

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. Tarkan Topcuoglu

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

Official School Name Central Jersey College Prep Charter School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 17 Schoolhouse Road

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

City Somerset                      State NJ                      Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 08873-4245

County Somerset

Telephone (732) 302-9991                      Fax (732) 302-9992

Web site/URL http://www.cjcollegeprep.org                      E-mail ttopcuoglu@cjcollegeprep.org

Twitter Handle                      Facebook Page  
https://twitter.com/cjcpes                      http://www.facebook.com/cjcpes                      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. Tarkan Topcuoglu                      E-mail ttopcuoglu@cjcollegeprep.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Central Jersey College Prep Charter School Tel. (732) 302-9991

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 Dr. Ferhan Tunagur  
(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

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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

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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)
  - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 0 High schools
  - 1 K-12 schools
- 1 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
<b>PreK</b>	0	0	0
<b>K</b>	28	22	50
<b>1</b>	21	29	50
<b>2</b>	0	0	0
<b>3</b>	0	0	0
<b>4</b>	0	0	0
<b>5</b>	0	0	0
<b>6</b>	20	30	50
<b>7</b>	29	21	50
<b>8</b>	23	24	47
<b>9</b>	19	26	45
<b>10</b>	18	30	48
<b>11</b>	25	24	49
<b>12 or higher</b>	13	19	32
<b>Total Students</b>	196	225	421

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 34 % Asian
  - 31 % Black or African American
  - 10 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 23 % 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: 1%

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	3
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	0
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	3
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	310
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.010
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1

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: 31 %  
Total number students who qualify: 133

8. Students receiving special education services: 7 %  
28 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
- 1 Emotional Disturbance
- 0 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 5 Other Health Impaired
- 21 Specific Learning Disability
- 0 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: 5
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	5
Classroom teachers	27
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	11
Paraprofessionals	8
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	24

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 16:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	95%	94%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

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.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	34
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	54%
Enrolled in a community college	30%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	4%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	1%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.  
Yes  No

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 CJPCPS is to prepare its students for the post-secondary institutes with the necessary skills and knowledge they need intellectually, emotionally, and physically to reach their highest potential .

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

Admission is open to all interested applicants in grades 6-12 (upper school) and K-2 (lower school), without regard to sex, race, color, creed, or national origin. Admission is also open to any student, regardless of intellectual or athletic ability, the level of achievement or aptitude, status as a handicapped person, proficiency in the English language, or any other discriminatory basis.

First priority for enrollment is given to students who are residents of Somerset, North Brunswick, and New Brunswick. If there are spaces open at the completion of the initial recruitment period, non-resident students become eligible for enrollment. "Resident student" means a student who resides in the area served by the district board of education that is the same as the district of residence of the charter school. Enrollment priority is given to siblings of a student enrolled in the CJCPCS. A sibling is defined as a child who has at least one parent/legal guardian in common with another child. If there are more applications for admission than available spaces, a random process in the form of a lottery is used to determine admission.

The lottery drawing is held publicly and facilitated by an impartial representative who has no vested interest in the outcome of the drawing. In the event that the random lottery process is used to determine enrollment, names continue to be drawn after all available spaces have been filled in order to form an enrollment waiting list.

## PART III – SUMMARY

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I pledge to do my best and I do respect the rest. At Central Jersey College Prep we demand hard work in depth. We are true, determined, and right. We try with all our might. I'm headed towards college, the right place of knowledge. We will maintain our ambition, that being our long lasting mission. Central Jersey College Prep will get us there step by step. - CJCPCS Student Pledge

Every morning a young enthusiastic voice broadcasts the student pledge to lead the school. This has been the tradition since the beginning and this simple act helps set the tone for the day and contributes to the omnipresent school culture of striving for achievement with the long-term goal of attaining college entrance and a college degree. The first cohort of students wrote the pledge in 2006; it motivates and gives a sense of pride. CJCPCS utilizes several strategies including; comprehensive preparation for college entrance, effective technology integration and benchmark assessments that provide data-driven instruction, dedicated educators who leverage the student-teacher-parent triad, and promoting social-emotional health.

CJCPCS began in 2006-07 with 77 students and the vision of being a free, intimate, high-quality college-prep alternative. The school completed expanding to grade 12 and in 2009 added grade 6. The school currently serves grades 6 – 12 in the upper school and K and 1 in the new lower school, which will expand through grade 5. The maximum enrollment for 2015-16 is 432 students. CJCPCS has a diverse student population coming from both urban and suburban neighborhoods. Most CJCPCS students are minorities; African American, Hispanic, and Asian. Families may come because of the size and safety, but stay for the overall experience and progress of their child.

CJCPCS has a proven track record, as the class of 2015 was the fourth-consecutive year with 100% graduation rate and 100% acceptance rate into 4-year colleges and universities; 82% of CJCPCS alumni are still in college. Percent proficiency on state-mandated standardized tests has increased dramatically. This progress has led to numerous recognitions. In 2012-13 JerseyCAN designated us a Top Ten Middle School. In 2013-14, CJCPCS was recognized as Exemplary Title-I school by NJ Department of Education. In 2014-15 CJCPCS was designated a High Performing Rewards School in NJ plus received a special Title I School Rewards Grant. In 2015, US News included CJCPCS in its bronze category of top US high schools. Our school was nominated this year for 2016 National Title I Distinguished School Award.

The words 'college prep' are taken very seriously. Classrooms are named for universities, such as Princeton and Rutgers. Students begin the day with 20 minutes of DEAR (Drop Every Thing and Read). Strong written communication is emphasized with 'Writing Across the Curriculum'. The curriculum is challenging to properly prepare for college level work with Honors classes for all core subjects and multiple AP courses. Counseling organizes college campus visits, provides substantial assistance in career decision-making and college admission tasks, plus holds parent workshops. College entrance exam performance is maximized. All high school 9th and 10th graders cost for PSAT are covered. Certain high school electives boost performance; a special extracurricular club, College Mentorship Program (CMP) provides, even more, focus.

CJCPCS is on the forefront of technology integration and data-driven instruction. These efforts have contributed greatly to progress. From the first year, CJCPCS has used school wide quarterly benchmarks to gauge progress and to target remediation. All teachers of core academic subjects in grades 6 – 12 administer benchmark tests to review the content each marking period. The results are analyzed and a week of re-teaching follows to reinforce skills and concepts missed. In 2012-13, all classrooms were equipped with smartboards and in 2014-15, the school went digital and now provides all students in the upper school with Chromebooks. Teachers use various digital resources to instruct online. This year CJCPCS is implementing the 'flipped classroom' approach. Middle school students take computer science. The school participated in the Hour of Code from the start in 2013 when we won a prize and had a live video chat with Bill Gates.

CJCPCS has a tech-savvy, hard-working, and dedicated staff that leverages the student-teacher-parent triad to support student achievement and parents are encouraged to request a home visit from staff.

Social-emotional health is promoted with a safe respectful learning environment and a strong Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) policy. Students earn Cougar Pride Points when exhibiting the three core values: Respect, Responsibility, and Safety. Many clubs, such as Science Olympiad and Robotics, emphasize competition, which builds persistence and fosters the ability to work within a team. They have won many awards including in 2014-15 CJCPCS FTC Robotics team won third in NJ. Central Jersey College Prep Charter School is a shining example of achievement. It has a multifaceted successful model for a college prep education.

## PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Core Curriculum:

Central Jersey College Prep provides a comprehensive curriculum that is aligned to the Common Core Standards. We have worked to provide our teachers with the tools needed to meet the high expectations that are set forth in the math and English Language Arts standards. This also includes a rigorous science and social studies curriculum that is aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards and New Jersey Social Studies Standards. Our curriculum is focused on essential student understanding where we ask the question: what is it that we want our students to be able to do at the end of each course and how can they apply that in their future endeavors? This is our focal point as we lay the foundation for each curriculum. We rely heavily on the integration of ELA and math skills across our entire curriculum, with all subjects working together to foster student achievement on PARCC and College Aptitude tests. We have implemented a 21st-century classroom where all students are equipped with Chrome books, access to digital textbooks, online apps and resources in addition to the utilization of Smart Board technology, flipped classroom and Google classroom which creating a technology-driven environment. The integration of all of these components not only better prepares our students for what they will experience in college but develops a balance between direct instruction and student directed learning to assist in managing the rigor of the curriculum and ensure achievement.

Our ELA curriculum focuses on students' comprehension skills, writing, and the ability to apply these skills in all aspects of their academics. In an effort to properly prepare our students for the PARCC assessment in 2015, teachers were given the tools and technology to craft the curriculum to meet these high demands. In the middle grades, 6-8, students are offered an honors track which is our Pre-AP track. This track allows students to work at a higher rigor which prepares them to take AP courses as early as their freshman year. Our regular track is still at a high rigor but also spirals in those necessary foundation skills needed to help students succeed. Regular track students can bridge to honor track throughout the middle school grades with proven academic success. In grades 9-12, students start off on an honor or regular track and then are placed in AP courses once they reach their junior year. Students have the ability to bridge to honors or AP courses with teacher recommendations and continued high achievement in their regular courses. The high school students engage in weekly writing prompts that reflect various genres and styles that are scored by the teacher based on the PARCC rubric. Data from these assessments is interpreted by teachers and administrators to track student growth and ensure that students' individual needs are met. Teachers were provided professional development and guidance as they worked to infuse the PARCC strategies into their existing units of study. The ELA curriculum also focuses on sample SAT questions as well as strategies to boost student scores. One of the unique features of our curriculum is the presence of student-driven independent reading. Students are required to read at least twenty minutes daily and are assessed in terms of their comprehension through an online reading system. In our kindergarten and first-grade curriculum we follow the balanced literacy curriculum. This curriculum consists of monitoring students growth in reading and writing. Students engage in group reads as well as independent reading where they are tracked and given books at their individual level. This independent time allows teachers to work with small groups on improving their reading skills based on their levels. The curriculum is structured as a reading and writing workshop which allows teachers to have their lesson but also allows enough time to engage in centers, small group instruction, and individual instruction.

Our math curriculum follows the direct alignment and pacing of common core standards. Our middle school students in grades 6 take a Math 6 or Pre-Algebra course as determined by a placement test. In 7th grade, students are placed in either Pre-Algebra or Algebra I and then move on Algebra I or Geometry in grade 8. By freshman year, students on the honor track are taking Algebra II while the remaining students take Geometry. This allows our students options for taking multiple advanced math courses during high school such as Pre-Calculus, Statistics, AP Calculus and AP Statistics. Our math curriculum relies on both instructional classroom teaching in addition to the integration of a flipped classroom. This allows our teachers more time to focus on guiding student achievement while giving them the tools to meet the rigorous pacing of the math common core. Our kindergarten and first-grade curriculum are also aligned to the common core standards as we utilize enVision math as a basis for our curriculum. Students have access to

books plus a yearly subscription to the online version which includes various resources. The math curriculum focus is heavily on the use of manipulatives to give students a tactile approach to visualize and solve problems.

Both the middle school and high school social studies curriculum are aligned to the NJ State Standards and rely heavily on the infusion of the ELA common core standards. Starting in middle school, students follow the sequential layout for the social studies courses. Once students reach their freshman year, they are able to enroll in an AP level history course, with additional AP social studies courses available over the next three years. Student writing and analysis of complex texts is emphasized in the curriculum, thus preparing students for the PARCC and SAT tests. In kindergarten and first grade, the curriculum focuses on the common core standards for social studies in addition to the ELA. In social studies units, students learn about the world around and engage in discussion techniques and synthesis of what they learn and how it is applied to their environment.

We have redesigned our science curriculum to align with the NGSS. This new curriculum design uses spiraled learning and allows science courses at all levels to refer back to foundation skills that will be taught and reinforced throughout each unit of study. As our teachers prepare for this transition, they are afforded every opportunity for professional development as they learn and research the levels that are required for these new standards. Our science curriculum requires the integration of the ELA standards as writing and text analysis serve as important components of their curriculum, with a heavy emphasis on these skills in our AP Biology, AP Chemistry, and AP Environmental Science courses. As early as their sophomore year, students have the opportunity to take a science AP course that will ensure that they will graduate well prepared for collegiate-level rigor and potential majors and careers in the STEM field. Our kindergarten and the first grade science curriculum also align to the NGSS. The science curriculum contains two parts. The first part is the sequence of the various units relating to the life, environment, atmosphere, motion. The second part is a spiraled learning which is integrated throughout the year which teaches the design process as it relates to each unit. This spiraled design allows students at an early age to engage in STEM learning and activities.

## 2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Structural and curricular frameworks of the elective coursework directly reflect and support the CJPCPS vision and mission providing students with the opportunity to share their talents and experiences through individual and communal projects/events. The strength of these projects stems from our collective diversity and empowers our entire community to reach its full potential in order to become life-lasting learners and to meaningfully participate in contemporary societies. The cross-curricular approach integrating various electives with core classes serves the primary purpose of preparing our students for a successful college completion. The following section depicts 1) course descriptions, 2) grade breakdown of students enrolled in electives, and 3) course goals/objectives focused on developing essential skills and knowledge base.

### Non-core Subject-related Electives

#### Music and Visual Arts

All CJPCPS students (approximately 420) enroll in various music and visual arts classes, i.e., Choir, Music Theory and History, Guitar, Drawing, Studio Art, Painting, Sculpting, where students learn the discipline of hand-eye coordination and develop observation skills to analyze, interpret, and organize the world around them by exploring composition, tone, subject matter line, unity, and rhythm. The CJPCPS music and art electives foster students' ability to creatively express ideas and to initiate dynamic dialogues through a unique lens of music and visual arts where traditional methods of communication may be ineffective or incomplete. Music and visual arts projects integrally rely on online software applications and virtual learning environments to communicate, share, and absorb innovative ideas and to produce multidimensional culturally-inclusive art pieces/communal events, for example, historical music composition analysis, digital voice recording preparation, urban versus rural perspective, artistic view onto human condition via auto-portrait, cross - curricular linked figurative/geometric objects. Students interact with experts in the corresponding fields by participating in trips, keynote speaker events, and perform during Band Concerts, Art Shows, and Theatrical Performances.

### Foreign Languages

Elective courses in World Languages, i.e., Spanish, Turkish, and Mandarin, offer about 350 students from grade 6 through 12 the opportunity to further their understanding of operational concepts in foreign languages and their historical and cultural foundation. Students practice speaking, reading, and writing and further their linguistic mastery through focusing on the functional application of the foreign language, for example, by studying Business-oriented Chinese. Additionally, students participate in poetry and singing competitions and international trips and where they become immersed in the languages and directly interact with native speakers.

### Computer Technology/Programming

These elective courses are designed to provide about 180 middle school and high school students with an opportunity to progressively develop a proficiency in computer-related technology and to expand their working knowledge of programming skills, e.g., block-programming in Scratch (online platform) and JavaScript coding. Students advance their proficiency in Google Apps such as Google Drive, Google Docs, Google Sheets, and Google Slides. The goals and objectives of the course focus on 1) expanding knowledge in the aforementioned areas by engaging in project-based and performance-based activities and 2) on applying these newly-acquired skills in a cross-disciplinary manner, for example, in Robotics Competitions or Game Design/Construction.

### Drivers' Education

The driving course develops students' awareness of the driving task and the responsibility accompanying the privilege of driving. Students learn traffic laws and regulations, develop skills associated with building a safe and courteous driving attitude, and are taught how to gauge the severity of hazardous conditions so they can react to them in a manner which maximizes safety.

### Core Subject-related Electives

A variety of core subject-related electives is designed to enhance the depth of knowledge and skills gained core subjects among grade 9-12 students (approximately 200 students). Creative Writing, Digital Literacy, Publishing, Public Speaking, and Journalism courses develop writing skills in various genres, effective public speaking techniques. Students construct e-logs, journals, e-books, and graphic novels for the purpose of enhancing active listening, critical thinking, and personal creativity.

Elective courses in Statistics, Environmental Studies, various progressive levels of Chemistry, Anatomy, Genetics and DNA Technology, and STEM and Engineering fields focus on cultivating students' comprehension of the concepts associated with the inquiry-based investigation and quantitative and qualitative review of mathematically and scientifically formulated principles. Students participate in hands-on activities, conduct laboratory experiments, and follow scientific methodology process to examine the inter-relational connections between various components of the biological and environmental systems.

A unique perspective on politics and government is offered through electives in Social Studies. Students interpret American politics by analyzing specific cases and historical materials. The evaluation of content information advances students' comprehension of the relational connections between the past and present and the contextual parallels between globally-connected societies.

### 3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Effective instructional methods and interventions are implemented at CJCPCS to ensure high levels of student learning and achievement. In core subjects, teachers vary approaches to reach every student and adhere to their diverse and individual learning needs. Educators aim to differentiate instruction in terms of levels of ability and learning styles. Instructional approaches used by educators include differentiated learning and technology-based support to address the diverse needs of the student body. Various lesson activities, informal assessments, and digital resources are all effective methods used by instructors.

In each classroom, educators use a wide variety of instructional approaches and methods. For example, the mathematics department regularly uses tiered-instructional process techniques by assigning homework at the individual level of each student. This method allows students to practice skills that need to be improved

upon instead of having students all work at the same level, which may be detrimental to a student's understanding and growth. In all departments, instructors differentiate learning by conducting informal assessments throughout lessons to gauge student understanding. Informal assessments, such as Socratic Seminars, Accountable Talk, Self and Peer Evaluations, and Pair/Share are practiced by all. The English department frequently uses the Write/Pair/Share check for the understanding method. This allows students to individually write responses and then discuss with a classmate to share ideas. It also facilitates higher-order thinking by allowing students to demonstrate individual understanding and evaluate the ideas of their peers.

Technology-based support is an integral part of the CJCPCS learning environment. Every student has a Chrome Book and many assignments and assessments are online-based. All departments use Google Classroom as a database to post assignments and announcements while individual departments have access to other resources pertaining to their subject area. Other online resources include Triand, EdConnect, Test Wizard, Pearson, Accelerated Reader, STAR Reading and Math, EdPuzzle, Socrative, Virtual Labs, and Padlet. These technology-based resources appeal to different learners, as well as help to prepare students for the PARCC exam. For instance, all core subjects use Triand and EdConnect to administer quarterly Benchmark Exams. These two programs allow instructors to align questions to Common Core Standards, assess student understanding of standards, and collect data to help drive instruction in the classroom.

Instructors in all departments work together to create intervention plans for students based on individual learning needs. Data is collected from Benchmark Exams, classroom assessments, and STAR Reading and Math tests. Instructors analyze the data to determine how to best address any areas of concern as well as identify areas students are excelling in. Some interventions include re-teaching standards in whole-class and small group instruction, after-school tutoring, Saturday Academy, and RTI Program.

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

A variety of assessments are used to collect data in order to improve student and school performance at CJCPCS. Each quarter, students are given the STAR Reading and Math exams, which measure student growth throughout the course of the school year. Benchmark Exams are administered at the end of every quarter to measure student understanding of skills and standards covered in the four core subjects: ELA, Math, History, and Science. For Benchmark Exams, the ELA, History, and Science departments use Triand and EdConnect, digital resources designed to prepare students for PARCC, to create Common Core standard-based questions. The Math department uses the online resource, MathXL to design exams. In addition to the quarterly exams, in-class assessments, such as traditional tests and quizzes, are given on a regular basis. Authentic assessments, which allow students to demonstrate their understanding in a more creative manner, are also assigned and evaluated for data analysis purposes.

In order to use the collected data to drive instruction, educators attend data analysis meetings with the Curriculum Supervisor, Guidance Counselors, and Chief Education Officer to determine which students need improvement. Departments and grade level committees also meet once a month to analyze data and determine which students fall below proficiency level, are close to being proficient, and are close to being advanced proficient. Students scoring below 75% on Benchmark exams are considered to be below the proficiency level. These students are recommended by teachers to attend RTI tutoring and Saturday Academy to improve basic skills and reach the proficiency level. These programs are an effective way to facilitate student growth and close the achievement gap. Students who are close to advanced proficiency are also offered additional tutoring to help them perform at their greatest potential. Classroom instructors assign personalized work for each student in these programs and regularly communicate with program tutors about student performance and progress. At the end of each quarter, students enrolled in RTI and Saturday programs retake the STAR Reading and Math tests to determine if the student's level has improved from additional tutoring. Additionally, educators prepare lessons to re-teach the standards that the majority of students are low-performing in based on data analysis results. Because of these interventions, there has been an increase in proficiency levels among all core subjects since the 1st quarter.

Communication with parents pertaining to grades, test scores, and proficiency level, is highly regarded at CJCPCS. Each week, parents receive a progress report of their child's grades for every subject. Educators

are also encouraged to keep in contact with parents through e-mail, telephone, and parent/teacher conferences. Students and parents are also kept up to date on all grades through the school database.

## **PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS**

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

CJCPCS fosters a culture of college prep level learning and mutual respect. The college prep climate permeates the school: classrooms are named after universities, the student pledge in the morning over the intercom, hallway university insignia decorations, picture postings of CJCPCS seniors and all university acceptances plus financial aid totals, and postings of alumni with their current university and major. CJCPCS focuses on graduating truly college ready graduates who can succeed. Multiple measures assure that all students own and realize the goals of college acceptance and aspiring toward degree-requiring careers. Students are pressed to perform at their highest level with honors classes in all core subjects in middle school and high school plus multiple AP offerings. This college prep culture emphasizes accountability, both academic and social.

Academic accountability means demonstrating learning regularly with comprehensive exams. Students will be required to perform on many important exams in college courses and they need to become acclimated to this in their K-12 experience. At CJCPCS all core subjects in middle and high school administer quarterly benchmarks and students are held accountable because this represents 20% of their final grade in the class. These exams also help them succeed on important NJ state-mandated standardized tests and college entrance exams. The school diligently assists students with SAT performance; they take the PSAT in 9th grade, they are offered high school electives for SAT math and SAT ELA, plus they have an opportunity for a special extracurricular, College Mentorship Program (CMP). CMP consists of small groups of students led by an adult college graduate who meets once a week all year to focus on career and college selection, college entrance exam performance, and scholarship applications.

Students need to be good test takers to get into college, but they need to be mature and responsible to actually finish. CJCPCS promotes a culture of mutual respect and social accountability school-wide to help students develop socially and become mature. All expected behaviors at CJCPCS flow from three core values: Respect, Responsibility, and Safety. Teachers use PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Support) program, ‘CJCPCS On Point!’, to promote this culture and whenever students are ‘caught’ exhibiting these values they earn Cougar Pride Points. Students earning the most points each week at each grade level are announced rewarded. In addition, the school’s HIB (Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying) policy is comprehensive, strongly enforced, and deals quickly with any allegations made.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

The importance of participation by parents in their child’s education cannot be overstated; CJCPCS reaches out to involve and inform families constantly. The school’s mission statement includes; “...CJCPCS aims to forge a powerful partnership out of the student-teacher-parent triad..(to) empower our youth with the support necessary to reach their highest potential...”. A special initiative promotes this goal, Home Visits. Families are urged to allow educators to come visit and celebrate their child’s achievements and focus on their needs. The administration staff calls all parents/guardians to inquire about having a home visit and scheduling a time. Appointments are made throughout the year, but especially in the beginning of the year and for new students. Then an email invitation is sent and teachers and/or administrators sign up to visit. Teachers are compensated \$20 per visit. A minimum of two educators will go. It could be, for example, the student’s ELA teacher and math teacher along with a school counselor; the CEO has gone along as well on some visits. So far this year there have been about 150 home visits. The result is teachers understand the child better and there is improved communication between home and school.

Another major method for strengthening the student-teacher-parent triad is making information available 24-7 to parents about their child’s current homework, grades, etc. through the school’s secure Student Information System, school website, plus email, phone, and regular mail.

CJCPCS brings families to school multiple ways: new students orientations, Back-to-School Night, Parent-Teacher Conferences (3x year), Guidance Workshops (FAFSA, internet safety, etc.), plus parents are

encouraged to volunteer for clubs and field trips. Numerous events are held for families to come and admire the accomplishments of our young people: high school and 8th grade graduation ceremonies, Winter and Spring Concerts and Arts Shows, Culture Night, Black History Month celebration, STEM Fair, Chinese New Year, Indian Culture Festival, Hispanic Heritage Night, School Dances; for lower school Muffins with Mom, Donuts with Dad, and Grandparents Night.

PTSO is a valuable part of the school and works with educators to hold special events at school including book fairs and the only theatrical production. They raise money for donations, help with the school library, and provide additional art supplies.

CJCPCS believes in being an active part of the community. Students give back through the annual food drive, coat drive, and blood drive. In a recurring service-learning project the eleventh grade visits senior citizens at a neighborhood assisted living facility. They interview elders several times about their lives and provide each with a biographical student-produced gift. Parents and community members come to school on Career Day to discuss their professions and motivate students toward career goals. There is a Speaker Series of community leaders such as Franklin Township mayor and NJ attorney general. Students attend multiple college campus visits to, for example, Princeton and Rutgers. College representatives come to discuss their institutions with upper classmen and for 'instant decision days' opportunities for our seniors. These activities help students understand the possibilities for their future and responsibilities to their fellow man.

### 3. Professional Development:

Our professional development reflects our needs within the school as we continually adjust our curriculum and instructional strategies to promote student achievement. Our professional development is focused on providing our faculty with ongoing support as we meet the needs of the students through connections to core curriculum standards and continued teacher effectiveness. Our staff is exposed to a wide variety of professional development each year. In addition to the built-in calendar days throughout the year, we start each school year with a weeklong intensive professional development program to prepare for the year. Starting with our August professional development, teachers are exposed to a wide variety of instructional strategies and resources that will be used throughout the year in their classrooms. Technology is a forefront in our professional development as we continually equip our teachers with the most advanced technology to create an integrated, student-centered classroom. This technology is enhanced through the year as we provide further development and workshops on how to further integrate the technology as well as any new advances that teachers need to be aware of as the school year progresses.

Our administrators and select teaching staff often attend outside professional development then come back and present materials in-house to our staff. Most recently our acquisition of EdConnect licensing through the state of New Jersey has been a focal point in our professional development. Lead teachers and administrators attend professional training on how to use and implement the program to ensure its alignment with the common core standards. These administrators and lead teachers provide the staff numerous hours of professional development on creating assessments, tracking data and crafting questions to meet the needs of rigorous academic standards.

Teachers are also provided continuing professional development on a weekly basis through grade level and department meetings. In these meetings, teachers are able to share their best instructional strategies with their colleagues allowing them to alter their instructional techniques based on the observation and input of their peers. Within these meetings, teachers also continue to analyze student data and make adjustments to meet academic standards within each specific department. This allows teachers to stay on top of student achievement as it is directly related to their specific learning objectives.

### 4. School Leadership:

Educators at CJCPCS work together as part of a coherent team to promote student success. Leadership is shared among the administration and the teachers and overseen by the Board of Trustees. Everyone believes in and has a part in advancing the school mission of propelling students toward success in school today and college tomorrow. The staff uniformly enforces the school wide discipline policy so students

always know what is expected. The Chief Education Officer provides the vision related to the school mission, communicates the vision constantly, and develops the strategic plans to realize it. He works closely with the Curriculum Supervisor to monitor teachers' performance and address their needs. Both the CEO and the CS have open door policies and address concerns and solicit ideas for improvement from teachers and support staff. They are constantly receiving feedback on new technologies and initiatives that have been implemented to strive for the best classroom experience for both staff and students. The administration shares decision making with teachers to empower them and to improve student achievement because they are the ones who are closest to the students and know their needs. Teachers are depended on to find creative ways to increase the rigor of their courses and implement 21st-century learning skills. Teachers are regularly consulted for decisions on which AP courses to include in the high school electives.

The administration strongly supports and provides individualized help to teachers. The professional development takes place all year, beginning in August before school, and is often tailored to areas that are common needs of improvement as seen in the classroom observations. Besides formal observations, all teachers have at least one walkthrough observation a week with instant feedback and consultations to address areas of concern if needed. When the end of the year comes if a teacher is still not meeting expectations a personalized PD action plan is created with both in-house and outside components. No teacher is discharged before two years of assistance is given. The administration strives to maintain highly effective staff to provide the students the best chance to succeed.

The Guidance Counselors roles are to address student social-emotional health and academic progress, plus to deliver important aspects of the school's college prep culture. They provide individual counseling for students needing emotional counseling and they are instrumental in administering the school's PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Support) and HIB (Harassment Intimidation and Bullying) programs. In addition, they help high school students with course selection, organize visits to college campuses, assist in student career orientation, and important college admission tasks.

The School Operations Manager focuses on seeing that the school is running smoothly and preventing all unnecessary disruptions to instruction. He oversees daily operations. His functions include ensuring classroom coverage and being a one-stop place for coordinating all school activities to prevent conflicts.

The Board of Trustees maintains contact with the staff, parents, and students and often attends school events to share in the school's success.

## Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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The most effective practice our school uses to ensure overall success is data driven instruction. Data analysis is the single most important component for our school as we use this to ensure student achievement. Students are assessed on a quarterly basis through an online benchmark system. Teachers prepare exams based on core curriculum standards that have been covered during that marking period. Upon completion of the benchmark at the end of each quarter, teachers meet within their departments to analyze the data from these assessments. Teachers are able to identify which standards the students struggle with and craft their upcoming lessons to fill those gaps.

Each quarterly data analysis period is followed by several days of re-teaching. During this period, teachers put together action plans for the struggling students to work throughout the marking period to better prepare them for the next benchmark. Based on the data from each of these benchmark assessments, students are grouped into tiered levels. The lowest achievers or Level 1 students, are referred to our RTI program. These students are given the opportunity meet with a tutor during school hours and focus on the basic skills they are missing in their courses. Students are tracked by their teachers and tutors remain in constant contact with the classroom teacher to provide feedback on a weekly basis. Our Level 2 and 3 students are assigned to after school tutoring or Saturday Academy for the extra interventions. Throughout the marking period these students are tracked by the teacher, guidance department and administration to ensure student growth and provide additional interventions as needed.

In addition to the quarterly benchmarks, the school uses previous year's test standards to track student performance and to further develop action plans to raise student achievement. The data from standardized tests such SATs, PARCC, and AP tests is used to identify gaps in student learning. At the end of each teacher's revise and edit the curriculum to make adjustments based on this data. By identifying where student weaknesses are on these tests, teachers are able to make the necessary adjustments to ensure focus on these specific areas as they prepare for the following school year. The performance data is then compared the following year to ensure the necessary changes were effective and student growth has been achieved.