

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Dr. Giovanni Durante

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

Official School Name Syosset Senior High School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 70 South Woods Road

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

City Syosset State NY Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 11791-3204

County Nassau County

Telephone (516) 364-5675 Fax (516) 364-5907

Web site/URL http://www.syossetschools.org/ E-mail jdurante@syossetschools.org

Facebook Page
Twitter Handle https://www.facebook.com/syossetcentralschooldistrict 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. Thomas Rogers E-mail trogers@syossetschools.org

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

District Name Syosset Central School District Tel. (516) 364-5675

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. Michael Cohen

(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):
- 7 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 10 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	253	207	460
10	295	269	564
11	280	262	542
12 or higher	283	249	532
Total Students	1111	987	2098

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 29 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 66 % White
 - 1 % 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	13
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	4
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	17
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	2162
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.008
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1

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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 6 %
Total number students who qualify: 127

8. Students receiving special education services: 11 %
235 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.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <u>17</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>87</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>104</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>7</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>14</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>1</u> Mental Retardation | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>3</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed |

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

	Number of Staff
Administrators	13
Classroom teachers	220
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	0
Paraprofessionals	18
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	19

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 10:1

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

Required Information	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	96%	97%	96%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	99%	99%	100%	100%	99%

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	536
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	93%
Enrolled in a community college	5%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	1%
Found employment	1%
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. 1993

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

We are dedicated to meeting the social, emotional and academic needs of all students, while preparing them for a life of learning and contributing.

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

PART III – SUMMARY

The Syosset Central School District enjoys a national reputation for academic excellence. The Board of Education, administration, faculty and staff are committed to upholding and enhancing our curricular and co-curricular program. This is evident in a challenging and all encompassing curriculum that evolves to support student in their efforts to achieve and become successful global citizens. In addition to the core components, we offer unique opportunities for interdisciplinary education, academic and community-based independent study, internships, cooperative work-study with local businesses, and experiences in leadership and service. Our mission at Syosset High School is to provide a collaborative and cohesive educational environment, from which all students will graduate with an outstanding foundation for college and career, as well as a strong sense of self and community. We are dedicated to meeting the social, emotional and academic needs of all students, while preparing them for a life of learning and contribution.

Established in 1956, Syosset High School serves the Syosset-Woodbury area in Nassau County in New York State. This suburban area is home to middle and upper income residents with approximately 33,000 residents. The community is 71.5% White-not Hispanic, 22% Asian, 4.1% Hispanic, .8% African American, and .1% Native American. 21.3% of the population is foreign born with 30.7% speaking a language other than English in the home. More than 95% of the residents over the age of 25 are high school graduates, 13.4% have attended some college, while 61.6% have earned a Bachelor's degree or higher. This challenges the school to provide a well- rounded education. With a 99% graduation rate and 98% of the graduating class attending college, the school meets the community's high expectation for student success. To this end, the school effectively collaborates with all stakeholders to enhance our tradition of excellence in education.

In order for students to reach their full potential, we offer a range from Advanced Placement (AP) and college affiliated courses through life skills. Students are encouraged to pursue their interests through a varied sampling of these offerings. Support for student success is evident through our English as a New Language (ENL) program. Our comprehensive ENL program provides a pathway into the academic mainstream, while assimilating the students into our school culture. This transition is accomplished through a dedicated week of multicultural activities, a PTSA sponsored multicultural luncheon for the entire high school population and a curriculum which demands high academic achievement.

With over one hundred clubs, organizations and athletic teams, the co-curricular program creates a collaborative environment that allows for student exploration and innovation while cultivating leadership skills. These organizations provide services, compete against other schools, showcase student talent, and support the academic program. The Student Government is the democratically elected board of students that oversees all student activities in the building. As the umbrella organization, it coordinates events, manages fundraising activities and provides feedback to the administration.

Historically, Syosset students have performed at mastery level on New York State Regents exams and above the National and State averages on SAT exams. The class of 2015 had eighteen National Merit finalists. Many students choose to take one of our twenty eight AP courses and most of the 1143 who sat for the exams scored a three or better on the requisite exams. Our school manages to balance a challenging intellectual atmosphere with a commitment to character development. We do not forgo the need to develop the whole child because of the demanding pressures of modern academia. PRIDE (Patience, Respect, Integrity, Dignity, and Empathy) is an acronym for our character education program and is integrated into the entire high school program.

A faculty and staff dedicated to the achievement of our student body is a hallmark of Syosset High School. The faculty is supportive, caring and highly qualified. They annually receive professional development that supports their ability to deliver instruction in innovative ways. Most members of the faculty are involved in after school activities and are ready to give students the extra time that goes above and beyond their contractual obligations. Another strength is the quality of inter-relationships existing among students, staff and administration. These relationships create opportunities for teachers, parents and students to be involved in the shared decision-making process.

Our dedication to an outstanding education has resulted in a Grammy Signature school designation for five years and being listed as one of the “Best Communities for Music Education in America” fourteen times. We received a Blue Ribbon designation in 1993, Middle States accreditation for over forty years, and Gold award designations by U.S. News and World Report as one of the best high schools in the nation. These honors are reflective of a well earned reputation, one which is founded on the principles of academic achievement and character development in an inclusive environment.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

The core curriculum of Syosset High School is designed to meet the needs of the students, enhance their learned skills, and continue them on their journey to becoming lifelong learners. The educational objectives of the building are spelled out in well-developed and articulated teacher-written curriculum which adhere to and augment state standards. This is evident in the English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies programs.

The English department prepares students for academic reading and writing essential to college-level studies and participation in an enriched intellectual life. Teachers guide students through critical examination of classical and contemporary nonfiction and fictional genres that evidence cultural constructs such as class, race, and gender within the context of institutional power relations. The critical thinking that students develop from analyzing and critiquing texts of renowned authors within a dialectical setting serve as a basis for teaching them to write with an awareness of distinct authorial perspectives, purposes, and conceived audiences. Curriculum identifies concepts, themes, and values integral to fostering students' intellectual and communal identities for meaningful participation in society. Text selection serves as a means to facilitate broad and in-depth examination of cultural assumptions and ideologies. Various strategies are used to enable students to acquire foundation and critical thinking skills. This is accomplished through textual analysis, lessons on concept and grammar, student submission of writing drafts and peer and teacher evaluation of that writing.

The Math curriculum incorporates state standards with best practices for teaching mathematics and encourages students to think about the "why" of mathematics. For the students working above grade level, we have Mathletes, national mathematics contests and the Math Research program. These offer students the opportunity to extend the ideas from the classroom to real-life application. Honors level courses provide enrichment with a deeper level of complexity focused on derivation, generalization and proof. "Math Theory Honors" integrates topics into a Pre-Calculus curriculum that students would not otherwise be exposed to until college. The course delves into concepts such as Network Theory, Linear Programming, Bubble Theory and Logic. For students to build foundation skills, our courses are replete with lessons concerning literacy in mathematics, independent study skills, and problem solving. Our courses go well beyond the expectation of the NY State standards by enriching the lessons. To prepare students for college and careers, they engage in meaningful learning experiences that show them how to connect the knowledge and skills learned in school to the real world.

In the Science department, the Common Core standards are addressed through a focus on a literature based, cross-curricula approach that is embedded into science lessons. The foundation skills are enhanced through laboratory work, demonstrations, videos and field trips. Abstract writing, data analysis, independent projects and our research program encourage college readiness. In particular, the Research Program, through its partnerships with facilities like the Cold Spring Harbor laboratory, affords our students the opportunity to work with world renowned scientists. In an effort to meet the diverse and individual needs of our students, teachers have focused their instructional approach on questioning techniques, motivations at the start of lessons, real life applications, relevant demonstrations and hands-on laboratories. Technology is also a vital component of the science lessons, as the SmartBoard, PowerPoint and Prezi are commonly used to transform lessons. The use of timely and engaging Internet resources are used daily to make lessons creative and efficient. Teacher feedback, student involvement and smaller group workshops ensure a higher level of student achievement. Collaboration among teachers, within and across content areas, has been critical to the development and enrichment of educators' knowledge and implementation of content.

The goal of the Social Studies department is for students to develop an appreciation of liberty, freedom and justice, while acquiring respect for all world cultures. There is significant consideration given to the role the United States plays in today's world, while comprehending the historical developments which brought us here. Fundamentals are developed and enhanced through a four year social studies requirement, which ensures that upon graduation, students can read critically, write analytically and think independently. The

breadth of course offerings is indicative of the desire to provide many pathways for students of varying levels of preparedness. Many of the social science electives are not history driven, but look at other approaches for studying the human condition. Courses like Human Geography, Sociology, MacroEconomics, Women's Issues or Government and Politics, provide unique perspectives for the students and make connections for real world application. For college bound students, there are many AP and college courses. Through the social science portion of our research program, students have the opportunity to engage in an in-depth study of an area of interest.

The efficacy of a Syosset education is often evaluated by returning alumni. Unfailingly, they indicate that they arrived at college well prepared because of our rigorous course offerings, high expectations and analytical discussions.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The Physical Education program is a four year requirement for all students. Skill development is differentiated and includes activities that are tiered to meet the varying skill levels of all students. Elective courses include Aquatics, Lifeguarding, Fitness Training, Dance, Aerobics, Total PE and Team Sports. The lifeguarding course provides an opportunity for outside employment upon successful completion. Lifetime wellness is a key concept that is emphasized and is delivered to the students each year, focusing on stress reduction, CPR/ AED training, coping skills and drug and alcohol awareness.

There is a half-year Health Education requirement for graduation which is satisfied in the junior year. More than half of the students opt to take Community Health which is rigorous, has a community service component, and meets every day. Electives include a four year leadership tract and a two year athletic training program. Skills such as decision making, goal setting, self-advocacy, communication, and acceptance of responsibility are the foundation blocks of the curriculum.

World Language courses are required for three years, but most of our students continue studying through their senior year. Spanish, French, Italian, Latin, Japanese, Russian, American Sign Language and Chinese courses are all available. Many students study two or three different languages simultaneously. Students develop skills in the interpretive, interpersonal and presentational modes using texts from the target languages and cultures. Students develop literacy skills, such as close reading of both literary and non-literary texts in formal and informal registers. In preparation for the multicultural world that awaits them, courses focus on culture and biliteracy.

In Business courses, students are given the opportunity to acquire essential skills and "real world" knowledge through participation in mock trials, debates, projects, presentations, and reports. There are college courses, Internships and Work Experience available. The College Real Estate course prepares students for the NY State licensing exam and upon passing, students receive their qualifying certificate and can immediately begin work as a real estate agent. Students in grades 9-12, and over half of the senior class, take these electives.

There are thirty diverse courses offered by our Art department, taken by over 600 underclassmen and over 100 seniors. The curricula in all of the introductory courses develop a thorough understanding of the elements of art and the principles of design. In the advanced art classes, students take their artistic endeavors to the highest level possible. Creativity, critical thinking and problem solving skills are emphasized. The same is true in our Music department, where students are given small group and individual instruction on a weekly pull-out schedule in addition to daily ensemble rehearsals. More than a third of the student population is enrolled in three levels each of band, orchestra and chorus. We also offer music classes which attract both advanced musicians and students who would not typically gravitate toward traditional high school performing ensembles.

The Human Ecology department offers courses in fashion and design, psychology, child rearing and family issues, and the culinary arts. The Child Study Lab teaches students how to be teachers by developing the foundational skills which are implemented in classrooms where they teach preschoolers from the district. They utilize instructional approaches designed to enhance students understanding of cultural diversity,

differentiated instruction, the vast array of learning styles, and gender issues. There are college level courses as well as those designed to assist the Life Skills program. A quarter of the school population and about one hundred seniors choose to take these courses.

The Technology department also enrolls about a quarter of the school and over one hundred seniors. Starting with Design and Drawing for Production (DDP) classes, the students are given a set of foundational skills wherein they are encouraged to identify problems, put forth potential designs, critique processes, resolve conflict, and arrive at viable solutions. The Architecture program culminates in a showcase of designs, both residential and commercial, while the college level Engineering and Nanotechnology classes prepare students for the future by providing them with a post-high school level of commitment and instruction. In the Robotics program, a math teacher instructs the students in program development and code writing, and a technology teacher moves them through robot design and construction.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

The variety of instructional methodologies utilized at Syosset High School guarantees all students an opportunity to learn. Student who require special accommodations, are new English language learners or are college bound have their needs assessed and a plan of instruction follows.

Testing is administered to place classified students in instructional support programs. There are lab classes which allow for additional time to strengthen weak basic skills, provide reinforcement of instruction, and re-teach materials which have not been mastered. Student centered learning shifts the focus of instruction from the teacher to the student. Students are taught in settings with a lower student-teacher ratio to foster success. There are separate settings and extra time for exams. Technology, scribes and readers are available when necessary and resource rooms, instructional support classes and extra help provide assistance with work completion, organization and personal interaction.

English as a new language (ENL) students are placed in an integrated ENL program. This incorporates a co-teaching model, wherein licensed ENL teachers collaborate and push in with each of the core content area teachers. This affords them the ability to individualize attention and differentiate instruction. The teachers meet periodically to assess the effectiveness of the program, adjust teaching methods and confer on the academic progress of individual students.

The general education teachers rely upon many teaching strategies to present instruction. Students in need are enrolled in workshops or given extra-help opportunities. While all teachers are required to give extra-help each week, all of them make time available during their lunch, prep or free time. Often, they provide extra-help while sitting on hall duty. Math offers five periods of extra-help every day. Every math room has a Smart Board and the teachers utilize that technology. Classroom teachers require students to reassess their own work by having them do test corrections, independent assignments, journals, unit summaries and study guides. Small group instruction, cooperative learning strategies, “turn and talk” methods, student led instruction, as well as more traditional models are utilized. Teachers create lessons incorporating primary and secondary sources, class discussion, debates, lectures, and student presentations. In all cases, discussion is geared toward higher order learning and critical thinking. At the same time, all classes take advantage of teachable moments. Teachers rarely feel bound to the lesson plan, and understand that ongoing events in our world and community provide great opportunities for learning.

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

As a high performing school, Syosset High School uses every tool available to maintain a high level of achievement. All assessment information is useful as a tool, only if it is used appropriately. Data should be used to guide instruction and assess performance. Assessment data is analyzed carefully and utilized to improve the delivery and reception of knowledge.

The BOCES Data Warehouse system is used for all of our Regents exams. This provides clear reports regarding student performance on every Regents test. Each academic department uses the information to inform instruction. Advanced Placement (AP) results are delivered each summer, and the

administrators and teachers are given information concerning their students. Item analysis provides the ability to make correlations between material taught, learned and tested and curriculum decisions can be made based on that knowledge.

Our academic departments revise the rigorous curriculum each year by using data from the previous Regents and AP exams. They incorporate different strategies for those areas which exhibit weaknesses of understanding and performance. More frequently, exit tickets, quizzes, and unit tests are used to formatively assess student performance and guide instruction. As a result of the English department review of Regents, SAT and AP results, they are constantly revising the curriculum for College Prep, CCSS Foundation of College English and AP Literature and Language courses. Strategies for instruction are adjusted accordingly to develop critical thinking skills in the four major domains of English Language Arts, namely: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

The New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) is taken by all of our ENL students and determines proficiency, placement and guides instruction. An analysis of the data helps decide each student's level of need, which courses meet those needs, and any changes in the instruction they receive.

All academic performance is shared with students and parents. The return of exams, the review of tests, and chances for corrections are commonplace in the classrooms. All testing information is available to parents via the Parent Portal of Infinite Campus (the online data system used for attendance, scheduling and grade reporting). Guidance counselors, through parent workshops and individual meetings, explain the importance of assessments in continued student growth, scheduling decisions, and college placement.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Syosset High School consistently and effectively motivates and engages its students through a variety of curricular and co-curricular experiences that contribute to a positive and supportive building climate. Our social, emotional, and academic needs are intertwined and supported by an environment that encourages the growth of students as individual learners. Faculty and staff members work in an atmosphere which fosters their creativity and values their input.

Students are encouraged to explore and pursue their passions through our expansive academic offerings. Electives are open to all grades, as well as independent study classes that align to even the most specific interests. Courses are offered based on the choices made by the students such as Robotics, Human Geography, Child Study Lab, Music Theory and Community Health. These ensure that students are engaged and take responsibility for their own education. Academic support systems, such as subject-based workshops and labs, resource rooms, an alternative school program, and a plethora of extra help sessions, encourage student participation and performance beyond the initial classroom setting. These programs motivate those who would otherwise be disengaged from the school community. The academic program is additionally supported through co-curricular clubs including Forensics, DECA and Science Olympiad, which are advised by an impassioned faculty and administration. Students are afforded the ability to create their own school-based groups dependent upon common interest. This motivates students to take on leadership positions and ensures there is something for every student.

Social and emotional growth is supported through PRIDE (Patience, Respect, Integrity, Dignity, Empathy), our character education initiative. Student driven programs such as peer mediation and conflict resolution, Student Government, grade level initiatives, the Health Fair, the Gay Straight Alliance (GSA), and Peers Reaching Out, promote a sense of empathy and respect for individual differences and similarities. Collectively these programs build the skills and character traits necessary for our students to become successful global citizens.

We have a culture that values and supports its teachers and staff. Teachers benefit from the support of their students, parents and administration. This is apparent through a variety of actions including PTA sponsored staff appreciation luncheons, teacher driven Sunshine Breakfasts, as well as recognition from the Board of Education. Additionally, administration supports teacher course proposals and attends a multitude of co-curricular events. Collectively, the Syosset High School climate and culture foster a professional atmosphere of mutual respect and appreciation.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Together administration, faculty, staff, families and community are vital to our students' growth and achievement. Communication between stakeholders is ongoing via social media, written correspondence, and face-to-face exchanges. That ability to share and exchange information leads to a meaningful working relationship.

Social media is used to enhance connections between home, school and community. This allows for an effective means of reaching a broader audience. The real-time engagement enables all those with a vested interest to be informed about school events and student achievement. Written communication is electronically transmitted through monthly guidance updates, PTA bulletins and quarterly student generated newsletters. Traditional written forms of correspondence and daily emails supplement our overall communication.

Face-to-face encounters solidify the school to community relationships. These include night time events, workshops, meetings and conferences. Throughout the year, the guidance department presents evening programs focused on the college application process, financial aid, college testing, NCAA guidelines, and

meeting with college representatives. The Guidance Liaison Committee, comprised of parent members, administrators and counselors, keeps the community informed about student services. In an effort to continually meet students' evolving needs, the PTSA Secondary Curriculum committee annually selects topics to be explored at monthly presentations by our faculty and students. Other encounters, integral to accomplishing the school's mission, are a ninth grade orientation, an open house and three parent-teacher conferences. The coordination of our annual community arts festival, BravesFest, is an example of the collaboration between the students and PTA. Our commitment to lifelong learning is exemplified by our scholarship fund. Administered by a team of teachers, PTA, and community members, it works with students to provide a \$5000 scholarship to as many as 10 graduating seniors. It is the high level of student participation in all of these diverse activities that helps to increase family and community commitment to students' growth and achievement.

We value our many professional relationships in order to promote global citizenry. Established partnerships allow students to acquire and apply their skills and knowledge in real-world settings. We are particularly proud of the student success that has been supported by our relationships with Metropolitan Museum of Art, Guggenheim, International Vocal Arts Institute, Holocaust Memorial and Tolerance Center, Intel and Siemens. We leverage the expertise of our professional community by inviting them to speak to our students. Promoting a shared vision for student success creates a world-class education that can be delivered with a small town feel.

3. Professional Development:

Syosset faculty and staff are devoted to learning. There is a common understanding that a well prepared teacher is one of the most critical elements for student achievement. We provide an environment that supports the individual and collective professional development of teachers and support staff. This increases the high school's capacity for learning and teaching. The district and the school's administration provide opportunities for our diverse and talented faculty to learn and grow as a community. Though topics may range from Common Core State Standards to addressing digital divide issues, professional development and the success of our students are always directly connected.

Our Superintendent's Conference Day has served as a springboard to form Teachers Actively Collaborating (TAC). This group encourages a generation of excellence by collaborating and facilitating team building and professional growth. In an effort to improve upon best practices and instructional strategies, voluntary participants engage in non-evaluative roundtable discussions and classroom visitations.

Teachers and administrators are encouraged to join professional associations and attend conferences. As turnkeys, they share learned information with colleagues during department, grade level and faculty meetings. Volunteer facilitators are trained and available in every department to offer ongoing support. Workshops are available during the school day to train teachers in new mandates which provide an environment to explore new technologies and innovative teaching techniques. Advancement on the salary schedule incentivizes teachers to further their education. The district supports this by offering classes through our Syosset Teachers Resource and Computer Training Center.

To support new teachers entering the district, we offer workshops addressing classroom instruction, counseling services, athletics, arts, the use of rubrics, library resources and discipline. Every new teacher is also paired with a mentor who provides individualized guidance and support. This extensive support is essential in a demanding and changing profession and is a distinguishing characteristic of our district.

Syosset High School has long been known as an excellent educational environment for our students. The nurturing energetic programs we offer teachers benefit our professional staff and students alike.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership at Syosset High School sets a clear expectation of academic and social excellence which supports an environment that enables the faculty and staff the freedom to attain these goals. The school administration operates under the guiding philosophy that their primary responsibility is to make the classroom teacher's job as unconstrained as possible.

To this end, the leadership structure has evolved into a team. The principal has fostered the concept of a learning community, encouraging collaboration among the administration and faculty. There is a well structured team which sees to the management of the building, the implementation of policies, academic achievement and student discipline. The principal is supported by two assistant principals, five administrative assistants, three coordinators, the athletic director and the assistant director of pupil personnel services. These people share in the administrative duties, as well as departmental supervision of instruction. The administrative assistants are also directly responsible for grade level discipline.

Support from the administration gives teachers the necessary autonomy to perform their teaching, counseling, coaching, advising and mentoring responsibilities. Building administrators model leadership and create an environment allowing teachers the freedom and ability to assume leadership roles. As a result, this has become the norm. Teachers are seen as educational leaders and are provided with multiple opportunities to share their expertise. Faculty meetings are often turned over to the teachers for professional development. The meetings are also used to engage the faculty in shared decision making. Beyond simply fact finding, these activities are truly empowering. Teacher time and input are valued. Ideas and decisions are implemented and supported.

The leadership practices ensure that policies, programs, relationships, and resources focus on student achievement. The administrative model aids in the cultivation of active student leadership and the development of future leaders through programs such as Peers as Leaders and student government. The student government officers meet with the administration on a monthly basis. The administration's commitment to a vast array of course offerings and co-curricular activities engage and challenge students in meaningful ways.

Leadership at Syosset High School comes not only from administration, but from teachers, students and staff members committed to excellence. Professionalism is key to fostering teacher independence and creativity in a highly motivated staff. The exhilarating atmosphere and uniform respect for all members of the school community are a part of our successful formula.

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Nothing epitomizes our educational mission greater than our acronym PRIDE. Throughout the district, faculty and students serve to model these core values: patience, respect, integrity, dignity and empathy. All students are treated as unique individuals who come to school with their own life experiences. Our character education program allows students to develop intellectually as well as emotionally, and express themselves in creative ways. Students learn the importance of respect, acceptance, and how their opinions and presence within our educational community are valued. These lessons are carried throughout their time here, not only in the classroom, but also in co-curricular activities. It would be impossible to highlight PRIDE in every exhibited form, but it is easy to see how it influences the daily activities and lives of the students and faculty and fosters an environment conducive to academic success.

One of the ways these values are illustrated is through our Junior Day program. Every junior participates in a day designed to break down stereotypes and unite students. The students, faculty, staff and administration participate in ice breakers and then the juniors are assigned to “families” with a student leader and an adult participant. They proceed to answer questions and often share personal stories. At one point, they all gather around to listen to the personal stories of two faculty members to understand that what we see on the surface is not the whole story. One of the culminating activities is a visually powerful representation that our students are not alone. Lined up on one side of the room, students wait for a statement to be read before knowing how to proceed. If the statement rings true, the student is supposed to “cross the line” in the middle of the room, then return. The students come to realize that there is more to someone than meets the eye and that they are not alone. The day successfully unifies students, developing their relationships with one another and with the school community.

PRIDE is woven into the very fabric of our school culture. When students feel accepted and nurtured in their school community, they have a greater chance of being successful academically, which in turn contributes to their success as lifelong learners and caring global citizens. The whole essence of the program helps our students, faculty, staff, and administration strive to be better and more caring people who continue to make a difference.