

U.S. Department of Education
2016 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [] Title I [X] Charter [] Magnet [X] Choice

Name of Principal Mrs. Alisa Welsh

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Madison Preparatory Academy

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1555 Madison Avenue

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Baton Rouge State LA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 70802-3460

County USA

Telephone (225) 636-5865 Fax (225) 456-5147

Web site/URL http://www.csalcharterschools.org E-mail awelsh@madisonpreponline.org

Twitter Handle _____ Facebook Page _____ Google+ _____

YouTube/URL _____ Blog _____ Other Social Media Link _____

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

_____ Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Dujan Johnson E-mail djohnson@csalonline.org

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Dujan Johnson Tel. (225) 448-5399

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

_____ Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. Curtis Calloway J.D.

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

_____ Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Part I – Eligibility Certification

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The public school has met their state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) using the most recent accountability results available for the year prior to nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) for the year in which they are nominated (2015-2016) and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2010 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, or 2015.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2015-2016) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 0 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 1 K-12 schools
- 3 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
 - Suburban
 - Small city or town in a rural area
 - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2015 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	88	60	148
10	56	64	120
11	59	41	100
12 or higher	44	38	82
Total Students	247	203	450

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 100 % Black or African American
 - 0 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 0 % White
 - 0 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2014 – 2015 school year: 7%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	7
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	17
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	24
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	346
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.069
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0%
0 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 72%
 Total number students who qualify: 325

8. Students receiving special education services: 6%
26 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- 1 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 0 Emotional Disturbance
- 0 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 4 Other Health Impaired
- 8 Specific Learning Disability
- 21 Speech or Language Impairment
- 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 0 Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 6
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers	25
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	0
Paraprofessionals	2
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 18:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	96%	97%	96%	95%	94%
High school graduation rate	91%	79%	61%	70%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2015.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	69
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	38%
Enrolled in a community college	25%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	12%
Found employment	13%
Joined the military or other public service	2%
Other	10%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No X

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

The mission of Madison Preparatory Academy is to provide a diverse learning environment through a rigorous curriculum and produce college and career ready individuals.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

Madison Preparatory Academy is committed to offering parents a public school choice. As such, we aim to help parents make an informed decision about whether Madison Preparatory Academy is an appropriate option for their children and whether their family can support our Charter and our School Policies. Madison Prep uses non-discriminatory processes to attract a diverse student population from the communities being served.

In the event that Madison Prep receives more application forms than it has the capacity, at any grade level, the school will hold a public random drawing (“lottery”). Should a lottery be necessary, the following definitions are the parameters of the admissions preferences that will be utilized. Enrollment opens January 5 for the following school year. All enrollment applications submitted are processed without consideration of the order received. If a spot becomes available and the wait list has been exhausted for the grade involved, a subsequent open enrollment period will be held for that class only.

In order to participate in the Enrollment Lottery interested families must:

1. Complete and submit an application form and other relevant documents by the published deadline, which will ensure they are part of the Enrollment Lottery.
2. A lottery, as needed, will be held to determine enrollment by grade level, based on space available for each grade. The lottery also establishes a waiting list once all known openings are filled.
3. After the lottery, all families will be notified of their enrollment status (space available and/or appropriate waiting list placement).
4. Families must accept or decline enrollment within three business days of notification, otherwise enrollment will be forfeited.
5. Students on the wait list who do not receive admission will not be automatically re-entered into the next year’s lottery; they must apply again for admission. In no circumstance will the wait list carry over for the next year.

PART III – SUMMARY

Madison Preparatory Academy is a Type II charter school that is part of The Community School for Apprenticeship Learning, Inc., a small, independent charter organization started in 1997. It services a predominately low-income, minority community in North Baton Rouge, an area plagued by high crime, astounding rates of adult illiteracy, teenage pregnancy, and high dropout rates. The current student body is 100% African American, with 72% of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch. The Community School for Apprenticeship Learning, the first school in the charter organization, is a middle school which was trying to provide an alternative to what was available in the public school system. After a while, the parents of CSAL Middle students began requesting a high school with an environment, like CSAL, where students could receive a quality public education in a small learning environment. Out of this desire, Madison Prep was born. It was not an easy road fulfilling this idea, for charter schools were considered to be a new, unfamiliar approach to education in Baton Rouge. While Madison Prep has been instrumental in building a positive reputation for charter schools, the school has had to fight to earn the respect that it now carries.

For the first three years, Madison Prep was, unfortunately, deemed a low-performing school, receiving the first school performance score of an 'F' in 2011. The next year, however, the school moved to a passing grade of a 'D'; in 2014, the school received a 'C'; in 2015, achieving the greatest milestone to date, Madison Prep earned the grade of a 'B'. At an 89.7, only 10.3 points away from an 'A', it is one of the top five performing high schools in the city of Baton Rouge, and the only one in that category to not have admission requirements; the top performing high school in North Baton Rouge, and the top performing charter high school in Baton Rouge. To make the gains that have been made by this school, in the short amount of time in which they have been made, is something few schools in Louisiana have accomplished.

In order to reach these significant milestones, a balance had to be forged between a focus on academics as well as a focus on culture. It is the culture of Madison Prep that creates a stark difference from other schools in the state. Obviously, this school would have never made the gains that it has without a strong academic program, however, at Madison Prep it is understood that it is more than academics that make a child. The culture at Madison Prep is set at the start of the day with a community meeting. There are no traditional morning announcements over an intercom at Madison Prep; all students and teachers meet together in the gym to begin their day as a community. Students recite what is known as the “core values of a charger” – affirmative statements that define the ideals of the school, meant to remind students, every morning, what it is they are expected to uphold. Community meeting is meant to celebrate achievements, address school-wide issues, and motivate students for the day and beyond. Wednesday mornings are set aside specifically for motivation, in which a guest speaker is brought in to talk to students about a myriad of subjects. Speakers have ranged from rappers to doctors to professional sports players to community activists, all teaching the students a different lesson about life. Madison Prep exposes students to more than just the books; it exposes students to the many opportunities available for their future. Community meeting gives students the opportunity to “reset” for the day; they are reminded what it takes to be successful and given the encouragement needed to carry it though every day.

To further extend the culture at Madison Prep, parents are recognized as one of the most important stakeholders in a student's success. Parent Night is held on the first Tuesday of every month, to encourage parental involvement as a part of the school's community. In addition to involving parents, students “dress for success” every Monday, as they are required to wear a more professional uniform, which teaches not only the importance of physical presentation, but also to normalize professionalism for success. Another way Madison Prep ensures success for its students is by keeping class sizes smaller than average. The average class size at Madison Prep is eighteen students. Small class sizes allow for increased academic success through more individualized interactions between teacher and student. Small class sizes create a safe and friendly environment where students feel more comfortable expressing their level of understanding of the content as well as engaging in respectful dialogue when debates emerge. Madison Prep proves to be a place that nurtures students' hopes and transforms them into possibilities by serving their interests and encouraging enthusiasm for learning and life, all while maintaining the highest of expectations.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Madison Preparatory Academy was created and designed primarily as a college preparatory school. The core curriculums are centered on the goal that every student is prepared for and has the opportunity to attend an institution of higher learning.

Due to the close relationship between Madison Prep and CSAL Middle, eighth grade core teachers regularly collaborate with ninth grade core teachers to make sure they're introducing the foundational skills incoming freshman will need in order to excel in their core classes in high school. Eighth grade teachers will take the remaining month after state testing to cover the material students will see in their first units of ninth grade. Students continue to acquire foundational skills for all core subjects through a Summer Bridge Program. This program guarantees all students, both CSAL and non-CSAL, are given opportunities to strengthen these skills. Incoming freshman attend the program for four weeks. During this time, reading comprehension, writing, and math skills are reviewed and re-taught based upon a pre-assessment of the incoming class' eighth grade state test scores. Not only does this program ensure the basic skills needed for all ninth grade core classes, it also introduces students to the schedule and work load of high school, thus further preparing them for success.

The ELA curriculum consists of English I, II, III, and IV. Within the core English classes, the curriculum is closely aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), however teachers have the autonomy to focus more on specific areas of need within each class. Collaboration among the English department is central to the success of students. English I lays the foundation for high school level grammar, reading comprehension, and writing. Because of the close curriculum planning of English I and English II teachers, English II successfully expands on these foundational skills to include increased rigor in reading comprehension, an analysis of a literary novel, and research-based writing. The close relationship and planning between English I and English II teachers ultimately results in high proficiency on the English II End of Course Assessment (EOC). A transition to English III consists of a focus on college and career readiness through continued assessment preparation and a rigor aligned with collegiate coursework. The English III curriculum focuses on American Literature, as well as integrating skills needed for the ACT and EOC. Literary analysis, using texts at increased Lexile levels, is a key component of English III. English IV continues students' path to college and career readiness also using literary analysis of high-level Lexile texts from the canon of British Literature. English III and IV refines students' writing skills using a writing curriculum based upon the variety and level of writing expected in a college freshman English class.

The Social Studies courses offered include Civics, World History, American History, and World Geography. The courses have been rearranged from the traditional order so that students will more effectively gain fundamental skills and concepts required to maximize exceptional achievement levels on high stakes state-mandated testing in American History. All ninth grade students are enrolled in Civics, which refreshes student knowledge of the role of the United States government and requires them to apply their knowledge to evaluate Supreme Court cases and role-play civic responsibility. The tenth grade World History course focuses on the history of humankind, concentrating on the Renaissance to present day, utilizing different methods historians use to interpret the past, including points of view and historical context. This course also introduces students to major world events that have affected the formation and growth of the United States. Eleventh grade students take American History which traces how the U.S. became a modern nation. This course will address the standards for success on the EOC. The twelfth grade World Geography course focuses on the relationship among people places and environments in geographic patterns on earth. The social studies curriculum at Madison Prep demonstrates the importance of writing and writing excellence by closely incorporating the English CCSS for writing.

Math courses that are offered are Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Advanced Math, and Math 1021 (College Algebra) and Math 1022 (College Trigonometry), both dual enrollment classes offered in conjunction with Louisiana State University. The curriculum is closely aligned to CCSS, however teachers have the autonomy to focus more on specific areas of need within each class and provide additional help for bridging

the gap caused by the transition to CCSS. Best Practices for Teaching Mathematics has been adopted and is posted in each classroom for guidance and instruction in learning. Algebra I lays the foundation of the basic algebra and function standards while Geometry continues on that foundation incorporating points, lines, surfaces and solids. Algebra II builds on various functions, as well as focusing on skills needed for the ACT. Students have the choice of Financial Math, Advanced Math, or dual enrollment courses as their fourth math course, depending on their intended college or career track. Financial Math focuses on the real world application of math, and Advanced Math gears students towards successfully entering College Algebra. Two dual enrollment classes are also offered in which students will receive six college credits upon successfully completing both courses, thus better preparing students for the next level of mathematics in college.

The science curriculum consists of Biology, Physical Science, Chemistry, Biology AP, and Physics. The curriculum is aligned to the Louisiana State Science Standards, incorporating Common Core reading and writing standards. This curriculum has also been rearranged from the traditional order to better fit the instructional needs of students at Madison Prep. Ninth grade students are enrolled in Biology, with a focus on life sciences. Students who score proficient on the Biology EOC have the option to progress to AP Biology in tenth grade. This progression better prepares students to do well on the AP Biology exam because the close planning between teachers ensures the attainment of skills for the exam. Students that do not qualify for AP Biology take Physical Science in tenth grade. The Physical Science class covers material that lays the foundation for Chemistry in eleventh grade. All eleventh graders take Chemistry, which also works to prepare students for the ACT by integrating science problem-solving skills during instruction. In twelfth grade, students have the option to take Physics or Biology II (for students who have not already taken AP Biology). These classes focus on inquiry-based and research projects to prepare for collegiate level sciences.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Madison Prep has a partnership with a four-year and junior college to give students the opportunity to become college and career ready. Seniors who have scored an 18 or higher on the ACT are eligible to participate in dual enrollment courses in conjunction with Louisiana State University and Baton Rouge Community College in order to earn credits towards college graduation.

Madison Prep has recently implemented the Career and Technical Education Program (CTE). This changes the high school experience from a traditional college preparatory model to one with multiple programs of study and/or pathways aimed at preparing more students for post-secondary studies and careers. The CTE program at Madison Prep includes six CTE career pathways: Architecture, Construction, Engineering, Business, Information Technology and Healthcare. Currently, approximately 24 career courses are offered and each career pathway has four to five elective courses that students can take, beginning in ninth grade. These courses will lead to earning a statewide or national industry-based certification aligned with high-growth, high-wage job sectors as approved by Louisiana's Workforce Investment Council (WIC) prior to high school graduation. Every student must declare a career pathway starting in ninth grade and if a student is interested in a program of study not available on campus, the CTE coordinator will seek out approved online education partners and/or dual enrollment courses at the local college or university to address that student's needs.

Success in personalizing learning and improving student achievement overall has been achieved through the CTE program by designing project-driven instruction that offers opportunities for cross-curriculum planning by core and CTE teachers. The CTE and core teachers, and the Special Education Director plan and work together to design activities and assignments that help students prepare for post-secondary studies and support skills necessary for success in core classes. The most essential standards in reading, writing, and math are selected to be embedded into CTE courses. These essential standards are one of the best predictors of students' eventual success in college and the workplace. Through these courses, students see the relevance of their studies and this helps them to achieve at higher levels in all their classes as they plan for their post-secondary and workplace experiences.

The foreign language courses offered at Madison Prep are Spanish I/II and Japanese I/II. Two years of a foreign language is a requirement for graduation. Foreign language classes teach students to become more

aware and respectful of other cultures and languages. The language skills acquired help to prepare students to compete in a global market where knowing a foreign language is a great advantage. Foreign language classes at Madison Prep are project-oriented. These projects provide students with real-life application to the language they are studying as well as strengthening the skills needed to successfully execute a project like time management, planning, and evaluation. Research writing is also a skill embedded in the foreign language curriculum. Students must write two research papers a year: one on a particular region in which their language of study is spoken, and one paper with a cultural/historical focus. These writing skills are essential to their success in core classes and beyond high school. At the request of students, French I/II is also offered at Madison Prep through an online virtual school.

The requirements for health and P.E. are that students must earn one and a half credits of P.E. and a half credit of health. These classes promote physical and emotional well-being by incorporating lessons on domestic violence, mental health issues, as well as bringing in guest speakers to address many issues facing teens today. Reading comprehension and writing skills are also promoted in these classes through reading health articles and writing in response to these articles.

Technology is an integral part of student success at Madison Prep. Most classrooms are equipped with one or more desktop computers, no less than five laptops, Promethean Boards, and teachers have access to classroom sets of wireless tablets. Teachers integrate various other hands-on technologies into their lessons through the use of Mimeo tablets, MimeoVote Assessment System, and a variety of educational apps students can access with their smart phones. Students are taught how to use technology effectively through a required Introduction to Business Computer Applications (IBCA) class. In a world where technology's importance is ever-increasing, this class provides students with the technology skills needed for success in their intended career path. The constant use of technology in the classroom readies students to compete in a global market already saturated with technology.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Madison Prep serves a population of very diverse academic needs. The autonomy exists to make instructional decisions based upon these diverse academic needs. Madison Prep teachers use a variety of instructional strategies in their classrooms such as: anchor charts, think-pair-share, interactive notebooks, learning stations, exit tickets, graffiti walls, etc. Three instructional strategies that are widely used across the curriculum are split classrooms, progress monitoring software programs, and skinny scheduling.

A split classroom is a technique which allows a teacher to differentiate their instruction to provide one-on-one attention to students who haven't mastered a learning objective, while simultaneously providing enrichment to students who have attained mastery of the learning objective. The split classroom model is often used after an assessment is given. One way teachers can provide both interventions and enrichment in and out of the classroom is through the use of various progress monitoring software programs. The software programs used at Madison Prep are Write to Learn, Accelerated Reader, MathXL, and Study Island. All subjects have access to one or more of these programs and each classroom is equipped with a variety of technology (laptops, desktops, and class sets of tablets). Teachers have found success in using these programs to target both below and above grade level students.

Skinny scheduling is used for EOC subjects. While the rest of classes at Madison Prep run on a 90-minute semester-long block schedule, EOC subjects run 45 minutes, year long. EOC teachers teach four skinny classes a day, during the first two block periods, which allows them one block period to use for interventions. Students are pulled from elective classes to receive intense intervention for skills on which students have shown non-proficiency. The need for intervention is determined based upon individual performance on EOC-style weekly assessments. Teachers use this time to review and re-teach standards and skills in a small group setting, using different methods than may have been used in the large group classroom setting.

EOC tests are a huge indicator of student success, therefore in the weeks leading up to testing, Saturday School is offered free of charge to ninth through eleventh graders. Teachers use this time to review content,

teach test taking strategies, and make students more comfortable with the testing process. Designed for students of all academic levels, Saturday School has proved to increase success on the EOC.

4. Assessment for Instruction and Learning and Sharing Assessment Results:

Madison Prep uses a variety of assessment types and assessment data to improve student learning. The types of assessments used and analyzed include previous state test data, daily formative assessments, weekly EOC and ACT style assessments, and EOC and ACT practice tests.

At the beginning of each year, the faculty reviews data from the previous year's state tests. The faculty, as a whole, looks at how students performed overall in each content area, as well as analyzing ongoing trends in the data. Each department then takes their respective data to further analyze apparent strengths and weaknesses. Although not all teachers are responsible for a tested area, all teachers take an active role at integrating skills and techniques in their curriculum that will lead to student success in testing. Therefore, it is crucial that all teachers are involved in the analysis of this data. The information gained from this beginning of the year analysis informs all instructional decisions for the planning of the school year.

In order to truly ensure outstanding student performance, Madison Prep has implemented a rigorous assessment program, with numerous checks of understanding, to guarantee that no student is overlooked or falls behind. Classrooms at Madison Prep are objective-driven, with an expectation that students must master one objective before proceeding to the next. One of the ways this is done is through daily formative assessments (DFA), which require students to prove their understanding through written discourse at the end of a class period. Teachers collect and analyze these DFAs every day and use them in planning whether re-teaching is needed. These tools are extremely effective in leading to student success because they encourage more reflective teaching. DFAs are passed back each class so that students can become self aware as to where they stand in their understanding of the content, and can take the necessary steps to obtain the extra help they may need.

Weekly EOC and ACT style assessments are the cornerstone of the assessment program at Madison Prep. These eight question, multiple choice assessments are given in every subject, on a weekly basis. Students become accustomed to the language, style, and timing for standardized tests through these assessments. Teachers and students alike benefit from this to gain a better understanding of the level of mastery which each student is currently attaining, thus ensuring students receive interventions when needed. All data collected is then entered into an online tracker which calculates the current level of student performance. This online tracker has been essential in increasing the level of student proficiency at Madison Prep – data driven instructional decisions all disseminate from this tracker. Individual data is shared in the classroom immediately following the assessment and aggregate data is shared school-wide during community meeting (on a weekly basis), parent night (on a monthly basis), and is also displayed at the entrance of the school. School-wide data sharing is done to celebrate successes or identify weaknesses so that students and parents will become invested in student performance.

Quarterly practice EOC and ACT tests are given to students in order to familiarize them with testing content and conditions. Detailed score reports are generated for each test and sent home with students to share with their parents. Students, parents, and teachers are regularly able to see progress on these high stakes tests to further inform instructional decisions and to identify intervention needs.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

The culture of Madison Prep is what makes the school unique. There is an unofficial motto among the faculty to always “do more” to help student’s success. Faculty, students, and parents all refer to the environment of the school as being a family. From the beginning of the year, the sense of family and belonging is fostered among teachers and students through unique experiences the school provides. Teachers attend a three day faculty retreat out of state to not only provide intense professional development, but to build camaraderie among faculty members. Students also get a chance at building this same feeling during a whole school team building day off campus. This is done at the beginning of the year to set the tone for the culture of the school. In order to upkeep this strong sense of community throughout the year, students are taken on school-wide field trips such as ice skating, hiking, to the movies, etc. to not only strengthen community but to also expose students to new things which creates a socially, emotionally, and physically well-rounded child. Through these activities, students learn to become a support for each other and can often be seen keeping each other motivated and on track both in and out of the classroom. A very inclusive culture is created where all students feel like they belong and students are not shunned or excluded from the mainstream.

Teacher involvement at Madison Prep is well above the average school. Eighty-two percent of faculty members are coaches or sponsors of some extracurricular activity. A teacher’s guidance and expertise is seen and felt well beyond the boundaries of the classroom. This interaction outside of the classroom works to support and foster students’ emotional and social growth and development because they have a multitude of adult figures to mentor them in many aspects of their lives. Students have no doubts that their teachers support them both in academics and in their extracurricular interests; the rapport between teachers and students at Madison Prep is extremely strong.

Madison Prep teachers are treated not only as employees, but also as stakeholders. Their ideas, opinions and input are highly valued by the administration of the school and the charter organization. The school takes a vested interest in helping teachers become the best they can be through various professional development trips and content-based conferences. Throughout the year the organization goes above and beyond to make sure teachers feel appreciated for all they do.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

One of the most successful ways that Madison Prep engages parents and stakeholders is through the monthly Parent Night. This night is held to update parents on school events, allow parents to speak with their child’s teachers, and offer parents various tools to aid in their child’s success (low-priced internet options, literacy tools through the local library, summer academic programs, and financial assistance, just to name a few). Progress reports are given on these nights and parents are informed of tutoring opportunities, state testing information, and any changes being made to the rules and regulations of the school. These constant “check-ins” allow parents to stay in constant contact with all elements of Madison Prep in order to keep their child on track. Teachers also use websites such as Edmodo, Schoology, and Remind to stay in touch with parents, and parents have access to a parent portal where they can view a snapshot of their child’s current grades. Through this portal, parents are informed of absences, tardiness, and failing grades that a student receives through an automated call out. These call outs have proven to be one of the most effective methods of increasing parental involvement in their child’s academic career.

Community engagement is also a key factor in student success and school improvement. Madison Prep has a partnership with the local community college as well as Louisiana State University to provide students with dual enrollment programs. There is also a strong partnership with a local organization, Big Buddy that provides students with tutoring and mentoring. Students are encouraged to apply for their summer program, Level Up Workforce Development Program, which gives them an internship with local businesses in the career path in which they are interested. Many Madison Prep students have participated in this program every summer and it has allowed them to make career connections necessary for after graduation. Other

ways that the school engages with the community is through its annual community health fair. In conjunction with iCare, an alcohol, drug abuse, and violence prevention program, local health organizations come in to promote awareness of health issues affecting the community, as well as providing services such as blood pressure screenings and interactive demonstrations about the misuse and abuse of alcohol. Students, parents, and the local community are encouraged to attend this event. A community stakeholder dinner has been another way Madison Prep has solicited support from the local community. This dinner is held with the goal of forging relationships between the school and local organizations. Their support is integral in furthering the success of students at school and beyond.

3. Professional Development:

The professional development plan at Madison Prep is an important tool that guarantees the faculty is high trained and qualified to execute data-driven instruction. The foundation and focus of professional development is daily formative assessments, collaboration, student work, weekly assessments, and learning objectives. Components of critical friends and professional learning communities are used to facilitate discussions. Grade levels meet once a week to read a journal or article from a nationally recognized educational resource. The articles are discussed and evaluated to determine ways to implement the best practices mentioned in the articles. A plan of implementation is then developed and teachers begin working to ensure that these practices have an impact on student achievement. During grade level meetings student work and weekly assessment data is analyzed to determine the next instructional steps. Content-area groups meet monthly to discuss assessment data and instructional practices. Content-specific data is analyzed in these meetings to determine what is working and what is not.

Another way teachers are professionally developed is through national conferences and trainings each year, as well as visits to other successful high schools around the state and country. These visits provide an opportunity for teachers to learn what is working with groups of students very similar to the students at Madison Prep and for teachers to learn and experience new instructional practices. Teachers who are experts in instructional practice are identified on our campus and they are used to work with other teachers. This form of job-embedded professional development works well because our teachers enjoy collaboration and feel more comfortable using tools and resources that they have learned from each other. The leadership team participates in learning walks to ensure teachers are implementing best practice in terms of instruction.

CTE teachers have the opportunity for further professional development related to their specific areas of certification. Initial training for these teachers is received at the Jump Start Super Summer Institute. Many of the teachers hired to teach CTE classes are not traditional educators; they possess many years of experience working in the industry in which they will teach. This extra professional development is extremely beneficial to these teachers because it gives them resources to ensure that the students in the CTE program successfully receive their industry-based certification upon completion.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership team at Madison Prep is made up of the principal, assistant principal, director of exceptional student services, dean of students, academic adviser and career and technical educational coordinator. In addition to the leadership team, there are four instructional lead teachers for the core classes and a data manager who inputs data into the state calculator. The data is then distributed by the principal during community meetings and parent night.

The principal takes a distributive leadership approach in running the school. The leadership team, on many occasions, relies upon the skills of teachers who are not a direct part of the team. Being a small school, it takes a collective effort to make things run smoothly. Although the principal's leadership style sets the tone of the school's culture, collaboration between the staff and the administration is essential to student success. The principal is primarily responsible for all major decisions, however, through weekly faculty meetings and regular content team meetings, all stakeholders are given an opportunity to voice opinions before these decisions are made. The school's vision is one that is shared. The ultimate goal is to produce college and career ready individuals and the principal understands the importance of utilizing everyone's

individual talents to make that happen.

The leadership team searches for and hires highly qualified educators that are capable of meeting students where they are and guiding them to perform at higher proficiency levels. The principal requires that all teachers follow a data-driven instructional method in conjunction with the school's data tracker. Otherwise, teachers are given a large amount of autonomy in the classroom to use their unique teaching styles, due to the principal's strong belief that giving teachers independence fosters ownership and leadership within their classroom.

The principal and assistant principal conduct periodic teacher observations and evaluations. These observations inform the leadership team of the strengths and weakness of the faculty, and from this information professional learning communities are established. The assistant principal and academic adviser work together to collect and analyze daily formative assessments on a weekly basis; data collected from these assessments are used to inform instruction. The CTE coordinator, with the academic adviser and principal, work together to add classes to the course catalog to meet the growing needs of the student body. The director of exceptional student services works with the entire leadership team and faculty so that all students with special needs have access to a quality education.

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

There is no doubt that the culture that has been created at Madison Preparatory Academy is a defining attribute of this school. However, the school's increasing focus on data-driven instruction is the one practice that has pushed the school to the success that it has gained. The weekly assessment program and subsequent data tracking from these assessments have revolutionized academics at Madison Prep. These assessments are designed to both prepare students for the language and style of standardized testing and allow teachers to see the progress students are making towards mastering content standards. Once assessments are given each week, data is entered into the school-wide tracker. This tracker provides a snapshot of the school's weekly performance. Data is shared with students and parents, teachers meet and reflect on what may need to be re-taught, and the need for student intervention is identified.

Through this program, teachers are forced to be more conscious of what students are actually learning. Teachers are not encouraged to move on from material for the sake of progressing if students have not attained mastery. Therefore, the quality of a student's understanding is prioritized over the quantity of material covered. This also benefits students because they are not inundated with large amounts of information traditionally assessed on unit exams, but are assessed on only one to two standards at a time. This model creates more self-aware and self-motivated learners because weaknesses and gaps are identified quicker and are thus easier to overcome. Students are invested in this program and it has created a healthy competition in an academic environment. They strive to do well on these assessments because it doesn't just mean a good grade in the grade book, it means that they are truly learning, and they take pride in that. This weekly assessment program is about more than just passing a test – it has created an environment where students not only are motivated to learn, but they also know how to ensure that they are learning.