

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

Official School Name Jay M Robinson Middle School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 5925 Ballantyne Commons Parkway
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Charlotte State NC Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 28277-0575

County Mecklenburg County

Telephone (980) 232-6944 Fax (980) 343-6947

Web site/URL https://www.cmsk12.org/jaymrobinsonMS E-mail michael.miliote@cms.k12.nc.us

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. Crystal Hill E-mail crystall.hill@cms.k12.nc.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Tel. (980) 343-6944

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 Ms. Elyse Dashew
(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):
- 115 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
39 Middle/Junior high schools
32 High schools
0 K-12 schools
- 186 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	413
7	455
8	475
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	1343

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 30 % Asian
 - 9 % Black or African American
 - 11 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 47 % White
 - 3 % 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: 5%

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	54
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	12
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	66
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	1343
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.05
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	5

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

American Indian, Amharic/Ethiopian, Arabic/Egyptian/LebaneseSyrian, Bengali/Bangla, Burmese/Myanmasa, Chinese, Chinese(Mandarin), Czech, Farsi/Persian/Dari, Filipino/Pilipino, French, German, Guarani, Gujarati/Gujarathi, Hindi/Indian/Urdu, Hungarian/Magyar, Japanese, Kannada, Konkani, Korean, Malayalam, Marathi, Nepali, Oriya, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi/Panjabi, Romanian/Moldavian, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Tagalog/Filipino, Tamil, Telugu, Tigrinya (Tigrigna, Tigray), Turkish, Twi, Ukrainian, Uzbek, Vietnamese

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 11 %
142 Total number ELL

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

Total number students who qualify: 94

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 9 %
Total number of students served 124

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>28</u> Autism	<u>3</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>32</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>41</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>2</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>11</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 7 %
Total number of students served: 89

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 9

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	4
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	74
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	2
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	6
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

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 22:1

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	95%	95%	98%	95%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

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

Yes X No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2016

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

To educate students at high levels while creating well-rounded students.

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

<https://www.cmsk12.org/diversity-and-inclusion>

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

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Jay M. Robinson Middle School (JMR) is part of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools System (CMS). Located in Charlotte, North Carolina, JMR is known for upholding high expectations and prioritizing the success of all middle schoolers. Since we serve a very diverse population of students (Chargers), we strive to create an inclusive atmosphere for all our Chargers. Currently, there are 1347 students in grades 6-8. The teacher turnover rate is extremely low, so we do not have to rebuild each year. This allows for greater consistency and the opportunity for our team to continuously reflect, capitalize on our strengths, and seek new ways to meet the ever-changing needs of middle schoolers today.

At JMR, we use the middle school teaming philosophy. Chargers are grouped by grade level and placed on an interdisciplinary team. This structure allows for the formation of smaller core groups that benefit both students and teachers. Teachers are able to build relationships with their students and create a sense of community. Our teaming structure also allows students to get to know their peers. Consequently, Chargers feel safe contributing to their learning environment. Not only do our students learn from their teachers, but they learn from each other as well.

Chargers follow a block schedule consisting of three core classes and one elective class each day. The longer instructional block allows for greater depth and complexity. Regardless of the content they teach, all of our teachers believe that rising tides raise all ships. They teach to the top, not to the average. Supports are incorporated as needed to ensure all Chargers can excel when challenged. In turn, our students persevere with our rigorous curriculum and high expectations.

A wide range of extracurricular activities, clubs, and sports are offered at JMR. These, too, bring students together and provide additional opportunities for Chargers to learn from each other. Our school is also home to a premiere exceptional children's program that includes three self-contained extensions classrooms.

Technology is an integral part of the learning process at JMR. Each student is issued a Chromebook as a learning tool. Teachers work in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to design instruction that offers Chargers differentiated opportunities to flourish using technology. Students participate in group work and complete projects that support collaboration and critical thinking. Teachers strategically plan for daily academic discourse. They utilize conversation frames and protocols for this purpose. They also present ideas and topics from various perspectives to position Chargers to answer thought-provoking essential questions each class period. All students are challenged to analyze multiple works, express their viewpoint, and provide evidence that supports, refutes, or qualifies an argument.

Our staff believes that each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs. They believe that all of them are capable of learning at high levels. To that end, teachers regularly use a variety of research-based, differentiated instructional practices that engage students in acquiring knowledge while using critical thinking and problem-solving skills to demonstrate their understanding. It is our core belief that students will rise to high expectations when teachers hold students to high levels of accountability.

In addition, our school team has adopted a framework that all teachers align their practice to daily. This "Reading Apprenticeship Framework" incorporates universal teaching strategies that are content agnostic. Thus, students are asked to utilize the same reading strategies in each class regardless of the content. The Reading Apprenticeship approach addresses four interacting dimensions that support both academic and social-emotional learning: Social, Personal, Cognitive, and Knowledge-Building. By exposing our students to this framework in all classrooms, we have been able to equip them with the necessary skills to be successful reading different types of texts about different topics. Furthermore, our staff has embraced the notion that we are all reading teachers.

Creating a safe atmosphere at school and within each classroom is paramount at JMR. All staff members build positive relationships with students, and teachers work with our middle schoolers to establish norms that define classroom procedures, student-to-student interactions, and academic expectations.

Physical well-being is also a vital part of educating the whole student, and we prioritize physical activity. Chargers are scheduled for a 30-minute activity time each day in conjunction with their lunchtime, and teachers incorporate movement during lessons by having students move around the room to work collaboratively with peers.

As a previous recipient of the National Blue Ribbon Award, we have leveraged this distinction to instill trust within the community and foster a sense of high expectations for students, staff, and families. The award has also led to the creation of a central motto that our school has rallied around: Culture, Expectations, Excellence. It is our belief that if we hold each other as staff and students to high standards, then excellence will be the byproduct.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

At Robinson, our English Language Arts (ELA) teachers work together in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to create a curriculum with meaningful learning targets and rich essential questions that is centered on the North Carolina ELA Standards for Grades 6-8.

We have a diverse school. To meet individual student needs, our teachers differentiate instruction on a regular basis. To that end, we intentionally use pre-assessments to understand our students strengths, so we can respond to students with appropriate scaffolding and enrichment while also embedding student interests into our classrooms. While EL Education, a suite of standard-aligned, research-proven resources and practices that highlight multicultural literature, serves as the foundation of our curriculum, our teachers consider students' individual needs and expand on the EL curriculum to better serve students and extend their thinking.

Reading Apprenticeship (RA) is integral to that work as it supports the acquisition of skills for deep comprehension. We emphasize metacognition and close-reading strategies, so our students learn to grapple with, analyze, and ultimately comprehend complex texts. With RA, ELA instruction extends past the doors of our reading teacher's classrooms. Other disciplines use the same language to reinforce student understanding of best practices and effective strategies.

A key strategy that we use in our ELA classrooms is teacher modeling coupled with a gradual release of responsibility. For example, a teacher might model a close-reading strategy by thinking aloud while she reads a new text. Students would follow along as the teacher records her annotations. Then, students would work in pairs to practice the new strategy. Finally, all students would apply the skill independently.

In ELA, we have intentionally increased the rigor demanded of our students by incorporating strategies from Vanderbilt's Gifted and Talented Curriculum, and asking students to consider text through the depth and complexity icons.

Academic conversations are another major component that have contributed to our reading program's success. JMR students engage in pair-shares, group discussions, Paideia seminars, etc. on a daily basis. This allows students to learn from each other. It also provides opportunities for teachers to use data to pull small groups of students for targeted instruction designed to further support or challenge students. This cycle of using data to drive instruction is critical to our success and is the reason why our teachers regularly use exit tickets and other formative assessments.

Because data discussions are essential to meeting individual student needs, our ELA teachers review assessment results together to identify grade-level trends, plan lessons based on student performance, and learn from each other. Data is shared, not hidden, and if one teacher's students consistently demonstrate mastery of a standard, others in the PLC ask what they are doing to make a difference. We frequently engage in peer observations as a way to support each other's development, and our teachers (and students) are encouraged to take risks and try out new things that might lead to greater success. That can be difficult, which is why we have cultivated a belief in the power and importance of a growth mindset. It supports the incredible work that our ELA teachers continue to do.

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

At JMR, our math courses address the North Carolina (NC) math standards which are integrated. This allows our students to study multiple branches of mathematics each year. No matter which math class a student is in, they are taking their next steps in algebra, geometry, statistics, probability, and more.

Instructionally, we have continued our focus on conceptual understanding in mathematics and cultivated analysis of the connections between those concepts. In short, we have learned to ask our students to memorize less and explain more. In part, this was a response to the needs of our students post-COVID-19. (Their confidence waned, and their ability to reason together was weakened.) Of course, this was also engendered by what we learned as we studied the importance of a growth mindset in the math classroom, a core value described in Jo Boaler's work, *Thinking Mathematically*.

Our math teachers emphasize putting the burden of work onto students while supporting students' ability to access mathematics. We accomplish this with academic conversations. But, these high level academic conversations do not happen by accident, and they have taken time to develop.

To make them happen, we use research-based teaching strategies. The 8 Mathematical Practices give our students a platform to engage in thinking, the 5 Practices of Math Discourse guide our teachers when they give students opportunities for academic conversation, and the Mathematical Language Routines (MLRS) are techniques used in all of our math classes to structure those conversations.

This approach to instruction has worked. Coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic, our students' understanding of mathematics has grown. And impressively, our Education Visualization and Analytics Solution (EVAAS) data increases every year. This was not a surprise to us since data informs everything we do. Our math teachers use both formal and informal formative assessments every day to ensure students are meeting goals. At times, this looks like a probing question, an observation of student work as they collaborate on vertical surfaces, or a quick exit ticket at the end of class. Our teachers frequently pivot the arc of their lesson on the spot if students show they need more support or more challenging content.

Additionally, our teachers work together in PLCs to create and analyze common formative and summative assessments. And, depending on the data, our PLCs often adjust their pacing or seek out advice about how to better teach a concept. We use the nationally normed Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment three times a year as a universal screener. And of course, we administer the statewide end-of-year assessments and pay close attention to EVAAS projections. We combine these data sources into a comprehensive and individualized data story for every student, and our teachers use that data to confer and set goals with students.

Put together, our curriculum, instruction, and assessment have propelled our students to push further while preparing for college and a career. The effect? Even though we are a middle school, our students will have earned a collective 543 high school math credits this year, drastically expanding their opportunities in high school and beyond.

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

Science classes at JMR also use an integrated curriculum. Every grade level studies core material in biology, physical science, earth science, and chemistry. This allows our teachers to help students make connections to prior learning when multiple topics overlap between grade levels while also ensuring alignment with the NC science standards.

In science, we emphasize real-world connections to the curriculum through the use of scientific inquiry, problem-based learning, technological design, and experimentation. We intentionally choose texts that hook the students on our topics to maximize student engagement. Reading bleeds into science as we embed relevant, rigorous, and differentiated texts throughout instruction. Our students develop analytical thinking skills with RA strategies such as golden lines, hovering words, schema, and metacognition. Teachers also perform close reads of texts prior to academic conversations, a strategy we use to promote student voice and choice so difficult topics are discussed/debated in a safe environment.

Because we view science classes as an opportunity to develop college and career skills, we purposefully use role-based collaborative grouping. This enables our students to develop process, evaluation, problem-solving, and management skills as they work together towards mutual curricular goals. We also incorporate reflective activities, so students learn to identify their strengths and weaknesses and make connections

between the curriculum and themselves.

Assessment is a major driver of our curriculum; naturally, informal and formative assessments such as tickets in the door and checks for understanding allow our teachers to make immediate changes to lessons based on student needs. We also use summative assessments like unit tests or cumulative mid/end-of-year exams. Our teachers use this data to measure student growth compared to pretests and provide feedback to students. It also enables them to identify Chargers for remediation and/or enrichment opportunities offered during targeted small-group instruction.

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

Our social studies curriculum begins in 6th grade with ancient world civilizations, continues through modern day global issues in 7th grade, and concludes with American history in the 8th grade. All of our courses are based on the N.C. core strands which highlight inquiry, behavior sciences, civics, and government, economics, geography, and history. Our teachers work as a department to vertically align all three courses, so students witness a cycle of recurring themes, concepts, and ideas each year. This design allows our students to strengthen their skills via a 6-8 social studies program that is filled with ongoing academic conversations, writing, and text analysis.

Teachers instruct conceptually and thematically through a sequential analysis of historical events and connections. We push our students to think of themselves as historians and use academic conversations to create new meanings from primary and secondary sources. Our teachers are in the background using the C3 Teachers of Inquiry Design Model and RA strategies such as golden lines, talking to the text, pair shares, hovering words, and think-alouds. Because they are experts in their content area, our social studies teachers facilitate learning. Chargers take ownership of their learning by comparing historical events to modern-day situations and through the use of debate, Socratic Seminars/Smackdowns, and Paideia. Every class begins with an essential question that guides the investigation process, followed by supporting questions that allow students to dive deeper into evidence-based sources.

Students demonstrate mastery of the social studies standards in a variety of ways, including formal exams, document-based question essays, text-dependent questions, student-made video analysis (with platforms such as Flip), project-based learning, and seminar participation. Our primary goal with our social studies curriculum is to create accountable global citizens and lifelong learners who are able to participate confidently within their community, country, and world.

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

At JMR, our teachers and staff make a difference in the lives of our students. In addition to preparing Chargers for the rigors of high school, they ensure that our students are on track to be college and career ready. Many students earn high school credits as middle schoolers, and many more are afforded opportunities to experience technical education.

We offer four different Project Lead the Way (PLTW) courses in computer science, engineering, and biomedical science that engage students in hands-on activities, projects, and problems. Most importantly, our PLTW courses empower students to solve real-world challenges and inspire them to re-imagine how they see themselves.

On top of this, our business courses engage students by broadening their awareness of the career world. While each of these courses has a distinct focus, the overall arc helps students explore the different careers in Information Technology, Management, Finance, Accounting, and Marketing. All of these classes promote career readiness skills needed for future success.

JMR's computer skills courses help students build real-world expertise in IT and computer science. Whether they are earning an official Microsoft certification in Microsoft Word or Excel (the majority of our students in these classes earn these credentials) or if they are programming a robot, designing websites with HTML and CSS, or writing and debugging code with JavaScript and Python, our students are already gaining

marketable skills they will use in their future.

It is easy to trace the positive impact of CTE on JMR's culture and sense of community. Lead4Change, one of the many clubs offered at Robinson, is a leadership and service-focused club that helps students develop their leadership, teamwork, communication, and presentation skills. The members of the 2022-2023 club noticed a need in our building and wanted to help. They developed an Honor Council and Student Council for JMR in order to meet the needs that they saw. Clearly inspired by the breadth and depth of our CTE program, our students are already contributing to our community in a positive way.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

At JMR, art is a semester-long, A/B day, elective class offered to Chargers in grades 6-8. In this class, our students develop creative and critical thinking skills as they study the function, history, techniques, and impact of art in different cultures. Chargers produce original art that includes drawing, painting, printmaking, crafting, and sculpting. Our media arts class is also a semester-long, A-B day elective class offered to students in grades 7-8. The course enables Chargers to collaborate on interdisciplinary, technology-rich projects in a variety of fields, including digital art/design, photography, animation, filmmaking, and electronic music. Students produce a digital portfolio to establish an online presence.

Our dance class is another semester-long, A/B day, the course offered to all students in grades 6-8. In this elective class, Chargers learn personal expression, create original compositions, and learn how to become aware of the cultural and gender roles in history. Our 7th and 8th graders focus on the techniques of ballet, modern, and jazz dance. These students are provided with numerous dance experiences and a chance to participate in the NCASA Dance Festival Competition. Selected Chargers choreograph pieces to be performed at the end of the semester concert. Band and orchestra are year-long, A/B day, and electives classes are offered to students in grades 6-8. Participating Chargers engage in learning through musical literature. Students also work collaboratively to prepare for a variety of performances in and out of school as well as competitions at the local and state levels.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

All students are required to take Health and Physical Education each year for grades 6-8. These courses are taught in alternating nine-week sections, one in health education and one in physical education. While in these classes, Chargers learn about the importance of making responsible and healthy choices about what they eat, their relationships with peers and family members, the importance of life-long physical activity, and understanding consumer information. It is vital that our students learn how to manage their physical, social, and emotional health. In addition, Chargers can elect to take the semester-long, A/B day "Fit for Life" course in grades 7-8. This course is aligned to the NC Healthful Living Standards for grades 7-8. The class enables students to obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to develop and maintain a health-enhancing level of fitness while increasing physical competence, self-esteem, and the motivation to pursue lifelong physical activity and well-being.

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

Our World language courses are offered on an A/B day schedule. Seventh and eighth-grade Spanish I classes are year-long courses. We offer this high school course to our middle schoolers by breaking it into IA in 7th grade and IB in 8th grade. Chargers in Spanish I develop a strong foundation for the language and practice skills in listening, reading, speaking, and writing through grammar and conversation. At the end of the year, students have assessed via the STAMP (STAndards-based Measurement of Proficiency) exam. In

sixth grade, Chargers have the opportunity to take Exploratory Spanish, a semester-long class. We offer this course as a basic introduction to the language and culture. French is also offered through the North Carolina Virtual Public School.

2d. Technology/library/media

All of our students are provided with a Chromebook equipped with essential applications for successful learning. Our teachers have Promethean boards in their classrooms for enhanced instruction. Our Media Center contains a plethora of books that are multi-disciplinary and culturally relevant. We have a student-led club that creates a morning news segment that is aired via Safari Montage daily. This same group also designs the yearbook and its contents. They serve as the talent behind the vision boards, as copy editors, and as photographers. At JMR, we believe in giving our students numerous opportunities to be creative and inventive.

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

Our Chargers live in a diverse world, and our school is home to students who speak a multitude of languages. To enhance our curriculum and meet individual needs, we offer Duolingo to students. All students are given access to Duolingo to learn another language. Furthermore, our multilingual learners (MLs) benefit immensely from using Duolingo daily to develop their English language skills.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

At JMR, teachers and administrators use multiple sources of data to determine instruction, enrichment, and intervention that meets the needs of all learners. Starting with CORE and district-provided curriculum, all Chargers receive sound instruction of grade-level standards. In addition to this, we tailor intervention and enrichment to meet individual student needs.

Students performing below grade level may receive interventions in a variety of ways. Our BOOST time is used to provide interventions to students who have shown a need for additional small-group instruction. Academic Enrichment, an elective class, is scheduled for students who receive intervention through a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS). Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) uses a Standard Treatment Protocol for all students in MTSS. Specific times, instructional programs, and methods of progress monitoring are outlined in the Standard Treatment Protocol. Students move throughout MTSS tiers as they show growth or display continued need. Our MTSS team meets routinely to disaggregate data and determine which students would benefit from additional academic and behavioral support.

In addition to MTSS and intervention, our Extended Day Program is introduced each spring to prepare students for upcoming End-of-Grade (EOG) assessments. Using MAP and historical EOG data, we invite students from all grade levels to participate. Sessions are offered in both ELA and math. Extended Day teachers use student data to create targeted instruction.

Our supplemental programs allow us to provide added support to our students, particularly those who fall in subgroups that are 10 percentage points below the overall performance of middle schoolers. These subgroups are economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are Black or more than one race. Targeted instruction and support will help students in these subgroups meet the expected achievement level.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

We extend learning in several ways for students who perform above grade level. Presently, 460 of our students are identified as gifted. To meet their needs, we use BOOST time to provide extension learning for students. Students also have the opportunity to pursue their passions by participating in one of the many clubs we offer during BOOST. Additionally, we offer leveled math courses to ensure that all of our Chargers

are appropriately challenged. Our students have the potential to earn credit through Math 4 while at JMR. JMR teachers offer ongoing professional development centered on AIG (Academically or Intellectually Gifted) specific strategies to support teachers in meeting student needs. The use of Kaplan's Depth and Complexity Icons has helped us deepen student understanding and develop complex thinking strategies.

3c. Students with disabilities:

Students with disabilities receive support through the Exceptional Children's (EC) program and their IEP. We currently serve 125 students in our EC program. Roughly 100 of these Chargers are in co-taught or resource classes, and 27 are in our Extensions program. The Extensions program is divided into three classrooms, each with their own teacher and assistant. There is also a fourth assistant who floats between the rooms to offer additional support. Students are instructed using the Unique Learning System (ULS) which aligns with the extended content standards. Each student completes an assessment which then determines the appropriate level of instruction. Continuous data is collected through progress monitoring and additional assessments. Instruction takes place with the use of interactive technology, games, lessons, and presentation displays. ULS also provides insight into social emotional, life skills, and behavioral supports. This curriculum prepares students for the Extend1 assessments that are given at the end of each grade in the areas of ELA, math, and science. Although the core instruction for students in Extensions takes place in a self-contained setting, these Chargers have the opportunity for inclusion with their peers during lunch, recess, and electives.

Our resource classes are another special education opportunity we offer to our EC students. These classes are taught using a modified curriculum that centers on content standards. Chargers who meet the criteria for these classes can be enrolled in math and/or ELA resource. Our ELA class uses the Language Live! curriculum. It is a comprehensive literacy program for struggling readers that uses authentic text to reinforce literacy foundations. Our math resource class uses Transmath. Transmath accelerates students' math growth by emphasizing fewer topics in greater depth using a systematic approach.

We also offer co-taught ELA and math classes at all grade levels. Chargers scheduled into these classes receive a variety of instruction from two teachers. These classes utilize a variety of co-teaching models, including, but not limited to, parallel teaching, small group/station teaching, and lead vs. circulate. There are 12 sections of co-taught courses: five in math and seven in ELA. Our general education teachers with the greatest track record for student growth are chosen to co-teach these courses with an EC teacher.

3d. English Language Learners:

Our English Language Learners, or multilingual learners (MLs), have increased in number at JMR over the past year. During the 2021-22 school year, we served 89 ML students. Presently, 145 students receive services through the ML program. This represents a 39% increase that resulted in the hiring of a second ML teacher. Between these two teachers, our novice and intermediate language learners receive co-taught support in their ELA classes. Our teachers work with their counterparts during PLC time to plan instruction for our MLs. Lessons are differentiated and academic conversations are infused into every class period. Our ML teachers also prepare targeted and/or integrated curriculum resources that support the core curriculum and language acquisition. These supplemental resources and materials are used to support the student's learning experience. Software is also implemented through resources such as Duolingo, Rosetta Stone, and Lexia. Usage reports and performance for these programs are shared with content area teachers during PLC meetings.

During BOOST time, our ML teachers provide direct English language acquisition instruction, especially for newcomers. Our advanced ML learners receive less direct instruction and support as they have acquired the language. However, they may still receive support depending on their specific needs. Teachers offer Advanced grammar classes and ACCESS test prep during BOOST. Our ML teachers consult with students' teachers to be sure they are making progress. Guided and highlighted notes and study guides are provided when needed. And, our content teachers provide frequent opportunities for interactions through group discussion, dialogue journals, socratic seminars, role play, etc. All levels of support are determined by yearly ACCESS testing in addition to teacher feedback and classroom performance.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

At Jay M. Robinson, we consider our school's climate and culture to be key components to the quality and character of our school. All of our stakeholders collaborate and share in the responsibility of growing each student. Currently, students participate in our school's SEL program. This program allows students and staff to apply knowledge, skills, and attitudes to help develop healthy identities. Each week, counselors share lessons that have been adapted for the specific developmental needs of each grade level. These weekly lessons allow students and staff to address the following five core competencies: self-awareness, self-management, self-awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. In addition, students have an opportunity to participate in our school's Panaroma for Social-Emotional Learning. This survey assists us in gathering information on our students' social and emotional learning, essential indicators of academic and lifelong success. The data gathered from the survey provides us with a clear picture of how our students, teachers, and staff are thinking about and feeling about diversity, equity, and inclusion at our school. This data helps us make decisions to improve the school's climate and culture.

Our grade-level counselors serve many important roles at JMR. For one, they are instrumental in assisting students in building positive relationships with peers, adults, and the community. They also serve as advocates for students, offer academic counseling, respond to student crises, and provide preventive and intervention strategies for student success.

We want our Chargers to feel included at JMR. To that end, we offer numerous clubs for students to participate in. We also promote engagement with our student of the month, an initiative that recognizes students who display exemplary behavior. And, we celebrate student success with our quarterly A Honor Roll and A/B Honor Roll celebrations.

Our athletics' program is another key factor that positively contributes to the climate and culture of the school. In addition to greatly impacting the physical and mental health of our Chargers, our athletics' program improves student confidence and leadership skills. Similarly, our school's exemplary fine arts program allows students to express themselves creatively. Our program creates an inclusive and supportive environment that promotes understanding and mutual respect for others. In addition to providing students with opportunities to pursue their interests, these two programs help us establish and maintain community involvement. Our annual Spirit Week also helps create a positive culture while fostering unity among Chargers. During this week, students and staff participate in various activities that bring the school body together as a community. In addition, fundraising events such as "Day of Awesomeness" and the annual JMR student/teacher volleyball game allow students and staff to interact in a fun and meaningful way.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

At Robinson, we understand the importance of maintaining communication between the school and the community. Communication has been essential to student success and school improvement. As a result, we have adopted various means of communication to maintain a healthy relationship between the students, faculty, and parents. Our school news allows organizational information to be shared with students and staff. Our school news is a student-led club where students acquire skills and expertise that prepare them for life beyond school. Parents and community members have access to a bi-monthly newsletter called the "Charger Chatter." This newsletter informs parents and community members of upcoming dates, community events, volunteering opportunities, and parent resources that address the social, emotional, and academic needs of students. In addition, our parents remain informed through our school's website, ConnectEd system, and various social media sites.

By partnering with local businesses, we have been able to gain the financial support that enables us to enhance the quality education we offer. For example, we partner with Harris Teeter Supermarkets through Harris Teeter's "Together in Education" program. This partnership allows us to earn funds when parents and community members link their VIC cards and shop Harris Teeter brands. A percentage of each purchase is

donated to our school and used to purpose resources that ensure academic success for all students.

We have also partnered with surrounding schools to create the “Ballantyne Families Helping Neighbors,” a program that provides support to local families in need. Organized by our guidance counselors, this program holds food and gift card drives for families who need assistance. Most recently, we joined forces with Community House Middle School to open a food pantry for our community.

Students face many emotional and developmental challenges in middle school. Our counseling department has responded to these challenges through the creation of “Conversation with the Counselors.” This program utilizes the expertise of local clinical mental health professionals from L&B Counseling and Southeast Psych. Their monthly webinar provides families with support and strategies to address the mental health issues of children.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

At JMR, we believe in investing in and supporting our staff. One way we create a supportive environment is through our professional development. We understand that professional development ensures career growth for teachers and academic growth for students. Instructional approaches are essential to a successful learning environment. As a result, we have adopted an instructional framework centered around “Reader’s Apprenticeship.” This instructional learning model is designed to increase student literacy skills. It also encourages our Chargers to think critically, synthesize information, and construct arguments. This framework has been key to our academic success. In addition to Reader’s Apprenticeship, we utilize the expertise of our teacher leaders. Our teacher leaders have been instrumental to the academic and instructional success of the school. Throughout the year, in-house professional development is provided to our staff. Our highly trained staff members provide their colleagues with ongoing assistance with classroom management and instructional coaching to ensure the academic success of every student. As a response to teacher feedback, we have adopted the same roll-out strategy for our math sessions. Teacher leaders provide professional development on the 8 Mathematical Practices, strategies that target similar skills, but through a math lens.

We recognize that teacher feedback is essential to creating and maintaining a positive work environment, so we utilize teacher surveys on a regular basis. JMR staff members give frequent feedback on the effectiveness of school leadership, students’ academics, cultural competency and awareness, school climate, and relationships. Our administrative team uses this data to determine appropriate professional development and create a more positive working environment

Building a sense of team unity is important for growth and moral support. To that end, we work under the “Charger Covenant,” a document created by the staff for the staff. The covenant outlines expectations that our staff believes are important to creating an exceptional school for students and staff. As part of these expectations, staff is encouraged to engage in regular conversations to support one another and hold each other to this bar. These conversations are possible because we take the time to bring the staff together for some fun and team building. This past year, our teachers worked in teams to build book-themed bookshelves for students. The bookshelves were decorated with imagery and quotes that encourage children to read. Another aspect of creating unity is nurturing collegiality among staff. Every month, our teachers open up their practice to their colleagues, so all teachers can see the high-level instruction occurring throughout the building. This creates a supportive learning culture where all teachers feel valued and have an impact beyond their classrooms.

Our PTA also does a phenomenal job of creating an environment where teachers feel valued and supported. The PTA has been instrumental in raising funds that are used to assist teachers in purchasing classroom materials that facilitate learning. In addition, funding is used to provide lunches to staff members on designated teacher workdays and school holidays. Furthermore, our hospitality committee consists of staff members who work with the principal to plan and coordinate staff outings. They make it a priority to celebrate important staff events during faculty meetings. By celebrating and enjoying the company of the people with whom we work, we are able to work better as a team.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy at Jay M. Robinson Middle School is one of distributive leadership, where teacher leaders collaborate to lead their peers toward school improvement. Our administrative team is composed of two assistant principals, one dean of students, one academic facilitator, and one math facilitator. Our team uses the Four Disciplines of Execution to track and accomplish school improvement goals. Furthermore, our department chairs assist in planning professional learning that aligns with data gathered from classroom visits and peer observation. The team creates plans of action to lead other teachers toward school improvement, and department chairpersons teach team leaders essential work decided upon by the school administration.

Each grade level has its own administrator that oversees the daily workflow and performance of staff. In addition, administrators travel with their grade level. For example, the 6th-grade administrator will transition from 6th grade to 7th grade to 8th grade with the same cohort of students in order to build on their experience and develop continuity for students and families. This has been a high-leverage strategy employed by the principal in order to create systems and processes of support for students as they navigate their turbulent middle school years.

The administrative team has created systems for peer coaching, where teachers conduct classroom visits and provide feedback and support to one another. This has created a culture of open practice and teamwork essential to professional growth, resulting in high proficiency rates and growth in student success. Our school currently ranks in the top 1% in the State of North Carolina for growth as measured by the Education Visualization and Analytics Solution (EVAAS).

In addition, our principal's belief is one that places an emphasis on peer accountability. He measures this through a nationally normed survey that teachers take two times per year, the TNTP Insight Survey. Currently, the peer culture is 100%, meaning there is very little tolerance for ineffective teaching by teachers. He also monitors the instructional culture index score which is also gleaned from this survey. Currently, the school ranks in the top quartile in every category nationally and within Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools with an index of 9.8 out of 10.

Overall, this approach to leadership has supported student success at our school, making it the only "A" rated middle school in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. This is not just due to its high proficiency rating but also due to the high growth experienced by our students.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Jay M. Robinson rallies again around its central motto of Culture, Expectations, and Excellence to provide culturally responsive teaching and learning. Many programs are in place to address the diverse needs and backgrounds of students, families, and staff. Some recognized needs include recognition and celebration of varied cultures and backgrounds, and support for a range of students from those with exceptional needs, multilingual learners, academically struggling students, students with emotional and/or behavioral difficulties, and academically/intellectually gifted students.

Recognition of various cultures and backgrounds is integrated into much of the curriculum taught. For example, texts studied in ELA classrooms focus on ideas such as the extreme effects of poverty in Africa and the innovators born into this poverty who have persevered. Our teachers pair this text with others that celebrate various cultures and regions in Africa in order to offer students multiple accounts of information about a topic and a better understanding of different cultures. Parents of our students and entrepreneurs who have experience living and working in Africa are also brought in to share their real-life experiences.

Additionally, JMR is culturally responsive in meeting the needs of students, families, and staff. Recently, a Muslim staff member educated our staff about what Ramadan is, what students and staff who participate in the Muslim holiday believe, and how everyone can best support those who celebrate this holiday. Our guidance counselors also arrange for quiet places for our students to pray during the school day. This is just one way we honor the cultural needs of our students and their families.

Equity is integrated into everyday teaching and learning with all students having access to a high-level curriculum. Our teachers are expected to provide support for students who need extra help accessing high-level learning as well as extension activities for our AIG students. Cultural awareness is celebrated throughout the school in our literature, arts, and music programs, and also through SEL lessons taught during BOOST time on subjects such as Black History Month, Women's History Month, and Asian-Pacific Islander Month. SEL lessons also include topics such as choosing good friends and taking personal responsibility.

Finally, support is provided in many ways throughout our school. Our student services team provides families in need with food and gift cards to food stores. JMR counselors offer "Conversations with the Counselors" to support parents with topics such as teenage anxiety, building resiliency, substance use awareness, and experiencing death and loss. Staff are provided professional development throughout the school year on topics to support instruction and respond to current educational events (i.e. active shooter response training). Teachers are also supported and made to feel appreciated throughout the school year in various ways with jean weeks, breakfasts and lunches provided by the PTA, and flexible work locations for teacher workdays.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

At Jay M. Robinson, we have centered our work on a single aligned vision that all staff has embraced, internalized, and modeled. This vision consists of three words: Culture, Expectations, and Excellence. Our vision is reinforced at the beginning of each school year with a review of the JMR Covenant. The covenant lists seven agreed-upon shared commitments.

As a member of the JMR Community, each staff member promises...

To be an appreciative, positive, and contributing member of the Jay M. Robinson community.

To be proactive and solution-oriented when resolving conflict.

To hold each other accountable and take responsibility for every student and staff member's success and well-being.

To build and develop an environment that models academic and social integrity.

To exercise a growth mindset by taking risks that lead to success.

To acknowledge our own bias and honor each other's diverse experiences and beliefs.

To nurture relationships built upon trust, respect, and dignity.

This covenant reinforces our shared vision as it creates a strong culture that holds all staff, students, and community members to high expectations. Our belief is that a strong culture where expectations are high for all will yield excellence for all. Our teachers embrace this shared vision, and, in turn, hold students accountable to the same shared values as they work together to create classroom cultures that empower all to flourish and succeed.

Our teachers believe that kids can absolutely rise to any challenge presented to them in a classroom or school setting. Thus, they continuously teach to the top as rising tides raise all ships. The belief that kids can meet high expectations through a strong culture is the bedrock of the work we do at Jay M. Robinson. It has continuously yielded strong academic results both through the lens of proficiency and growth. This is evidenced through our State performance data and continuously high EVAAS growth index which ranks in the top 1% of all schools in the State of North Carolina.