



# THE ST. JOAN OF ARC



# Gazette

MRS. CAROLINE ROBERTS  
SJA SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

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ALL ABOUT OUR SCHOOL...

## 1. WHAT is the IOWA?

The IOWA is a nationally standardized achievement test provided as a service to schools by the College of Education of the University of Iowa. "Questions, conditions for administering, scoring procedures, and interpretations are consistent and are administered and scored in a predetermined, standard manner."

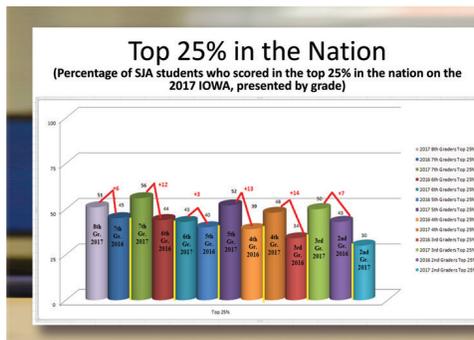
- A score in the 50th percentile is considered performing at an average level nationwide
- A score in the 75th percentile is considered the top 25% in the nation (Upper Quartile in the nation)
- ELA Total = Reading/ Language/ Vocabulary
- Extended ELA 2nd Grade Only = Word Analysis/ Listening
- Math Total = Number Operations/ Algebraic Connections/ Data Analysis/ Geometry/ Measurement (Computation skill is not included in the total)
- Core Composite = Total ELA and Total Math scores combined
- Complete Composite = Total ELA/ Math/ Social Studies/ Science scores combined (Not applicable for the 2nd Grade)

## 2. WHY the IOWA?

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School, along with other parochial and private schools, appreciate the longevity of the IOWA and that it is administered nationwide compared to tests that come in cycles or may be only for the state of Florida such as the FCAT/ FSA (Florida Standardized Assessment). Having this information makes it easier to do longitudinal studies. Many Catholic and private schools use the IOWA (often this population is more competitive and performs better—higher parent involvement, expectations, resources...). St. Joan shares its IOWA results with parents on a yearly basis.

## What happens in March every year at St. Joan's? St. Joan of Arc School administers the IOWA to 2nd through 8th grade students.

By MRS. CAROLINE ROBERTS — SCHOOL PRINCIPAL



## 3. HOW do teachers use the IOWA?

Teachers and parents compare IOWA scores to a growth chart at the doctor's (a 50th percentile is considered average). However, we remind parents and students that the IOWA is only one piece of the puzzle. Along with STAR MATH, STAR READING, and report card grades, the faculty is able to identify students who need more assistance or need to be challenged more.

The IOWA provides specific areas that a teacher or the school as whole needs to focus on such as: math problem solving skills. IOWA results are also helpful in determining areas that need improvement are part of our School Improvement Plan's Action Plan for reaccreditation.

SJA analyzes data with longitudinal study approach, comparing the same subset of students year over year with the exception of students new to the grade and students who have left the grade. Additionally, SJA analyzes the percentage of students by grade who score in the top 25% of the nation. SJA also does a comparison study against the Province of Florida and the Diocese of Palm Beach.

## 4. HOW did SJA perform in 2017?

- 2017 8th Grade class's ELA score was in the 84th percentile, which remained flat with the same group of students from 2016 7th grade class.
- 2017 8th grade Math score was in the 67th percentile which was a 3 point improvement from their 2016 7th grade class score.
- 2017 8th Grade Complete Composite score was in the 74th percentile which was a 3 point improvement from their 2016 7th grade class score.
- 2017 7th Grade ELA scored in the 87th percentile, an 8 point improvement from 2016 6th grade class.
- 2017 7th grade Math score was in the 67th percentile which was a 7 point improvement from their 2016 6th grade class score.
- 2017 7th Grade Complete Composite score was in the 76th percentile which was an 8 point improvement from their 2016 6th grade class score.
- 2017 6th Grade class stayed flat in both ELA and Complete Composite from 2016 5th grade.
- 2017 5th Grade class's ELA score was in the 84th percentile, which remained flat from their 2016 4th grade class score.

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# Taking care of **SPiRiT, MIND & BODY**

By MSGR. MICHAEL D. MCGRAW

- 2017 5th grade Math score was in the 66th percentile which was a 7 point improvement from their 2016 4th grade class score.
- 2017 5th Grade Complete Composite score was in the 75th percentile which was a 4 point improvement from their 2016 4th grade class score.
- In 2017 51% of 8th graders (Class of 2017) were in the top 25% a 6 point improvement from 2016 as 7th graders (Class of 2017).
- In 2017 56% of 7th graders (Class of 2018) were in the top 25% a 12 point improvement from 2016 as 6th graders (Class of 2018).
- In 2017 43% of 6th graders (Class of 2019) were in the top 25% a 3 point improvement from 2016 as 5th graders (Class of 2019).
- In 2017 52% of 5th graders (Class of 2020) were in the top 25% a 13 point improvement from 2016 as 4th graders (Class of 2020).

The administration is quite pleased with the overall performance of the students and the dedication of our educators in order to achieve this success.



- Nevertheless, St. Joan will continue to strive for further growth, especially in Math, by providing:
- Small Group Math taught by a certified Math teacher instead of a K-6 certified teacher,
  - By April 2018, students in Grades 3 - 8 will improve mathematical skills by demonstrating mastery of grade level math problem solving skills (Data Analysis/ Problem Solving/Statistics), Geometry, and Measurement by 5% on the IOWA Math Total from 2017 to 2018,
  - Differentiated math instruction by having different math groups and assigning weekly online Mathletics assignments (supervised by a school coordinator),
  - Regularly scheduled faculty "Data Chat" meetings to analyze each student's progress and compare other data (students will also be involved in data chats with their teachers in order to facilitate goal-setting and to further empower students),
  - Geometry Honors Class during school hours to 8th graders who meet the criteria, and
  - SST (Student Support Team) Meetings in order to discuss proper intervention for struggling students.

*Thanks to all who collaborated in this effort to help our students maximize their potential!*



At St. Joan of Arc School, the objective is to educate the whole student in an integrated manner. All subjects of a traditional elementary education are taught in addition to religious learning, volunteerism and spirituality. Numerous extra-curricular activities help our students to develop their leadership, sportsmanship, and athletic skills by engaging in physical education and in organized sports. We are proud to announce the championship sports successes of our Gold Coast Boy's Baseball Team, our Girl's Varsity Soccer Team, our Gold Coast Girl's Softball Team and our Girl's Varsity Volleyball Team. They all won their respective championships and demonstrated skill, teamwork and spirit. Athletic

development helps to round out an education and teaches the valuable lessons of persistence, dedication, and time management. This year, we introduced to our school calendar a 7th and 8th grade **SJA Athletic Banquet**. This event recognizes our students' commitment to athletic activities. A special Thank You to the volunteer coaches whose guidance was so invaluable and so generous. We also want to thank the SJA Dad's Club for hosting. *Congratulations to all of our outstanding young student athletes.*



*A special award was given to one student on each team, the "Gator Award". This award exemplifies a student athlete who leads by example, in the classroom with scholastic achievements as well as on the court or field.*



# First Florida Catholic school to bring **HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION** to every grade

By MEAGHAN  
BRESNAHAN

Parents seek out St. Joan of Arc for the first-class education and strong Catholic framework — but the students walk away with so much more. For nearly sixty years, St. Joan of Arc has been enriching minds beyond the classroom with hands-on learning opportunities in technology, athleticism, and the arts. Now, students at St. Joan are taking their worldly education to another level: understanding human rights.

St. Joan of Arc recently partnered with International Solidarity for Human Rights (ISHR), a Florida-based nonprofit organization, to bring Human Rights education to Pre-K-3 through eighth grade. ISHR is dedicated to teaching the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a way of life “for the prevention of violence, dehumanization, and bullying, and the promotion of equality and inclusion.” ISHR’s signature program is the Human Rights Class in a Box, a curriculum that introduces the principles behind human rights in an approachable way that is flexible for all stages of learning.

Diana Castro, a proud St. Joan of Arc mom and member of the Council of Catholic Women, recognized the potential impact ISHR’s program could have on St. Joan of Arc students. She brought together Devorah Sasha, one of the founders and director of ISHR, and Mrs. Caroline Roberts (Principal), to devise a way to bring the Class in the Box program to all grade levels, making St. Joan of Arc the first Catholic school in Florida to teach human rights to the entire school. “At the International Solidarity for Human Rights, we believe the respect for all human rights starts at home. It starts at our own schools,” explained Sasha. “The more we understand, accept, tolerate, and open up to differences between people in our own lives, the more we can see our similarities.” To that end, the Class in a Box program and all of ISHR’s teachings aim to help students to identify the similarities they may share with others — including people they haven’t met or may be on the other side of the globe.



**The Universal Declaration of Human Rights** is “a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms.”



“If children see recognize something in another person that reminds them that the person has feelings and connections similar to their own, then they are less likely to act in an uncivil manner to another human,” said Sasha. ISHR’s proprietary Class in a Box program arms students with tools that are essential to their development as citizens who respect and perpetuate Universal Declaration of Human Rights. During the program, St. Joan students learned about the principles that protect them from discrimination, inequality and slavery, as well as the principles of freedom, equality, justice, and peace.

The students responded enthusiastically, and they engaged with the content right off the bat. “We were surprised by how they instinctively [the children] knew how to relate and could incorporate the 30 Human Rights with examples of their daily life,” said Sasha. The students were given the opportunity to “take action” by making videos for the Human Rights TV Set installed in each class. “From start to finish, the experience was very gratifying,” said Sasha.

*As a result of the Human Rights In-house Field Trip, the 2017 required summer reading list for our 6th through 8th grade students was updated with novels based on a spectrum of human rights issues.*



Learn more about the International Solidarity for Human Rights by visiting [ishrights.org](http://ishrights.org).



## We are so proud of our new St. Joan of Arc **CAMPUS!**

**THANK YOU** to all the parishioners and friends who helped make this Capital Campaign a reality! Our Campus expansion is now completely operative and our Church and School families are now reaping the benefits of utilizing the wonderful new areas which are:

- A highly developed Mercy Center with a theater/reception hall, a study room, 3 conference rooms, an art classroom, and a music and arts conservatory
- A new interactive playground
- An enclosed gazebo with a cafeteria kitchen
- A new athletic field
- A beautiful palm court
- A covered walkway from the Church to Mercy Center and conversely



**Thank you SR. KATHLEEN** for giving so much of yourself for 49 years to St. Joan of Arc Parish



Our beloved Sr. Kathleen Sweeney has made the difficult decision of heading to Ireland so she can be with her family. Sr. Kathleen served St. Joan of Arc Parish in various capacities since 1968. Her duties included:

teaching first grade, Individualized Reading, media center classes to our younger students, and Religion to kindergarten through 2nd grade. She particularly loved preparing students for their Holy Communion. She made it a point to know her little ones and find ways to connect with them in the manner of perfect balance of gentleness and firmness.

*"We should be shining lamps, giving light to all around us."* Catherine McAuley (Sisters of Mercy founder)

Sr. Kathleen has been a compelling and shining "light" to all who meet her. She will always be in our hearts as she has assured us we will be in hers. She has undoubtedly touched the lives of thousands through her outstanding dedication and service as a Sister of Mercy.

May you hold in your heart rich memories of your many years at St. Joan of Arc. May we offer our farewell to you in the words of the Irish Blessing:

*"Until we meet again, may God hold you in the Palm of His Hand."*

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