

U.S. Department of Education
2021 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Walter Payton College Preparatory High School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1034 N Wells Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Chicago State IL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 60610-2513

County Cook

Telephone (773) 534-0034 Fax (773) 534-0035

Web site/URL https://www.wpcp.org/ E-mail fjshabazz@cps.edu

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. José Torres E-mail JMTorres@cps.edu
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name City of Chicago School District 299 Tel. (773) 553-1000

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 Mr. Miguel del Valle
(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, leave blank.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The electronic signature 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 2021 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 must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2015 and grades participating in statewide assessments must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2019.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 or 2020.
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 current school year (2020-2021) unless otherwise stated.

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

- Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
 - 476 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 162 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools

638 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not the district.)

- 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

- Number of students as of October 1, 2020 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

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	146	143	289
10	133	157	290
11	141	162	303
12 or higher	148	178	326
Total Students	568	640	1208

*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):
- 0.2 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 18.6 % Asian
 - 10.4 % Black or African American
 - 21.8 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0.9 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 43.9 % White
 - 4.2 % 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 2019 - 2020 school year: 6%

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, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	0
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	78
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	78
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019	1231
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.06
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	6

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

Students Identified as speaking a non-English home language: 36.3%

Spanish, Greek, Polish, German, Korean, Pilipino (Tagalog), Arabic, French, Hindi, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Czech, Cantonese, Portuguese, Hebrew, Swedish, Romanian, Mandarin, Farsi, Turkish, Urdu, Vietnamese, Russian, Gujarati, Norwegian, Swahili, Panjabi, Macedonian, Kannada, Nepali, Telugu, Yoruba, Tamil, Akan, Amharic, Tigrinya, Teochiu, Hainanese, Croatian, Bosnian, Albanian

ELL Program Data:

Spanish, Yoruba, Urdu, and Punjabi

0.83% of students

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1 %

10 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 29 %

Total number students who qualify: 354

8. Students receiving special education services: 5 %
65 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. All students receiving special education services should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <u>25</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>2</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>18</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>0</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>2</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>13</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. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	4
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	67
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.	7
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	12

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 18:1

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

Required Information	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
Daily student attendance	95%	93%	93%	93%	93%
High school graduation rate	97%	96%	96%	97%	93%

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 2020.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	284
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	88%
Enrolled in a community college	2%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	10%

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. 2014

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

Every student feels a sense of belonging; feels their identity centered and celebrated in the curriculum and culture; academic outcomes are consistent across all groups.

16. Briefly describe how your school has been operating during the current 2020-2021 school year (e.g., open as usual, online only, a hybrid model, etc.)? If different grade levels in your building operate in different ways, include this. If the school began with one model and switched to another partially through the year, include this as well.

Payton has been operating under a 100% remote learning (online) model for the entirety of the school year. The model shifted to hybrid on April 19 (students attend two days per week).

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

Walter Payton College Prep is one of 11 selective enrollment high schools (SEHS) in the Chicago Public Schools. Students are scored out of 900 total points in the following categories: 300 possible points from the 7th grade end-of-year NWEA MAP Assessment, 300 possible points from core subjects (English Language Arts, Social Studies, Math, Science) grades at the end of 7th grade, and 300 possible points from the SEHS entrance exam taken in the winter of students’ 8th grade year.

For general education students, 20% of students are admitted based on their SEHS total score. The remaining 80% of students are admitted based on scores relative to their economic tier group, 20% per group. CPS uses U.S. Census data to categorize students into 4 economic tiers. They consider the following when classifying students: median income, level of adult educational attainment, percentage of single-parent households, percentage of owner-occupied homes, percentage of homes where English is not the home language, and achievement scores from neighborhood schools.

For the 2020-2021 school year, students were admitted within the following score ranges:

Rank: Minimum 898, Maximum 900

Tier 1: Minimum 803, Maximum 894

Tier 2: Minimum 855, Maximum 898

Tier 3: Minimum 882, Maximum 898

Tier 4: Minimum 895, Maximum 898

Additionally, students with IEPs are admitted via the pathways outlined above, however, the cutoff scores are adjusted to ensure representation of diverse learners in the school. For School Year 2020-2021, students with IEPs were admitted within the following score range: 504 - 887.

Finally, Payton offers two special education cluster programs. One program serves visually impaired students who participate in much of the general education curriculum and one program for low-incidence disabilities who spend most of their day in a self-contained setting. In both of these programs, students are placed through the Office of Diverse Learner Supports and Services (ODLSS).

PART III - SUMMARY

Payton was founded in 2000 as a magnet high school with 350 freshmen and a simple motto: “We Nurture Leaders.” Since then, the school expanded first to four full classes totaling 813 students by 2014, and, after a capital project to expand the school, increased enrollment to 1208 students today. Students are selected through a combination of standardized test scores, grades, and performance on an academic exam, with 35% of seats allotted to students in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. The result is a uniquely diverse student body. Half of our students are BIPOC (Black and Indigenous people of color), and a third qualify for the federal Free/Reduced Lunch Program; they come from every neighborhood in Chicago and over 100 public and private elementary schools. Throughout its nearly 21-year history, the Payton community has been rooted in the “Four Cs”: Curiosity, Character, Compassion, and Courage. These values call for students and teachers alike to be “inquisitive, creative, and skeptical problem solvers,” “ethical and engaged representatives of our local and global communities” who are “empathetic” and “appropriately disruptive of the status quo.” A focus on these traits distinguishes Payton from other schools focusing primarily on academic success.

Payton students are selected based on their academic credentials, so academic success is a tradition at Payton. As the most competitive of the 11 CPS selective enrollment high schools, Payton’s students demonstrate a level of excellence that is unmatched in Chicago. The class of 2021 has an average SAT score of 1350 -- earned in September 2020 despite the closing of schools due to COVID-19 in March, 2020 and a district-wide teacher strike in the fall of 2019. Payton is regularly ranked in the top 10 high schools nationally by U.S. News & World Report; the STEM programs are also top-50 ranked, and the school as a whole was named the #1 high school in Illinois in 2019-20.

Payton adheres to a block schedule which allows students to have extended 90-minute learning blocks and provides faculty the opportunity to differentiate instruction to meet learning needs, engage in student-centered class discussion, and provide individualized support when needed. Learning focuses on critical thinking and conceptual understanding, making connections, articulating positions and defending them with evidence--not just memorizing facts and procedures.

Students extend their learning beyond the traditional curriculum through two 90-minute seminars that meet every other Wednesday. These pass-fail courses encourage students to engage in new challenges and expanded learning. Seminars are tailored to broaden learning beyond Payton’s curricular offerings to provide deeper engagement in the arts, physical wellness, civic and community engagement. During this past year of remote learning, after Seminars, students were released to asynchronous study and learning time, and staff were released to engage in professional development. During a school year without COVID-19 limitations, students will be released after Seminars to pursue internships at local academic and cultural institutions. A standard school day at Payton ends with a 49-minute Enrichment period during which students have agency in signing up for activities, attending club meetings, attending faculty office hours, or meeting with the counseling department for postsecondary support. Payton strives to offer a curriculum that is both academically rigorous and diversified.

Payton is also exceptional in the international trips accessible to students each year. By the time they graduate, nearly half of Payton students will travel internationally on academic trips or student exchanges. Ten to twenty percent of travelers are on free/reduced lunch. Payton’s commitment to making every Payton experience open to every student ensures that all students --regardless of socioeconomic status-- have access to these trips. While COVID-19 has halted this programming over the past year, with evolving public health guidelines, Payton teachers are beginning to plan for the 2021-2022 school year when we hope to return to sending Payton students across the globe as learners, inquirers, scholars, and global citizens & friends.

Payton is proud to have been awarded the National Blue Ribbon Award in 2008 and 2014. This honor, both times -- and through the nomination process this year -- has pushed the community to reflect on the next opportunities for growth. Since 2014, much of Payton’s focus has been on equity. Payton faculty have engaged in deep professional learning on implementing culturally responsive teaching; data-informed practice is examined through an equity lens to work to decrease the opportunity gap that persists; and hiring

practices have ensured the diverse student body is reflected in its faculty, staff, and administration. Most recently, Payton has deepened its equity practice to include implementing school-wide restorative practices; amplifying student voice above mere expressing of ideas to actual student-adult co-planning and co-facilitating at many levels of decision-making; and actively and publicly addressing institutionalized racism, biased-based harm, and the historic marginalization of BIPOC students at Payton. Payton's Vision for Equity, written in July 2020, guides all aspects of school: Every student feels a sense of belonging; every student feels their identity centered and celebrated in the curriculum and culture; academic outcomes are consistent across all groups (including race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and gender/gender identity).

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

The COVID-19 Crisis has provided a remarkable opportunity for us at Payton to examine our practice and push the envelope on innovation. Teachers have leveraged edtech to enhance their curricula. School investment in platforms such as PearDeck, NearPod, and the use of the Google Education Suite, empowers teachers to creatively deliver their curricula in an online setting to support authentic engagement, collaboration, and rigor. Remote learning has forced teachers to reimagine how collaborative work can look through Google Classroom, breakout rooms, hyperdocs, and other online tools. We'll continue to push the envelope as we enter hybrid and simultaneous (remote and in-person) teaching over the next few weeks. Additionally, teachers have had to rethink assessment. Given the availability of online resources and information when students are learning remotely, traditional testing is no longer a valid measure of students' knowledge/skills. Teachers have shifted to group assessment, projects, portfolios, and performance-based tasks. Furthermore, given the many challenges and hardships students face this year, an iterative process of creating new and individualized grading expectations, opportunities for retakes, changes to missing work policies, and holistic grading over points-/average-based semester grades, has centered students' social-emotional wellbeing in our assessment practices while still ensuring high academic standards and academic excellence. Additionally our focus on social-emotional learning this year has allowed us to intentionally create community in an online setting.

Payton uses a variety of learning standards to root its curriculum. First and foremost, we are part of a group of schools in CPS that are piloting competency-based education (CBE). The CBE learning model is designed to help students develop the skills they need to succeed in college, career, and life by offering students customized learning instruction that relies on an advanced evaluation system to gauge mastery of essential skills. This year the focus of the CBE pilot is on social-emotional (SEL) competencies. The CBE SEL team has been focused on curating resources and piloting initiatives aimed at developing the competencies of agency, collaboration, adaptability and flexibility, and leadership across content areas. Additionally, with so many AP classes at the heart of our curriculum, the AP skills, practices, and content support horizontal and vertical alignment to ensure students possess the college readiness skills required to be successful in the highly competitive colleges and universities they ultimately attend.

Competency-Based Education has influenced how we assess our students. Rather than focusing on task completion, content knowledge, and letter-based grades, Payton faculty focuses on assessing student skill proficiency. Departments and course teams collaborated on identifying the key skills and concepts students would need to be successful in their classes, and then delineated between levels of proficiency. While some departments use different terminology depending on their content, the mastery levels can be described as such: beginning, novice, approaching mastery, and mastery. With the focus being on competency development, students are afforded multiple opportunities to be assessed and demonstrate mastery and growth.

A major shift in the curriculum at Payton that aligns to our Vision for Equity is intentionally marrying content and skills with real-world context, experience, and application. In Chemistry, for example, students are learning about environmental justice through a study of the Flint Water Crisis; in PE/Health students, service projects centered on community-based health; in Rehumanizing Math students conduct a research project on the sociology of Math and independently create new math outside of an algebra construct; in Multimedia Lit students identify an issue related to inequity they are passionate about and use multimedia literacy skills to create actionable solutions; in US History, students are examining current social, civil, and political unrest through a historical lens and making connections to their daily lives. As part of our Math program, Payton offers Honors Computer Science, AP Computer Science Principles and AP Computer Science A. Our CS classes emphasize real-world application of a variety of skills and competencies, and encourage content creation at a variety of different levels. This year, WPCP was awarded the College Board 2020 AP CSP Female Diversity Award for achieving high female representation and expanding female-identifying students' access in AP Computer Science courses.

1a. For secondary schools (middle and/or high school grades):

Payton's 92% college matriculation rate holds the community to a high standard for preparing every student for college. High SAT scores, AP scores, and all-honors curriculum support students in earning seats at the most prestigious colleges and universities. Payton offers 27 AP courses to ensure students enter college more than ready for college-level work--and we work hard to make those courses accessible and available to all students. Over time, barriers that have historically resulted in Black and Latinx students being under-represented in AP courses have been removed and for the first time in its history, for SY2021-21 programming, all grade and recommendation requirements have been dismantled. In math, incoming freshmen are either placed in geometry or an accelerated algebra course to ensure all students have access to AP calculus before they graduate. Approximately three-quarters of Payton graduates leave with at least one year of college math. In English, about three-quarters of the 11th grade takes AP Language and Composition to hone their nonfiction reading and writing skills, which are the most essential skills for college success. Virtually all students take four years of a world language--qualifying them to place out of at least one semester of college language--as well as four years of science (with about half our students taking at least one year of AP science), and four years of social studies. And students pass these courses overwhelmingly; our 5-year average AP pass rate from 2016 to 2020 is 95%. Payton also offers the AP Capstone, as well as a Payton-developed Advanced Studies Cohort to give students experience with research while in high school. Many of those research projects are collaborations with university professors. Payton's counseling team also supports postsecondary readiness through a four-year college readiness curriculum that includes grade-specific lessons delivered in class, small group workshops and planning, and one-on-one college and career counseling throughout students' four years.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Payton is proud to offer many non-core content area classes. We encourage our students to explore our offerings to enrich their academic lives and to pursue their interests. Like our core content classes, these programs meet four times a week for 45 minutes, or twice a week for 90-minute blocks.

Our Visual and Performing Arts (VPA) program includes a variety of honors and AP classes including Orchestra, Band, Chorus, Dance, and Drama. These classes are available to all students regardless of prior experience. The department's focus is on fostering an appreciation of a variety of art forms, developing technical competencies, and artistic creation. The department encourages students to use art to creatively and collaboratively address issues in our community. This year, in remote learning, the VPA teachers have pivoted to create unique interpretations of their curricula. Drama shifted from live theatre performances to a radio program launched as a series of podcasts; our choir director has mastered software to combine individual video performances into full choral masterpieces that are shared community-wide; and our dance teacher has leveraged live-streaming technology to hold live dance performances. Our visual arts teachers created at-home art kits while also creating projects that used household items to adapt to remote learning.

Students at Payton take Physical Education classes for 4 years and learn about and develop healthy life-long habits. Students focus on the development of competencies including teamwork and leadership skills. We encourage our juniors and seniors to take advanced programs like Dance, and Personal Fitness and Wellness. The PE program also houses Drivers Education and Health classes. Both include real-world application and service projects to ensure students are getting beyond the theory. During remote learning, PE has made innovative use of the ranges of spaces students have access to at home so that exercise can still take place.

The World Language (WL) Department offers honors and AP classes in Latin, Spanish, French, and Chinese. WL teachers focus on competency-based language acquisition models and students explore a variety of cultural enrichment through authentic materials, resources, and activities from around the world. The department fosters students' development of communication and critical thinking skills. The Global Connections Program -- while not currently running due to COVID-19 restrictions -- historically created opportunities for students to practice their world language skills through exchange programs, home stays,

and international travel. During remote learning, WL classes go on virtual field trips and “explore” digital representations of Francophone, Spanish speaking, and Chinese speaking communities, and practice their language skills through simulated interactions and role-play.

As Payton uses Competency-Based Education (CBE) principles, character-building and developing life skills are integrated across content areas. This is augmented in our Advisory, Seminar, and Enrichment programs. During daily advisory, students engage in a variety of different activities and lessons created and curated by our staff and students. These lessons tend to have a focus on civic engagement, restorative justice, antiracist practice, mindfulness, healing-centered engagement, and social-emotional wellness. Seminar classes are special-interest classes and take place every two weeks over a semester. Seminar classes focus on special interests, and have included classes on judo, improv comedy, 3d modeling and printing, financial analysis, and more! Our community partnerships also bring in experts in the field to engage with students. Four days a week, the day ends with a 49-minute Enrichment period when students self-select an area of focus to engage in. Enrichments can serve as academic time, club time, and more.

3. Academic Supports:

Payton’s 92% college matriculation rate holds the community to a high standard for preparing every student for college. High SAT scores, AP scores, and all-honors curriculum support students in earning seats at the most prestigious colleges and universities. Payton offers 27 AP courses to ensure students enter college more than ready for college-level work--and we work hard to make those courses accessible and available to all students. Over time, barriers that have historically resulted in Black and Latinx students being under-represented in AP courses have been removed and for the first time in its history, for SY2021-21 programming, all grade and recommendation requirements have been dismantled. In math, incoming freshmen are either placed in geometry or an accelerated algebra course to ensure all students have access to AP calculus before they graduate. Approximately three-quarters of Payton graduates leave with at least one year of college math. In English, about three-quarters of the 11th grade takes AP Language and Composition to hone their nonfiction reading and writing skills, which are the most essential skills for college success. Virtually all students take four years of a world language--qualifying them to place out of at least one semester of college language--as well as four years of science (with about half our students taking at least one year of AP science), and four years of social studies. And students pass these courses overwhelmingly; our 5-year average AP pass rate from 2016 to 2020 is 95%. Payton also offers the AP Capstone, as well as a Payton-developed Advanced Studies Cohort to give students experience with research while in high school. Many of those research projects are collaborations with university professors. Payton’s counseling team also supports postsecondary readiness through a four-year college readiness curriculum that includes grade-specific lessons delivered in class, small group workshops and planning, and one-on-one college and career counseling throughout students’ four years.

Students who are performing below expectations are provided support through differentiated assignments in class; assessed against mastery standards (CBE) and provided with academic interventions; and through one-on-one tutoring during an in-school enrichment period. Additionally, student tutors provide another layer of support. Diverse learners are supported via resource class, with direct support by co-teachers, and through a variety of accommodations and modification of the curricula.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Payton’s Vision for Equity serves as the foundation for all school-wide initiatives. Ensuring that the needs of all WPCP students are met means student voice is at the center of how we work to create opportunities for social and emotional and academic growth opportunities for every WPCP community member. We provide SEL that matches the rigor and support of our academics so that students are holistically prepared to thrive at Payton and in their postsecondary lives. Leveraging student voices and feedback to create actionable support has been the single-most meaningful strategy in this work. Through PERTS data collection and analysis, student inclusion in staff professional development and department meetings, and culture & climate collaboration, student input has allowed us to be co-creators in building the equitable learning environment our community deserves.

Our developmentally-attuned schedule includes an Enrichment period that can be utilized for individualized teacher support, student-led club and organization engagement, and counseling support. Our Selenium platform provides students with the opportunity to virtually select from daily Enrichment offerings and have an additional platform of communication with teachers. Payton offers SEL-focused, student- and staff-led Seminars every 2 weeks. WPCP has +75 student-led, adult-sponsored clubs, and organizations with offerings ranging from academics to activism and topical learning. Student club leadership increases trust across community members and consistently build toward WPCP’s Vision for Equity. Our school partnerships provide pro-social student and mental health supports that buoy the work of our counselors.

WPCP Administrators have also leveraged district connections to ensure that students have opportunities to be integral voices in national and district policy discussions. A WPCP Student cohort of 20 participated in a two-part feedback session with the CPS Offices of Discipline, SEL, and Student Protections regarding changes to the district’s Student Code of Conduct related to bias-based harm. WPCP student representatives have been a part of the National Equity Project/CPS Equity Design Team to inform the integration of student voice in district-level equity policy. Members of WPCP Student Government were supported to create the first-ever district-wide Association of Chicago Student Councils. Students have collaborated with the WPCP Director of Transformative Justice and Wellness to create whole-school Advisory lessons about racial inequity, kindness, disability justice, and community building. In 2021, WPCP launched an official Instagram account [wpcp_official](#)-- to promote connection, highlight student excellence, launch learning campaigns, and provide a springboard for Advisory content and follow-up resources. Students are encouraged to collaborate in the creation of content and the account amplifies student org and club work. In a time when students report they are most interested in connecting on social media, we have utilized this platform to our creative advantage.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Payton has a variety of family and community engagement opportunities that work collaboratively with school personnel to support student success and school improvement. The Local School Council (LSC) operates to hire and evaluate the principal; supports the implementation of the Continuous Improvement Work Plan (CIWP) -- a two-year action plan detailing school priorities and initiatives; and approves Payton’s \$8 million annual budget. This elected council includes parents, community members, Payton stakeholders, and the principal. Additionally, other parent groups provide support-- Friends of Payton (FOP) is instrumental in fundraising to fill the gap between district funding and what is needed to implement our world-class education. FOP also coordinates an extensive volunteer network that supports with SAT proctoring, main office support, hosting teacher appreciation events, and providing translation services. Our alumni organization created an endowment and makes annual gifts to the school, supports alumni engagement, and provides mentoring and networking opportunities to recent graduates. Payton launched the Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Committee to better meet the needs of parents and caregivers who seek a deeper connection to their students' education. In its inaugural year, the FACE Committee launched a series of mental health workshops in partnership with Northwestern Hospital on teenage mental health. Additionally, FACE is providing postsecondary planning support to parents and caregivers

specifically targeting first-generation college students. To better meet the needs of BIPOC students, a parent founded Payton Families of Color (PFC). This organization works in partnership with the principal to center the unique experiences of our BIPOC students and families who have been historically marginalized at Payton. The Senior Steering Committee consists of administration, students, teachers, and parents of our class of 2021 and is creatively reimagining senior activities including graduation, prom, and other events within the context of COVID-19 public health guidelines.

This year has presented a unique opportunity to engage parents/caregivers remotely resulting in much greater parent and community engagement than Payton has seen in the past. Our most recent reopening webinar had nearly 400 participants. Payton's principal hosts a webinar every month to deliver a State-of-the-School address that garners 100-200 live audience members and is later available as a recording on the website. LSC meetings that historically saw few if any non-members in attendance when they were in-person, now include 60-80 viewers engaging over Zoom.

Payton Cares provides material and financial support for families in need. Our new partnership with Lutheran Social Services of Illinois provides therapeutic clinical services for students and referrals for families. Payton students founded a nonprofit that currently operates across CPS called Connecting Chicago to provide elementary students in high-need schools with Payton student tutors.

Finally, our January 1st-launched Instagram account has a vibrant hub for community connection, learning, and celebration.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

COVID-19 impacts on school, communication, and community have amplified the need for intentional, differentiated investments in adult learning and support. We have been able to creatively leverage our remote learning schedule to institute weekly staff professional development that is aligned to our Vision for Equity, voiced-needs of educators and students, and the changing realities of the educational landscape. This year, faculty have engaged in a combination of admin-, teacher-, student-, and external vendor-provided professional development related to educational equity; inquiry-based communication, empathetic listening; identity-based self-awareness; healing-centered engagement, trauma-responsive pedagogy; restorative practices; classroom community-building, belonging, and SEL strategies; soliciting student voice through data collection; analyzing student feedback and engaging in improvement science cycles; modeled processing and discussion related to current events; bias-based violence prevention; tech training; experiential training with acquired e-learning resources. Sessions have been planned in collaboration with our instructional leadership team and student groups including Student Government and the Student Advisory Committee. Leveraging departmental feedback, student experience data, and collaborative decision-making, we have provided learning investments that have iteratively met staff needs while remaining aligned to district and school priorities and responsive to student needs.

Over the past 13 months of remote learning, ongoing and frequent teacher-led professional development to share best practices has empowered teachers to learn from one another, take professional risks, collaborate, and enhance skills.

This year we have creatively utilized asynchronous student learning time as opportunities for staff to connect and collaborate. Each department has held day-long learning and connecting retreats this year to support one another in collaboratively learning, sharing remote learning innovations, and engaging in relational connection. These planning retreats have been instrumental in supporting effective curriculum alignment and pacing adjustments in response to the demands of remote learning.

During this year of to-date fully-remote school, our weekly staff newsletter has been a place where WPCP staff can easily access weekly expectations, resources, and opportunities clearly outlined up to three weeks out; teaching, learning, and mental health resources; staff celebrations; student accomplishments; and the weekly advisory curriculum. WPCP admin liaison office hours are held weekly to troubleshoot any issues raised during the week and/or the reading of the newsletter. As much as possible, during a time of deep uncertainty, disconnection, grief and loss, we have worked to create a culture of connection, predictability,

and deep support for our educators in hopes that honoring their needs and context will allow them to honor our students' needs, contexts and invest in their learning and growth.

4. School Leadership:

[Disclaimer: During this unprecedented time of COVID-19 and school closures, WPCP welcomed an entirely new leadership team. This section significantly goes over the word limit for this section.]

Payton saw the departure of its entire leadership team at the end of SY19-20, which paved the way for the LSC to hire a new principal, who then filled out her leadership team with two assistant principals and a Director of Transformative Justice & Wellness (a newly created position). The new Senior Leadership Team (SLT) has engaged in a change management process through which many aspects of the Payton culture are being examined, interrogated, reflected on, and discussed widely. The need for change leadership, specifically around issues of inequity at Payton, was an integral component of principal selection. And while the LSC is eager to see the new administrative team address these issues, shifts in adult practice rarely come easy. Presently, the focus of the senior leadership team is on trust-building and modeling vulnerability and honesty to have difficult conversations. As a high-performing, high-profile school, there is deeply ingrained perfectionism at Payton. This influences student and adult behavior and mental health and can undermine opportunities for innovation, creativity, and risk-taking. Authentic relationship-building; a focus on community responsibility over individual autonomy; intentionally attending to the grief and loss that are associated with all aspects of the pandemic are how the SLT is working to create the conditions to support change. And the need for this cannot be overstated. While average test scores and acceptances at highly competitive universities tell a story of excellence, the reality is that isn't every student's story. Despite the high achievement that all Payton students demonstrate to be selected to enroll, historically, not all students have found their success here. Three days before the new principal took over, an anonymous Instagram page was launched to document incidences of overt and covert racism, bias, and identity-based harm that have characterized the experiences of BIPOC students at Payton for two decades.

Our leadership structures are heavily influenced by the partnership opportunities that we have at Payton. We are in year two of a partnership with the National Equity Project (NEP). Through this partnership, the SLT receives support and coaching in Liberty Mindsets and Liberatory Design, the purpose of which is to address the racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic disparities at Payton. This partnership includes our participation in the CPS Equity Design Team. Through this team, Payton is contributing to district-level change around student voice and anti-racist practice. Furthermore, the NEP partnership works synergistically with our participation in the Equal Opportunity Schools (EOS) cohort to address access and enrollment disparities in AP classes. Both organizations are part of the BELE Network, which creates an access point for Payton to be at the forefront of national, regional, and local educational equity conversations and practices.

The senior leadership team (SLT) takes a distributed leadership approach with Payton. Team structures that have been launched this year, and existing teams that have been reimaged under the new administration, have supported a collaborative approach to leadership. The Grizzly Instructional Leads (GILs)-- the instructional leadership team at Payton - consists of department chairs and other teacher leaders who meet weekly with the SLT to plan the weekly professional learning for the faculty, align priorities to the CIWP, raise issues that would otherwise be invisible to the SLT, and problem-solve to enact solutions to a wide range of issues. New teams to Payton this year include the Attendance Team, which has voice from teachers, Related Service Providers, counselors, security, and clerks who all have a role in supporting attendance initiatives. Our Operations Team meets weekly to address all issues related to facilities management, technology, security, records and clerical tasks, events, and athletics. This team has been especially important as we continually adapt under COVID-19 restrictions. Our newly-formed COVID-19 Safety Committee is charged with overseeing safety protocols and working with SLT and Facilities to support a safe and healthy return of students. We are in the process of launching both a Culture Team and a Climate Team to support school spirit initiatives and restorative practices/School Code of Conduct violations respectively.

Student leadership is also an essential component of the leadership philosophy at Payton. As a CIWP priority, we are working to shift the culture to a more student-centered, collaborative, co-creation model

with students. This has taken the form of an active partnership between the principal and the Student Government Executive Board, the SLT and the Student Advisory Committee -- a representative body of the identity and affinity clubs at Payton; and regular partnership between the SLT and student groups to ensure that student voices that have historically been at the margins of decision-making are now at the center. We look forward to expanding student voice initiatives next year to include student representatives on the GILs and other teams at Payton.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

During this unprecedented year, we have made intentional efforts to honor the emotional and traumatic toll of our nation's co-occurring pandemics (COVID-19, racism & police brutality, a divided & polarized political climate; and increased identity-based violence) on students and staff. Students consistently request facilitated space for conversations related to the world around us while teachers simultaneously work in real-time innovate during remote learning to mitigate its disconnected impacts. We've provided teachers with latitude, permission and support to iterate, differentiate and modify curricula and pacing to meet the needs of each individual classroom. Teachers have been provided weekly, scripted SEL-focused Advisory lessons that allow them to facilitate timely classroom discussions with high support and consistency across the school. This has given WPCP the opportunity to build shared language and practices around identity-based self-awareness, equity, harm-interruption, safety, and mental health needs that do not place an additional burden on teachers to create. Admin-led office hours to support teachers in creating lesson modifications prior to the scheduled lesson date are offered and provide structured support and learning to teachers in meeting student-SEL with structure.

We have also engaged in school-wide training and discussion sessions related to trauma, cancel culture, justice, and identifying and disrupting identity-based harm. In response to the rise in anti-AAPI violence, we contracted with Asian Americans Advancing Justice of Chicago to train our entire Payton community on bystander interventions to address bias-based harm. In the wake of significant societal events, administrators and school counselors have teamed up to provide differentiated processing spaces (individual, group, multimedia, and creative expression) to provide higher student and staff support beyond what teachers provide in the classroom. Our community is diverse in identities, backgrounds, and starting points; our diversity makes for rich and challenging learning experiences; and our students have indicated they cannot fully engage in academics without opportunities for processing. This year we have provided structured, continuous opportunities for both academic and equity-rooted social-emotional learning.

We have also leveraged our newly-formed Student Advisory Committee--a committee of student identity club leaders that advises WPCP Administrators on culture & climate needs and opportunities. In 2021, WPCP planned for the school year with input from the Targeted Universalism Steer Committee (comprised of students, community, and WPCP faculty); launched its inaugural student-led Culture Fair, engaged in learning campaigns for celebration events/months (e.g. Latinx Heritage Month, Black History Month, Lunar New Year, Women's History Month); created affinity-based processing spaces for students and staff; and have incorporated student voice in +90% of our professional learning spaces to ensure that our efforts are rooted in youth voice.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Beginning in Spring of 2020, Payton began using the PERTS Copilot-Elevate Student Experience Survey. This survey measures six learning conditions that create more engaging and equitable learning experiences for students: teacher caring, classroom belonging, student voice, feedback for growth, meaningful work, affirming cultural identity. This 5-minute survey is administered to all students in all classes over the course of a two-week window every five weeks. During remote learning, we are doubling down on the six conditions, as the need to go beyond academics is even more important as students face the pandemic (and civil, political, and social unrest) isolated in their homes.

The focus on the six learning conditions -- within the context of remote learning -- has pushed teachers to reconceptualize their classroom community, which has been central to our success this year (and likely why our attendance rates have held steady as compared to prior years). Engaging in the data cycles every five weeks supports deep reflection and shifts in practice around the central responsibilities of a teacher. We are seeing a greater focus by teachers on the student experience and a willingness to be vulnerable to feedback in ways that were less prevalent previously. The process has also revealed a level of fear around the meaning behind the actual data -- pointing to focus areas for improvement in adult culture.

The processing of the survey data has also paved the way for Payton to amplify student voice in new and exciting ways. For each of the data cycles, we create professional learning to support the implementation of next steps. These workshops have included students in a variety of ways: as participants in small group sessions alongside teachers to develop best practices on the six conditions, as facilitators of adult learning for content they co-created with adults, and as developers of protocols that they are teaching their teachers how to employ to unpack the data in their classes. The student-teacher collaboration has resulted in increased buy-in for everyone around the survey and deeper investment in the six learning conditions. It has also supported deeper relational and academic connections remotely.

The process of the inquiry cycles tied to Copilot data has been iterative. A year in, we're learning that a continuous return to the "why" behind the focus on these conditions is essential. Payton's reputation for academic excellence puts a lot of pressure on teachers to focus on content and test scores. We have a shared hypothesis that improvements in these conditions will result in a closing of the opportunity gap that has historically existed at Payton (in grade, achievement, graduation, attendance, discipline data) and that as we close that gap, our school becomes more excellent in both reputation and practice.