

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Veterans Tribute Career & Technical Academy
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 2531 Vegas Drive
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Las Vegas State NV Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 89106-1643

County Clark

Telephone (702) 799-4710 Fax (702) 799-0322

Web site/URL http://www.vtcta.org E-mail ginozjm@nv.ccsd.net

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. Jesus Jara E-mail jarajf@nv.ccsd.net
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Clark County School District Tel. (702) 799-2273

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mrs. Lola Brooks
(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. 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

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):
- 226 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 59 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 49 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 334 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	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	66	174	240
10	70	169	239
11	51	141	192
12 or higher	50	100	150
Total Students	237	584	821

*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
 - 3 % Asian
 - 6 % Black or African American
 - 67 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 18 % White
 - 5 % 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.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	1
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	10
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	11
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	811
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1

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

Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 3 %
25 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 65 %

Total number students who qualify: 531

8. Students receiving special education services: 1 %

12 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>0</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>0</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>12</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</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: 1

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:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	3
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	33
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	3
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	0
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 25:1

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

Required Information	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

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

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

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	178
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	68%
Enrolled in a community college	10%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	14%
Other	8%

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

Yes No

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

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

Veterans Tribute Career & Technical Academy will create a rigorous learning environment while promoting respect and responsibility honoring those who have served our nation.

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

Veterans Tribute Career & Technical Academy (VTCTA) is a magnet, career and technical academy high school. Students who are entering grade 9 apply for one of two CTE programs that focuses on law enforcement and public safety. Students are selected through a blind-lottery conducted by the Clark County School District. Approximately 70% of students meet the minimum qualifications for the lottery which includes a blind-review of academics, attendance, and citizenship as reported on the first semester report card. There are three lottery priority groups that apply only to students entering grade 9; they are sibling preference (25%), magnet middle school program continuity (25%), and geographic zone preference (25%). If there are more qualified applicants than seats available, a computerized random lottery is used to select students for the remaining seats. The lack of a geographic attendance zone and utilization of a lottery process allows for a highly diverse student body that closely resembles the diversity of the Las Vegas community.

As student selection is through a lottery process, the demographic composition of the student body reflects the lottery pool. VTCTA actively works to sustain a diverse student enrollment by having a dedicated, full-time Magnet Recruiter who develops an annual targeted recruiting plan to ensure that VTCTA’s demographics mirror that of the school district. The Magnet Recruiter presents to students and parents at all 59 CCSD middle schools, several community events, an 8th Grade Open House, and several private and charter schools. In addition, our 54 Student Ambassadors encourage underrepresented minority students to attend VTCTA through shadow days, recruiting events and hosting school tours.

PART III - SUMMARY

Veterans Tribute Career & Technical Academy (VTCTA) embodies the vision of "Preparing Everyday Heroes", which produces a new generation of civic-minded students who will enter the ever demanding fields of law enforcement and public safety. The vision of VTCTA is to equip students with a strong foundation of public safety principles, while promoting P.R.I.D.E.: Professionalism, Responsibility, Integrity, Determination and Excellence. These characteristics are embedded school-wide and ensure that our Sentinel students are college and career ready upon graduation.

Veterans Tribute Career & Technical Academy (VTCTA) is a Title I magnet Career and Technical Academy (CTA) located near downtown Las Vegas, Nevada. VTCTA is the high school that most closely mirrors Clark County's demographics, and students from every zip code in the Las Vegas Valley attend our school. The school district provides free bus transportation for all VTCTA students to eliminate barriers and ensure equitable access.

Established in 2009, VTCTA is the only school in the state of Nevada that focuses on Law Enforcement and Public Safety. VTCTA's mission is to create a rigorous learning environment engaging students through collaborative problem-solving while promoting respect and responsibility in honor of those who have served our nation and community.

VTCTA students are selected into one of two magnet CTE programs: Law Enforcement and Emergency Medical Services. During freshman year, all students in Law Enforcement are exposed to the five different programs that fall under the Law Enforcement umbrella. In February of each year, students "declare" their program of study that they wish to pursue. The students choose from Criminal Justice, Cyber Security, Forensic Science, Law Enforcement and 911 Dispatch/Emergency Telecommunications. Students may earn up to 12 college credits as well as industry certifications through completion of their CTE program. During the junior year, students may choose to "minor" in another program of study.

All seniors must complete an extensive school-wide scenario Capstone project in their CTE program, which includes three phases. Phase I includes a written test, Phase II includes a presentation and detailed program specific skills tests. Phase III takes the top 3 teams from each program and has them participate in a first responder training exercise to challenge them and to test the protocol, skills and knowledge that they gained in their CTE program classes. This year's training exercise took place at the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department's SWAT Hangar.

Five years ago, VTCTA committed to expanding its AP program by increasing access to courses for underrepresented students. In that time, VTCTA added two AP courses including Computer Science Principles and Human Geography bringing the total to 12 different courses offered this year. The number of AP exams has doubled with FRL students accounting for nearly 65% of exams taken. Not only has the underrepresented student participation and the number of exams increased, but the percent of students scoring 3 or higher (passing) remained 8% higher than the Nevada mean. The AP expansion has proved successful in providing all students the opportunity to learn college-level content and skills.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

VTCTA’s goal to create a rigorous and relevant learning environment, while preparing students to be college and career ready, drives our innovative instructional practices. At VTCTA, our approach to success in the classroom starts with a student centered approach to learning. The teachers are there to guide and facilitate student learning in a broad range of ways such as group projects, class discussions, project based learning opportunities and a varied approach to formal and informal types of assessment.

With a strong emphasis on project-based learning, public speaking, and building relationships with the public safety community, our students are provided with opportunities to engage in hands-on learning with highly qualified program teachers and content instructors. VTCTA students learn from industry practitioners, and put into practice the knowledge, skills, and dispositions they have learned in their program majors in hands-on scenarios throughout the school year.

The law enforcement and public safety theme is embedded throughout our core and elective classes. Teachers use innovative ways to integrate these concepts into their coursework by utilizing novels, passages, labs and community partners to help reinforce our vision into the class curriculum. VTCTA’s teachers work with our program teachers to integrate our theme and steer the course of instruction in a seamless manner. Students reap the benefits of teacher collaboration as our magnet theme is embedded in program, core, and elective courses.

1b. Reading/English language arts

VTCTA’s English and Language Arts (ELA) curriculum is aligned to the Nevada Academic Content Standards (NVACS). The required four-year program offers courses at grade-level, honors, and AP (11th and 12th). The AP Language and Composition and the AP Literature and Composition courses follow the College Board curriculum.

The English department adjusts instruction based on analysis of AP, ACT and Nevada End-of-Course assessments. VTCTA’s ELA AP teacher participates in the district's AP Cadre PLCs to ensure a deep understanding of college-level expectations. ELA teachers collaborate to vertically align their long-range plans to support AP courses at all levels. Teachers are still provided with autonomy on which texts they choose to use. Texts are arranged in thematic units to address issues of diversity, equality, and civic responsibility.

Instructional strategies in all classes include seminar discussions, close reading annotations, graphic organizers, text rendering, collaborative grouping, project-based learning, and writing workshops. In addition to these strategies, our teachers use a variety of assessments that emphasize and monitor the process of student learning. Assessments such as multi-genre research projects, student portfolios, Socratic Seminars and multimedia presentations all focus on the students demonstrating their knowledge in innovative ways. These types of assessments give the students control over their own learning in a variety of performance-based assessments. In turn, our teachers use these assessments to analyze and evaluate the students' level of understanding. In addition, this data reveals proficiency as well as learning gaps. By identifying these gaps, our teachers are able to reflect on their instructional practices to make sure that they are delivering the highest quality instruction. These ELA changes have proven successful with our students outperforming the state average by 9% of VTCTA’s seniors reaching the ACT College Readiness Benchmark in English.

1c. Mathematics

Although only 3 years of mathematics is required for graduation in Nevada, nearly all VTCTA students graduate with a minimum of 4 math credits. VTCTA's math curriculum provides students the tools and critical thinking skills necessary for problem solving in a wide variety of disciplines. Grade-level and honors courses in Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, and Pre-Calculus align to NVACS. Students enrolled in Algebra I and Geometry are required to take Nevada End-of-Course Exams that are calculated into semester grades. AP Statistics and AP Calculus courses align to The College Board Curriculum. In order to stay abreast of the current trends in AP, our AP Calculus and AP Statistics teachers attend the annual AP Summer Institute in order to strengthen their individual courses.

VTCTA's students come from every middle school in the district and possess drastically different skills. To identify any weaknesses and help students overcome their learning gap, our math department offers after school math tutoring that focuses on the freshmen in Algebra I and all other students in need of additional assistance. Data demonstrates that these students have traditionally struggled the most, and are more likely to withdraw due to low grades.

The Math department uses a PLC model for data analysis, alignment, and scaffolding of curriculum. Math teachers consistently incorporate instructional technology in their daily lessons. Math classrooms utilize student issued Chromebooks, graphing calculators and TIInspire calculators; teachers consistently use these devices to gather real-time formative data to pull small groups of struggling students or assign a student tutor to assist. Lessons are posted to Google Classroom for students to review material at home. The Math department continues to implement innovative practices to meet the diverse needs of VTCTA students. VTCTA's seniors have outperformed the state average on the ACT College Readiness Benchmark in Mathematics by 5%. With these implementations and innovative practices in place, we expect for our students to continue to improve on the ACT.

1d. Science

The science curriculum prepares students for college and careers by introducing them to methods of scientific inquiry in applied laboratory contexts. Students learn to understand science as a process rather than as an accumulation of facts and terms. Instructional strategies employed include lab experiments, simulations (virtual and hands-on), project-based learning, independent research projects, and reading/analysis of a variety of print and online resources. Most classes use a flipped classroom model to increase time for hands-on lab experiments and student discourse.

Students may complete grade-level and honors courses in biology, chemistry, physics, and geoscience that align to the NVACS. A state-mandated science assessment is administered to all 9th graders. In 2019, 68% of VTCTA's students met or exceeded proficiency on this exam compared to 27% of all Nevada state students.

Although only 2 years of science is required for graduation, a vast majority of VTCTA students graduate having taken 4 science courses. Students are encouraged to take advanced levels of science aligned to the College Board curriculum in AP Biology.

The Science department uses a PLC model to examine assessment data and align instruction. A focus emerging from data analysis has been to increase ACT science scores. Strategies have included, using online resources such as Albert.io, attending district training opportunities, and extensive ACT practice sessions. Results have been promising with VTCTA Seniors being an average of 2.4% higher on the ACT Science Test.

The Science department's focus on mastery learning and high expectations coupled with data analysis guarantees that students graduate with skills needed in college or career settings.

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

VTCTA's Social Studies department is regarded as one of the best in the state as evident by an ever-expanding enrollment in AP and AP pass rates that are consistently 30% higher than the Nevada average.

The department includes three AP readers and a 2015 James Madison Fellowship Recipient. The curriculum provides students the opportunity to investigate historical events of western and non-western peoples from prehistory through the present time. The curriculum in grade-level and honors courses in World History, US history, and US Government align to the NVACS. The curriculum in AP Human Geography, AP World History, AP US History, AP US Government, and AP Psychology align to the College Board curriculum.

Social Studies teachers focus on the synthesis of information from multiple sources and assessments, making connections between different concepts, evaluating sources, presentation skills, and writing research papers. Our teachers embrace additional assessments such as Socratic seminars, mock trials and debates which promotes and tracks purposeful learning. For example, AP Government students compete in the We The People Competition where they use skills honed in a variety of sources and assessments. This competition is a simulated congressional hearing in which students “testify” before a panel of judges acting as members of Congress. Students demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of constitutional principles and evaluate, take, and defend positions on relevant historical and contemporary issues.

Social Studies teachers use a PLC model to discuss current issues, review data, and share best practices related to curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Classroom methods address both disciplinary skills and content themes. These methods are integrated into the curriculum using high-quality instructional techniques such as graphic organizers, close readings, analysis of primary source documents, cooperative learning structures, writing and presenting information, and the use of oral and visual activities that extend critical thinking and discourse.

1f. For secondary schools:

VTCTA ensures all students graduate college and career ready through rigorous curriculum, high expectations, and multiple opportunities to earn college credits in CTE courses. All VTCTA students enroll in one of six CTE programs that focus on skills in that career area. In addition, our school counselors assist students with finding requirements for college, and arrange college and military recruiter visits. VTCTA also has a partnership with the City of Las Vegas and Clark County to provide Internships for our students. These internships give our students first hand knowledge and experience of working within the Law Enforcement and Public Safety fields. VTCTA’s model has proven effective as 78% of the Class of 2019 entered post-secondary institutions, 14% entered the military/public service and 8% percent went directly into the workforce.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

With a block schedule of eight periods, VTCTA students are able to enroll in two elective classes beyond that of a typical CCS D student; allowing them to explore curriculum areas outside their core and CTE courses. The vision for electives is to provide meaningful and rigorous courses that allow students to cultivate personal interests and develop well-rounded college/work skills.

VTCTA offers elective courses in visual arts, physical education/health, foreign language, and CTE courses. Elective choices include multi-year studies in journalism, art, and principles of leadership. Also, included are AP elective courses (Psychology and Computer Science Principles).

VTCTA believes that the arts can enhance our programs and therefore students are encouraged to take visual arts courses. These multi-year courses include art and drawing. Students often blend their knowledge from these courses into their CTE programs. For example, in art, our students practice sketch artistry and use a facial reconstruction program to connect art with their CTE programs. This cross-disciplinary approach with the arts and technology is critical for 21st-century career pathways.

The physical education/health program provides all students with the knowledge, skills, and desire to maintain a healthy lifestyle. VTCTA follows required physical education/health requirements but also offers

to upperclassmen a Lifetime fitness elective and/or Physical Training for Law Enforcement that focuses on the physical skills necessary for success in the Police Academy. Students may also have a flexible schedule to participate in varsity sports at their home schools.

Although not required by Nevada, nearly all VTCTA students complete a 2+ year foreign language sequence. Spanish I, II, III and AP Spanish Language are robust courses. Russian was added after student surveys showed a need for a second language option. Russian I and II are offered to give students a choice in which language they would like to learn.

VTCTA students select one of six CTE programs for four years to develop skills for occupations and further post-secondary educational opportunities. All students complete a Senior Capstone in the form of a three phase school-wide scenario. An overview of each program follows.

In addition to enrollment in their core academic courses, students enroll in a minimum of one of the following program areas which prepare students for a career in public service:

Forensic Science/Crime Scene Investigation: Students enrolled in this program focus on forensic recovery, investigations, evidence analysis and data acquisition.

Criminal Justice: Students enrolled in this program are introduced to the basics of the legal and criminal justice system.

Cybersecurity: Students enrolled in this program learn about the techniques of protecting computer systems, networks, and applications.

Emergency Medical Services: Students enrolled in this program are introduced to basic and college-level health services and emergency medical training, foundational for students desiring to work in all areas of medicine.

Law Enforcement: Students enrolled in this program receive specialized training in law enforcement practices, criminal justice investigation and physical agility training.

911 Emergency Dispatch: Students enrolled in this program utilize the nation's largest 911 call center training simulator and are introduced to codes, law, and criminal statutes.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

Despite VTCTA's academic success and higher scores than the Nevada average in every indicator, an achievement gap between ethnic groups exists in all subtests of the ACT and in average composite scores. VTCTA's White (24.1) and Hispanic (19.2) average ACT scores are higher than the African American (17.2) average. Although the average ACT scores for all groups, with the exception of our African American population, is much higher than the state average for all students of 17.9, VTCTA strives to ensure all students reach college and career readiness benchmarks.

To assist our juniors we have implemented several procedures to help them prepare for the ACT. All juniors participate in two all day tutoring sessions with tutors from Tutors Across America to help breakdown the ACT test with strategies and tips. In addition, all students who scored between a 16-20 in English and 20-24 in Math on the PreACT were placed into a series of vigorous ACT Prep Sessions that focus on building confidence and improving test scores on the ACT.

Students from low performing middle schools are often overwhelmed with the rigor of VTCTA and thus a renewed focus has emerged to assist these students during this difficult transition. A teacher supervises the library daily until 4:30 pm so all students have access to computers, printers, and a place to collaborate. The teacher also provides tutoring to the students needing additional support.

Lastly, VTCTA has incorporated a 30 minute Assistance Period at the end of the school day. Students are strongly encouraged to use this time to receive additional help from their teachers. This time has been particularly beneficial for underclassmen who struggle with time and workload management.

3b. Students performing above grade level

VTCTA's offers additional educational opportunities to our advanced students in a myriad of ways. In the classroom, we offer a variety of advanced placement (AP) courses to tackle college level work while still in high school. The AP courses also allow our students to earn college credit upon passing the AP exam. In addition to AP courses, VTCTA also offers Dual Credit courses to our students. In these courses, students are able to earn high school credit as well as college credit during the school year. Upon graduation, students who pass their Dual Credit course will receive credit at any in-state college or university.

Another way that VTCTA meets the needs of these students is by offering them opportunities outside of the classroom. Students that excel are encouraged to apply for competitive internships with the City of Las Vegas and Clark County. These internships are aligned with the students' programs and provide them with building blocks, knowledge and experience to excel in the life after VTCTA.

Our high performing students also participate in our student tutor program. During class, these students work under the teacher's guidance to help their peers understand course concepts and enhance their understanding. VTCTA also offers after school tutoring for students who need extra assistance.

3c. Special education

VTCTA employs a multi-tiered instructional and support system to ensure success and achievement for all students. Targeted instruction, interventions, and assessments meet the individual needs of our students. VTCTA promotes student achievement in the general education setting for all students through supplemental services and additional supports throughout and after the school day. VTCTA maintains a 15:1 special education student-to-teacher ratio and has one, full-time special education teacher to support students in the least restrictive environment.

Our special education facilitator provides individualized and targeted support for our special education students for their core classes, CTE courses and ACT prep sessions. This support is provided by offering ACT study sessions and one on one help for all other classes during the school day. This approach has offered our special education population the safety net needed to thrive and succeed at VTCTA.

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

In addition to VTCTA's identified ELL population, over 37% of VTCTA students speak another language at home. Due to this large population, VTCTA adopted a three-year ELL professional development plan for all faculty. VTCTA is currently in year two of the three year plan. All faculty attend weekly, rigorous training focused on leveraging student assets to support academic language development through researched-based teaching practices. An ELL Success Advocate position was created to provide additional support to teachers and staff. These interventions have proven successful with 55.5% of VTCTA's ELL population meeting the Nevada Adequate Growth Percentile compared to the district average of 14.9%.

Due to our large ELL population, VTCTA's teachers receive training to assist in developing differentiated instruction targeted at providing additional assistance to these students. Speaking skills are encouraged by our teachers by giving our ELL population the opportunities to use purposeful and appropriate speaking techniques during class discourse.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

VTCTA's success depends on recruiting diverse students willing to step out of their comfort zones to challenge themselves. Therefore, it is critical that Veterans Tribute has a student-centered approach to creating a positive climate and culture.

This student-centered focus starts with welcoming students to the VTCTA community. Student ambassadors, student council and the 9th-grade teachers host a new sentinel orientation for students and parents. The new sentinel orientation allows students to interact with their future teachers and build relationships with faculty, staff, and other students. There are activities from ice breakers to leadership lessons to make the new students comfortable on the first day of school. In addition to these activities, student ambassadors serve as mentors to help our new freshmen acclimate to life at VTCTA.

Recognizing students is critical to a positive culture. Every month each department and program selects a Student of the Month. The student and parents are invited to a luncheon to celebrate their accomplishments. At VTCTA, we believe that parents should be involved in these types of celebratory events. Each quarter, parents are invited to attend the Power Lunch with the Parents where parents bring their child lunch and are able to eat with him/her and get a glimpse of life at VTCTA. This activity began with only a few parents participating but now has over 100 parents taking part in this quarterly event.

VTCTA has also committed to expanding our cultural awareness by continuing to develop our Black Student Union and Student Organization of Latinos in order to help our minority students feel connected to the school. In the Spring, VTCTA hosted a Cultural Awareness Seminar with community members interacting with our students to identify bias in order to tackle and overcome these issues.

The results of a student-centered approach is clear as VTCTA has consistently had one of the top student and parent satisfaction rates of all high schools in the Clark County School District. The 2019 Parent and Student Survey results identified that 95% strongly agree that VTCTA engages their students; 96% strongly agree that they are happy with the education their student receives at VTCTA and 97% strongly agree that VTCTA focuses on student safety. Our climate and culture allows our students to focus on their education knowing that their well being is a top priority for the teachers, administrators and staff at VTCTA.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

VTCTA recognizes that parents need a sense of ownership to feel invested in their schools. This is why parents are provided leadership opportunities including having three parent representatives on the School Organizational Team (SOT). There are online elections for these seats, which account for 50% of the voting bloc. Members of the SOT also include two teachers, a support staff employee, and a non-voting student representative. The SOT meets monthly with the principal and administration to discuss and vote on facility and faculty concerns, the budget, School Performance Plan, and staffing plan.

VTCTA welcomes parents during our New Student and Parent Orientations, Open House, and College and Scholarship Night. In addition, parents are invited to attend an Academic Letter Ceremony and Senior Awards Night. Additional events are held which encourage parents to interact with school staff including movie nights, school dances and our Emergency School-Wide Scenario. Our parents are encouraged to participate in their child's education by volunteering at our school events, student incentive BBQs, senior day and community service projects. At VTCTA, we understand that our parents are a vital part of our school community.

VTCTA understands the needs of our diverse parent population. All office messages and weekly updates are sent in English and Spanish. The VTCTA website has a link to Google Translate to automatically translate the entire website into more than one hundred languages. Parents are also provided access to their child's grades and attendance online and can be viewers on Google Classroom pages.

The Las Vegas community also recognizes the uniqueness of VTCTA and many organizations have formed partnerships with our school. Community members serve on an Advisory Board that funds scholarships, arranges field trips and guest speakers, provides internships and classroom support. A majority of our Advisory Board works within the Law Enforcement and Public Safety sectors. Their expertise has helped build a network of support for our programs, teachers, students and staff.

Another vital member of our community is our partnership with the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and the University of Nevada, Reno. UNLV and UNR have developed relationships with VTCTA including hosting on-site application fairs for parents and students, free flights to tour UNR in order to get a sneak peak of their campus and by attending UNLV's Rebel for the Day Program. Due to these relationships, UNLV and UNR are a top choice for many of our graduating seniors.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Each school year begins with two days of professional development, presented in a conference-like format. Teachers who attended conferences over the summer or have expertise present to their colleagues. This time is also used to reinforce the school's mission and best practices.

Each week, VTCTA teachers have one hour of CCSD-required Site-Based Collaboration Time (SBCT). VTCTA uses this time for a variety of purposes. The departments collaborate on a variety of school specific goals. The departments also use this time by using a PLC model, allowing teachers to select goals aligned to VTCTA's School Performance Plan, and selecting meeting times when it is convenient for them as many teachers have pre scheduled school organization meetings, professional development, and family obligations. All PLC groups created and implemented an ACT Action Plan prior to the state-mandated ACT test to improve student preparedness.

VTCTA is also in its second year of a three year professional development series focused on ELL best practices. The ELL professional development includes several instructional rounds per year when district-level ELL staff along with VTCTA administrators and teachers visit classrooms to focus on instructional practices and shadow ELL students.

Professional development is further individualized at VTCTA through the evaluation process. The evaluation cycle requires administrators to observe, conference, and collaboratively develop next steps with every teacher. Teachers set Student Learning Goals (SLGs) that are connected to an academic standard allowing teachers to address and monitor areas identified in need of improvement. Through the use of effective Student Learning Goals, VTCTA has experienced an increase in student ACT scores. VTCTA administrators attend all district and state trainings related to magnet, assessment, and CTE programs.

School Leadership:

VTCTA's school leadership philosophy is based on a shared and participatory approach. The principal, two assistant principals, department chairpersons, school counselors, the School Improvement Team (SIT), and SOT collaborate to drive continuous school improvement.

The administrative team builds relationships with faculty by maintaining an open door policy, being approachable, visible, and celebrating student, teacher, and staff successes.

VTCTA administrators are foremost instructional leaders who closely monitor classrooms for effective instructional practices and implementation of adopted curriculum. Lesson plans are reviewed to ensure objective-driven lessons and bell-to-bell instruction is occurring at all times. Struggling teachers are paired with a fellow department member for assistance and are also required to follow specific improvement plans developed with student achievement in mind.

VTCTA's SIT is a representative body of teachers, support staff and administrative team responsible for examining all school-wide concerns. The SIT analyzes datasets including surveys, ACT, PSAT, End of NBRS 2020

Course, and AP results. The SIT then sets a clear and consistent action plan aligned to strategic goals in three areas: 100% graduation rates, structured student supports, and a respectful climate for diverse students. The School Performance Plan and aligned Strategic Budget is submitted for final revision and approval by the elected School Organization Team members.

The School Leadership team consists of the school administrators, department chairs, counselors and support staff personnel. They meet weekly to ensure proper planning for and execution of curriculum, instructional, and day-to-day operations. In addition, all teachers participate as members on at least one school committee (Technology, Graduation, Student Incentives, etc.). These committees change each year based on school needs and provide teacher leadership opportunities to support the administration.

Students participate in focus groups at various points throughout the school year to solicit feedback on the entire school program, and administrators have an open door policy for student feedback/suggestions. Students also complete a district-administered, anonymous survey in which they rate school safety, cleanliness, academics, school supports, and extracurricular activities. At the end of each quarter, teachers and staff are also given the opportunity to provide feedback on the performance of VTCTA's administration through an anonymous survey. VTCTA's leadership believes in constantly refining its practices based on data and feedback to ensure a high-quality education is provided for all students.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

VTCTA is a highly ranked school in the state of Nevada for many reasons such as a talented teaching team, strong administrators, a diverse student body, and courses that are rigorous and relevant. VTCTA staff, teachers, and administration believe in empowering our students by demonstrating and communicating our school motto of P.R.I.D.E.: Professionalism, Responsibility, Integrity, Determination, and Excellence.

VTCTA provides all students with Chromebooks which allow for extended learning opportunities and reinforce the skills students will need to be successful in an ever evolving technologically focused environment. Matching technology needs to classroom instruction has empowered our students to create an improved student to teacher communication. VTCTA's daily schedule is purposefully structured to allow additional time for students to receive academic assistance through the use of a thirty minute assistance period at the end of each day. During lunch, students may eat outside, play soccer, or visit the student union. Providing choices to students has reduced disciplinary issues because students feel empowered to make appropriate decisions.

The master schedule represents VTCTA's belief in choice driving the decision-making process. Counselors meet individually with students to develop a strong academic plan but ultimately students and their parents approve course selections. Providing students with informed options and upholding high expectations is part of the reason for VTCTA's continued success. When students take ownership of their decisions, they feel empowered and achieve at high rates.

Teachers are also empowered with the freedom to decide how best to teach their standards. This professional autonomy with accountability has spurred incredible collaboration and adaptations. For example, the math department analyzed data and utilized a flipped classroom model focused on individualized assistance. The math classrooms now have increased student collaboration, self-reflection, and targeted supports. When teachers have ownership over decisions in their classrooms, positive outcomes for students emerge.

VTCTA's CTE programs have demonstrated a high level of success both academically and in providing students the necessary skills to enter the workforce. These program areas typically require students to be 21 years of age to enter the law enforcement workforce; however, VTCTA's 911 Telecommunications and Emergency Medical Services programs prepare students to obtain certifications, and students are eligible to apply for positions at eighteen years of age. Upon graduation, our students feel empowered to utilize the skills, knowledge and dispositions they learned at VTCTA and apply them to these fields to help keep our community safe.