



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION SCHOOL  
223 SOUTH 14TH STREET  
FORT SMITH, ARKANSAS 72901  
479-783-6798



A COMMITMENT TO CHRIST...A COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

## **IMMACULATE CONCEPTION RECOGNIZED AS A 2013 NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL**

### **IMMACULATE CONCEPTION SCHOOL IS THE FIRST:**

- ◆ Catholic school in Arkansas to receive National Blue Ribbon School recognition
- ◆ Elementary school in Fort Smith to receive National Blue Ribbon School recognition

### **Purpose of Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

- ◆ Established by the United States Secretary of Education in 1982
- ◆ Identifies and recognizes outstanding public and private schools from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, as well as Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Department of Defense Dependent Schools
- ◆ Schools must demonstrate a strong and sustained commitment to educational excellence for all students

### **How Are Schools Chosen?**

- ◆ Each state education agency administers its own program for selecting public schools to be nominated to the national level. The Council for American Private Education (CAPE) nominates private schools. The U.S. Department of Education convenes the National Review Panel to evaluate the nominations. Based on the quality of the application, the National Review Panel makes recommendations to the U.S. Secretary of Education, who then announces the names of the schools selected for recognition

### **What Selection Criteria Are Used?**

- ◆ The National Review Panel considers the following general categories in analyzing the application of each school: student focus and support, school organization and culture, challenging standards and curriculum, active teaching and learning, professional community, leadership and educational vitality, school/family/community partnerships, and indicators of success

**THE NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON AWARD IS THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS HONOR**

**AN AMERICAN SCHOOL CAN ACHIEVE!**

Immaculate Conception Catholic School, following the example of the Blessed Virgin Mary, develops the whole child, instills gospel values, inspires a love of learning, and promotes academic excellence in a diverse nurturing community.

## **Process for Immaculate Conception School to become a Blue Ribbon School**

- ◆ CAPE criteria to receive a nomination application: standardized test scores ranked in the top 15% nationally in reading and math.– **spring 2012**
- ◆ Submit an application to CAPE highlighting the school's history and operations in specified areas- **fall 2012**
- ◆ Reviewed and approved, CAPE recommended I.C. School to the Secretary of Education for BRS recognition– **January 2013**

## **I.C. School Highlights**

- ◆ Strong Catholic identity; embracing children from other faith traditions
- ◆ Since 1930, developing Catholic Christian leaders
- ◆ Stanford 10 test scores in the top 15% nationally in reading and math
- ◆ Cutting edge technology in each classroom; first school in Fort Smith to utilize interactive smart boards in every classroom
- ◆ School faculty has an average tenure of 17 years with 45% having advanced degrees
- ◆ Immaculate Conception School families represent diverse religious, ethnic, and socio- economic backgrounds
- ◆ Superior parish support: \$350,000 in budget subsidy and over \$125,000.00 in student financial assistance awarded for the 2012- 2013 school year
- ◆ A safe and secure environment through controlled building access, security cameras throughout campus, fully enclosed P.E./play areas, carefully designed arrival, dismissal, and travel procedures
- ◆ *Leader in Me* process emphasizing student leadership in entire school life
- ◆ 85-year tradition of daily morning assembly with entire school community for recitation of pledges, mission statement, announcements, student recognition, and prayer
- ◆ Student service projects embodying the precepts of Catholic Social Teaching through partnership with local charitable agencies
- ◆ 97% and above student attendance
- ◆ Strong alumni support for Immaculate Conception School's faith and academic traditions through multi-generational enrollment and family involvement
- ◆ Front runner in implementation of: all-day kindergarten (1987), after school care (1989), certified special education program (1996), after school homework assistance (1997), summer care (2003), STEM learning camp (2009)
- ◆ After school tutoring for ELL and eligible Title I students
- ◆ "Guardian Angel" student mentoring program
- ◆ 24% of Fort Smith high schools' National Merit Scholars from 2002- 2012 are I.C. School alumni

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