

U.S. Department of Education
2023 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Geneva Community High School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 416 McKinley Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Geneva State IL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 60134-1200

County Kane County

Telephone (630) 463-3800 Fax (630) 463-3809

Web site/URL
https://www.geneva304.org/genevahighschool_home.aspx E-mail trogers@geneva304.org

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

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Andrew Barrett Ed. D. E-mail abarrett@geneva304.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Geneva Community Unit School District #304 Tel. (630) 463-3000

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.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Larry Cabeen
(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.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

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 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 2023 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 2018 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2022.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 or 2022.
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. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

12. 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.

The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the current school year (2022-2023) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools. For charter schools: If a charter school is part of the public school system, information should be provided for the public school district. If a charter school is considered its own district or part of a charter district, the information provided should reflect that.)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 6 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
2 Middle/Junior high schools
1 High schools
0 K-12 schools
- 9 TOTAL

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

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 in the school as of October 1, 2022 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 Students
PreK	0
K	0
1	0
2	0
3	0
4	0
5	0
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	402
10	419
11	396
12 or higher	422
Total Students	1639

*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
 - 5.7 % Asian
 - 1.3 % Black or African American
 - 9.2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0.1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 83.5 % White
 - 0 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2021 - 2022 school year: 2%

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, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	14
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	25
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	39
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	1733
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.02
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

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

Afrikaans, Arabic, Bulgarian, Burmese, Cantonese, Czech, French, German, Greek, Gujarati, Haitian-Creole, Hindi, Hungarian, Ibo/Igbo, Italian, Japanese, Konkani, Korean, Latvian, Mandarin, Panjabi, Pilipino, Polish Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Slovak, Spanish, Telugu, Thai, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese

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

26 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 6 %

Total number students who qualify: 93

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 12 %
Total number of students served 198

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 with an IEP should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

<u>15</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>2</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>1</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>67</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>84</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>20</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>4</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>3</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 10 %
Total number of students served: 163

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 16

11. 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	8
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	103
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	19
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	13
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	18

12. 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 16:1

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

Required Information	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018
Daily student attendance	94%	97%	96%	97%	94%
High school graduation rate	99%	98%	100%	99%	99%

14. **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 2022.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	450
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	68%
Enrolled in a community college	24%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	2%
Found employment	2%
Joined the military or other public service	1%
Other	3%

15. 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.

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

Work collaboratively so all students learn at a high level.

17. Provide a URL link to the school's nondiscrimination policy.

https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/?b=geneva_cusd_304&s=608315

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

N/A

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Geneva Community High School (GHS), the “Home of the Vikings,” graduated its first class, consisting of two students, in 1876. It is still the only high school in our community unit school district that also consists of 6 elementary schools and 2 middle schools. As we approach the 150th anniversary of our school, pride, tradition, and support stand out as constants throughout our history.

Our students are friendly, polite, and respectful and walk through the front door each day eager to learn, participate, and succeed. They have goals and aspirations inside and outside the classroom, work hard to achieve them, and take great pride in their success. While certainly not the only indicator of success, approximately 90% of our seniors are college-bound and GHS graduates attend more than 120 different colleges and universities each year. Most of our students participate in the many extracurricular activities we provide and those that don’t formally participate are often in the stands or the audience cheering their classmates on at athletic events, plays, or concerts.

GHS parents and community members value education and encourage all the exciting things that enhance the high school journey. Many graduates even return to Geneva to teach or to raise their own children. Homecoming week is one example of when our Viking Pride is on full display. Alumni return for reunions and former musicians participate with the marching band in the halftime show, while parents and community members line the downtown streets for the annual homecoming parade and help chaperone the dance.

A substantial and challenging curriculum designed to meet the needs of all learners, delivered by highly qualified and dedicated faculty and staff is the primary reason for our students’ academic success. We carefully recommend the appropriate placement for students in core classes. We offer slower paced math classes and co-taught courses in English, math, social studies, and science as well as an array of honors and Advanced Placement courses in all curricular areas for higher level learners. We take great care to make sure all students succeed academically.

A very competitive and successful athletic program is a source of great pride amongst our students, staff, parents, and community. In the past several years our teams and individuals have won many conference championships, earned numerous victories in State Regional and Sectional competitions, qualified for the State Finals, and thrilled our school and community with State Championships.

But winning is not the primary focus of our athletic programs. Participation in a physical activity, being a part of a team, learning how to win and lose with dignity and grace, developing resiliency and perseverance, while representing our school with pride; these are the things our coaches teach our athletes. We encourage our students to take full advantage of the 28 boys and girls sports our school offers. At every opportunity we reinforce that academics are their top priority, but getting involved in something outside of the classroom runs a close second.

For the non-athlete, an assortment of interesting social activities and clubs awaits. Students can pursue their interest in robotics, join a community service club, participate in one of three foreign language clubs, perform in the variety show, build the set for the play, act in the musical, compete with the DECA club, join Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) and Skills USA. In addition to many more clubs, students can get involved in homecoming activities, spirit weeks, and prom. More than 75% of our students do something to emotionally engage with our school and make their high school experience a memorable one.

GHS is a Professional Learning Community (PLC) and our teachers have a specific time to collaborate each Thursday morning for 45 minutes designed to preserve instructional time. The goals of our PLC are to focus on learning, promote a collaborative culture, and ensure a high level of learning for every student. Our counselors also use the time to meet with their caseloads and help them choose future courses and assist with college and career plans. Our student services team provides social-emotional presentations, wellness workshops, and other programs throughout the year to help enhance the mental health of our students. While

their teachers are collaborating, we offer our students Personal Learning Choices (also PLC). During the student PLC, they can choose to get assistance in the math, language, or writing lab, make-up a test in an assessment center, go the library, exercise in the gymnasium, study in the cafeteria, or some students choose to arrive late to take advantage of extra sleep.

GHS has a history of great success which can be attributed to hardworking, involved students, a dedicated faculty and staff, supportive parents, and an engaged community.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Reading/English language arts curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The English Department at GHS offers a curriculum designed to provide students with the skills and knowledge to succeed in higher education and future careers. We have core English classes at each grade level designed to help students develop a strong foundation in communication, critical thinking, and language. Supports ranging from co-teaching through Advanced Placement provide students with the necessary tools, such as close reading strategies to analyze and interpret texts in a way that enables them to make personal and real-world connections as well as practice the process of writing to create various forms of effective written and oral communication. Students also have opportunities to extend their skills through various electives such as Speech, Journalism, Creative Writing, Drama, and Critical Approaches to Film.

Teaching methods in our high school English classes include lectures, large and small group discussions, and individual and group projects. We encourage students to actively participate and engage in diverse activities like Socratic Seminar discussions and projects that promote teamwork and collaboration. We often collaborate with our school librarian to find engaging, contemporary young adult texts and resources that cater to the ever-changing interests of our students. To further support the curricula, in April, students will participate in a school day Poetry Slam event during their English class to not only support their own creative expressions but to also improve the articulation of their written and verbal work.

To ensure students are learning, we offer continual guidance as students progress through their work and provide timely feedback to identify areas that need reteaching. We also use a variety of summative assessment methods, such as essays, projects, or quizzes/tests, to gather the necessary data that determines if students have mastered the essential skills of each unit.

Currently, our department is focusing on identifying the essential standards for each unit to vertically align the Common Core English Standards across the four grades. By completing this intensive curriculum work, teachers can refocus instruction and assessment to ensure that students have the essential skills they need to be successful as they progress through each grade. After this phase, teachers will create formative assessments to collect data to assess standard mastery and identify areas that need improvement to ensure all students learn at a high level.

1b. Mathematics curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

For the sake of equity, all students must be exposed to significant mathematical content that is based on high standards. To ensure that our curriculum meets these criteria, we have created and continually update common course assessments and course frameworks which align the curriculum in each of our courses (Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and beyond) to the most current and applicable math standards (typically Common Core Standards and/or the applicable Advanced Placement curriculum). As these frameworks are transformed into student learning targets, they serve as a vehicle, along with common assessments, to ensure equitable experiences from room to room, smooth transitions from course to course, and smooth transitions for college and career readiness.

The GHS Mathematics Department continually explores new instructional methods. Most recently we have embarked on a departmental book study of Liljedahl's Building Thinking Classrooms in Mathematics. While we explore new ideas collectively, teachers are given the autonomy and have the expertise to take calculated instructional risks within their classrooms. This selective adaptation of instructional strategies, through a problem-solving model, has led to dynamic classrooms in which you can find varied instructional strategies in use from day to day. A few strategies that are commonplace in our classrooms are: collaborative activities that help students informally explore new topics and develop hypotheses which are later formalized, interactive lectures intermixed with think-pair-share activities, lab activities that allows students to experience the physical realities of mathematics, and problem-solving activities.

When it comes to assessing program success, we use standardized test data annually to determine areas of strength and weakness. Based on these results, we collectively problem solve the situation to ensure weaker skills have improved coverage moving forward. At the course alike level, teams of teachers discuss common assessment results during dedicated learning team time. These discussions allow the team to share instructional practices and make plans for remediation or enrichment. Formative assessments allow students to assess their understanding of learning targets and allow them to take advantage of interventions.

1c. Science curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

GHS uses the Next Generation Science Standards in its rigorous science curriculum. The course sequence students take depends on their entry as a freshman. Freshman entry points, as determined by numerous factors, are General Science, Earth Science, co-taught Earth Science, Biology, co-taught Biology, or Honors Biology. The sequence students follow from there is determined by their individual goals and interests and may include: Chemistry, Honors Chemistry, Chemistry / Physics, Horticulture, Physics, Advanced Placement (AP) Physics I, AP Physics C, Anatomy and Physiology I & II, Natural Disasters, Astronomy, AP Biology, AP Chemistry, and AP Environmental Science.

Science lessons are centered around a hands-on approach with inquiry-based laboratory experiments and investigations. We engage students with a variety of teaching methods that include direct instruction, collaboration, modeling, inquiry, and projects. A traditional science curriculum is presented with real world applications in mind. Students are challenged to conceptualize a real-world context to the content and concepts they learn in courses. Lessons also emphasize the scientific process and related skills such as observing, inferring, measuring, predicting, and communicating. An example of this process in action is the horticulture classes' "Radish Competition." Students learn about the growing environment and design and conduct an experiment to grow the largest radish. Students collect and analyze data, draw conclusions, and connect potential real-world applications to horticulture and agriculture. The experience concludes with a class presentation and peer review.

We use a variety of formative assessments including small group discussion, exit slips, and quizzes. The formative assessments gauge understanding and the need to reinforce or reteach certain concepts. Summative assessments can take the form of exams, projects, or lab reports. Cumulative semester final assessments are administered to retest core concepts and reinforce how individual semester topics are intertwined.

1d. Social studies/history/civic learning curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The mission of the GHS Social Studies Department is to lead our students to become active, informed, and responsible citizens of our democratic society by understanding multicultural, local, national, and global perspectives. To achieve this mission, we utilize curricula that provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the world, the United States, and civic life, as well as develop their critical thinking, research, and analytical skills.

Our department has consistently worked to align our classes to current Illinois State Social Science Standards and the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) framework. We have vertically aligned student learning targets across grade levels to ensure that students have a consistent foundation of knowledge and skills. Students are required to take World History or AP Human Geography, US History or AP US History, and Government or AP Government. Additionally, students have the opportunity to take electives such as Psychology, Economics, Sociology, and Urban Studies.

Our instruction is centered on inquiry-based learning experiences that allow students to explore the deeper meaning of historical topics. We use document-based questions and free-response questions that challenge students to analyze a variety of resources, including both primary and secondary sources. Additionally, we encourage instructional practices such as Socratic Seminars where students engage in open-ended discussions about complex historical topics. Students are taught to analyze and interpret various forms of media, including news articles, videos, and social media posts, which helps them to become critical

consumers of information and to develop their own informed opinions.

Assessments should challenge students in terms of both content and application. Our assessments require students to use the information they learned throughout a unit and apply it to real-world scenarios. For example, students may be asked to analyze historical events and draw their own conclusions based on the evidence presented in a format such as portfolios, projects, and class presentations.

1e. For schools that serve grades 7-12:

Geneva High School offers students a wide range of Career and Technical Education courses through our Applied Arts Department to prepare them for college and career. Our courses offer students project-based environments involving critical thinking and real-world application of technical skills.

Technology education courses offer students various pathways to help them practice college and career readiness skills. In Woodworking levels 1-4, students use a range of techniques and equipment to introduce, develop, and perfect carpentry skills. Students interested in engineering have the option to get involved with a 3-course Project Lead the Way (PLTW). PLTW is an honors-based sequence where students apply math and science skills and use 3D modeling software skills to solve complex problems. In Family & Consumer Sciences, students can go into pathways such as culinary, fashion, interior design, child development, and education. Students enrolled in child development programs work daily with our in-house preschool program to design lessons, provide feedback, and collaborate with preschool teachers and families. Our culinary sequence progresses from Culinary Arts, where students learn fundamental culinary skills, to Restaurant Entrepreneurship, where students plan meals for school and community events. Through our business program, students can take a variety of courses such as Marketing, International Business, Entrepreneurship, Microsoft Office Suite, Business Law, and more. All business courses lead up to our Virtual Enterprises International class (VEI), where students create and manage a virtual company.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

The philosophy of our Fine Arts Department is to provide students with a variety of opportunities designed to create artistically diverse individuals. GHS offers numerous visual arts classes in areas such as photography, clay, art history, painting, drawing, and graphic design. In these classes, students develop an understanding and appreciation of visual art culture by learning about art-making materials and the tools and techniques used by visual artists. Many students submit their work to several different shows and competitions throughout the year, which challenges their artistic abilities and exposes them to other artistic styles.

We also offer various classes in the performing arts, such as Band, Choir, Orchestra, and Music Theory. Students have opportunities to perform music, create music, understand the role music has played in history, and develop a commitment to music that can be shared with their school and community. Many of our students have numerous opportunities to attend festivals, work with guest clinicians, participate in performances, and more.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

The Wellness Department's mission at GHS is to motivate all students to achieve a healthy and satisfying lifestyle that reflects the benefits of physical activity. We believe that engaging in physical activity not only helps students stay physically fit but also has a positive impact on their mental health and overall well-being. We encourage students to adopt a healthy lifestyle by offering a range of programs and activities that cater

to their different interests and abilities such as Personal and Group Fitness, Dance Aerobics Fitness, and Leadership Principles. In addition, all students take Health & Safety, and we offer electives in Personal Wellness and Social Issues in Sports.

One of our key goals is to encourage all students to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to participate safely in a variety of fitness activities. Our students also demonstrate a strong dedication to assisting and encouraging their classmates in participating in wellness activities and developing healthy habits.

At GHS, we believe that wellness is not just a personal goal but a community effort. Our aim is to create a culture of wellness that is sustainable and inclusive, and that supports students in their pursuit of a healthy and satisfying lifestyle. We believe that by working collaboratively, we can create a healthier and happier community for all.

2c. Foreign language(s), if offered (if not offered, leave blank)

GHS offers levels 1 – 5/5 Advanced Placement in Spanish, French and German. The number of sections for each language and level fluctuates according to student enrollment. Eighth graders at the two Geneva middle schools are permitted to begin level 1 of each world language with a curriculum that is generally the same as that which is taught at the high school level. If students take a language in middle school and the subsequent course in high school, they receive retroactive transcript credit.

The World Language Department has adjusted its curriculum to align more closely to the standards of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language, which are communication, cultures, connections, comparison, and communities. Lessons are designed to highlight the importance and cultural impacts of various indigenous groups, immigrants, and women around the world. Juniors and seniors in levels 4 and 5/5AP are strongly encouraged to take the Illinois Seal of Biliteracy Exam. In 2022, 32 students earned the Seal of Biliteracy, and 51 students earned the Commendation of Biliteracy.

2d. Technology/library/media

The GHS library program and technology services support student learning while adapting to the needs of the school's population.

The GHS library team is working hard to modernize the current space. The library provides a safe space for students to congregate, collaborate with students and staff, independently work, or find their next favorite book. Classes visit the library to browse the collection, conduct research work (utilizing the print resources or one of the 12 database options), or just take a brief mental break and enjoy the library's selection of games.

The library collection is frequently updated with award-winning and high interest novels of all genres to appeal to the high school student and maintains a strong relationship with the public library to help support title demand. The library strives to provide students with a love and passion for reading through programs such as Bookworms, classroom book talks, and monthly themed reading challenges.

At the entrance of the library, the GHS technology team is housed where a convenient 'Help Desk' window allows students to receive quick and efficient assistance from technology professionals in the building. The technology team troubleshoots device issues and provides support to navigate device programs.

2e. Any other interesting or innovative curriculum programs you would like to share

Virtual Enterprises (VE) is an in-school business simulation that transforms the classroom into an office setting and students into business executives. We replicate the functions and demands of real businesses, as students create their own business, interview and hire on to this business, then run it from the ground up, from product development, production & distribution, marketing, sales, human resources, finance and accounting.

As “employees” of this virtual business, students become accountable for the performance of their business, while interacting with other virtual firms throughout the world, but within the same virtual economy. Students create their business plan and present it to potential investors (judges), create a live website to market and sell their products, attend live trade shows with other VE firms from across the country and internationally, all while challenging students to find new solutions that drive business results.

Since implementing this program at GHS, many students have reported back after graduation that the skills they learned through VE, such as time management, teamwork and problem-solving, have been invaluable and set them apart from others, as they felt they had actual business experience.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

GHS has multiple programming options for students performing below grade level. We know it is important to meet the students where they are and support them academically. Differentiation is available in all our classrooms.

Outside of differentiation, specific accommodations and supports are accessible with a formalized plan. We have 166 students with 504 plans and 234 students with Individual Educational Plans. Our classrooms offer book sharing, tips and tools for notes, immersive reader support, and math support. Other options are pre-teaching and reteaching when necessary for student success.

Our staff utilizes the Scholastic Lexile Assessment to determine what supports are necessary for each identified student. For our students significantly below grade level, research-based replacement curriculum is used in our instructional classrooms. More intensive support assesses fluency, reading, and comprehension throughout the school year. Based on the results, we modify texts and adjust outcomes. Our focus is on essential elements and common core anchor standards. An additional component of the instructional program is vocational exploration. It offers on-the-job training to teach employability skills. They practice skills in our building as well as at off-site locations to learn how to work in the public setting.

In our instructional and structured learning classrooms, we incorporate carefully planned lessons in collaboration with regular education teachers. We use a multi-modal approach with differentiated instruction including the use of assistive technology. We build strong relationships with our students to foster a learning environment where students feel safe to ask questions and are open to giving and receiving frequent, timely feedback. Students are offered choices that allow them to demonstrate their learning in a way that works best for them. Additional support is provided from paraprofessionals who work with students individually or in smaller groups.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Many of our GHS students excel academically. To meet their needs, GHS offers various courses for students above grade level. Our 20 Advanced Placement and 20 honors courses are available in every content area. In the 2021-2022 school year, 433 students took 690 AP exams and 82 percent of the exams taken earned a score of three or higher. In addition to these courses, our math department offers the University of Illinois Calculus II and III dual credit courses.

Enrich and Empower is a club that meets monthly and provides enrichment opportunities in the areas of humanities and science. Sophomores, juniors, and seniors are invited to join based on their cumulative GPA and the PSAT from the previous year. We currently have 196 students participating. Involved students are invited to attend a variety of field trips throughout the year to expose them to new experiences and opportunities. Field trips have included the Argonne Laboratory, Paramount Theater in Aurora, the American Writer's Museum, and the Shedd Aquarium.

GHS is proud to have eight National Honor Societies: National Honor Society, National Art Honor Society, NBRS 2023

National English Honor Society, National Social Studies Honor Society, National Technical Honor Society, National French Honor Society, National Spanish Honor Society, and National German Honor Society. Students initiated into these organizations excel in scholarship, leadership, service, and character. They are driven to make a difference in our school and community and have done so through numerous student-directed initiatives.

We are proud of the number of students who excel during their high school careers. Because we have so many high achieving students, in lieu of a valedictorian and salutatorian, we recognize the top 5 percent of unweighted grade point average (GPA) students and the top 5 percent of the weighted GPA students at graduation. While it is important to meet the needs of all students, we want to challenge our students to achieve their highest potential.

3c. Students with disabilities:

GHS incorporates a team approach in our work with students with disabilities. Each student with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) has a case manager who regularly checks in and assists the student throughout the year. The case manager regularly communicates with all stakeholders. In addition to classroom teachers, paraprofessionals are placed in many classes to bridge the access to general education curriculum and interaction with typical peers. Our special education students also have social work services available as needed. Our social workers, along with our speech and language pathologist, offer individual and group support to students. Frequently, the team communicates and collaborates with the families of students with disabilities.

A student's transition plan guides the IEP process. We collect data from all members of the IEP team via the TRAX transition assessment, which monitors student progress and assists the team in creating post-secondary goals; these goals include skills in executive functioning, employability, social, and self-advocacy. To further students' transitional goals, we host post-secondary transition fairs to foster connections between community support agencies, our students with disabilities, and our students' families.

Our special education department offers three levels of support. Our resource program is for students in co-taught courses in the regular educational setting. The special education teacher and content teacher work closely to support all students in the room. Next, our instructional program is for students performing over three grade levels below their age-appropriate peers. This program utilizes research-based replacement curriculum. Finally, our structured learning classrooms (SLC) provide a smaller setting for students who need additional emotional support and more structure in their day. Our SLC program uses a point system to provide positive reinforcement for behavior and academic success.

All of our special education students have access to a study skills class where students receive intensive support from learning behavior specialists and paraprofessionals. In these classes, students benefit from further skill development, re-teaching of concepts, problem solving, and pre-teaching of vocabulary.

3d. English Language Learners:

GHS has a growing English Language Learners (ELL) population. We currently have 47 languages spoken in our community, and 26 students utilize ELL services at the high school level. The yearly access test gives us the data to determine the individual needs of each of our ELL students.

We have three levels of support for our ELL students. The highest level of support is 5 or more sessions each week. The moderate level is 3-4 sessions each week. The lowest level is 1-2 sessions each week. We offer ELL English as well as ELL study hall for our students. Our two ELL teachers also push into regular classrooms, allowing them to support the students in traditional classrooms as they continue to learn and understand English.

It is important that our students and families have access to all the academic and educational supports we offer and to feel a part of our school community. All our students have a translation option through Microsoft Office applications, which enables our teachers to support our students. Many of our staff

members also use a translation option for their computers or phones to assist with communication. For parent contact by phone or in person, we use a translation service that allows us to speak directly with parents in multiple languages. For written communication, we translate most of our correspondence into Spanish and send both English and Spanish versions to parents. Our website also has a translation option on the front page, which gives viewers the ability to translate information throughout the website.

3e. Other populations, if a special program or intervention is offered:

GHS offers multiple interventions and programs for students who need assistance. One type of intervention is our various student groups. Our Strong Teens group works with students who need to develop social emotional competence. Students learn evidence-based skills and strategies to help them daily. Our GHS Connect group follows up after the Strong Teens group to continue the process for students needing additional support. This school year, we have incorporated a self-efficacy group that promotes self-compassion and increases motivation.

On the academic side, we offer academic skills group each semester. The students in this group are identified by our weekly individual progress report. The skills will help students learn executive functioning to support them in the classroom.

To build community we also offer a new students' group. We identify students new to our school and work with them at the beginning of the school year. Our goal is to help students get involved and to feel more comfortable in a new setting.

Additionally, we offer two levels of structured study hall for regular education students. Our students are identified through our Problem-Solving team based on academic and social emotional issues. A first step is a Supported Study Hall which is a small classroom with regular check-ins with students but does not include reteaching. A slightly more intense level of support, Study Seminar, involves daily check-ins and reteaching when needed. Students are also identified for our mentoring program. Students with multiple failing grades are connected with an adult. They meet regularly for six weeks to help identify academic struggles and create a plan for success in the classroom.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

We engage the students at GHS with a rich, challenging, and interesting core curriculum, along with a vast array of elective courses that allow students to pursue their interests or explore new ones. Most of our students are college-bound and are motivated to take as many courses as they can to meet college entrance requirements. Students are intrinsically motivated by the expectations that exist in our community.

Many of our extra-curricular programs are an extension of our curriculum, allowing students to explore, compete, or perform activities that stretch their learning beyond the classroom. Our students do not just participate, but they excel and appreciate their experiences. Our school board provides a “Tradition of Excellence” award to students who compete or earn awards at the state, national or international level. In February 2023 alone there were more than 150 “Tradition of Excellence” awards presented to GHS students.

Students’ dedication and excellence often lead to incredible opportunities. For instance, one of our choir ensembles auditioned to perform at the Illinois Music Educators Conference. They were so inspired, and excited to be chosen, they arrived at school at 4:00 a.m. to get on a bus to travel two hours to perform. Approximately 50 DECA students compete regionally each year with the hope of qualifying for the state or international competition in places like New York City, Atlanta, or Orlando. They are willing to spend countless hours after school preparing their presentations.

Several years ago, some students asked for their voices to be heard and opinions to be valued. We formed a Student Advisory Board (SAB) comprised of representatives from all four grade levels. The group meets quarterly and brainstorms projects that can benefit the school. Last year the SAB partnered with our Art Honor Society students and painted two murals in areas of the school that needed beautifying. The SAB students are aware of the social-emotional challenges their friends and classmates are experiencing. This past March, a group of students organized a Wellness Workshop, offering students the opportunity to take a short yoga class and other activities to decompress. They have been listening to the mental health presentations shared by our student services team, and we are thrilled they were willing to act.

The above are just a few ways students take advantage of and create opportunities to engage. As a former student activities director expressed, “there’s always something going on at Geneva High School.”

2. Engaging Families and Community:

GHS always receives tremendous support from families and community members. It’s often communicated to prospective teaching candidates that our community has lofty expectations, but the wonderful thing is they are willing to do whatever it takes to help us meet those expectations.

We engage our parent community in their child’s education before their high school career even begins. We invite them to 8th Grade Parent Night, AP/Honors & Elective Night, and 9th Grade Parent Orientation Night and let them know about all the curricular offerings in store for their child during high school. We also communicate clear expectations of performance and behavior as their child transitions from middle school to high school.

During the first week of school, we invite parents to Back to School Night. The parents experience a shortened version of their child’s schedule, and our classrooms and hallways are traditionally packed with friendly and enthusiastic parents wanting to meet the teachers who will be working with their children that year. Later in the semester parents jump at the opportunity to schedule in-person parent-teacher conferences.

Our Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is incredibly active. Our PTO sponsors an academic awards breakfast for high achieving students at each grade level in the spring and they fund wish-list items so teachers can enhance their classroom and their instruction with “extra” items not included in our budget. They also sponsor an amazing post-prom event to keep students safe after prom each year.

The Geneva Academic Foundation (GAF) “provides supplemental programs, equipment, and learning experiences to ensure that all Geneva school students continue to succeed in our technologically complex and culturally diverse society” as stated on their website. As a result of GAF grants, our school received parts and equipment that allowed our Robotics Club students to build a new robot for two competitions this year, new microphones to enhance the student broadcasts from our television studio, and high-top tables to provide flexible seating in our library.

Our exceptionally talented student musicians and actors enjoy constant support from our Music and Theatre Boosters organizations. They provide scholarships for summer camps and higher education, pay for guest clinicians to visit our school, and defray the costs of producing plays and musicals each year.

GHS is fortunate to have parents and community partners that are willing to give time, talent, and resources to help our students. We appreciate their involvement and strive to continue and promote this strong collaborative relationship.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

GHS has created a culture where teachers feel valued and supported by empowering teachers to make and carry out decisions regarding their students’ education, encouraging collaboration, and providing opportunities for sustained development of their own skills.

In August 2022, a group of teachers, administrators and instructional coaches attended Solution Tree’s “PLC at Work Institute.” This group became Geneva’s Guiding Coalition and was inspired to examine and revamp Geneva’s Professional Learning Community (PLC) model to better support the work of Geneva’s teachers.

For this PLC model to succeed, it was critical to get teachers excited at the start of the year. To provide teachers a voice in this process and give them ownership, we first collaborated and contributed our ideas to the school’s vision statement. Guiding Coalition members synthesized these ideas into a shared vision statement. Because we own the vision, we feel our voices are heard and valued.

Once the school vision was established, every learning team was sent out to achieve one common goal: work collaboratively to ensure all students learn at high levels.

Before focusing on curricular work, each learning team used meeting time to create a unique set of group norms that would foster a sense of collegiality. The time spent developing these norms contributed to the positive culture we need for effective, productive collaborative groups.

This year we have focused on working toward a results-oriented standards-based curricula with clearly articulated common goals to direct classroom instruction. Many teachers were unsure of the standards their departments used, so the first step we took was to review and unpack content standards. From there, we have all made substantial progress.

An important factor contributing to this success is the continuous support. The Guiding Coalition provides numerous resources, such as educational journal and magazine articles, templates to guide our work, and online resources if we want and/or need to acquire more information.

Support is also available outside of our learning teams. Because it is important for educators to develop and enhance teaching practices and stay up-to date with the latest research and trends in education, we promote a variety of in-person and virtual professional development (PD) opportunities. Some of these include Schoology and other technology training; Talks in Ten, a monthly 10-minute drop in PD targeted to provide training on what teachers need at that moment; and Ah!bservation April, which provides teachers an opportunity to observe, learn, and be inspired by their colleagues.

4. School Leadership:

At GHS, our leadership philosophy is dedicated to the success of all students. We concentrate our efforts on providing a well-rounded experience for every student and making sure they feel cared for, safe, and welcomed.

As school leaders we foster a culture of collaboration, trust, and empathy to promote success for all learners. GHS utilizes several collaborative groups to support this high standard. Our eight-member administrative team consists of a Principal, Associate Principal, Assistant Principal, Student Services Coordinator, three Deans, and an Athletic Director. The team works collaboratively with our Building Leadership team, our Student Services team, and our PLC Guiding Coalition to provide opportunities and supports focused on student success.

Creating a wide range of rigorous curricular opportunities that meet the diverse needs of our students is the primary goal of our Building Leadership team. Academic department chairs, together with the administrative team, work collaboratively to ensure that academic programs support our goals. Evaluating student course offerings, analyzing state and local assessments, and reviewing school policy are all examples of how this group seeks to ensure students are reaching their potential. Recently, we have added opportunities for dual credit, AP, co-taught, and Project Lead the Way courses, and increased online learning and credit recovery options.

One of the most impactful changes we have implemented is the Professional Learning Community (PLC) model. Leading this initiative is the Guiding Coalition, consisting of our Building Leadership team and our four Instructional Coaches. This team works collaboratively to provide structure and guidance for the academic learning teams that focus on curriculum development, academic learning targets, common assessments, and classroom intervention and enrichment. The adoption and development of the PLC model at GHS drives the commitment to consistently promote a high standard of success for all learners.

Outside of the academics, our leadership team is committed to being present and visible at all athletic, extracurricular, and school sponsored events. While leadership attends many student centered events, a favorite is the annual Salvation Army Christmas bell ringing trip for our instructional level special education students. For well over a decade, our principal has prioritized being there with the students.

At GHS, our leadership philosophy is also dedicated to the success of all faculty and staff. We concentrate our efforts on celebrating staff accomplishments, supporting diverse ideas and teaching styles, and embracing our shared educational philosophy.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Respect is a central value emphasized at GHS. Respect is instilled in classrooms, on athletic fields, at all clubs, events, and extracurricular activities sponsored by our school. We strive to make GHS a welcoming environment for all students, families, and staff.

Recently, our district has focused staff development for diversity, inclusivity, equity, and in response a high school committee of educators, administrators, and support staff have been working on ways our school can address this focus. The goal is to provide resources to students, parents, teachers, and staff for cultural awareness and to engage in practices that bring about meaningful acceptance and empathic responses to diverse populations.

Respect begins in a classroom environment where students can engage in honest and kind discussions. Disagreeing considerably and presenting evidence-based opinions is emphasized. Many teachers practice the Socratic Seminar method of discussion to encourage critical thinking and respectful dialogue.

Our educators are committed to promoting cultural awareness. Curricular approaches to diversity and inclusivity include several subject areas. In social studies, our World History class covers historical content from all over the world. In addition, our US History curriculum emphasizes the importance and impact of black Americans, Asian Americans, LGBTQ Americans, and Latino Americans on our country in the 19th and 20th century. In our World Language classes cultural awareness and respect are embedded in every-day

activities, and can be seen building-wide during events like International Week, National French and German Week, various fundraisers like the Pulsera Project to help artists in poverty-stricken Central America, etc. Students in World Language classes learn to communicate about cultures and make comparisons between their own community and those around the world. Additionally, our English department emphasizes communication for diverse purposes. We also encourage reading literature to build empathy and understanding. Teachers are careful to make available diverse novels written by and about people from a wide array of cultures, ethnicities, races, abilities, genders, and sexual orientations. Our educators use literature to create “windows and doors” through which students can see themselves and observe others’ lives.

Our educators also support students through differentiated lessons and activities at all levels whether a student has documented needs (IEP or 504) or not. Adaptive technology and textual resources offer scaffolding to ensure students are challenged yet supported as necessary. District provided software, especially Microsoft Office applications, provides all students with universal supports that are naturally occurring within the software (such as translating and immersive reader) and will be readily available in students’ post-secondary education and/or careers.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

GHS is successful because of the care and compassion the faculty and staff provide to all students. Struggling students, high-achieving students and everyone in between receive the care and compassion they need to achieve their goals. Our focus on Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is the one strategy that provides support to give students all the skills they need to be successful. The focus on caring starts each year before the incoming freshmen walk through the front door.

Our administration, counselors, and peer mentors welcome the freshmen at Viking Fest. We help them set goals, allow them to walk their schedule, and answer as many questions as we can so they are as comfortable as possible on the first day of school.

Our most significant strength is truly our staff's individualized, considerate relationships with students. An AP Chemistry teacher asks us to schedule the course prior to a lunch period so he can work with students who need extra help during lunch. We staff a math tutoring lab all day so students can seek assistance, however students go to the lab for much more than math. The instructor cares for them as people and counsels them on whatever they need.

An Alternative Learning Opportunities Program (ALOP) is a resource that helps students who have failed a course, are returning from a hospitalization, are credit deficient, or have other factors prohibiting success in a traditional classroom. While ALOP is important academically, it is even more important given the connection these students experience once they enter the program. A lack of motivation or attendance issues often contribute to the lack of success prior to placement in ALOP and we see a drastic change once they begin this program. Students want to come to school, want to succeed, and they beam with pride and credit their ALOP teachers when they do succeed.

As seniors approach the end of their career, we closely watch students at risk of not graduating. We employ Operation Graduation, pairing a senior with a trusted adult and adding additional support to help them earn their diploma.

Every support we provide would be ineffective without the care and compassion of our faculty and staff. To a person, our faculty and staff will tell you the key to our success is how we care for our students.