

---

# MATER DEI CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Mater Dei, a Catholic diocesan regional high school, nurtures the spiritual, moral, intellectual, emotional and social growth of young men and women.

In a caring environment, respectful of individual differences, her comprehensive program educates, fosters faith, and develops gospel values.

---

On behalf of our entire school community, we thank you for providing us with the opportunity to share the many unique aspects of Mater Dei Catholic High School! We are confident you will find that the information included in this brochure illustrates the Mater Dei difference — a difference that positively impacts our students both during and following their four-year high school journey.

**Faith . . .** Our students not only learn their faith, but also live and share their faith through their experiences with service, liturgies, and retreats.

**Atmosphere . . .** Our programs and our policies ensure the fulfillment of our Mission to nurture the spiritual, moral, intellectual, emotional, and social growth of young men and women in a caring environment that is respectful of individual differences.

**Mentoring . . .** Our knowledgeable and dedicated faculty offer academic, personal, and spiritual guidance with the assistance of our school psychologist, campus minister, class advisors, director of college placement, and PlusPortals (our online link between school and home).

**Instruction . . .** Our extensive, multi-level curriculum fully prepares all of our students, including those needing academic accommodations, for continued academic success, as is exemplified by our ACT scores, number of Illinois State Scholars, and percentage of students who pursue higher education after graduation.

**Leisure . . .** Our numerous, varied, and successful extracurricular activities and athletics allow our students to discover, to share, and to further develop their many talents and gifts.

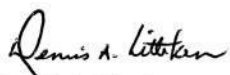
**You . . .** Our exceptional commitment to serving our students and our parents results in our students' ability to achieve their fullest potential.

In addition to reviewing this brochure, we encourage you to visit our website and to follow us on social media (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter).


Finally, to students in grade 7 or 8, we extend an invitation to shadow a knight in order to truly experience the Mater Dei difference. We know you will be impressed with the Mater Dei family!

Again, we thank you for providing us with an opportunity to share with you and your family the many unique aspects of Mater Dei Catholic High School. Should you need additional information, please contact us. We hope to serve your family in the future!

Sincerely,



Dennis A. Litteken  
Principal



Maria B. Zurliene  
Assistant Principal



---

## Contact Us

900 North Mater Dei Drive  
Breese IL 62230  
618-526-7216  
knights@materdeiknights.org

## Follow Us

Website: [www.materdeiknights.org](http://www.materdeiknights.org)  
Facebook: Mater Dei Catholic High School  
Instagram: [breesematerdei](https://www.instagram.com/breesematerdei)  
Twitter: [@breesematerdei](https://twitter.com/breesematerdei)

---

---

# FAITH

---

**LEARNING OUR FAITH** Students further develop their faith through their theology classes (one per semester) and days of retreat (one per year). We also welcome students of other faith traditions (currently 14% of our student body).

**LOVING OUR FAITH** For Masses, students serve as extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, greeters, lectors, musicians, servers, and ushers. Select seniors serve as catechists for Youth Faith Formation programs at local parishes.

## **LIVING OUR FAITH**

**Service:** Students participate in service both as a school community and as individuals. Freshmen, sophomores, and juniors complete Works of Mercy each semester, and seniors complete a three-week Senior Service Project in January.

**Class Missions and Special Causes:** During the 2022-2023 school year, our Mater Dei community raised \$12,323 in support of our class missions and a variety of special causes and hosted three collections for those in need (food and cleaning supplies).

**Liturgical Opportunities:** Students participate in Masses as a school community (once per month) and with their theology class (once per semester). In addition, morning prayer is offered daily (optional) and a reconciliation service is held during Lent.

---

## **IN THE WORDS OF OUR STUDENTS . . .**

*"Helping prepare for Masses as a member of the Mass Set-up Crew and participating in Masses as a candle bearer and extraordinary minister of Holy Communion provides me with the opportunity to serve the Mater Dei community. Additionally, in my theology classes, I enjoy learning how to apply my faith to my daily life."*

*Samantha Muscarello, Class of 2024 (Breese, St. Dominic Catholic Church)*

*"As a member of Teens for Life, St. Vincent de Paul Society, and Sisters in Christ, I am able to live my faith while also positively impacting the lives of others. Through the meetings, I have also met and developed friendships with students from all four grade levels."*

*Nadia Baer, Class of 2025 (St. Rose, St. Rose Catholic Church)*



---

# ACTIVITIES & ATHLETICS

---

**EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES GUIDE AND FAIR** Students receive a guide with descriptions of and contacts for our activities and athletics. In addition, at our annual activities fair, students sign up for activities and receive information from current members.

**MEETINGS DURING STUDY HALLS** Numerous activities meet during our school-wide study halls, which allows students to participate in multiple activities.

## **ACTIVITIES (31)**

Academic Challenge in Engineering and Science (ACES) Team, Art Club, Band (concert, jazz, marching, percussion ensemble), Bass Fishing, Book Club, Chess Club, Chorus, Color Guard, Fall Play, FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America), FFA, Liturgical Music Group, Liturgical Planning Team, Mass Set-Up Crew, National Honor Society, Newspaper, Peer Tutors, Pep Club, Scholar Bowl, Sisters in Christ, Spanish Club, Spin Club (flags and rifles), Spring Musical, St. Vincent de Paul Society, Student Ambassadors, Student Council, Teens for Life, Yearbook

## **ATHLETICS (17)**

**Fall:** Cheerleading, Cross Country (boys and girls), Football, Golf (boys and girls), Soccer (boys), Volleyball

**Winter:** Basketball (boys and girls), Bowling (boys and girls), Cheerleading

**Spring:** Baseball, Soccer (girls), Softball, Track and Field (boys and girls)

*NOTE: For specific athletics not offered at Mater Dei, students may have the opportunity to compete as an individual in the IHSA state series.*



---

## **IN THE WORDS OF OUR STUDENTS . . .**

*"As a two-sport athlete with limited time outside of school, I appreciate that we have a school-wide study hall every day! The fact that activities meet during study halls, but on different days, allows me to actively participate in seven activities (as well as volleyball and basketball)."*

*Alyssa Koerkenmeier, Class of 2025 (St. Rose, St. Rose Catholic Church)*

*"My freshman basketball season was filled with experiences I will never forget! It was special not only to win the state championship, but also to do so with the support of our pep club. The energy of our student section was surreal! Mater Dei's fans definitely play a role in the continued success of all our athletic teams."*

*Amelia Beer, Class of 2026 (Highland, St. Paul Catholic Church)*

---

---

# ACADEMICS

---

**CURRICULUM** Our multi-level curriculum allows all students, including those needing academic accommodations, to challenge themselves and to achieve success. (Academic accommodations include those outlined in an IEP - Individual Education Plan).

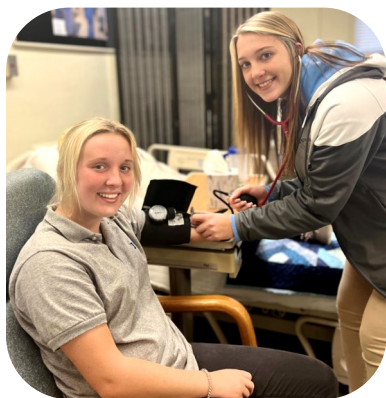
Moreover, in addition to a wide range of courses in “traditional” disciplines, we offer courses in agriculture, business education, computer science, culinary arts, fine arts, industrial education, and sewing, as well as a CNA (certified nursing assistant) program.

**FACULTY AND CLASS ADVISORS** With small class sizes, our knowledgeable and dedicated faculty provide individual instruction, guidance, and academic accommodations (including those outlined in an IEP - Individual Education Plan). Additionally, our advisors (one per grade) monitor students’ academic success and provide guidance with course selections.

**STUDY HALL** Our daily schedule includes a school-wide study hall. Following ten minutes of silent reading, students may receive assistance from teachers and peer tutors, attend meetings, or complete assignments.

**DIRECTOR OF COLLEGE PLACEMENT** Our director of college placement assists students and parents with the college placement process, including ACT and SAT preparation, college searches and applications, scholarships, financial aid, and NCAA eligibility. We also host a college fair, ACT prep sessions, and a college planning workshop (for parents).

**COLLEGE CREDIT HOURS** Offered at Mater Dei for no additional fee,\* our seventeen dual credit courses provide both experience with college-level coursework and future financial savings. \* *Residential Electricity is offered off-campus and includes a fee.* Our Class of 2023 earned nearly 1,500 credit hours – an average of 17 credit hours per student and a total savings of at least \$700,000 (based on an average tuition cost of \$445 per credit hour).



---

## IN THE WORDS OF OUR STUDENTS . . .

*"Initially, I was nervous to move from my small hometown school. However, Mater Dei's challenging yet comforting environment made my transition easier than I ever imagined! Teachers spend extensive time determining and supporting students' academic needs (strengths and weaknesses). They also ensure students know the various course options and are comfortable with their schedule. Moving schools was definitely worth it!"*

*Brianna Noud, Class of 2024 (Lebanon)*

*"I appreciate that teachers spend time developing relationships with students. As a result, while they hold you to high standards, they are also always happy to help. I also appreciate the variety of courses, such as the agriculture and business classes, in which I can explore and apply my interests."*

*Reid Koch, Class of 2025 (Damiansville, St. Damian Catholic Church)*

---

### **DUAL CREDIT COURSES**

Accounting Principles  
Advanced Computer Applications  
CEO (Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities)  
CNA – Medical Terminology  
CNA – Nurse Assistant  
Chemistry II  
Early Child Development  
English Composition 101  
English Composition 102  
General Psychology  
Introduction to Music in America  
Life Span Growth and Development  
Residential Electricity  
Spanish 101  
Spanish 102  
Speech 103  
Weightlifting and Conditioning

### **AP COURSES**

American History  
Calculus \*\*

*\*\* While not an official Advanced Placement (AP) course, the level of coursework fully prepares students for the AP test.*

### **TECHNOLOGY**

#### **Bring Your Own Device**

For academic purposes, students may utilize the school-wide Wi-Fi and the electronic device of their choice.

#### **Microsoft Office 365 License**

Students receive a Mater Dei email account and a license to download Microsoft Office 365 products to five devices.

#### **Electronic Learning Days**

Via Microsoft Teams, teachers and students are able to interact while the teachers live stream classes. As a result, days of learning are not lost to “snow days.”

#### **Electronic Textbooks (e-books)**

The use of e-books has been implemented in numerous courses.

#### **PlusPortals**

Our interactive web portal provides students and parents with academic, attendance, and discipline reports, as well as general information.

### **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

Theology 4.0 credits  
English 4.0 credits  
Mathematics 3.0 credits  
Science 2.0 credits  
Social Studies 2.0 credits  
(including American History)  
Physical Education 1.5 credits  
Consumer Economics 0.5 credit  
Fine Arts 0.5 credit  
Health 0.5 credit  
Speech 0.5 credit  
pass U.S. Constitution Test  
complete Senior Service Project

*NOTE: For theology, transfer students are only required to earn credit for each semester they are enrolled at Mater Dei.*

*NOTE: For science and social studies, 3.0 credits are recommended for college.*

*NOTE: For foreign language (Spanish), 2.0 credits are recommended for college.*



---

---

## TUITION AND FEES

---

---

**TUITION** Families choose from the following payment schedules: twelve-month, ten-month, quarterly, semi-annual, or annual. The 2023-2024 tuition rates are as follows:

**Catholic Students:** first student \$6,110, second student \$5,240

**Non-Catholic and Out-of-District Students:** first student \$6,610, second student \$6,210

*Additional students enrolled during the same year are not charged tuition.*

**COURSE AND ACTIVITY FEE** The course and activity fee (paid in August) offsets the expenses related to instructional materials, graduation, library services, retreats, technology, and standardized testing. The fee ranges from \$260 to \$350 depending on a student's grade level and courses.

Additional fees are **not** charged for transportation, participation in activities and athletics, parking, and admission to home athletic events, the musical, and the play.

---

---

## SCHOLARSHIPS & GRANTS

---

---

**OUR COMMITMENT** We are committed to ensuring that **all** students receive the opportunity to attend Mater Dei, regardless of financial resources.

In fact, **over 40%** of our students received a scholarship or memorial grant for the 2023-2024 school year.

*For additional specific information, please contact Mr. Dennis Litteken or Mrs. Maria Zurliene.*

**WHO CAN APPLY** All families may apply for scholarships and/or memorial grants on an annual basis.

**Scholarships:** We award over fifty scholarships of various amounts on the basis of each scholarship's designated qualification(s) – academic, leadership, financial need, ethnicity, grade level, and/or affiliation to a specific parish, school, or community. Additionally, specific parishes, schools, and organizations award scholarships independently of Mater Dei.

**Memorial Grants:** We award over \$100,000 in memorial grants of various amounts based on financial need.

**HOW TO APPLY** Families of incoming freshmen receive our general scholarship application (due May 1) and memorial grant application (due June 15) at the time of registration. (Those who register after June 15 may still apply for a memorial grant.)

*By completing our general scholarship application, a student is automatically considered for all applicable scholarships awarded by Mater Dei.*

---

---

## FAQs

---

---

Below we address the most frequently asked questions from students and parents.

Families with additional questions are welcome and encouraged to contact Mrs. Maria Zurliene.

---

---

### QUESTIONS FROM STUDENTS

***Friends: How will I meet people? Will I make friends?***

Each year our freshmen consistently report that meeting new people and making new friends are two of their **favorite** aspects of attending Mater Dei.

To assist our freshmen with their transition, we host multiple events that continually promote a sense of community.

- Freshman Welcome (May)
- Summer Emails (June, July, August)
- Freshman Lock-In (August, hosted by seniors and faculty)
- Freshmen-Only First Day of School

***Extracurriculars: Will I be interested? Will I have time?***

Our extensive variety of activities and athletics provides students with opportunities to explore, to develop, and to share their gifts and talents. There is truly something for everyone!

Therefore, we utilize two methods of ensuring students are aware of all the extracurricular opportunities:

- distribute our *Extracurricular Activities Guide*, which includes descriptions of and contacts for our activities and athletics
- host an activities fair, which allows students to sign up for activities and to receive information from current members

Finally, aside from athletics, numerous activities hold meetings during the daily school-wide study hall, which minimizes or eliminates meetings after school **and** allows our students to participate in multiple activities.

---

---

### QUESTIONS FROM PARENTS

***Transportation: To where do you provide bus service?***

We provide **free** bus transportation (to and from school) for students outside the Central Community High School District:

- North to Highland
- East to Posey - Hoffman - Centralia - Sandoval - Carlyle
- West to O'Fallon \* - Lebanon - New Baden -Trenton

*\* In O'Fallon, the location is the park 'n ride at I-64/Air Mobility Drive.*

***Extracurriculars: Will living outside of Breese limit my child's participation in activities and athletics?***

Aside from athletics, numerous activities hold meetings during the daily school-wide study hall, which minimizes or eliminates meetings after school. Students are also welcome to remain on campus and utilize the Lampe Commons to study, relax with peers, or prepare a snack (vending machines and microwaves are available). Finally, families often share travel obligations.

***Academics: Can you meet my child's academic needs?***

Our extensive, multi-level curriculum allows **all** students, including those needing academic accommodations, to enroll in the course levels that meet their needs. We do not "track" students, as we know their needs vary by academic discipline.

Students may also receive additional assistance from teachers or peer tutors during the daily school-wide study hall.

Finally, we highly value working hand-in-hand with parents for the benefit of our students.

---

---

# CLASS OF 2023 ACT SCORES

---

---

We are proud to share highlights of the ACT composite scores earned by members of our Class of 2023.

**ILLINOIS STATE SCHOLARS** The average of the ACT composite scores for the seventeen Illinois State Scholars is 27.5.

**VALEDICTORIANS** The average of the ACT composite scores for the eleven valedictorians is 26.5.

## ACT COMPOSITE SCORES

- **29 or higher** The top 12% of scores (8) are all 29 or higher and have an average of 30.3.
- **27 or higher** The top 23% of scores (15) are all 27 or higher and have an average of 28.7.
- **25 or higher** The top 37% of scores (24) are all 25 or higher and have an average of 27.4.
- **23 or higher** The top 60% of scores (39) are all 23 or higher and have an average of 25.9.

ACT composite scores of our "single-year" international students are not included in the statistics.

---

---

# CLASS OF 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

---

---

**FAITH** The Class of 2023 included six catechists who served local Youth Faith Formation (YFF) and Parish School of Religion (PSR) programs and fourteen extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion.

**SERVICE** The Class of 2023 provided nearly 12,500 hours of service, donated to orphanages in Haiti and Venezuela as their class mission, and contributed \$712 to fund a Pay It Forward Scholarship for the Class of 2027.

## KNOWLEDGE

**Illinois State Scholars:** The Class of 2023 included seventeen Illinois State Scholars (20% of the eligible members of the class).

**National Merit Scholarship Program (NMSP) Commended Student:** The Class of 2023 included one student who earned recognition as an NMSP Commended Student. (Approximately 50,000 students in the nation earn NMSP recognition.)

**Scholarships:** Sixty-four members (75%) of the Class of 2023 received scholarship offers, which totaled over \$7 million.

**National Honor Society (NHS):** Fifty-three members (62%) of the Class of 2023 were members of NHS, having earned a GPA of 3.6 or higher on a 4.0 scale.

**Academic Honors:** Forty-two members (49%) of the Class of 2023 earned academic honors: twenty-six summa cum laude (3.9 to 4.0 GPA, blue cord), nine magna cum laude (3.8 to 3.89 GPA, red cord), seven cum laude (3.7 to 3.79 GPA, white cord).

**College Credit Hours:** Through enrollment in our dual credit courses, our Class of 2023 earned nearly 1,500 credit hours, which is an average of 17 credit hours per student.

## INSTITUTIONS AT WHICH MEMBERS OF THE CLASS OF 2023 ARE CONTINUING THEIR EDUCATION

Ball State University  
Blackburn College  
Earlham College  
Eastern Illinois University  
Emory University  
Illinois College  
Illinois State University  
Kaskaskia College  
Lindenwood University  
Maryville University  
McKendree University

Missouri State University  
Missouri University of Science & Technology  
Murray State University  
North American Lineman Training Center  
Northern Illinois University  
Oklahoma State University  
St. Louis University  
Southeast Missouri State University  
Southeastern Illinois College  
Southern Illinois University Carbondale

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville  
Southwestern Illinois College  
University of Alabama  
University of Arkansas  
University of California Berkeley  
University of Health Sciences & Pharmacy  
University of Illinois  
University of Kentucky  
University of Missouri  
University of Tampa

---

## IN THE WORDS OF AN ALUMNA . . .

*"No words can truly express my gratitude for the four incredible years I spent at Mater Dei! Teachers and staff were consistently supportive and always strived to challenge the student body. As a freshman, I remember how thrilled I was to have the opportunity to join numerous clubs and athletic teams, which allowed me to explore my interests, gain leadership roles, and build many friendships. The collaboration and friendly competition among peers in class and the extracurricular activities in which I was involved made the transition from high school to college seamless. I could not have asked for a better experience, as Mater Dei prepared me and provided me with the tools I need to succeed today and in future endeavors!"*

*Sophie Hustedde, Class of 2022 (Breese, St. Augustine Catholic Church)  
currently attending Creighton University in Omaha, NE*



---

## SHADOW A KNIGHT

---

We invite students in grade 7 or 8 to join us for a day of school to truly experience the Mater Dei difference!

By shadowing a knight - observing classes, enjoying lunch, touring campus, and receiving a shirt - students experience and gain insight into life at Mater Dei. On the day of their choice, students may shadow a knight of their choice or request the selection of a knight with similar interests.

Contact Mrs. Maria Zurliene today to schedule a visit! We are confident your child will enjoy the Mater Dei family!

For additional information on planning a shadow day, visit our website: "Prospective Families" menu, "Visit Us" page.



---

## OPEN HOUSE

**November 5, 2023  
12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

---

Prospective families with students in grades 5 through 8 are invited to discover the unique aspects of Mater Dei.

Guests will enjoy a guided tour and visit information tables related to our spiritual, academic, and extracurricular programs; scholarships and grants; College Placement Office; and parent organizations.

**Registration via our website, which includes the selection of a tour time, is encouraged, but not required.**

Families who are unable to attend are invited to contact Mrs. Maria Zurliene to request our informational folder or to schedule a family tour. email: [mzurliene@materdeiknights.org](mailto:mzurliene@materdeiknights.org); phone: 618-526-7216

---

## JOIN OUR CLASS OF 2028

---

The following events are held for current 8th-grade students and their families.

---

### PLACEMENT TEST

December 9, 2023, 9:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

### CLASS OF 2028 INFORMATION NIGHT

January 18, 2024, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

### REGISTRATION

February 24, 2024, 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

### FRESHMAN WELCOME

traditionally held in late May (date tba)

Families who are unable to attend an event are invited to contact Mrs. Maria Zurliene to request information or to schedule an appointment. email: [mzurliene@materdeiknights.org](mailto:mzurliene@materdeiknights.org); phone 618-526-7216

---

## IN THE WORDS OF OUR STUDENTS . . .

"For each of us, our shadow day was a key factor in our decision to attend Mater Dei! Throughout the day, in the classes and the halls, the faculty and the students made us feel welcome and comfortable. We also appreciated meeting one-on-one with Mrs. Zurliene after the tour to discuss our questions and concerns. We agree that when we left, we felt like we were already a part of the Mater Dei family!

**Lane Kohrmann (Germantown, St. Boniface Catholic Church) and Kayden Barriger (St. Rose, St. Rose Catholic Church), Class of 2027**

"Although I planned to attend Mater Dei, shadowing a knight was still beneficial! Experiencing a day in the life of Mater Dei calmed my nerves and erased my fears. I also felt a sense of belonging, which made me more confident in my ability to transition from grade school. I strongly recommend shadowing a knight!

**Avery Wuebbels, Class of 2025 (Albers, St. Bernard Catholic Church)**

---

---

## IN THE WORDS OF A NEW PARENT . . .

"At Mater Dei, the onboarding for incoming students is nothing short of amazing! The Shadow a Knight program, orientations, and numerous events hosted throughout the summer immediately create a bond with and a sense of belonging to the Mater Dei community. Many of the activities are student-led, which is a true testament to the leadership and service that is ingrained in the culture at Mater Dei. Our son knew early on that he was a part of something much bigger and that the relationships he makes with not only freshman, but the entire student body, will be carried with him for a lifetime. His excitement and level of comfort made the transition to high school easy for not only our son, but also us as parents - for that I am extremely thankful!"

**Tammy Kampwerth, mother of Will '27 and Emma '30 (Aviston)**

---

## IN THE WORDS OF A VETERAN PARENT . . .

"Mater Dei has been my home away from home for over 30 years - first as a student, then as an alumna, and now as a parent. It has been a privilege to watch my children succeed and flourish in academics, activities, and athletics, all of which are encouraged and valued at Mater Dei. The dual credit courses allowed my sons to excel in and to expedite their paths through college and graduate school. In addition, the activities and athletics in which my children have been involved increased their self-esteem and encouraged them to live their faith not only in the halls of Mater Dei, but also in their lives and in their communities. Mater Dei also continues to offer new opportunities, such as the CAN program and FFA. Finally, the administrators, teachers, and staff have always challenged my children and enhanced their faith through prayer and opportunities to serve. We are grateful and blessed to have Mater Dei be a part of our family!"

**Lisa Baer '90, mother of Collin '11, Jonah '14, Gavynn '22, and Nadia '25 (St. Rose)**

---