

Donovan Catholic
Diocese of Trenton

Executive Summary

Donovan Catholic, the only Catholic high school in Ocean County, New Jersey, welcomes 658 students from five counties in New Jersey, as well as international students from China, Vietnam, Italy, France, Germany, Czech Republic, and Canada. Deeply rooted in the Dominican tradition of truth, service, and love, Donovan Catholic lives its mission to “educate its students to live their faith, respect and serve others in a global society, and pursue academic excellence in a college preparatory environment.” The Administration, Faculty, and Staff lead by example in the Church, classrooms, offices, fields, courts, stages, studios, and off-campus venues. A strong sense of Catholic Identity permeates the atmosphere with countless reminders of God’s presence through visual representations, prayer offerings, prayer services, Masses, and retreats, as well as continual faith-based connections to the academic curriculum.

We strive to meet the needs of every student by providing equitable opportunities through a wide range of course offerings, athletics, fine and performing arts, clubs, activities, and service opportunities. Students may choose to pursue International Baccalaureate courses, take Advanced Placement classes, study online, or advance to college level courses, in addition to college-prep and honors level curricula. Students who need academic support receive those services through Supplemental Instruction and Comp Education, as well as extensive help through our Academic Support Program. Incoming freshmen in need of scholastic assistance take a pre-fall Jumpstart preparation class and enroll in a Foundations course to assure they are prepared for a strong start to their high school experience.

The vibrant learning culture of Donovan Catholic promotes creativity, innovation, and collaborative problem-solving. Often with choices, students are

encouraged to expand their minds beyond the basics of a task. They may work collaboratively to plan effectively, and to contemplate their decisions about what is important. These tasks encourage students to take into consideration the many elements that enter the learning environment: relationships, habits, intellect, and social dispositions. Figuring out how to be part of a team requires effort and understanding from each team member and promotes a cooperative spirit.

Since communication of critical thinking is an integral part of learning, many projects require students to speak in front of the class to present their findings. This encourages ongoing self-assessment, as the presentations challenge them to take calculated risks to succeed and yet, account for the outcomes of those risks.

Our recently constructed Fine Arts Design Center provides an environment conducive to a **STEAM** curriculum with proportion, ratio and other measurements, investigation of materials and methods, and problem solving for students to develop Studio Habits of Mind and TAB (Teaching for Artistic Behaviors) methods.

We continue to impact the Ocean County community with our *Seeds of Service* program where students and teachers work tirelessly to lighten the load of struggling families. Our projects involve stocking and serving at the pantry, organizing gently-used clothing, toys, and small appliances, and developing fund-raising to supplement the generous donations offered.

Looking ahead, we will pursue a one-year plan with a long-term vision for a three-year plan with the themes of Technology, Student Accountability Assessment with Progress Monitoring, and Project-based Learning for Improved Student Engagement, and we remain committed to maintaining and advancing Catholic Identity, close reading, critical thinking, powerful writing and speaking communication of knowledge and critical thinking. We continue to move from discipline to self-discipline in the form of accountability, all within the framework of Catholic Identity as set forth in our Mission Statement.

As we look forward to ever-growing opportunities, we encourage students to enjoy areas of concentration suited to their interests beyond the core high school curriculum. For example, a student who aspires to a career in medicine may choose from a selection of science-based electives to expand their knowledge before college, or one who anticipates a future in sports management may follow a curriculum map involving business, weight-training/physical education classes,

and other related subjects. Continual data collection and analysis will determine concentration areas based on student interest.

Ninety-seven percent of the graduating Class of 2021 will continue their life journey on a college campus this fall, many of whom will enjoy the fruits of their efforts with the \$26,556,439.00 offered in scholarships and grants from colleges and universities across the country and Canada. We wish them well as we continue the Donovan tradition of faith, service, and love with future alumni.