical growth of each student. A warm, accepting environment promotes self-affirmation and is essential for academic excellence and life-long learning. The intellectual development of each student is fostered by recognizing individual abilities and needs. Students learn in flexible grouping situations through multi-sensory activities, technology, and carefully planned instruction. Each student is encouraged to develop to his/her full potential, express a positive attitude, and accept responsibility for educational learning.

The social development of each student is extremely important and critical to success in life. The student's awareness of the talents, abilities, and needs of others contribute to the development of well-formed social relationships. The well-defined standards of behavior enable students to recognize their place in the family, school, community and world.

The school community of faith shares a common purpose and commitment to the students and their success as human beings. As professional Catholic educators, the faculty and staff exchange ideas, communicate openly, offer each other support and respect and appreciate each other's unique differences. Parents and teachers collaborate frequently to discuss students' achievements, learning or behavioral difficulties, and educational improvement.

The administration believes that the teachers are the "heart of the school." The faculty and staff understand that it is their willingness to share in spirit and service that is key to their role as authentic Catholic educators. They see themselves as being formed by each other and guided by their Christian vision of reality; this concept of community makes St. Rose of Lima School a meeting place to express, teach and live Christian values of education.

## **Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement**

**Describe the school's notable achievements and areas of improvement in the last three years. Additionally, describe areas for improvement that the school is striving to achieve in the next three years.**

St. Rose of Lima School in accordance with the Office of Catholic Education and the Diocese of Trenton administers the Terra Nova to Grades 2-8. Overall, our scores are consistently above average and have been for the last several years. Presently 31 students in grades 5-8 qualify to take the John Hopkins Standardized Aptitude Test. This trend is documented and has been consistent for the last ten years. We are proud that we offer all our students what they need academically. We work with MOESC to provide services to those children who have learning disabilities, speech and language problems, and autism.

We are very proud that we incorporate teaching and learning with technology into academic instruction across all grades and curriculum areas. Our computer lab showcases new Dell computers and a spacious and inviting atmosphere. All classrooms are equipped with Smartboards, laptop computer for the teacher and a computer station with 2 - 3 computers per station for the students. We also have a Netbook cart that can be used in the classrooms. Wireless access is available throughout the building. We are in the process of setting up new Chromebooks for a cart that can be used in the classroom. In the future, we hope to have a Chromebook for each individual student. During the next three years we hope to be able to provide staff training in the use of the Chromebooks. As we replace textbooks, we hope that we will be able to afford online versions in order to enhance school instruction and student learning. In this regard, we will strive to promote causes that will help us to financially afford the best that technology can offer to enhance our educational achievements.

## **Additional Information**

**Provide any additional information you would like to share with the public and community that were not prompted in the previous sections.**

St Rose of Lima School has an extensive sports program. We compete against other schools and offer an intramural program as well. In addition, our very active PTA provides various types of after school enrichment programs. These programs provide access to non-discriminatory student activities that are age- and developmentally appropriate to supplement educational growth. The varied clubs and co-curricular activities help to develop the many talents of all the students.