



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

To: Indiana State Board of Education
From: Office of School Accountability
Date: May 22, 2024
Subject: Accreditation Petition for Chesterton Academy of Saint Joan of Arc

This memorandum provides a summary of the information provided by the school in its petition for performance-based accreditation and the final recommendation from the Indiana Department of Education (Department) regarding the accreditation of Chesterton Academy of Saint Joan of Arc (CASJA).

Background & Demographic Information

Chesterton Academy of Saint Joan of Arc plans to operate in Muncie, Indiana and serve students in grades 9 through 12. The school operates strictly in-person. CASJA plans to open in August 2024.

CASJA was “established to nurture the minds and the souls of children through an integrated education. Through the study of art, music, literature, language, history, mathematics, science, philosophy, and theology, they want to prepare children to think both rationally and creatively, to defend their faith, to contribute positively to society, and to promote a culture of life.”

CASJA plans to enroll 10 students in their first year of accreditation. They anticipate enrolling another 10 students every year for the next five years.

Operations

Facilities: CASJA is planning to sign a lease with Ball State University. The lease is not ready yet, however Ball State University has confirmed that they are working with CASJA to secure a space for them and that the building is in good operating condition. Ball State University assures that the building will be inspected before the school opens. CASJA has been given a stipulation that if they are approved for provisional accreditation, they must have a lease signed by August 1. Both parties plan to have the lease signed between June 24 and July 1.

Tuition: Annual tuition and application fees for CASJA total \$10,000 per student for students. There is a book and supply fee of \$495 per student annually. CASJA indicated that it intends to participate in the Indiana Choice Scholarship program.

Staffing: Ashley Whitlow is the temporary Executive Director of CASJA. Ms. Whitlow has a background in finance. She is the Chief Financial Officer for a locally owned medical company out of Yorktown, Indiana. CASJA plans to hire a headmaster, one to two teachers in their first year of operation and continue to hire one to two teachers each year for the next five years. They plan to hire one full time teacher that has their Indiana teaching license and three part-time teachers with their Indiana teaching license.



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Academic Programming

CASJA follows the National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA) network curriculum. Students at CASJA will be instructed in the areas of English/language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, dance/physical education, Catholic Mass, art, Latin and music. CASJA will follow the Indiana academic standards.

Students are assessed using formative and benchmark assessments. They plan to administer the required Indiana state assessments, as well as the National Latin Exam.

Department Recommendation

Chesterton Academy of St. Joan of Arc has plans for steady reasonable growth for the future. Based on the submitted petition and accompanying materials, Chesterton Academy of St. Joan of Arc has a fair understanding of the requirements of being an Indiana performance-based accredited school. Therefore, the Department recommends granting Chesterton Academy of St. Joan of Arc provisional state performance-based accreditation as a nonpublic school in Indiana.