



Diocese of Gary

dcgary.org

Pastoral Center
9292 Broadway
Merrillville, IN 46410-7088

Phone: (219) 769-9292

MEDIA CONTACTS:

communications@dcgary.org

Colleen McGinty-Rabine, *Director of Communications*
crabine@dcgary.org | (219) 769-9292 ext. 88275

Dr. Colleen Brewer, *Superintendent of Schools*
cbrewer@dcgary.org | (219) 769-9292 ext. 88233

- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -

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St. John the Evangelist School Named a 2025 Blue Ribbon School

MERRILLVILLE – St. John the Evangelist Catholic School (SJE) in St. John is one of those named a 2025 Blue Ribbon School, in recognition of their achievements as a high-performing school. The National Blue Ribbon Award has been a widely recognized honor for exceptional teaching and learning since its inception in 1982 by the Ronald Reagan administration. Schools nominated for the award serve as models of effective and innovative practices for educators across the nation.

Each nominated school submitted a comprehensive application detailing its school culture, curriculum, assessments, instructional practices, professional development, leadership, family involvement, and community engagement.

SJE school principal Katie Fredericksen is delighted to be recognized as a Blue Ribbon School, noting that it represents a significant milestone in the school's history. When asked about the award, Fredericksen was quick to recognize "our incredible teachers and staff, our hardworking students, and the parents and community members who support us every step of the way" and commended the exceptional SJE Blue Ribbon Committee, "whose leadership and dedication were vital in earning this prestigious award."

Pastor of St. John the Evangelist, Father Sammie Maletta, was especially excited to congratulate Principal Fredericksen for the exceptional work she and her team put into the lengthy application process that earned them the Blue Ribbon distinction.

"We are thrilled to announce that our school has received the Blue Ribbon Award as an 'Exemplary High Performing School,'" said Father Maletta. "This honor recognizes us as one of the top-performing schools in the nation, placing us in the top 15 percent for student achievement across the country."

Most Rev. Robert J. McClory, Bishop of Gary, congratulated the dedicated leadership and staff at St. John the Evangelist, acknowledging that they truly live out their mission to "learn, live and love as Jesus taught us."

Diocese of Gary Catholic Schools Superintendent Dr. Colleen Brewer praised Fredericksen and the entire school's faculty "for their commitment to provide a strong academic education grounded in the Catholic faith, while ensuring that every student is learning and thriving." Dr. Brewer affirmed that every school in the Diocese of Gary is committed to providing a high-quality, well-rounded education, rooted in the Catholic faith.

Another Diocese of Gary school, St. Paul Catholic School in Valparaiso, received the prestigious honor of being named a National Blue Ribbon High Performing School in 2022 and last year, St. Thomas More Catholic School in Munster was named a 2024 Blue Ribbon School for its exemplary gap-closing achievements. St. Patrick Catholic School in Chesterton was honored as a Blue Ribbon recipient in 2014.

As part of a move to scale back the federal role in education, the U.S. Education Department officials told state education agencies on Aug. 29 that they were ending the longstanding National Blue Ribbon Schools program, which honors high-performing schools.

Although the federal government will not be formally hosting “blue ribbon” awards going forward, the U.S. Department of Education is encouraging states to recognize the schools they nominated for the 2025 competition, so the schools that put in the work to earn these prestigious honors will be celebrated, nonetheless.

SJE Principal Fredericksen concurred.

Even with the Blue Ribbon federal program being discontinued, it doesn’t take away from the work by the entire community to meet such extraordinarily high standards,” Fredericksen said. “We are honored to be included in the last cohort of schools receiving this prestigious award.” The school will be celebrating this recognition with the Council for American Private Education, Indiana Department of Education, the National Catholic Educational Association, and the local St. John the Evangelist community.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

Media are welcome to attend the following events.

Sign in at the school office to receive a visitor's pass:

Address: 9400 Wicker Avenue, St. John, IN 46373

Phone: (219) 365-5451

- The school will announce the Blue Ribbon Award at an assembly on Thursday, October 23, at 8:40 a.m., with the full school in attendance.
- The Race for Education Walk-a-thon fundraiser takes place later:
 - Grades 1-4 walk at 10 a.m.
 - Grades 5-8 and K walk at 1:15 p.m.

Pictures can be accessed on the [diocesan Flickr page](#).

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About the [Diocese of Gary](#)

The Diocese of Gary serves an estimated 170,000 Catholics in Lake, Porter, LaPorte and Starke counties through 53 parishes, two missions, one Catholic student center, three diocesan high schools, one private high school, one diocesan elementary school and 16 parish elementary schools that serve 6,558 students. An additional 5,271 students are enrolled in parish Catholic formation programs. More than two million are served by Catholic affiliated agencies, including seven Catholic hospitals, residential and day care facilities for adults and children, and centers for Social Services.