

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 [] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Brian Alm

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

Official School Name Haldane High School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 15 Craigsides Drive

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

City Cold Spring State NY Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 10516-1813

County Putnam County

Telephone (845) 265-9254 Fax (845) 265-3010

Web site/URL http://www.haldaneschool.org/hs E-mail balm@haldaneschool.org

Twitter Handle https://twitter.com/Haldane_Minds 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*Dr. Diana Bowers E-mail dbowers@haldaneschool.org

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

District Name Haldane Central School District Tel. (845) 265-9254

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 Mrs. Jen Daly

(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):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 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	44	39	83
10	37	29	66
11	35	34	69
12 or higher	40	35	75
Total Students	156	137	293

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 2 % Asian
 - 2 % Black or African American
 - 6 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 86 % White
 - 3 % 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: 4%

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	4
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	7
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	11
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	286
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.038
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	4

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1 %
2 Total number ELL

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 11 %
Total number students who qualify: 32

8. Students receiving special education services: 17 %
49 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.

- 2 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 3 Emotional Disturbance
- 0 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Mental Retardation
- 5 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 13 Other Health Impaired
- 26 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: 9
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	23
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	3
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.	2

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 22:1
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	90%	96%	96%	95%	96%
High school graduation rate	97%	99%	94%	96%	98%

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	77
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	73%
Enrolled in a community college	21%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	6%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
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.

Haldane Central School District will prepare all students to succeed in an ever changing global society.

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

This is a public high school without school choice. However, students from the neighboring K-8 Garrison School District, have High School choice, for which Haldane is one of two public school options. On a

consistent basis, the majority of the Garrison School 8th-graders choose Haldane for High School over private school and a different public school option.

PART III – SUMMARY

Haldane Central School: 80 Years on the Hudson River

Haldane School has a long tradition of providing excellent education to Philipstown children. Following a bequest of land by iron industrialist and West Point Foundry supplier, James H. Haldane, the Haldane Union Free School opened in 1890. Then in 1936, the Haldane Central School District was formed with a new K-12 building.

Today, Haldane serves nearly 900 K-12 students, 300 of whom are in the high school. The school community is vast, connecting multi-generations of alumni, many who remain in the area to raise their families. Dedication is evident in the number of graduates who returned to teach at Haldane over the years. Currently, 11 of the eighty-three K-12 teaching faculty are alumni. Due to the bucolic Hudson River setting, the school community bears a strong sense of responsibility to protect the surrounding environment.

One Mind at a Time

The Haldane School philosophy seeks to challenge students, one mind at a time, just beyond their potential. Haldane strives to prepare all students to be global citizens and 21st century learners who are innovative, creative, adaptable, and independent thinkers. The educational philosophy is framed as Inquiry through Question, Connection and Creation (IQCC). Haldane applies this framework to every class offered in every area of study. For example, students create and use scatterplots in Trigonometry with real data on the behavior of predatory birds, collected by the local Bear Mountain State Park. Students in the “Discover, Create, Innovate” class apply their skills to redesign classroom space in our own school. Students in French III design a virtual museum for the city of Vichy, France to illustrate hidden history.

Haldane students learn in a progressive culture of collaboration and innovation. To create this learning environment, Haldane emphasizes Project-Based Learning (PBL), 1:1 Technology (iPads), and an innovative schedule that extends the length of each class period.

Innovative Student Support

One of the most targeted approaches to student success at Haldane High School is the implementation of Math Labs. Designed to strengthen math instruction, Math Labs offer students the opportunity to build an extra half period of math into their schedules for more concentrated math learning. Additionally, a critical component of Haldane’s commitment to help each student achieve their personal best is HEART (Haldane Encourages Achievement, Research and Teamwork), an after-school extra help program open to students in all academic subjects. Because seeking extra help is routinely encouraged by the faculty, beginning in middle school, there is no stigma attached to HEART. Participants range from struggling students to the highest achievers in AP classes. Haldane credits HEART and Math Labs with boosting enrollment in upper level math and science courses for students who might not have felt confident enough to tackle more difficult courses without these supports.

Beyond the Classroom

Haldane offers seniors the option for structured internships with local organizations and businesses. Meeting criteria set by the administration, these internships give students the opportunity for hands-on experience in the professional world, as well as instilling a strong work ethic and responsibility. A related program for freshmen is Pathways to Success. This is a weekly lecture series in which professionals from the community discuss their careers with students. Volunteer speakers include filmmakers, musicians, attorneys, corporate executives, and professionals in education, public service, and non-profits. This program helps students appreciate that no two paths to success are the same, while helping them envision their own unique path.

Unlike in larger schools, Haldane students are rarely defined by one extracurricular activity. Because of the small population, Haldane sees much crossover in participation. For example, a basketball player competing in state finals also acts in our musical and plays percussion in our jazz band. Knowing that these activities reinforce a student’s connection to learning and deepen their mastery, Haldane offers support to enhance these experiences. Theatrical productions and music groups are assisted by volunteer professional actors, choreographers, and musicians. Foreign language students participate in enrichment opportunities such as a

full-day immersion event, a school trip to French Canada, or an off-Broadway play performed entirely in Spanish.

Realizing that a successful student is one who is willing to try new things, Haldane encourages innovative ideas. When a group of male students wished to form an a cappella group, it was created. Recent student emphasis on social issues results in clubs formed across animal rights, women's empowerment, and individual identity. Students regularly surrender lunchtime freedom in favor of hosting and attending the interest groups they create, so as not to interfere with after school sports and other commitments.

Defined by the Community

Community is everything at Haldane, both in front of students and behind the scenes. Drama productions receive coaching from a former Broadway actor, choreography from a former Radio City Rockette, and set design from an area architect and contractors. Professional musicians guide the jazz band, a published poet and local professor inspires the Creative Writing class, athletic teams play on a turf field funded by the community. Countless other parents, townspeople, and professionals volunteer their time on school committees, including safety, environmental, and wellness. Field trips, workshops, and speakers are made possible by the Haldane School Foundation and PTA. Because of these efforts, our students are challenged, engaged, and thriving.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

One of the most unique aspects of Haldane High School is an extra period of instruction each day to support students in all areas, but particularly those below and above grade level. "10th period" is a time during the day designated for extra help. Sports and activities are not allowed to begin until after this session, thus allowing a time for students to access teachers for unstructured help. This mechanism, coupled with the HEART program (see part III Innovative Student Support) ensures success for all students. The math classrooms are frequently packed above capacity on a daily basis during 10th period. The HEART program on any given day could be filled with AP Physics students, students struggling to pass Algebra, or those who want to have a chat in Spanish or French. The whole spectrum of learners are represented in these spaces every day.

Mathematics

The mathematics program at Haldane High School focuses on achieving profound mathematical fluency. Students are encouraged to develop problem solving, analytical, and reasoning skills in every course. Students are expected to demonstrate a deeper understanding of math that goes beyond processes and formulas. Each course helps students establish foundation skills to then apply those skills across a variety of problems.

Haldane students are challenged to use mathematics to solve authentic, real world problems. Our philosophical approach is constructivist in nature. Students are encouraged to develop mathematical concepts along with their classmates. They learn math by doing, rather than simply following a prescribed set of formulas and procedures. It is through this construction of math ideas that students are able to transfer concepts to increasingly more challenging courses.

From traditional math concepts, including Algebra, Geometry, and Trigonometry, students move on to Advanced Placement courses in Calculus and Statistics. In addition, students have the ability to use math in applied mathematical courses such as Modeling and Business Math. This course variety serves a diversity of math learners in our population. Within these courses, instruction is differentiated to meet the needs of all students.

By exposing students to mathematical concepts and challenging them to problem solve, Haldane helps students develop a fluency in the language of math so they can apply the concepts they learn in ever-challenging situations. In one such project, students are charged with researching four large banks for the purpose of investing \$10,000 over 50 years. Using compound interest, students make investment decisions and demonstrate financial growth.

With the focus on authentic applications and the practice of using mathematical and reasoning skills, students build a strong foundation upon which they can move into academically challenging colleges or on to careers that utilize their problem solving skills.

Science

The science program at Haldane High School strives to motivate and teach students of all abilities to scientifically approach the world by incorporating critical thinking, problem solving, and real-world application of science concepts to their everyday lives. Application of these principles at Haldane includes: physics, chemistry, biology, earth science, astronomy, environmental sciences, forensic science, and science research.

With emphasis on the importance of critical thinking and logical reasoning, students use various methods of investigation, such as observation, comparison, experimentation, and mathematical manipulation of data. These practices begin in regular classes, and come into full bloom with the science research course. Past student projects include a GPS-enabled road hazard tracking device for cars, psychological study of memory and cognition, and statistical analysis of weather patterns in North America.

Haldane's science program is committed to the concept that science has a practical application and must be understood in a larger cultural context. The open and free exchange of ideas and opinions is essential to the intellectual growth of our young students' minds, and it is through inquiry that students are able to view science as an interdisciplinary study applicable to society and their own lives. Mixed-grade and mixed-ability classes in science create an environment of support, where peer tutoring happens naturally and as a result, all students are supported.

English

The English program at Haldane High School provides a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach to English Language Arts instruction with numerous courses and pathways to graduation. Students begin in 9th grade in heterogeneously grouped classes and then have the opportunity to take Regents or Honors level English in 10th grade. In 11th and 12th grades, students take Regents, Honors, or Advanced Placement courses to fulfill their English requirement. Haldane's English teachers choose texts based on their propensity to create 21st century thinkers and foster a democratic and inclusive society. In addition, writing assignments and projects are developed in order to nurture academic and social skills needed for college and career readiness. Haldane supplements the core curriculum with electives such as Film Studies, Creative Writing, Journalism, and genre studies. In the Dystopian/Utopian Literature class, students are challenged to write a series of alternate paths for the main characters in *Lord of the Flies*. This choose-your-own-adventure twist expands students' ability to develop textual and cultural literacies beyond traditional interpretation. A Young Writers Immersion Day and Poetry Out Loud competitions round out the unique ways that students expand their reading and writing repertoire.

In order to ensure success for all students, members of the department often employ the workshop model of instruction. This format allows for frequent individual conferences with students, and regular convening around student writing.

Social Studies

The Haldane Social Studies department prides itself on preparing students for the 21st century world and recognizes the need to help students become informed citizens in a global community. The social studies program provides a coordinated, systematic study, drawing from a number of disciplines including anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, religion, and sociology. Students are given the opportunity to explore more than just historical facts; they are taught the content knowledge, intellectual skills, and civic values necessary to become active citizens in a participatory democracy.

In addition to our standard core curriculum classes, Haldane offers a range of more challenging courses from Advanced Placement United States History and American Government, to Psychology and World History. University of Albany college credit bearing courses are available in United States History, American Government, and Sociology. Students struggling to pass courses required for graduation are offered an extra "Lab" class for more time for review.

Haldane's social studies electives give students the opportunity to engage in social issues outside of the traditional classroom setting with classes such as Criminal Justice and Model United Nations. In these courses, students receive real world experience by meeting with various community individuals from police officers to United Nations representatives, and have the ability to attend national conferences for even more authentic experiences. In April of this year, Haldane will host its first HALMUN model UN conference, organized entirely by students in the Model UN course and club, bringing together other globally-inspired students from across Putnam County. During this day-long Saturday conference, students will attend breakout sessions and hear from a Pace University Senior Fellow on the balance of human affairs with the planet's limits.

Overall, the social studies department aims to prepare students to become humane, tolerant, rational, participating citizens in a world that is increasingly becoming interdependent.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Haldane High School treats these “other curriculum areas” as core courses with as much value as Math, Science, English and Social Studies. While some schools refer to them as encore courses, they are very much the main event at Haldane. Instead of reflecting on them individually, Haldane strives to integrate each of these domains into the core curriculum.

Haldane has a robust music-education program supporting band and chorus. There are several unique ensembles, including Concert Band, Jazz Band, Blues Devils (jam band), Chorus, Blue Notes (female acapella), and Acafellas (male acapella). The recent addition of a World Music Theory course offers the most talented musicians the opportunity to engage in deeper learning across music disciplines and genres. Many students attend New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) competitions each year, in addition to All-County and All-State.

While Haldane’s visual arts offerings are limited to four electives - Studio Art, Drawing & Painting, Ceramics/Sculpture, and Advanced Art - the program remains decidedly strong. Students submit and place in regional arts competitions each year and their works are displayed throughout the campus and local community. Curricular offerings are enhanced through periodically hosting “artists in residence” to conduct specialized workshops and mini-courses.

Haldane’s theater arts program is second to none. Film, creative writing, and drama electives are supported as a theoretical foundation for dramatic performances. Much like in athletics, Haldane has a strong feeder program in the elementary and middle schools that nurtures young talent and sets the bar at an early age. It is worth remarking that for such a small school, the theater productions are not only on par with top performing arts schools, the talent is so deep it necessitates a double cast. This is further substantiated by the fact that the YouTube video of the production of Grease has 1.2 million views.

The greater Philipstown community is home to an impressive list of professional artists, musicians, filmmakers, and creative types of all sorts. What the school lacks in facilities and arts-based resources, the community makes up for in formal and informal mentoring, coaching, and support. As much Arts education happens outside of the school as it does inside. As such, Haldane students enjoy an inordinate number of portfolio/audition-based college acceptances each year.

Physical Education, Health, and Nutrition are integrated into the fabric of the culture of school. More specifically, these programs support the notion of lifetime fitness and educate students about holistic health and wellness. The courses extend beyond games; they are not simply about creating activities for students, but about always being active. In addition to the standard P.E. course, Haldane also offers a Wellness curriculum. Health classes are offset by a mandatory prevention education workshop for all students in 9th grade. The Foods elective teaches students to prepare healthy meals in the context of organic, locally-grown, sustainable agriculture.

The World Language department at Haldane provides students with the opportunity to learn French, Spanish, or both. Haldane’s philosophy is that access to languages other than English is an essential part of literacy in a globalized world. This belief is supported by the availability of first and second year college-level coursework, an annual immersion program, and opportunities for international travel.

In recent years, a separate and distinct technology department was phased out of Haldane. This is consistent with the belief that technology should be fully infused into the day-to-day workings of a 21st century school. Haldane no longer takes students to “the computer lab,” rather students have 1:1 access to devices as an ubiquitous teaching tool throughout the day. At Haldane, it is not about the technology, it is about the advanced teaching and learning techniques that technology can often leverage. Haldane is a Google school, and students and teachers interact in digital learning spaces and virtual environments as much as they do in person. Two different standalone coding electives, and a “Discover, Create, Innovate” course help spread these philosophical ideals.

Career and Technical education is offered to students after 10th grade at our regional Board of Cooperative
NBRS 2016 16NY228PU Page 11 of 17

Educational Services (BOCES). The “Tech Center” offers a large breadth of career-related programs, making it a popular option for students of all career interests and academic levels. Typically, students split their time between traditional coursework at Haldane and hands-on training at BOCES in courses ranging from masonry, to nursing, to veterinary studies, and New Visions Engineering.

While only National Honor Society members are required to complete community service hours for graduation, service learning is omnipresent throughout the curriculum. Most assigned projects are framed to build a product that has larger value to the local community or to society at large. Each year, the senior class travels to engage firsthand in service learning; in recent years, a Habitat for Humanity work experience in New Orleans. Every senior has the opportunity to conduct an internship for their final quarter of study, allowing them to test drive a potential future career or to give back locally in an area of personal interest.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Haldane High School provides differentiated and quality instruction to meet the diverse learning needs of its student population. Interdisciplinary and deeper learning opportunities are part of the Haldane curriculum and culture. Students often work on long-term projects that include problem-based learning and multi-tiered processes.

Haldane’s staff engages in ongoing professional development and is trained in how to best incorporate inclusive practices such as Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) models, including parallel lessons and workshop stations into the classroom. Haldane High School offers a 1:1 iPad program in grades 10-12, and other technology-based supports to provide an enriched learning experience for all students. Advanced Placement courses are offered to provide academic challenges and rigor for students who excel.

For struggling learners, The Child Study Team, an interdisciplinary team that enables general education teachers to work collaboratively with special educators, related service providers, and administrators, develops and implements targeted and research-based interventions and strategies that are specific to individual student needs and performance.

In addition to traditional Resource Rooms, the District will soon offer skills classes to special education students who need support strengthening their executive functioning and organizational skills. Learner Profiles are also being designed for all students to include neuroscience and brain-based learning, enabling all students to develop bypass strategies. Providing intensive and individualized interventions and hands on instructional practices that engage and inspire students to learn not only fosters independence, but ensures a high level of achievement across the district.

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

Students at Haldane are assessed utilizing multiple measures and varied lenses of analysis. It is Haldane’s belief that quantitative analysis has value, but not without balance from a qualitative view. What students can create and do (soft data) is as important as how they score (hard data).

Hard Data

NY State Regents examination scores are analyzed for pass rate and mastery (>85%) among various subgroups. Similarly, Advanced Placement examination results are analyzed in data teams within PLC groups over a longitudinal view. In this work, Haldane tries to differentiate between cohort effect and multi-year patterns. With these strategies, achievement gaps are identified, specifically for special education students, and targeted interventions are implemented as a result (see section 3). In recent years, Haldane was recognized by the College Board with placement on their AP Honor Roll. This distinction is the result of having an open enrollment policy that allows for a large proportion of student participation and success relative to the overall population. That is, over 60% of Haldane’s eligible population takes AP courses, with over 75% scoring 3 or better.

Similarly, in recent years Haldane has made efforts to raise math rigor for all students. Using the “terminal course” in the NY State math sequence (Algebra 2/Trigonometry) as a benchmark for college readiness in

math, Haldane believes that the 85% of graduates attending four year colleges should meet this standard and pass this course. In only six years, Haldane raised the rate of terminal course completion/pass from 30% to nearly 80%. Raising expectations and destigmatizing extra help, math labs, and academic intervention services (AIS) all contributed to accomplishing this goal. Haldane now has as many so-called high achieving students in AIS for A2/Trigonometry as struggling learners in AIS for basic Algebra.

Soft Data

In a culture where student work is as important an artifact as test scores, teachers spend a lot of time in data teams or PLC groups collaboratively examining student products. As Haldane continues its dedication to professional development in support of project-based learning, this practice will grow in frequency and sophistication.

A piece of this cultural practice is formal and institutionalized. Currently, 20% of teacher evaluation is oriented toward critical review and self-analysis of a unit plan. Even though it is an evaluative practice, teachers find value in the process of designing a unit, formally writing a series of lesson plans, conducting a pre/post assessment of students, and reflecting on the products generated by students.

Performance-Based Assessment

As project-based learning practices grow in the school, teachers are developing better methods of data collection. Specifically, as the type of work students generate on a daily basis changes, teachers' grading practices will need to adapt accordingly. Haldane is currently in the process of developing more sophisticated rubrics and other measures that adequately track soft skills or 21st century competencies in students. More specifically, in partnership with the New Tech Network, Haldane is working to better assess agency, or "the capacity of a learner to act as an advocate for their own success" (Curtis, 2013). Haldane is increasingly turning attention to things like confidence, growth mindset, self-direction, and responsibility in assessment practices. Metacognition, reflection, and the four C's - Critical thinking, Collaboration, Creativity, and Communication are important, as well.

Creating an institutional space that promotes, encourages, and rewards this work is central to Haldane's success. Each year, Haldane hosts a K-12 Discovery Night that is an exhibition of the finest work of students. This is much more than a cross-curricular science fair, but more like a research symposium where students are able to present and defend their work, demonstrating its impact on the larger community.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Haldane High School is best known for its positive climate and culture. In this relatively small school, students are able to feel ownership of the culture and responsibility for the climate. Seniors are explicitly tapped for this task through Peer Mentoring, as well as informally with outlined expectations each year. Teachers, administrators, and staff alike work diligently to forge positive relationships with EVERY student in the building. As students grow through the years and feel increasing ownership of the culture, they learn to do the same. Haldane does not have cliques per se; in fact, graduating seniors often reflect on how powerful it is for them to know 60-85 of their peers on a personal level. Students flow in and out of various tracks throughout their four years in core academic classes and multi-grade electives are the standard rather than the exception. This makes for a model of intellectual diversity in most classes, where discussion is encouraged, skillfully facilitated, and students are able to entertain and challenge multiple perspectives.

Haldane sports and extracurricular activities are also cross-grade. There are abundant opportunities for informal mentoring among upper and lower classmen at Haldane. Many students cite these experiences as ones that contribute to their maturity and add to a sophisticated understanding of evolved human interactions. Peers are more loosely defined across grade levels and age groups, creating more fluid, harmonious interactions and a larger sense of community. This is true of Haldane's high school students, as well as the K-8 community.

One aspect of the school that greatly contributes to the positive culture is Haldane's unit lunch. All high school students have lunch simultaneously. The cafeteria is housed in the K-8 building and 9th graders are required to eat there with attendance taken. Tenth graders enjoy the opportunity to eat lunch anywhere on campus, but must remain on school grounds. Juniors and Seniors may leave campus for lunch if they choose, but often elect to remain. During lunch, the high school building transforms into what looks and feels like a college commons. Students eat at tables in the hallway and in classrooms throughout the building. While sharing the meal, students are sneaking in extra help from teachers, meeting in clubs and interest groups, or having a team bonding lunch prior to the big game. It is remarkable how much academic conversation is interspersed with pure social engagement. On nice days, students are sprawled across the lawn in small groups among the various outdoor seating arrangements. It can be a time for having a catch, throwing a frisbee, or engaging in deep philosophical debate.

A recent student-produced film short captures the essence of what makes Haldane culture unique.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HI_vO7gsWYs

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The Haldane High School community extends well beyond students, teachers, and parents. Academic, arts, and athletic accomplishments are due, in large part, to the dedication of coaches, experts, and volunteers who contribute to and feel some ownership of the success of our students.

In 2014, the District engaged in developing its new Strategic Plan. Stakeholder groups from all sectors of the community were tapped to contribute, including students, teachers, administration, parents, business, and retirees. Over the course of several months, these groups met and explored essential questions in order to design the future of the Haldane Central School District. After the Strategic Plan was completed, the District continued its engagement with its Community Leaders Group, comprised of a cross section of local members of the community, which continues to meet monthly.

Similarly, PLAY HALDANE, spearheaded by the Haldane Booster Club, brought together parents, community members, and local businesses for a large-scale fundraising initiative. Funding for a new turf field and concession stand, as well as locker room improvements and auditorium sound system upgrades were all made possible in a budget-neutral way. The new field serves Haldane's K-12 students for

everything from daily P.E. classes to middle school and high school soccer, lacrosse, track, and football, while the auditorium upgrades enhance Haldane's stellar musical and theatrical productions.

The connection between the town and the school is so strong, the wider community shows real Haldane Pride in the accomplishments of each graduate. Haldane High School's graduation ceremony is held outdoors on the graduation knoll with a spectacular view of the Hudson River. One by one as their name is called during the presentation of diplomas, graduates ring the bell, which was recovered from the old high school and placed on a boulder at the knoll. The ceremony is open to the community, many of whom choose to attend, even when they do not have a family member graduating that year.

Likewise, as Haldane athletic teams continue to win Sectional, Regional, and even State championships year after year, the entire community seems to travel from game to game. Town-wide support is equally impressive as the team accomplishments themselves.

Parents are actively engaged in the success of Haldane in many ways. The PTA developed after-school enrichment programs which are taught by parents and community members that provide interesting alternative experiences for students. The Haldane School Foundation, a non-profit parent and community group, supports ongoing and enrichment opportunities in the school by funding programs that the school budget would not ordinarily cover.

The following are excerpts from an essay composed by a Haldane parent just this month:

“So happy today that my daughter goes to a small K through 12 public school. About 60 kids per grade. Love that she has these amazing high school role models that she sees walking around campus and can go to their sporting events and their theatrical productions. That they can come be her babysitter or show up at a basketball practice and lead by example...There is so much community support in this town for what the kids are doing. That support is expressed in so many small and meaningful ways. Building a theater set. Coaching travel league soccer. Filming games for coaches to go dissect. Teaching private music classes. Building a concession stand. Hugging the kids after a heartbreaking loss. Dancing with your son on the hardwood after he just helped the team win the regional championship. Coaching other people's kids and doing the best you can. Driving hours to cheer the girls' soccer team onto victory in the state championship in thirty degree weather. Alumni from teams past clapping in the stands. You put all these little things together and you have a community. A really rich community with huge family engagement.”
—Haldane Elementary School Parent and frequent guest speaker in high school Creative Writing classes

3. Professional Development:

Haldane High School and the Haldane Central School District are in the process of undergoing systemic change in the areas of pedagogy, deeper-learning strategies for students, and experiential learning opportunities. These areas of focus are aligned with the mission, the goals and the Strategic Plan that was adopted by the district in June of 2015.

In September of 2016, Haldane teachers will enter into their third year of dedicated staff development to help transition thinking and the practices necessary to make adaptive change and build capacity with faculty. The theory of going “an inch wide and a mile deep” with professional development keeps the emphasis on dedicated growth areas, and enables monitoring of the rate of change to remain in a “comfortable disequilibrium” as practitioners develop and learn. Staff development partners were chosen to refine specific areas of teaching and learning that will be interrelated and woven into a well-crafted product that supports instructional focus and the goals that emerged in the Strategic Plan.

The determination of initiatives and partners began with a needs analysis that included Haldane's readiness for change, the planning and preparation of well-crafted lessons through Understanding by Design, Learning Strategy Instruction, and developing the metacognitive classroom. A partnership with the Public Education and Business Coalition (PEBC) out of Denver Colorado spanned over a two-year period of formulating the vision. The expertise of progressive educators such as Ellin Keene, Cris Tovani, Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis, helped determine Haldane's readiness to launch the new undertaking, the skill-

set necessary to shift the locus of control and gradually release the responsibility of learning to students. This progressed to include instruction on creating the metacognitive classroom, and the strategies that will help Haldane students learn best in a metacognitive setting.

This year, Haldane began to overlap innovative work with the New Tech Network in the process of including project-based units of study coupled with interdisciplinary teaching in experiential learning opportunities K-12. Teachers were also provided with best practice in co-teaching partnerships as Haldane burrows deeper in learning.

4. School Leadership:

Haldane High School utilizes a distributed leadership model. There are only two official administrative posts; Principal and Athletic Director/Dean of Students. With this flattened leadership structure, the day-to-day management of the school happens in a non-hierarchical form. The building leadership team consists of department chairs and union executive board members. There is also a class parents group that is a sub-committee of Haldane's K-12 PTA. The high school has a student support team that meets weekly, consisting of the principal, director of guidance, school social worker, A.D./Dean, and school resource officer. This collaborative leadership philosophy extends to the students, as well. The principal and guidance counselor regularly run focus groups with students as issues and growth opportunities arise. These meetings could consist of student council members - those serving in an official capacity - or more informal groupings of students.

One example of these structures at work is the process for adding new courses. Each year, elective course offerings are evaluated, and all constituent groups (students, teachers, and parents) are included in the conversation about what they would like to see added or modified. Two unique courses recently came out of this collaborative process: Modeling the World with Math and Discover, Create, Innovate.

Another example that highlights Haldane's leadership structure is the evolution of the daily schedule. Haldane used to have a very traditional schedule with nine sessions of forty-one minutes. A few years ago, a committee of stakeholders was formed to examine exemplary scheduling models from the region. At the time, the teaching faculty was engaged in rigorous professional development around curriculum redesign within the context of student engagement. It was discovered that the schedule was inhibiting growth. With student and parent input, Haldane adopted a new schedule with fifty-five minute periods that rotate or shift times throughout the cycle. This adjustment has proven to be an essential ingredient in the overall improvement of teaching and learning as Haldane moves toward creating more project-based learning opportunities for students.

These curricular shifts are supported by parents, teachers, and students because there is an individual sense of ownership over the direction of the school. It is not so much that student achievement is the focus, but more so that individualized student growth is at the center of all structural decision making. Haldane is continually moving toward creating a more individually customized student program where students have voice and choice. By creating time for students to inquire, reflect, design, and pursue their individual passions, Haldane minimizes the confines of a traditional departmentalized curriculum. Wherever possible, Haldane tries to break down the compartmentalization of academic disciplines, instead creating opportunities for students to find connections in their daily work.

Teacher professional development at Haldane High School takes place in professional learning communities (PLC groups). These cross-curricular teams allow teachers to share best and next practices, convene around student data, and compare the developmental needs of individual students.

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Haldane success is best defined by the way the school leverages and constructs the K-12 experience. When the eighteen year old graduate rings the historic bell and flips his tassel, the Kindergarten teacher sits in the audience in her academic gown alongside hundreds of community members that shared in the journey of his growth from the time he was five years old.

The close proximity of all thirteen grades enables optimal attention to students' developmental needs. Formal and informal student-to-student mentoring abounds. Horizontal and vertical alignment of curriculum is a reality, not an aspiration. There is a separate and distinct identity in the three elementary, middle, and high school buildings, but it is decidedly special that their principals and faculty collaborate on a daily basis.

Haldane's learning community culture is established at an early age in elementary grades, reinforced in the middle school, and fully realized in the high school. Because of the K-12 campus, students have opportunities and interactions they would never have in other environments. High school students are regularly present in elementary and middle level classes, and it is not implausible for a Kindergarten teacher to discuss pedagogy with the AP Physics teacher. This unusual juxtaposition is deliberately and routinely leveraged for success.

With plenty of room for every student to shine on a team, the stage, or in a club, over 92% of Haldane students participate in at least one activity. Students take ownership in their individual learning paths and have the space and support to pursue their personal interests. There is truly a bottom-up culture at Haldane; a palpable sense of anticipation in the lower grades as students look to be the next generation of Haldane leaders.