

The Aquinas Institute and Nazareth Schools
Frequently Asked Questions
as of March 23, 2010

Academics

Q-1: My daughter is in the Nazareth Class of 2011. Will she still be eligible for the Regents exemption?

A-1: Students enrolling at Aquinas will graduate with an Aquinas diploma. Students in the graduating classes of 2011, 2012 and 2013 will have Nazareth Academy recognized on their Aquinas diplomas.

Like a Nazareth diploma, an Aquinas diploma exceeds New York State graduation requirements. Aquinas will honor the Nazareth requirements for Graduation for the Classes of 2011, and 2012. Students will also have the opportunity to earn either the Aquinas Regents or Regents with Advanced Designation diploma. We will ensure that any student interested in receiving a Regents diploma will begin the process this spring to prepare for the necessary Regents exams.

Q-2: What is the maximum class size at Aquinas?

A-2: The average class size at Aquinas is 23. Half of our classes or sections have 23 or fewer students. In rare situations we permit 31 students in a class based on teacher approval and curriculum.

Q-3: What is the status of the elementary school?

A-3: The Nazareth Elementary school will be moved to the Nazareth Academy building which will greatly enhance the instructional program. The Sisters of St. Joseph and Aquinas are committed to supporting the growth of the elementary school.

Q-4: Will I have the same challenging academic program at Aquinas as I do at Nazareth?

A-4: All current Aquinas and Nazareth students will benefit from expanded course offerings. Aquinas offers students the opportunity to achieve a Regents or Advanced Regents diploma. Course offerings include 13 college dual credit courses, 11 advanced placement courses, and separate elective tracks in business, fine arts and ASCENT.

Q-5: Does Aquinas have special education teachers?

A-5: Yes, Aquinas has two full time and one part time special education teachers on staff as well as resource teachers assigned by the Rochester City School District.

Q-6: Will Nazareth students be required to complete the same number of community service hours as Aquinas students?

A-6: Currently, Nazareth students are required to complete a few more hours than Aquinas students. Aquinas will take that into consideration when establishing service hours for graduates in the class of 2011. All other students will follow the Aquinas service hour requirements by grade.

Q-7: My daughter has changed schools four times because of school closings. Each time, I see a dip in her academic performance. How will you be able to provide support so that students can manage the transition successfully?

A-7: The Sisters of Saint Joseph are creating a plan to monitor and support the adjustment and academic performance of each Nazareth student enrolling at Aquinas. Aquinas Counselors monitor each student's progress and communicate regularly with parents. Students and parents are able to track academic progress throughout the year via the online Gradebook program.

Q-8: If extra academic assistance is needed, is help available?

A-8: Yes, many teachers routinely stay after school to provide extra help and all will schedule time with students upon request.

General Questions

Q-19: Which Nazareth personnel will move to Aquinas with the girls?

A-19: Aquinas will offer any Nazareth employees a position when we know what openings exist at Aquinas. Openings will come if we experience increased enrollment and staffing departures at Aquinas.

Q-20: What is the AQ Board structure?

A-20: Aquinas Institute is an independent not-for-profit 501(c) 3 legal entity owned and operated by a Board of Trustees. The school's Catholicity is approved by the local bishop, Matthew Clark, and its traditions stem from a long affiliation with the Congregation of St. Basil. The school's Board of Trustees includes three priests from the Congregation of St. Basil, an ex-officio position for the school's President, Principal, a faculty member, a parent, and soon two members from the congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

Q-21: How will you assist Juniors with the college search process?

A-21: The Nazareth Academy Counseling Department has begun this process with the class of 2011 and will continue to assist students. At Aquinas, students and their families work with Counselors and the many resources and planning software available through the Counseling Center to navigate the college search process. The Counseling Center also sponsors guest speaker nights focusing on the search process, admissions processes and financial aid.

Q-22: Is this a merger or a partnership?

A-22: This is a partnership to create a strong, co-educational, Pre-K-12 Catholic school system, bringing together the best of each school.

Student Life

Q-23: What is the dress code? Will the Nazareth Academy students be able to wear the Nazareth Academy uniform?

A-23: Students in 7th and 8th grades will wear the junior high uniform. High school students will follow the Aquinas seasonal dress code, which consists of the same style pants the Nazareth students currently wear, and a short-sleeved Aquinas polo shirt in September, October and May and June, or a blouse with a collar and optional sweater or vest throughout the year. Boys must wear dress or khaki-style pants, a button-down dress shirt with a tie or may wear the short-sleeved seasonal polo during the appropriate months. Aquinas students are only permitted to wear sneakers for gym class and on designated dress-down days.

Seniors are allowed to wear a personalized Aquinas Senior Shirt, jeans and sneakers on Fridays.

Q-24: What is the plan for preserving traditions and programs for Nazareth Academy girls?

A-24: Aquinas is committed to offering the, STEM, ASCENT, and Women's Robotics programs, as well as the Chamber Orchestra, Perosian Choir and Competitive Dance Program. The Sisters of St. Joseph will fund a position at Aquinas to foster the implementation of women's leadership and development program.

Q-25: Will you have space on your athletic teams for Nazareth students?

A-25: The coaches will run a fair and objective tryout for varsity team positions. The best athletes will be chosen irrespective of prior school affiliation. We will encourage

coaches to expand the roster if practical. We will be willing to field more than one team for the modified, freshman and JV programs if the numbers support it.

Q-26: How will Aquinas help students adjust to the differences in an all-girls school versus a co-ed school?

A-26: The administration at both Aquinas and Nazareth, as well as the Sisters of St. Joseph, are committed to creating programs that will help the Nazareth girls make a successful transition including assigning a big sister, conducting a new student orientation, and placing Nazareth students in classes together to the extent possible.

Q-27: At Nazareth Academy, classes meet every other day in a block schedule. What is the Aquinas schedule?

A-27: Aquinas has a 9 period fixed schedule where every class meets for 40 minutes each day.

Q-28: Will any classes be taught as single sex classes?

A-28: AQJH 7th and 8th grade physical education, health and technology classes are currently single sex classes.

At the high school level, there have been instances where all of the students enrolled in a class are either male or female, but that occurs infrequently, resulting from interest in a particular course rather than gender scheduling.

Registration

Q. What registration paperwork is required in order for our student to be considered registered?

A. In order to be considered registered the following MUST be completed:

- Completed and Signed Tuition Payment Preference Form
- Full payment of Registration Fee
- Finalized FACTS Automatic Tuition Payment Agreement*
- Student tuition account is current (without a past due balance)

*FACTS Tuition Management is upgrading their system, and we are unable to re-enroll FACTS Agreements. Families are being encouraged to complete a new automatic payment agreement online. After 3/15/10 there will be a link on the Aquinas web site to set up your FACTS account. Paper Agreements will be available in the Business Office after March 3, 2010.

NOTE: All student tuition accounts must be current in order to be considered registered.

Q. What happens if we fail to complete and/or submit each of the registration requirements listed above?

A. In the absence of each of the required registration materials, your student will not be considered registered for 2010-2011. This may result in your student not receiving selected courses, or being placed on a waiting list. Delays in returning your complete packet will also increase the registration fee amount.

Q. How much is the Registration Fee?

A. The 2010 Registration Fee for students enrolling from Nazareth is discounted to \$100.

The 2010 registration fee for all other students enrolling at Aquinas is \$200.

Q. Is there a deadline for returning registration paperwork? If so, do you charge a late fee?

A. To assist us in planning our class sizes, sections and course scheduling, we encourage families to return their registration paperwork by April 16, 2010. We will continue to accept registrations after this date based upon availability of space.

For registrations received between April 17 and April 30, the registration fee increases to:

- \$150 per family at Nazareth
- \$150 per student at Aquinas

For registrations received after April 30, the registration fee increases to:

- \$200 per family at Nazareth
- \$200 per student at Aquinas

Tuition & Fees

Q. How much is Tuition?

Level	2010-2011 Tuition Rates
Aquinas Junior High, 7-8	\$5,450
Aquinas High School, 9-12	\$7,700

Q. How much are Miscellaneous Fees?

Level	2010-2011 Misc. Fees
Aquinas Junior High, 7-8	\$140
Aquinas High School, 9-11	\$180
Aquinas High School, 12	\$330

Q. What does the Miscellaneous Fee cover?

A. They cover lockers, agendas, yearbooks, orientation, theology books and retreats for grades 7 – 12. For grades 9 – 12 they also include material fees and PSAT-PACT fees and graduation for seniors. For grades 7 – 8 they also include TerraNova and Explore tests.

Q. What tuition payment plans do you offer?

A. The following payment options are available in 2010-2011:

- **One-Time Annual Payment Plan:** Payment is made in full and must be received by the school on or before August 13, 2010. This option entitles the payer to a prepayment discount (See schedule below) for payment made by check, money order, or in cash. Annual payment may also be made by credit card by contacting the Business Office. *Payments made by credit card are not eligible for the discount.*

Level	2010-2011 Prepay Discount
Aquinas Junior High, 7-8 Without Aid	\$150
Aquinas Junior High, 7-8 With Aid	\$100
Aquinas High School, 9-12 Without Aid	\$215
Aquinas High School, 9-12 With Aid	\$160

NOTE: If you choose a one-time annual payment plan and do not make your payment by August 13, 2010 and change your payment selection, you will (1) lose your one-time payment discount and (2) incur a \$50 payment plan change fee.

- **FACTS Monthly Payment Plan (August – June) by Automatic Bank Draft:** Payments are budgeted over 11 months**, beginning August 2010 and ending June 2011. Families authorize automatic payment for either the 5th or the 20th of the month. An annual fee of \$38 per Agreement is currently assessed by FACTS to utilize this option.

****Seniors are placed on a 10 month payment plan, beginning August 2010 and ending May 2011.**

Q. How is the annual processing fee paid to FACTS?

A. The annual fee is currently \$38 per Agreement, and will be withdrawn from your bank account after FACTS has processed your Agreement and your account is set-up. You will receive notification directly from FACTS prior to the withdrawal.

Q. We currently have a FACTS Agreement established for payments to Nazareth Schools. Do we need to set-up a new Agreement next year?

A. Yes. All families need to set-up a new FACTS Agreement in order to make installment payments.

Financial Aid

Q. How do we apply for Financial Aid?

A. Please complete the Aquinas Financial Aid form, attach your 2009 Federal tax return and your 2009 w-2, sign and return to the business office by **Friday, April 30, 2010.**

Q. Do you offer a sibling discount?

A. The Financial Aid Chart calculation includes all family dependants for the consideration of financial aid.

Q. How much financial aid can we expect to receive?

A. The Aquinas – Nazareth Schools System Financial Aid Chart is a helpful tool in determining aid, in addition to a complete review of your financial aid application and any extraordinary circumstances experienced in the household.

Q. When will we know the amount of our Financial Aid?

A. Families who meet registration requirements by April 16, 2010, and apply for aid by April 30, 2010, can expect to receive notification letters after May 31, 2010.

Q. I received financial aid last school year, do I still have to apply for 2010/2011?

A. Yes, in order to receive a financial aid award you must complete and return a financial aid application with all the necessary documentation each year that you are looking for assistance.

Q. I am a Wegmans employee, how do I apply for their scholarship?

A. You must be a full-time Wegmans employee for at least one year and your student must be in grades 9 – 12. On the tuition preference form please check off that you are a Wegmans employee and include your Wegmans ID number.

**Frequently Asked Questions
About the Aquinas Institute and Nazareth Schools Partnership
As of February 9, 2010**

Q: Was declining enrollment the reason for creating the partnership?

A: Declining enrollment is an issue that has faced Catholic Schools across the nation.

- This affected Nazareth Academy High School in particular.
- The Nazareth Hall Elementary School has been stable and healthy in terms of enrollment.
- Aquinas has recently experienced an increase in enrollment in the junior high and ninth-grades.
- Due to the economics of the time, the declining numbers of families with children in our community and the fact that five private Catholic high schools were accepting students, the Nazareth Schools determined that demand would decrease. Through strategic planning, the SSJs and the Nazareth Schools Administration determined that, due to these demographics, a

partnership with Aquinas would be an excellent alignment for Nazareth to bolster private Catholic education in our community.

- Aquinas and Nazareth will create a solid school system from top to bottom in terms of enrollment, plus the collaboration will bring together the best of Nazareth and Aquinas programs, services, and community support to further enrich the students Catholic School experience.

Q: When did you start talking about a partnership and who approached whom? How long have you been working on this?

A: Each school has been working on strategic planning for close to 5 years. Over the last number of years, the Sisters of St. Joseph have had numerous conversations with other Catholic high schools.

The Sisters of St. Joseph believe Aquinas is a good fit because we are neighbors, share common core Catholic values and have a history of working together for the common mission of education.

When AQ opened its doors in 1902, the SSJs were assigned to the faculty. Twenty-two SSJs taught at AQ from 1902 to 1959.

Q: How will you combine the staffs of each school? Do you anticipate staff lay offs?

A: The 2010-2011 enrollment numbers will be a factor. Nazareth faculty and staff will be given priority in filling positions created by the partnership.

The school administrations will work with faculty and staff to make determinations about staffing.

Q: How will the administrative structure of the schools be organized?

A: Each institution will maintain a separate legal entity. There will be board involvement at both schools. This is an evolving process and would look to be efficient in other areas as well.

Q: What about tuition? Is tuition between the schools compatible or is one school going to be forced to charge more?

A: A combination of financial aid from Nazareth and Aquinas will be offered to current Nazareth students and to those who were accepted to Nazareth for fall of 2010. The financial aid package will match wholly what the student is receiving or was set to receive from Nazareth. There may also be other opportunities to apply for more aid.

Q: How does the Diocese feel about this partnership?

A: Neither Aquinas nor Nazareth is a Diocesan school. Both are private Catholic institutions. Bishop Clark is supportive of this new initiative.

Q: How was it decided which grades would be housed where?

A: The Nazareth Schools announced in fall 2009 that the elementary school program would move from its Raines Park location to the Lake Avenue campus.

Once the partnership with Aquinas was developed, it made sense to move the Nazareth 7th -12th grades to AQ, and develop the preK-6 program at the Lake Avenue campus.

Q: Are you changing the names of the school buildings?

A: Each school will retain its own name. However they will be part of a school system known as The Aquinas Institute and Nazareth Schools.

Q: Does Aquinas have space to accommodate every student from The Nazareth Schools grades 7-12, as well as the students who have already applied for 2010?

A: Aquinas has experienced an increase in junior high and ninth-grade enrollment, but recent investments of more than \$25 million in improvements to the campus make it possible for us to accommodate applicants as well as all of the 7th – 12th grade Nazareth students, should they choose to enroll at Aquinas. We are prepared to renovate and/or rearrange classrooms if necessary, in order to maintain an average class size of 25 students and to promote easy passage in the hallways.

Q: How will Aquinas accommodate the Nazareth program? Will the Sisters be present at Aquinas? What programs is Nazareth Academy bringing to the Aquinas campus? What are the benefits for Aquinas?

A: The Nazareth Academy program at Aquinas will continue to encourage a strong commitment to women's leadership and development. This commitment will be overseen by a position to be staffed by the SSJs.

- At the high school level, expanded programming means:
 - The women's robotics program and team will continue.
 - The ASCENT – Pre engineering program will continue.
 - There will be expanded opportunities for sports, dance, arts, music, and theater
 - Students will have the opportunity for dual credited college courses.
 - They will have access to not only their course of study, but additional courses of study that Aquinas will offer. Ex. criminal justice, accounting, careers in finances, marketing
 - We will have the ability to expand the women's program to include more women.

- At the middle school level this means:
 - The Lego Robotics program and team will continue.
 - There will again be expanded opportunities for sports, dance, arts and music
 - There will be greater opportunity for the student base to expand

Q: What is the current enrollment at Aquinas? How many boys per grade, how many girls per grade?

A: 699 High School / 180 Jr. High. 42% female / 58% male

Q: What is the current enrollment at Nazareth Elementary School? How many students will you be able to accommodate in the Elementary school?

A: Enrollment at the Elementary school is stable and we expect additional, new registrations. The Elementary school has a well respected Pre-K program as well as wrap-around before and after-school care. The partnership with Aquinas better positions the SSJs to expand the Nazareth Elementary school program.

Q: Has tuition been set for the 2010-2011 school year?

A: Yes. The tuition for each school is outlined below:

Nazareth Pre-K	\$5,775
Nazareth Elementary, Kindergarten - 5 & 6	\$5,050
Aquinas Junior High, 7-8	\$5,450
Aquinas High School, 9-12	\$7,700

Q: Will Nazareth students have to apply for admission to Aquinas?

A: No. Students already enrolled at Nazareth will be accepted at AQ. Registration information for Aquinas will be provided through Nazareth.

Q: What is the admission process for those who want to attend the Elementary school?

A: Call Sheila Abelein at The Nazareth Schools, phone (585) 647-8738

Q: Will a tuition discount be available to all Aquinas and Nazareth faculty and staff?

A: We expect that a discount will continue to be available.