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# PRESS RELEASE

## O'GORMAN HIGH SCHOOL CONTINUES TO EXCEL IN ACADEMICS

*Sioux Falls, SD:* Not only does O'Gorman High school continue to obtain high ACT test composite scores, but they have also been named a 2022 Cognia School of Distinction for excellence in Education. Cognia is the global nonprofit school improvement organization. In 2021, Cognia initiated its Schools of Distinction award program which recognizes preK-12 education institutions that exemplify excellence in education and service to learners. Cognia selected O'Gorman as one of the 96 schools and 38 systems out of more than 1,500 institutions that were eligible for its 2022 Cognia Schools and Systems of Distinction.

O'Gorman participated in Cognia's rigorous Accreditation Engagement Review process, which is based on research-based performance standards. The process includes a third-party review by education experts of evidence, interviews, and classroom observations. The evaluation covers Leadership Capacity, Learning Capacity, and Resource Capacity, as well as a demonstrated commitment to continuous improvement.

"O'Gorman High School is to be commended on their recognition as a School of Distinction," said Dr. Mark A. Elgart, president and CEO of Cognia. "Cognia Accreditation is already a mark of distinction recognized around the world. Being named a School of Distinction further recognizes the commitment to education quality O'Gorman has for its learners," he added.

Each recognized school and system is reviewed every five years to maintain this designation. They must continue to effectively implement high-quality instruction, show consistent organizational effectiveness, maintain a commitment to continuous improvement and demonstrate energetic and sustained commitment to learners.

The ACT test scores for the graduating class of 2022 were also released this week. O'Gorman's average ACT composite score remained steady at 25.4 while the average ACT composite score for the state of South Dakota declined to a 21.5, and the average score at the national level fell to a thirty-year low of 19.8.

Seventy-six percent of OGHS graduates met three or four of the four ACT college readiness benchmarks compared to only 44% of graduates across the state.

"Our strong ACT scores do not happen by accident," says Joan Mahoney, Principal of O'Gorman High School, "They are a testament to the rigor found in all of our courses, and they are the result of the hard work and dedication of our students and faculty."

While the number of students taking the ACT test declined across the state for the fifth year in a row, over 90% of O'Gorman's class of 2022 took the ACT test.

For more information, contact Rachael Kapperman, Marketing & Communications Specialist, at Bishop O'Gorman Catholic Schools Development Office. (605) 575-3366 or [rkapperman@ogknights.org](mailto:rkapperman@ogknights.org).

**About Cognia:** Cognia began their legacy of accomplishments in school improvement and accreditation in 1895 and is located in Alpharetta, Georgia. Their focus is seeking what works in schools around the world, providing learning forums for skilled educators and helping school systems provide students with the opportunities that knowledge brings. Cognia's mission is to serve as a trusted partner in advancing learning.

**About Bishop O'Gorman Catholic Schools:** Bishop O'Gorman Catholic Schools was started in 1905 and is located in Sioux Falls, South Dakota but serves more than the Sioux Falls population. It is made up of six elementary schools, a junior high and a high school and our system welcomes children from all communities. Bishop O'Gorman Catholic Schools is a Christ-centered community providing a financially-viable, world-class education for an increasing number of children whose mission is to form a community of faith and learning by promoting a Catholic way of life through Gospel values and academic excellence.



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