

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[X] Choice

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

Official School Name Middle College at Austin Peay State University
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address Austin Peay State University, 601 College Street APSU - Marks Building
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Clarksville State TN Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 37044-0001

County Montgomery

Telephone (931) 221-1351 Fax _____

Web site/URL <https://middlecollege.cmcss.net/> E-mail phyllis.casebolt@cmcss.net

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

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Jean Luna-Vedder E-mail jean.luna-vedder@cmcss.net
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Clarksville-Montgomery County School Tel. (931) 648-5600

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. Kent Griffy
(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):
- 25 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
8 Middle/Junior high schools
9 High schools
1 K-12 schools
- 43 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 | 0 |
| 10 | 0 |
| 11 | 57 |
| 12 or higher | 50 |
| Total Students | 107 |

*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
 - 4 % Asian
 - 18 % Black or African American
 - 13 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 59 % White
 - 5 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2021 - 2022 school year: 6%

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

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

| Steps For Determining Mobility Rate | Answer |
|--|--------|
| (1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year | 6 |
| (2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year | 0 |
| (3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)] | 6 |
| (4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021 | 100 |
| (5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4) | 0.06 |
| (6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100 | 6 |

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

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
0 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 25 %

Total number students who qualify: 27

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 0 %
Total number of students served 0

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

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 0 %
Total number of students served: 0

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 1

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 | 1 |
| Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher. | 4 |
| Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc. | 0 |
| Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students. | 1 |
| Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc. | 1 |

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 26:1

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 | 99% | 97% | 98% | 98% | 98% |
| High school graduation rate | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

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 | 58 |
| Enrolled in a 4-year college or university | 91% |
| Enrolled in a community college | 0% |
| Enrolled in career/technical training program | 0% |
| Found employment | 2% |
| Joined the military or other public service | 7% |
| Other | 0% |

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.

The mission of the Middle College at Austin Peay State University is to support students in pursuing post-secondary goals through the immersive college environment. Our vision is for all students to graduate with an attainable, well-structured plan for their post-secondary goals.

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

<https://middlecollege.cmcass.net/student-handbook-attendance>

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

The Middle College at Austin Peay State University (APSU) is considered a school of choice. The principal visits each of the traditional high schools in the district and meets with sophomores to ensure all discover information about the opportunities at our school. Additionally, a parent meeting is hosted for those interested to learn more about our school. Students must meet the eligibility requirements listed below. In addition, students will submit an application, participate in a face-to-face interview with the school counselor or principal, and take an Accuplacer assessment administered by APSU officials, if they do not have an ACT score. After all of the applicants have completed this process, the Middle College team reviews multiple measures to determine which candidates are selected. The counselor or principal meets individually with the applicants to share if they were or were not selected. If selected, students are required to complete and submit an acceptance packet.

Eligibility Requirements: Resident of Clarksville-Montgomery County, TN; 2.85 or Above GPA or 19 ACT Composite Score; Good Behavior and Attendance Records; and On Track to Graduate.

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Our school community is representative of our county. Our school is located on the Austin Peay State University campus, in Clarksville, Tennessee. Clarksville is adjacent to Fort Campbell, Kentucky, a United States Army installation. Fort Campbell is home to the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment and the 101st Airborne Division. Thirty-four percent of our students are military-connected. We value and appreciate the diversity of our student population and the families we serve. Students have free access to attend many cultural and athletic events hosted on campus.

Students are chosen from the local public high schools. Families typically have an interest in post-secondary educational opportunities. Some students are first-generation college attendees. Our school offers three pathways including Fine Arts, Transitional, or an Associate of Arts in Liberal Science Degree. Students selected for the Associate Degree are required to take six university courses during the summer of their junior and senior years and earn both a high school diploma and an Austin Peay State University Associate of Arts in Liberal Science Degree. The students in the Fine Arts pathway have the opportunity to earn a maximum of 30 hours of college credits with a focused elective in music, visual arts, theatre, or dance. Transitional pathway students earn a maximum of 30 hours of college credits while completing high school classes.

Through the immersive college experience, students have the opportunity to fully explore academic areas of interest. Many of our students have been selected to partner with APSU STEM professors to participate in research studies. For example, one student had a heightened interest in understanding more about cancer. The professor granted her the opportunity to assist with the research of cancer cells. Another student is assisting with the research of native birds. As a final example, one of our seniors has been engaged in molecular biology research by following the process to separate DNA samples to send to a Cornell University lab.

Juniors are required to take an ACT Prep class while attending our school. Core content teachers rotate to a different group of students every three weeks to ensure all students are fully equipped with content knowledge as well as test-taking techniques. Students take practice ACT assessments quarterly. Students also hold ACT lunch and learn sessions on Fridays to teach each other specific strategies to conquer the assessment. In October, our seniors earned an average ACT composite score of 26.

At the Middle College at Austin Peay State University, we promote a culture of kindness. We want all students to feel accepted and connected to a positive learning community. One of the clubs chose to create a kindness tree display. Students and stakeholders write positive messages to encourage others and add to the display. A few of our former students have stopped by to provide motivational messages for our students. Kindness coins are often given when an exceptional act of kindness is observed.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

The reading and English curriculum taught at The Middle College at Austin Peay State University is a hybrid of district resources and college-level development. Instruction is delivered in-person for all classes and uses a variety of resources in instructional methods including, but not limited to: lectures, digital development, media analysis, text analysis, collaborative projects, whole class instruction, small-group Socratic analysis, written work, continuous improvement of curricula through student participation and feedback, hands-on project, and real-world connection. Assessments are given within the classroom timeframe and focus on written development, student analysis, and application of skills through presentations, multiple-choice testing, and subjective observation of student mastery of skills.

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

The mathematics teacher regularly attends Professional Learning Communities (PLCS) for Algebra II content to plan instruction, create common assessments (benchmarks), and monitor the progression of growth in content standards set forth by the state of Tennessee. Additionally, the mathematics teacher is a lead teacher for fourth-year mathematics (Precalculus, Statistics, Calculus, Applied Mathematics) at the district level, ensuring content areas align with state standards and vertical alignment between freshman, sophomore, and junior courses.

Our mathematics teacher also developed a weekly tutoring time for additional math support. This session focuses on concepts currently taught in the classroom where students are struggling the most. Students work in small groups and/or one on one with the teacher.

The teacher monitors and tracks student performance. As she plans lessons, she uses predictive assessment data to differentiate lessons to meet the needs of all learners. Benchmark assessments are administered throughout the district and our students' performance exceeds district averages. Data-driven instruction is sustained during the school year to ensure student learning is ongoing in each math class.

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

High school science courses include chemistry and ecology. Science courses are facilitated in the Sundquist Science Complex on the APSU campus. Students have full access to university laboratories to engage in purposeful learning activities. Chemistry is taught using a blend of explicit instruction and guided inquiry. Concepts are presented through sketch notes and video demonstrations, followed by guided practice, then an independent assignment. Assessments at the end of each unit may be written (including a mix of short-answer, multiple choice, and diagramming) and/or practical-based (students must collect data in the laboratory setting).

Ecology is taught using inquiry-based and project-based learning strategies. Scaffolding for content support is given in the form of guest lectures from experts, assigned readings of scientific literature, reflective journal writing, and peer collaboration/feedback. Assessment includes peer evaluation, research presentations, and reflective journal writing.

Students meeting the eligibility requirements have taken APSU science classes and labs. The university science courses students have completed include biology, chemistry, astronomy, physical geography, and physics.

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

Within the Social Studies contents, US History (American Civil War to Current Events) and Economics (Micro & Macro Economics) are taught. An Explicit Direct Instruction format is used for both classes which include a teacher presentation of information (I Do), generally through the use of a PowerPoint with embedded videos, interactive activities, and discussions throughout (We Do), followed by student independent work (You Do). There is an assessment at the end of each unit which is comprised of multiple-choice answers and a short writing exercise utilizing a specific writing format taught within the class setting.

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

Our school offers students a dual-track program with both college and high school courses to complete their high school diploma. Some courses are 100% taught at the college level while ENGL 1010, 1020, and 2330 are taught as dual enrollment by our English teacher. Students have the opportunity to participate in several clubs with our school including Key Club, S2S, Math Team, Book Club, Shakespeare Club, Creative Writing Club, Science Exploration Club (partnered with APSU), and math tutoring. Students also work with our Senior Seminar teacher to learn about workplace shadowing, career development, college entrance placement, and financial aid opportunities.

Our students also participate in activities that contribute to the community. Some service-oriented projects include volunteering at the animal shelter, providing resources for Families in Transition, stocking shelves at a food pantry, organizing clothing items for easier access to underserved populations, gathering mathematic flash cards to give to elementary students, participating in food drives, etc.

In addition, some of our students have engaged in internships at a local hospital and an attorney's office. An opportunity to participate in an entrepreneurship competition was presented to all of our students. A team of three students was chosen to represent our school. They created a pitch for Irul Energy and earned second place in the competition with a \$500 award. After graduation, the students may opt to put their plans into action.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

Our school offers our students a fine arts pathway that allows them to explore the Fine Arts at the collegiate level. We are partnered with the university for this track. Students can apply to study music (vocal and instrumental), theater, art, and dance. Students have access to attend fine arts events held on campus. As an elective, students may explore the arts by enrolling in a course. This semester, a few students have enthusiastically shared how much they are enjoying an Introduction to Dance class. If students are enrolled in a visual arts class, our school purchases all of the required materials.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Our students work with The Foy Fitness and Recreation Center, the fully equipped gym on campus, to complete their physical education hours. This is a free service to them. A teacher tracks the hours to ensure requirements are met for each student. Many students also participate in recreational activities at the center before school, or between or after classes. Students may earn their wellness credits using a digital learning course. Topics covered in the course include Nutrition, the Relationship Between Diet and Disease, the Benefits of Physical Activity, Substance Use, and Abuse, Mental, Emotional, and Social Health, First Aid and Safety, and Human Growth and Development.

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

We offer foreign languages at the high school level through an online digital program. Students have received high school credits in Spanish, German, French, Latin, and Korean. Students seeking to expand this knowledge have the option to take foreign language classes at the college level. Austin Peay State University has offered college credits in the following foreign language classes: Japanese, Korean, Spanish, and German.

2d. Technology/library/media

Our students have 1-to-1 technology in the classroom. Additionally, our students have use of the university library both in person and online to access all available resources.

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

Our science teacher has partnered with the APSU Science Department to expand our cooperation between high school students and upper-level science. Students have the opportunity to shadow a professor and learn the application of skills in the collegiate lab environment.

Our math teacher has created a tutoring partnership with Burt Elementary (a small public elementary school near campus) that pairs high school students with elementary students for math tutoring.

Students in the Creative Writing Club have access to publishing opportunities and guest speakers for the development of writing skills.

Seniors participate in a two-week long career week where members of the community attend classes as guest speakers to develop a career-fair atmosphere specifically for The Middle College.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

We closely monitor our students' academic performance. For the high school classes, all teachers regularly work with students not meeting expectations during our weekly scheduled RTI time. This includes tutoring, retesting, rewriting, revising, and revisiting for taught skills. In terms of ACT or high-stakes testing, teachers work directly with students for individualized reteaching as needed to better the development of the skill. During the academic performance check, teachers also access each student's performance in university classes. If a student's grade begins to decline, support is put in place to assist. Peer tutoring, access to the APSU Learning Center, and before and after-school assistance from our teachers are free resources provided to students.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Assessment results are used to determine whether a student would need to take high school core content classes. The guidelines are defined by Austin Peay State University. Students earning an ACT English score of 28-30 may receive university credit for English 1010. If a student earns an ACT English score of 31-36, he/she may receive credit for English 1010 and English 1020.

3c. Students with disabilities:

At this time, we do not have any students with documented disabilities. Historically, students with disabilities have received the services stated in their IEP. Regarding university support, students have been assisted with partnering with the APSU Office of Student Disability Resource Center. The center ensures access to all curricular and co-curricular opportunities offered by Austin Peay State University for students with disabilities.

3d. English Language Learners:

N/A

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Our school is dedicated to teaching the whole student. Teachers and staff become confidantes and supporters of students in all areas. Our program is designed with the unique student in mind and they are given choice, ownership, and opportunity in their learning. Advisory meetings are conducted every three weeks as "check-ins" on students for not only grades, but also their focus, general perspective, and outlook on their success. Each teacher has a vested interest in the success of the student and regularly goes above and beyond to be sure students' needs are met. As stated before, students participate in a dedicated college readiness environment and are exposed to a bevy of career opportunities during the two-week, personalized career fair. Our guidance counselor conducts student registration twice a year for college courses with teacher support to ensure all students are ready for the next step in their educational journey.

One of our students recently shared the following reflections of her experiences as a Middle College at APSU student.

"I transferred to Middle College two years ago to build deeper connections with my peers and teachers and broaden my learning opportunities as a student. When I first heard about Middle College, I was intrigued by the model in which the school functions. Situated on a college campus, students can take high school classes concurrently with college courses taught by professors. I knew this was a unique opportunity, and although I wasn't sure if it would be the right fit, I was willing to take a chance.

I am glad my willingness to go outside my comfort zone and take on new opportunities paid off. I am simultaneously receiving a rigorous education while experiencing first-hand what studying on a college campus is like. In addition, with a student population of under 110 and a low student-to-faculty ratio, I can create deep bonds with my peers and teachers, which I would have otherwise not been able to do in my previous high school, which has a large student body.

The supportive environment at Middle College, where I can interact with like-minded peers daily, allows me to grow as a student and is a stimulating learning environment I greatly enjoy. In addition, my teachers, principal, and counselor can get to know me by name, and I feel like a valued member of the school community."

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Our school reaches out to parents through school messenger with regular updates that are important to student success. At the beginning of the year, our school hosted an Open House for parents/guardians. We were excited that the number of participants had increased from previous years. Following the event, a handwritten thank-you note was sent to all of the attendees. Parents are always welcome to contact our team.

All teachers communicate with parents as needed for student growth and development - we do not wait for specific conference dates. In times of need (for example, a student's home burned down last year), our faculty rallied around the student and provided not only academic support but also assistance for the family. We work with students on transportation providing free bus passes to students to alleviate parental travel concerns. We have several partners in education that support our students in activities such as providing food for events, purchasing t-shirts for clubs and the entire student body, and/or donating resources for supplies needed in the classroom.

In addition, we partner with multiple departments on the Austin Peay State University campus to expand cultural and learning opportunities for students. Students also have access to several university resources, such as the Wilburn N. Daniel African American Studies Cultural Arts Center, Asian Studies Club, Every Nation Campus, India Club, Korean Culture Club, Latino Community Resource Center, Le Club Francais, Adult, Non-Traditional, and Transfer Student Center, Pre-Veterinary Club, Spanish Club, Social Work Club, Community Engagement and Sustainability, etc.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The teachers at The Middle College at Austin Peay State University share in the decision-making process for students and themselves. Our school functions as a team in which we collaborate on cross-curricular partnerships that create relevant and lasting bonds for student learning. Additionally, teachers are encouraged to participate and facilitate professional development within and outside of district offerings to better instructional leadership. Within the last two years, teachers have attended conferences in Ohio, Georgia, Tennessee, and internationally as learners and presenters to further engage academic development. All teachers feel supported in pursuing professional opportunities at all times, which in turn lends itself to a professional environment within the school. Our school counselor has been part of the Counselor Advisory Board and attends the national conference annually. She brings back information to share with the team. Our administrative assistant manages several responsibilities as the sole support staff for our school. She participates in district-level training to ensure requirements are met. The principal keeps the faculty and staff informed of critical information and shares opportunities for ongoing professional learning. As a team, we understand if there is a temporary setback, we move forward and learn from every experience. That love of learning drives us to strive for excellence which in turn influences our students' resilience in the classroom.

4. School Leadership:

The Middle College at Austin Peay State University (APSU) only has one administrator, the principal of the school. The principal is responsible for completing all of the evaluations of the faculty and staff. She visits high school classes daily. She also navigates challenges that arise between the high school and the APSU community. The relationships established with APSU officials help to ensure a positive experience for our students. The principal sustains communication with the Director of High Schools and provides data throughout the year to demonstrate students' progress. The Director of High Schools visits our school and classrooms throughout the year, and she discusses her observations with the principal. In turn, the principal shares information with the team.

Our English teacher serves as the Academic Coach during an additional planning period. She collaborates with the principal and core content teachers to discuss assessment results. She also offers advice to colleagues when requested. She plans the assessment calendar and shares responsibilities with those impacted.

Our school counselor manages numerous responsibilities. Since the school first opened, she has served in this role and there has been a 100% graduation rate each year. She informs students of scholarship and internship opportunities more than once a week. She counsels students and provides them access to resources both on campus and in the community as needed. She skillfully tracks the post-secondary goals of each student in the school. She helps to steer the process for students to register for APSU classes before each semester.

Teachers are leaders in the classroom and beyond. They work with district core content consulting teachers to share strategies that have yielded positive results for our students. They support the mission and vision of the school and take on additional responsibilities such as recognizing students' exemplary achievement during awards ceremonies, attending activities after school hours, serving as a club sponsor, and contributing to the plans for ongoing success.

Finally, student leaders positively impact our school community. Student leaders provide input regarding school matters. Two students serve as Student Advisory Group representatives. Selected seniors are chosen to participate in the Student2Student (S2S) club to ease the transition of new students to the university environment.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Most students choose to attend our school because the traditional high school setting was not the best fit for them. Students share a common goal of pursuing post-secondary education. During class discussions, students have refined skills to provide an opposing point of view without dismissing a peer's stance. A

culture of acceptance and respect is expected in our school.

Concerning SEL needs, the faculty and staff strive to connect with students daily to ensure they feel accepted. Multiple resources are available for students managing life challenges and our team is well-equipped to provide support for students. Students may opt to meet with the school counselor or another trusted adult. The counselor sustains an updated list on the webpage of resources available to all students. We also partner with parents and guardians as needed. The district provides an SEL hub as well as access to research-based tools for students, educators, and stakeholders.

In the classroom, students are all provided access to additional academic and community resources. Teachers often confer with students before school to offer academic assistance. During their senior year, students are informed of their rights and opportunity to vote. If the student is 18, they are granted the option to complete the voter registration process in class.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

The Middle College at Austin Peay State University sustains high expectations for the entire learning community. During the interest meetings to explain our school of choice to potential students, parents, and other stakeholders, this expectation is explained. With the immersive high school and college experience, students need to possess the skills to successfully manage personal responsibility. There are no bells to alert students to change classes. Students make many choices throughout the day, such as where to spend time between classes. Many choose to work independently in a classroom adjacent to a teacher's office. Some have discovered areas in the Morgan University Center, the Felix G. Woodward Library, or other study spaces available on campus. Students understand accountability for academic success. The expectation is for students to actively participate in meaningful learning activities in each class. Resources are readily available for students to access. Not only are there high expectations for students, but there is also a commitment of the Middle College at Austin Peay State University team to continuously improve and sustain a standard of excellence with our daily practices.