

***U.S. Department of Education***  
***2020 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program***

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Metairie Academy For Advanced Studies  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 201 Metairie Road  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Metairie State LA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 70005-4538

County Jefferson Parish

Telephone (504) 833-5539 Fax (504) 838-6241

Web site/URL https://www.jpschools.org/metairie E-mail Lisa.Babin@jpschools.org

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. James Gray E-mail james.gray@jpschools.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Jefferson Parish Schools Tel. (504) 349-7600

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

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

## **PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2020 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. 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.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2014 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, or 2019.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2019-2020) unless otherwise stated.

**DISTRICT** (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 54 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 15 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 14 High schools
  - 2 K-12 schools
- 85 TOTAL

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)  
 Suburban  
 Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2019 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	20	20	40
K	24	28	52
1	28	24	52
2	25	27	52
3	24	28	52
4	29	36	65
5	32	34	66
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	182	197	379

\*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 20.5 % Asian
  - 5.9 % Black or African American
  - 5.6 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0.3 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 67.7 % White
  - 0 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2018 - 2019 school year: ≤1%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain:

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

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	3
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	0
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	3
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	376
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	<.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	<1

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

Spanish, Chinese-Cantonese, Vietnamese, Korean, Russian, Turkish, Urdu

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 2 %  
7 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 8 %

Total number students who qualify: 29

8. Students receiving special education services: 3 %

11 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>4</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>5</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>2</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>0</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>22</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	14
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	9
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	4
Student support personnel e.g., school 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 27:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	98%	98%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2019.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
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 X      No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.      2010

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

Our mission is to help our students grow academically, socially, and physically to become well rounded responsible citizens.

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

The Jefferson Parish Schools Advanced Study Academies (ASAs) are designed to expose the most highly capable students to a challenging, rigorous, and accelerated curriculum. The academies focus on high-potential students who are successful in gaining admission through the ASA admissions process. Applications are accepted prior to the year of attendance and acceptance is based on residency and performance expectations where the student must score in the 85th percentile or higher on the district's admission test. Students in attendance must then maintain a 2.0 GPA each year to remain enrolled at Metairie Academy.

## **PART III - SUMMARY**

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Metairie Academy for Advanced Studies is a Southern Accreditation of Colleges and Schools(SACS) accredited five-star rated Pre-K through 5th grade elementary school in Jefferson Parish, Louisiana. The school was founded in 1939 as Metairie Grammar School and was redefined in the 2004-05 school year. The student population adjusted when Metairie Grammar became Metairie Academy for Advanced Studies, the first elementary magnet school in the Jefferson Parish Public School System. The school now serves students from throughout Jefferson Parish who apply and are accepted based on competitive academic performance. Each year, the advanced studies program (elementary, middle, and high schools) attracts large numbers of students which can be directly attributed to the initial and continued success of Metairie Academy and the academies that were later established.

Our school community is based on developing relationships among students, teachers, families and community members who work together to support students and help them grow academically, socially, and physically to become well-rounded responsible citizens.

Although every student must meet specified academic requirements, each student is recognized as a unique learner with individual strengths, interests, and challenges. Our culturally diverse student body includes autistic students and those with physical, emotional, and health issues. By creating a safe, positive, and nurturing school environment, we foster respect and acceptance which builds each student's confidence and self-worth. We believe self-esteem grows with competence and achievement. Our entire school community (students, parents, and staff) works to support student learning and is accountable for student success.

Our instruction includes student work at and above grade level placement. To meet the academic needs of every student, teachers integrate district supplied resources with a variety of supplemental programs designed to enrich and challenge academically advanced students. Individual student achievement is monitored and assignments adjusted as needed to engage students in creative, diversified, and challenging tasks that acknowledge both their learning styles and levels of mastery.

Metairie Academy embraces the Schoolwide Enrichment Model, developed by Dr. Joseph Renzulli, which establishes enriched learning experiences and higher learning standards for all children. Students are given opportunities to develop their talents and to choose from a variety of enrichment and supportive activities based on their individual strengths and interests. They participate in music, art, and theatre classes within the regular classroom and select a cross-graded personalized enrichment cluster each nine weeks which meets weekly. These interest-based small group clusters include performance in theatre and dance, knitting, academic games, robotics, photography, and gardening.

The real-life experiences in which our students participate are designed to guide them to become well-rounded responsible citizens while improving the community in which they live. Through Earthkeepers, students learn first-hand how all living things are connected and how our carbon footprint can affect the Earth positively or negatively, depending the choices we make. Students participate in local beautification efforts and frequent Metairie Road businesses to establish positive relationships with this community. They contribute financially to the St. Jude Math-a-Thon, Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, American Heart Association Jump Rope for Heart, and Children's Hospital Toy Drive. Throughout the year, our students donate food and personal items for numerous groups in need. These activities and experiences help our children understand that each of us has a responsibility to improve the world in which we live.

Our school is an exemplar environment built on a foundation of student leadership and the acknowledgement that every person is a valued member of our learning community. Each day, student leaders manage student arrival and dismissal, support our early childhood students, and facilitate our morning meeting where the community gathers for the Pledge of Allegiance, student recognition, motivational messages, and educational connections and enrichment.

Positive student behavior is recognized and rewarded. Students look forward to wearing their spirit shirts each week and jeans once a month. Our parent groups (Gala Group and Mustang Men's Club) sponsor

additional rewards periodically.

Many special activities create a sense of community and enrich our learning environment. Evening Share Fairs, held quarterly, welcome families and community members into our school to observe evidence of learning in our classrooms. Students participate in school-wide activities including our Spelling Bee, Field Day, Mardi Gras parade, STEAM week, World War II Museum projects, and a variety of field trips and excursions chosen to enhance their learning experiences.

Metairie Academy's exceptional educational environment is based on positive relationships that support our students as they grow academically, socially, and physically to become the best that they can be. Our community is enthusiastic, dedicated, and collaborative. The ideas and opinions of ALL stakeholders are invited and considered. Teachers and staff members are valued and supported. Students are acknowledged, engaged, and happy. Metairie Academy has been recognized by our district, our state, and our nation (receiving the National Blue Ribbon School award in 2010) for excellence in student achievement and community relationships.

After receiving Blue Ribbon recognition, we have addressed the importance of early childhood education, expanded Conscious Discipline to establish grade level partnerships, increased our discussions on data to guide student achievement, and provided teachers job-embedded professional development with more opportunities for reflection and growth. Our increased community involvement has resulted in expanded opportunities for our students.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.**

**1a.** Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas

As an academy for advanced studies, we focus on developing motivated life-long learners with critical thinking and questioning skills while developing relationships that support social and emotional growth in an environment that builds confidence and self-esteem.

Louisiana Department of Education’s Tier 1 academic standards define the knowledge and skills students are expected to learn at each grade level and in each content area. Teachers utilize both formal (LEAP360, district benchmark assessments, DRC, iSTEAP, etc.) and informal assessments (teacher-created and technology-based tests) to identify the functioning levels and academic growth of their students. Baseline testing is partnered with periodic progress monitoring to provide data which drives instructional decisions. All assessments are aligned with the Louisiana state standards.

Weekly cross-graded Professional Learning Cluster meetings give teachers the opportunity to discuss student progress, share successful instructional approaches, and develop a school-wide tiered curriculum which begins in Pre-K and is designed to meet the needs of our unique learners. Subject area teachers collaborate and plan together so that academic and behavioral expectations for students transition smoothly from one grade to the next.

Real life situations are utilized to help students make the connection between what they learn at school and the world in which we live. Small group instruction in all subject areas allows teachers to develop a positive relationship with each student as they assess his/her academic growth and provide individual instruction and assignments as needed. Supplemental paper based & online resources (Renzulli Learning, iReady, and IXL) are employed to either enhance or remediate students’ learning depending upon their individual needs.

**1b.** Reading/English language arts

Metairie Academy’s Language Arts curriculum is based on Tier I level Guidebooks developed by the Louisiana Department of Education. Our goals are that all students will learn to: read with fluency; understand complex grade-level texts; and express their understanding through writing and speaking. These standards are rigorous, research and evidence based, internationally benchmarked, and aligned with college and work expectations.

Our students are accelerated one grade in English Language Arts, with reading and writing instruction beginning in our Pre-K classes. Grade-level expectations are tiered and achievement is monitored to assure that students demonstrate increasing sophistication in all aspects of language each year. In addition to whole-class instruction, daily small group discussion is embedded into the curriculum allowing teachers to assess student progress and assign either remediation or accelerated activities to individuals as needed.

Our Pre-K – 2 Language Arts curriculum is based on Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) by Amplify. Through sequenced lessons students develop foundational reading skills as they master phonological awareness, phonics, word recognition, and reading comprehension. They also acquire language skills, vocabulary, and listening and speaking skills.

Teachers utilize whole class, small group, and individual instruction and monitor students’ progress as they transition from learning to read to reading to learn.

In grades 2 -5, teachers utilize programs such as LEXIA, iReady, and Accelerated Reader to supplement the Louisiana Department of Education literature-based curriculum. These programs provide leveled reading passages and questions for individual instruction to increase reading fluency and students’ comprehension. During differentiated small group discussions, students demonstrate understanding of text by summarizing,

retelling, answering questions that require higher-level thinking, and analyzing and inferring knowledge from text and pictures.

Teachers across grade levels and across subjects collaborate to create writing assignments and oral presentations that require students to integrate ELA skills with various subjects. Students' writings are reviewed and filed so that they can compare their early papers to later ones and cite evidence of their learning. Writings completed by our younger students are often displayed in the hallways outside their classroom to give them pride in their accomplishments. All students maintain personal journals and have opportunities to share their entries with their classmates.

Louisiana Department of Education's elementary writing prompts most often have students reading assigned texts and novels and citing evidence from them to support answers to questions. Teachers have supplemented this curriculum with a greater variety of novels and texts and with creative, informative, narrative, persuasive, comparing and contrasting, and research writing assignments. Using teacher-created rubrics, students evaluate their writings for grammar, capitalization, punctuation, spelling, vocabulary, sentence and paragraph construction, and coherency. Students engage in self-reflection and peer collaboration to edit, revise, and rewrite their drafts.

Students demonstrate mastery of grade-level ELA goals through assessments that mimic standardized testing structure. Additionally, they may choose multi-subject and multi-media creative projects (technology presentations, artistic, musical, or dramatic integrations, etc.) to demonstrate evidence of learning.

### **1c. Mathematics**

Louisiana Department of Education's Pre-K – 5 Student Standards for Mathematics are built within domains and progress logically and coherently across grade levels. The curriculum focuses on the continuum of development beginning with basic number sense and fact fluency and growing into understanding of mathematical concepts and the development of refined thinking to solve problems. Teachers design Math instruction at Metairie Academy to be rigorous and relevant to our students' lives.

Eureka (Great Minds) Math modules are the primary resource with some additional paper based and online resources utilized for student enrichment. Teachers collaborate to choose instructional videos and manipulatives that develop and support students' conceptual understanding and mathematical vocabulary continuously and sequentially. Pre-K and 1st graders improve fluency by completing assignments in First in Math. Teachers in grades 2 – 5 have adopted iReady to provide students individualized remediation and/or acceleration as needed. Math instruction focuses on the process and not simply the answers. It also emphasizes deeper understanding of why the process that solves the problem works. Students are required to find several methods of solving a problem and explain why each method can be used to arrive at the same solution. They create visual models (drawings, manipulatives, number lines, etc.) of both the problem and their solutions. Real-world problems are designed to engage students as they develop problem solving skills and the ability to understand and communicate mathematical ideas effectively. This program lends itself to whole-class instruction but all teachers provide students opportunities for peer collaboration.

Teachers identify students' progress and levels of conceptual understanding daily by having students complete an exit ticket at the end of each class. For students who were not able to complete the exit ticket correctly, they provide small group re-teaching or peer tutoring during the next day's class period. Module assessments, benchmark tests, and teacher-created evaluations are aligned with standardized tests and identify students in need of remediation and/or acceleration. Teachers provide these students with small group or individualized instruction as needed. Since most parents are not familiar with Eureka Math and are unable to help their children at home, it is imperative that all re-teaching and remediation be completed at school and our teachers work diligently to give each student the instruction and attention he/she needs to be successful.

## **1d. Science**

Metairie Academy's Science curriculum is based on the Louisiana Standards for Science which incorporates Three Dimensional Learning. Science and Engineering Practices are integrated with Disciplinary Core Ideas, and Crosscutting Concepts so students' gain the understanding that science affects all aspects of their lives.

To provide students a logical sequence of content, we have adopted the StemScopes Instructional Programs Material school-wide. Teachers develop and utilize hands-on STEAM experiences which incorporate Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics. This phenomena-based approach presents real-life experiences and challenges students to solve problems they create.

Rigorous expectations in all grade levels include analysis and interpretation of data, oral and written communication, critical thinking skills, and problem solving. Students engage in hands-on activities and teachers employ a variety of instructional modes to meet class and individual needs. Differentiated lessons, requiring higher order thinking skills, present grade level standards at various levels of difficulty.

Vocabulary development is embedded within tasks and activities designed to build conceptual understanding. Students work in small groups and/or individually to identify problems, design and carry out experiments, make claims, and cite evidence supporting their conclusions. Class presentations are springboards for peer collaboration and increase student awareness that there are often numerous ways to solve a given problem. Evaluation of multiple solutions promotes deeper comprehension of scientific concepts and guides students to become lifelong learners.

Students' progress is tracked through exit tickets, lab sheets, and small group discussions. Teachers examine data from rigorous teacher-created tests and benchmark assessments that mirror standardized tests to identify students in need of remediation, enrichment, or more challenging content. They provide additional small group and/or individualized instruction and assignments to identified students.

## **1e. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement**

Metairie Academy's Tier I Social Studies curriculum addresses the Louisiana Department of Education standards which require students to: use sources to learn content; make connections among people, events, and ideas across time and place; and express informed opinions using evidence from sources and outside knowledge. Instead of textbooks, students are issued parish-produced resource books. Using these as guides, teachers collaborate to create differentiated instructional opportunities that require students to delve deeply into content. Through discussions, document-based questions, and project-based learning students develop a foundation that allows them to be able to state and support claims about Social Studies content.

Following the subscribed standards, students advance from learning about communities in the lower grades to Louisiana History (3rd grade), the evolution of the United States (4th grade), and European exploration and colonial accomplishments (5th grade). Commonalities among the grade levels include emphasis on the development of chronological and historical thinking, geography, government, citizenship, economic concepts, and integration with ELA GuideBooks. Throughout the grade levels, teachers utilize a variety of supplemental materials to engage students including Social Studies Weekly, Discovery Ed, ReadWorks, Flo-cabulary, and current events. In addition to written assessments, students may choose to create oral presentations, power points, skits, musical performances, and art projects as evidence of learning.

Teachers collect data to drive instruction through formative and summative assessments. Formative assessments identify content areas that require re-teaching and students who need additional small-group or individualized instruction. Summative assessments, designed to mimic standardized test format, provide feedback for students and teachers by detecting misconceptions that require clarification and highlighting areas in need of instructional improvement.

The ultimate goals of our Social Studies curriculum is to produce students who will become productive members of society who: are critical consumers of information they read, hear, and observe; can

communicate ideas effectively in words and writing; can use a wide array of sources to gain knowledge; and can develop and express intelligent and informed opinions.

**1f. For secondary schools:**

**1g. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:**

Metairie Academy's integrated Tier 1 Pre-K curriculum is designed to help children gain knowledge and skills in a variety of developmental areas and make connections across those areas. To lay the foundation critical for students' future academic success, teachers adhere to the Louisiana Birth to 5 Early Learning and Developmental Standards which include: Approaches to Learning; Cognitive Development and General Knowledge (creative thinking, expression, Math, Science, and Social Studies); Language and Literacy Development; Physical Well-Being; Motor Development; and Social-Emotional Development.

Before Pre-K classes begin, teachers evaluate each child to determine his/her functioning levels in reading and math readiness and plan differentiated instruction. Classes adhere to a regular routine with built-in flexibility that allows adjustments to meet children's needs and interests. Daily schedules include whole group and small group instruction, hands-on student-selected center activities, and consistent transitions. Lessons and centers are designed to address varying developmental levels while deepening students' motivation and enjoyment for learning. Family engagement activities form a home-school partnership to enhance student success.

Language and literacy skills develop through phonological awareness, regular read-alouds to increase knowledge and vocabulary, and repeated readings which advance students from basic comprehension to inferential questions. Writing skills begin with the formation of shapes and letter-like symbols. Math activities guide students to improve their number sense, learn ways to represent numbers, understand the relationship between numbers and quantities, and acquire a math vocabulary. Social Studies focuses on students' community and Science helps them understand their world.

Art and Music activities aligned with themes and topics enhance learning. PE emphasizes cooperation and motor skills development.

Teachers regularly assess students through observations, checklists, and work samples and provide remediation and enrichment as needed. When students exhibit proficiency in Pre-K expectations, teachers utilize Kindergarten resources including Eureka Math and Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) to continue their academic growth. This logical and coherent early academic progression lays the foundation that results in continued success as students progress through Metairie Academy.

**2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

PE

All students at Metairie Academy attend PE class by grade level 45 minutes each day. Two PE teachers lead students through a Louisiana Department of Education standards-based curriculum designed to promote effort, enjoyment, and individual goal pursuits with an emphasis on etiquette and safety. Classes begin with student-led warm-up exercises followed by a mile walk/run in which children consistently strive to beat their personal best time. During Health classes embedded in the curriculum, students learn and discuss good health habits (eating well, water consumption, sleep, and physical activity).

The Pre-K – 2 PE curriculum focuses on learning and acquiring locomotor, nonlocomotor, and manipulative skills that gradually become more complex as movement becomes more specific. Emphasis is on sharing, learning and following rules, and fair play. In grades 3 – 5 students learn and acquire movement skills that are required for games and sports. Emphasis shifts to guiding students to apply movement skills and concepts to specific activities. All students are expected to exhibit good sportsmanship while working with partners or in small groups with peers of higher or lower skill abilities.

Teachers include a free-play day every week to give students greater choice in activities, observe their interactions, and identify and address any social and emotional issues that individual student's exhibit.

## FRENCH

Our French teacher instructs all Metairie Academy students. Children learn about the culture and language that played an integral part in our state's history. Class exercises and activities include vocabulary, conversations, songs, and writing. The number of 30 – 40 minute enrichment classes per week diminishes as the complexity and demands of the Social Studies curriculum increases. (Pre-K – twice a week; K and 1st – every day; 2nd - 3 times a week; 4th and 5th – once a week).

## GIFTED/TALENTED PROGRAM

Because of our admission requirements and advanced curriculum, Metairie Academy has a large Gifted/Talented population. According to the LDOE guidelines, children classified as "Gifted" demonstrate abilities and high performance in academic and intellectual aptitude and children classified as "Talented" possess unique abilities in visual or performing arts. Students may qualify for Gifted, Talented Visual Art, Talented Music, and/or Talented Theatre classes. Many Metairie Academy students have multiple Gifted and Talented classifications. 109 Gifted students, 67 Talented Music students, 62 Talented Visual Arts students, and 46 Talented Theatre students have been identified and are participating in specialized classes to develop their natural abilities. Students with a singular classification attend G/T classes twice a week, those with multiple classifications attend each of their G/T classes once a week. Classes are usually 45 minutes but may be expanded for special projects, guest speakers, etc.

The Gifted curriculum emphasizes enrichment, acceleration, and higher-level and abstract thinking skills at a more difficult degree of complexity than in the regular classroom curriculum. Once identified by State evaluators as qualified for the G/T program, a student receives an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) to provide challenging curriculum unique to his/her abilities. Gifted teachers may also pull G/T students by grade level from the regular classroom to provide them with accelerated core subject instruction.

Our Talented programs are performance-based but include introductions to the theory, history and possible careers in each art form. Talented Music and Talented Theatre students perform and Talented Visual Art students exhibit their creations in our school and community. Talented teachers also push into classrooms to provide introduction in the arts and identify students who should be tested for the programs.

## TECHNOLOGY/LIBRARY/MEDIA

Technology is incorporated into all classrooms. ActivPanels and Promethean Boards enable teachers to infuse instruction with current information and engaging presentations which appeal to students' interests and address diverse ability levels. Our librarian serves as a technology coordinator assisting both teachers and students in improving their abilities and confidence using technological tools and programs. Students begin using computers and iPads in Pre-K and become increasingly techsavvy as they move through the grades learning to utilize Chromebooks, Laptops, and classroom technology. As early as second grade, students are required to take computer-based standardized tests.

All students attend weekly library classes in which they learn the basics of library science and check out books for the week. Our librarian introduces students to authors and suggests books based on their interests and reading levels. She also collaborates with grade-level teachers to create instruction that reinforces and enhances current educational concepts using a variety of media.

### **3. Academic Supports:**

#### **3a. Students performing below grade level**

Because we are a selective admissions school based on academic performance, 100% of our students' Math and English/Language Arts instruction is one grade level above their assigned grade. To remain at Metairie

Academy students are required to maintain a 2.0 grade point average (GPA). Teachers consistently monitor student progress and review test data. If a student is in danger of falling below the 2.0 grade requirement, he/she is considered to be “at risk”. If a student’s GPA actually falls below 2.0, he/she is placed on probation.

In both cases, teachers identify the area(s) in need of remediation and hold a conference with the student and parent(s). In coordination with our academic and behavioral intervention team (ABIT), an individualized action plan is designed to address the student’s deficiencies and ascertain why they are occurring. Interventions are varied and focused to address each individual student’s issues. They may require the student to “check-in and check-out” daily with a faculty member to monitor his/her effort and assignment completion and/or to attend small-group and/or individual remedial instruction during enrichment clusters so he/she does not lose core instructional time. It might be recommended that parents increase their oversight and monitoring of their child’s schoolwork and set “have to” and “want to” limits. (If you want to play computer games, you first have to complete your classwork/homework).

Although all stakeholders (students, teachers, parents) play a role in helping the student meet specific learning goals and maintain good academic standing, it is our ultimate goal to have students self-monitor their academic progress and seek help if needed. We have been successful in this endeavor, with only 5-7 students (2.5% of population) placed on probation since August 2019 and currently one student has a GPA below the expected 2.0 (LESS THAN 1 %) at this time, April 2020.

### **3b. Students performing above grade level**

By design, 100% of Metairie Academy’ students are performing one grade level above their assigned grade placement in Math and English/Language Arts. Our students’ advanced academic abilities produce unique challenges for our faculty. Students must be challenged and engaged to maintain their advanced levels of performance. At the same time, they must be required to follow directions and complete problem-solving steps that they do not believe should be mandatory because they do not have the foresight to see that they will lead them to master more complex concepts. Because learning usually comes very easily to them, students must be encouraged to persevere when they meet an academic roadblock. Although they may not enjoy every required task, they must be guided to understand that it is their responsibility to complete them.

To nurture our students’ accelerated academic abilities, teachers collaborate to give students assessment choices that demonstrate evidence of learning. Rubrics issued with assignments allow and encourage students to self-assess and improve their work. Peer collaboration has proved to be a useful tool to support learning. Project- based learning is popular with our students who enjoy the freedom of choice it provides and the creativity it encompasses.

Students who were evaluated and identified as Gifted/Talented attend additional small-group classes once or twice a week. Academically gifted students are provided opportunities to master more rigorous content at an accelerated pace. Students identified as Talented receive specialized small-group instruction in their recognized ability (music, visual art, theatre).

### **3c. Special education**

\*12 students (3 % of our population) \*

Students in our school who have a diagnosed impairment (cognitive or physical) receive additional services within the classroom as well as additional instructional minutes when warranted. A certified teacher works with the content teacher(s) to adjust instruction and accommodate the instructional tasks for SPED students. Alternative placements and assessments may be developed to support student needs, as well.

### **3d. ELLs, if a special program or intervention is offered**

### **3e. Other populations (e.g., migrant), if a special program or intervention is offered**

## **PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE**

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### **1. Engaging Students:**

Metairie Academy’s primary mission is “to provide a safe, nurturing, and positive learning environment with a curriculum focused on challenging, creative, diversified, and engaging learning experiences” for every student. Every day begins with a morning meeting attended by our entire school community during which announcements are made, birthdays are celebrated, and special student achievements are recognized. Students join in singing our school song which includes these words: “Be Positive”; “Be Respectful; “Be Responsible”; “Be Safe”; and “Be a Problem Solver”. Throughout the year, students explain what these lyrics mean and give examples illustrating how students can change them into words and actions.

Our mission statement contains the belief that children should “feel safe to be who they are” and that “we respect and celebrate individual and cultural differences.” The diversity of our population provides students opportunities to learn about other cultures from their peers. Students are guided, encouraged, and expected to value themselves and others. Teacher-student interactions model these expectations.

Our Positive Behavior Intervention and Support team (PBIS) has established a schoolwide initiative that recognizes students for following rules and showing kindness and respect for others. All staff members carry slips of paper called Mustangs, which can be redeemed for items at the Mustang Store, and award them to students who are “caught” going above and beyond expectations or performing random acts of kindness.

The PBIS team meets monthly to identify students in need of additional academic and/or behavioral support and create interventions to address their needs.

Building on relationships developed through Conscious Discipline, older students (grades 3-5) regularly partner with younger students (grades Pre-K-2) for a variety of activities. These partnerships form cross-graded relationships and a sense of community. Younger students look forward to the interaction with older students. Older students gain confidence and improve their self-esteem.

We take pride in the positive, nurturing environment we have created at Metairie Academy. We are aware of the unlimited potential our students possess and work to instill in them a sense of responsibility and the tools they will need to use their talents to improve the world. Judging from the accomplishments of our past graduates, we feel confident that we are laying a strong foundation on which our students can build their lives.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

As a selective admissions academy, students are not assigned to Metairie Academy, they compete to attend our school. Parents choose to send their children to us because of the positive reputation our school has developed within our school system and the community. When families enter Metairie Academy for the first time they are excited to be here. It is our job to maintain this relationship and join with them in a partnership that will ensure their child’s success in this academically demanding environment.

From our first meeting with parents, we communicate to them our belief that our entire school community (students, parents, teachers, and staff) play an integral part in students’ learning and are accountable for their success. We encourage them to come to us with any concerns that might develop. Teachers communicate regularly with parents through emails, phone calls, and school conferences to share good news as well as concerns. Our principal welcomes parental involvement, supports this communication, and sends out a monthly calendar to encourage participation in school activities.

Our Co-Op, Gala Group, Men’s Club, and Grandparent’s Club actively support our school with both man hours and funding. These partnerships enhance our curriculum with materials and supplies. Our Grandparent’s Club sponsors and works monthly bake sales and birthday lunch celebrations. These groups

oversee annual fund-raising events such as our Fall Fiesta, Mardi Gras parade, Fun Run, and the annual Auction/Gala which provide supplies and equipment and foster parental/family involvement. In recent years they have purchased technology (Devices such as iPads, Laptops, and Chromebooks) , funded and built a new playground, and created a learning garden which teachers utilize as an outside classroom. Their continued support is essential to both students and teachers.

Community partnerships provide opportunities for student learning. We maintain a prominently displayed school sign to keep businesses and neighbors informed of special school activities and invite them to attend quarterly Share Fairs to view our students' work. Not only do we invite their participation but community members often contact school and offer to share their vocational experiences with students. Local business owners provide incentives for exceptional academic achievement in the form of coupons students can redeem at their stores. The community takes pride in our school's reputation and our students' accomplishments and considers us to be an asset to the Metairie area for which our school is named.

### **3. Creating Professional Culture:**

Numerous studies have confirmed that there is a strong correlation between teacher training and student learning. Teachers must continue to grow if students are to continue to improve. Everyone at Metairie Academy is a lifelong learner and all are encouraged to strive to achieve his/her personal best.

Jefferson Parish Public Schools' design for continuous improvement is based on the formation of an Instructional Leadership Team composed of the Principal, Master Teacher, and Instructional Leaders appointed at each school. These educators participate in system-wide professional development which they share with their faculties. They are also responsible for completing teacher observations and classroom walkthroughs to identify instructional practices that are exemplary and those that need refinement. These observations are shared with the entire faculty and all teachers work together to develop practices that will refine and improve classroom instruction.

The Instructional Leadership Team meets weekly with teachers in either grade- level or subject-area clusters during which teachers analyze data from both formative and summative assessments, share student work samples, and refine instructional practices.

This data-driven approach is utilized to pinpoint instructional areas of exceptional achievement as well as those in need of improvement. Striving to improve achievement in both their students and themselves, teachers engage in meaningful focused conversations and have developed greater professional respect for their colleagues through these interactions.

Teachers are required to complete system-based professional development and encouraged to explore and attend professional learning opportunities outside the system. Supported by the school administration, teachers have attended learning opportunities at Confratute, Kagan Professional Development, multiple sessions with the Bureau of Educational Research, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, and National Art Conference.

Our entire school community benefits from every teacher who attends these and other conferences and seminars. Not only do they use what they learn to improve their classroom instruction but they share their knowledge with all faculty members. Teachers are recognized and respected as professionals by our entire school community. Our principal encourages them to assume leadership responsibilities and supports them in these endeavors. Parents provide a monthly luncheon to express their appreciations for all teachers do for their children.

### **4. School Leadership:**

Metairie Academy's leadership philosophy is based on forming meaningful relationships with all stakeholders which result in collaboration and communication focused on assisting our children to become the best that they can be. Every student, teacher, staff member, and parent is valued and all ideas and opinions welcomed and considered. Our principal greets every student and parent by name and models the

positive attitude that defines our school. The Leadership Team exemplifies the tone of collaboration and encourages and values teachers' and students' opinions and suggestions. Everyone in our school community feels empowered to communicate their needs, express concerns, and offer solutions for improvement.

Our fifth grade student leaders serve in many capacities. They welcome Pre-K students and help them with their breakfast. They assist teachers with morning and afternoon carpool. They make announcements at morning meetings. Through these and other leadership roles, fifth graders understand that they must set good examples for our younger students. Everyone benefits from this initiative. Teachers are assisted, younger students have positive role models, and fifth graders gain confidence and improve their self-esteem.

This team approach has created a true sense of community at Metairie Academy. Students feel safe and are happy. Parents feel welcomed and important. Teachers feel valued and respected. Metairie Academy is a collaboration of teachers, students, and parents all focused on the academic, social, and emotional development of our students so they will fulfill their goal of becoming well-rounded responsible citizens.

The hard work of our entire school community is evident and validated by the success of our students and our school. Metairie Academy is the highest rated of the Jefferson Parish Public School academies. We are annually recognized as being one of the best overall elementary schools in the state of Louisiana ranking either first or second. In 2011, we received national recognition as a Blue Ribbon school.

## **PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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By design, Metairie Academy is different from other public schools. As the first and highest rated academy for advanced studies in the Jefferson Parish Public School System, our success can be contributed to many things. But, if we had to choose a single reason for our success, it would be the relationships we have built with our students, families, and community.

Our students know that we are a family. They understand that our most important job is to keep them safe. They recognize that their physical and emotional well-being is our top priority. Above all, we want them to be safe, happy, and successful.

As a faculty, we strive to get to know each of our students. We learn their strengths and weaknesses and work with them to build their confidence and self-esteem. Our students know that we believe in them. As a result, they believe in themselves.

Our positive school climate is valued and reinforced by our total school community which focuses on the physical, emotional, and social well-being of our students as our primary goal. Through individual relationships, we have created a school environment in which students feel safe to take risks when learning. We explain to them that a mistake is not a failure but a learning experience and an opportunity for growth.

We teach our students how to communicate effectively. In the lower grades, we model how they should use words to express their thoughts and feelings. Students help each other and offer support and guidance to their peers. Older students assume leadership roles, guiding younger students to “use your words.”

The Metairie Academy community chooses kindness. On specific days, everyone wears a shirt with the slogan, “Kindness Rocks.” Student designed posters encourage us to be kind to ourselves and to one another.

They say it takes a village to raise a child. Our Metairie Academy community is our village. Everyone is working together to raise our children so they will achieve the great expectations they have for themselves and we have for them.