



Guardian
Catholic School

Protecting potential.

About Guardian Catholic School

Guardian Catholic School opened in August 2017, combining the students and faculty of Holy Rosary and St. Pius V Catholic Schools in a brand-new facility constructed on the former Holy Rosary campus. These two highly respected elementary schools were anchors of the largely African American community in North Jacksonville, with a combined legacy of over 150 years of providing educational excellence and community outreach. When the schools faced the threat of closure in 1995 due to severe financial challenges, a group of business leaders founded The Guardian of Dreams Foundation to provide support for the schools and preserve their mission of addressing child literacy and disrupting the cycle of generational poverty faced by families in Jacksonville's inner-city.

Thanks to financial support from individual and corporate donors, grant-making organizations and foundations, Guardian Catholic School continues to provide educational opportunities and spiritual growth to children in Pre-K3 through 8th grade so that they may develop into healthy, well-rounded individuals endowed with the tools needed for lifelong success. Our vision is that all children who desire, but cannot afford, a quality education will have that opportunity, regardless of the neighborhood in which they live, economic status of their families, or their religious beliefs.

Guardian serves as a critical, high-impact presence within the Brentwood neighborhood, an area of Jacksonville that has been designated as both low income and an enterprise development zone. Dubbed the "Urban Core," this area is located in Jacksonville's Northwest Quadrant or "Health Zone 1." According to the 2009 compiled Racial and Ethnic Disparities Report by the Jacksonville Children's Commission, "Jacksonville's Health Zone 1 has the greatest concentration of poverty, health & social issues which adversely affect a child's ability to succeed."

With the support of our generous donors, volunteers, and community partners, Guardian is able to provide high-quality education in a safe and healthy environment for over 400 children in Pre-K3 through 8th grade. The demographic makeup of our student body is over 90% African American with a growing number of Hispanics, over 85% non-Catholic, and 80% are from single head-of-household families. The majority of our students qualify for funding from the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program, and all students receive some level of financial support from Guardian. In addition, one hundred percent of our students qualify for free breakfast and lunch from the National School Lunch Program.

Guardian Catholic School's transformational model of education recognizes the connections between low literacy and socially disadvantaged children and aggressively promotes educational advancement and early health initiatives as keys to success. Guardian has been recognized by the Duval Early Learning Coalition for earning "High Star Ratings in Quality Education Programs," despite the fact that the school is located in Jacksonville's highest poverty-stricken community where students demonstrate low academic achievement. With an average of 96% of Guardian alumni going on to graduate from high school, our students defy the odds, thanks to our structured, disciplined model that works.