

U.S. Department of Education
2016 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. Bart Weaver

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

Official School Name North DeSoto High School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 2571 Highway 171

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Stonewall State LA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 71078-9423

County _____

Telephone (318) 925-6917 Fax (318) 925-1940

Web site/URL http://ndhs.desotopsb.com/ E-mail barton.weaver@desotopsb.com

Twitter Handle _____ Facebook Page _____ Google+ _____

YouTube/URL _____ Blog _____ Other Social Media Link _____

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

_____ Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Cade Brumley E-mail cade.brumley@desotopsb.com

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name DeSoto Parish School Board Tel. (318) 872-2836

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

_____ Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Dr. Neil Henderson

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

_____ Date _____

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

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Part I – Eligibility Certification

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The public school has met their state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) using the most recent accountability results available for the year prior to nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) for the year in which they are nominated (2015-2016) and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2010 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, or 2015.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2015-2016) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

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

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
 - Suburban
 - Small city or town in a rural area
 - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2015 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	98	97	195
10	94	94	188
11	88	77	165
12 or higher	74	53	127
Total Students	354	321	675

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 19 % Black or African American
 - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 77 % White
 - 0 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2014 – 2015 school year: 6%

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, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	15
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	25
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	40
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	647
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.062
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	6

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

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

Spanish

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 42 %
Total number students who qualify: 263
8. Students receiving special education services: 5 %
36 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- 4 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 1 Emotional Disturbance
- 0 Hearing Impairment
- 8 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 1 Orthopedic Impairment
- 7 Other Health Impaired
- 15 Specific Learning Disability
- 0 Speech or Language Impairment
- 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 0 Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 11
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	3
Classroom teachers	43
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	2
Paraprofessionals	5
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 16:1

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

Required Information	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	91%	93%	89%	92%	93%
High school graduation rate	95%	84%	85%	86%	74%

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

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2015.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	147
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	36%
Enrolled in a community college	28%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	15%
Found employment	20%
Joined the military or other public service	1%
Other	0%

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

Yes No

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

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

The North DeStoto High School family is dedicated to our students achieving academic success and obtaining life skills to become confident, self-directed, life-long learners.

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

PART III – SUMMARY

The North DeSoto High School (NDHS) family dedicates itself to helping students achieve academic success and obtaining life skills to become confident, self-directed, life-long learners who transform their dreams into realities.

Located in rural northwest Louisiana, NDHS's biography began in 1980 when citizens of Desoto Parish School District II passed a bond election to fund and combine Second Ward High School, a traditionally minority school, with Stonewall High School. The major employers were and continue to be timber businesses, manufacturers, health systems, the school board, lignite mining, and power plants, among others.

Open house for this newly formed learning community was held on August 1, 1982; students in grades 7-12 reported on August 26, 1982. To help shape the culture and promote the ethos and spirit of the newly formed learning community, the student body chose the mythological creature of the griffin as its mascot-with the body of a lion to represent the Second Ward Panthers and the head and wings of an eagle for the Stonewall Eagles.

Starting as a one building structure, in 1982, the NDHS compound has grown to now share acreage with three feeder schools: North DeSoto Middle School grades 6-8; North DeSoto Upper Elementary School, grades 3-5; and North DeSoto Lower Elementary "Little Griffins," Pre-K through 2nd grade. With an enrollment of 675 in October 2015 compared to 488 in October 2009, today NDHS serves grades 9-12. The rapid population shift has required the need to quickly expand the infrastructure - classrooms, parking, traffic control, and security procedures; hire additional staff; and increase student services.

The increase in enrollment has not diluted our purpose of building a legacy of excellence one student at a time, but augments our capacity and what we can achieve. Conversely, the joy of this growth has brought an increase in the school's diversity. In an increasingly global society, we feel that openness to diversity is an asset. We have been able to enhance the educational experiences by requiring all students to take rigorous coursework, while providing the appropriate support needed for successful learning. Students benefit from teachers qualified to teach these rigorous college-oriented courses. We carefully consider the full range of abilities within our school when expectations are developed, including different types of intellectual abilities. Expectations are flexible yet rigorous. Teachers emphasize the positive by analyzing data, providing feedback, re-teaching, and stretching the students' minds: motivating them and encouraging them to achieve at their highest level. Students are challenged to develop their full potential academically, emotionally, physically, socially, and culturally.

Our school goals are as follows: goal #1: NDHS students will increase achievement on state-mandated and national tests; goal #2: NDHS students will increase their attendance rate because more active students will increase student achievement and increase the graduation rate; goal #3: NDHS will increase extra-curricular involvement for all students; goal #4: NDHS will increase community awareness and involvement; and goal #5: NDHS will grow its SPS score from 100.6 to 105.6.

As a result of our collective vision and goals setting, NDHS celebrated in fall 2015 a Louisiana Department of Education School Performance Score (SPS) of 100.6 with being named an A-school.

One of the primary focuses of North DeSoto High School is to provide a solid curricular foundation to prepare students for post-secondary educational endeavors. In an effort to accomplish this, North DeSoto offers a variety of career pathways to assist with guiding students in making appropriate course selections that are aligned with coursework in a field they plan or desire to pursue post-secondarily. The career pathways offer a suggested sequence of classes that will help prepare students for their chosen future career. The pathways offered at North DeSoto High School are: Advanced Studies, Agriculture Production, Biomedical Sciences, Business, Information Technology, JROTC, Mass Communications, Performing Arts, and Pre-Engineering.

NDHS students find support in 17 sports teams, 20 clubs, and enrichment services of art, drama, and music

electives with activities, performances, practices, and rehearsals held during and after school hours; 75% of students participate in at least one. Other services include gifted and talented education, emotional support from in-house counselors, and a vivacious athletic program, governed by Louisiana High School Athletic Association, that supports 55% of the students who can begin training at age 3 with the North DeSoto Youth Association. Among the athletic district and area honors, NDHS won State Championship for 3-A baseball in May 2012 and State Championship for 4-A softball in May 2015. NDHS also participates in the District and Louisiana State Literary Rally system for academics and theater with 10% of the student population participating and 5% winning at the state level.

In 2015, NDHS Special Education received commendation for significant strides with its 6% of the school population who receive daily personalized instruction with multi-disabilities, autism, inclusionary practices, co-teaching strategies, and real-life skills so they, too, can be successful after high school.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

The foundations of the curriculum are the Louisiana comprehensive curriculum and the Common Core Content Standards (CCSS) that provide specific learning targets for each subject and grade level. Each department works to vertically align each level so that all students experience cohesive transitions as they progress from one class to the next. Departments also work together to build CCSS-aligned benchmark assessments, unit tests, and post-tests so that teachers may better assess skills where students are weak and departments may collaboratively work to develop content-specific and skill-specific strategies.

Teachers commit to differentiated instructional practices in modalities to provide opportunities for learners of different skill levels to succeed. Students may choose to take general, pre-AP, AP, or dual enrollment courses through collaboration with local colleges and universities. Advanced placement courses are open to all students who choose to enroll because administrators and faculty believe these opportunities should be available to all students and actively seek to increase diversity in those courses. Fees for dual-enrollment courses as well as the AP examinations are paid for by the district. NDHS is a College Board CLEP test center which affords juniors and seniors opportunities to earn additional college credit.

Because NDHS offers six Advanced Placement courses, ten pre-AP courses, and four courses for post-high school certifications, 27% of graduates earn dual enrollment credit. NDHS also celebrates a 72% pass rate on End-of Course tests, compared to 67% in district and 62% in state, including 22% of students with disabilities, 57% of minority students, and 63% of economically disadvantaged students passing. The average ACT score is 19.0, compared to 18.1 in district; 19.2, state; and 19.7, national; with 67% of students earning a score of 18 or above, including 40% of students with disabilities, 46% of minority students, and 65% of economically disadvantaged students. Ninety-five percent of students graduate in four years with a diploma, compared to 95%, district; 75%, state; and 81%, national. Sixty-five percent of graduates enroll in two- or four-year colleges within the second fall semester after graduation, compared to 56%, district and 59%, state. This has resulted in the 2015 graduating seniors being awarded approximately \$1,547,000 in scholarships.

Reading/English Language Arts:

The Reading/ELA Department is designed to facilitate student success on all levels. For students testing below grade-level in reading, a Reading I course is offered as well as a 45-minute daily intervention. Pre-AP courses are offered for English I and English II lead by instructors trained in NMSI's Laying the Foundation program (LTFP). English III and English IV offer AP options. For students wishing to take AP but lack the requisite skills, a pre-AP English Reading and Writing Essentials course is offered. In order to graduate, students must pass either the English II or English III state-mandated End Of Course (EOC) test. All seniors must complete Senior Project, a mentor-based program in which students produce a physical product, write a research paper, and give a presentation to a panel of judges about a skill or post-high school career. For seniors who passed all English courses but need help boosting ACT English and Reading scores, a dual enrollment College Readiness English is offered.

Mathematics:

The Mathematics Department is structured to facilitate student success on all levels. Advanced students may enroll in pre-AP Geometry beginning their freshman year. All other incoming freshmen take Math Essentials in the fall and Algebra I in the spring. Students enroll in Geometry in their sophomore year. Algebra I and Geometry have state mandated EOC tests, one of which is required to graduate. Students may enroll in regular or pre-AP Algebra II, the latter lead by instructors trained through NMSI's LTFP. Following those courses, students may choose from an array of options based on their post-graduate plans, including Financial Math, Advanced Math: Functions and Statistics, Advanced Math: Pre-Calculus, and AP Calculus. Through a partnership with a local colleges and universities, students may enroll in the following math dual enrollment courses: College Algebra, Finite Math, Trigonometry, and College Readiness Math.

Science:

The Science Department is engineered to facilitate student success on all levels. Classes in Biology, Physical Science, and Chemistry are made available to all students. Advanced science students may choose pre-AP options of Biology and Chemistry lead by instructors trained in NMSI's LTFP. For students struggling with a course, teachers require tutoring during and after school. For continued study in science courses to meet a fourth science requirement for graduation, students may choose from AP Biology II, AP Chemistry II, Environmental Science, AP Environmental Science, and dual enrollment Physical Science.

Social Studies/History:

The Social Studies/History department is designed to facilitate student success on all levels. Classes in World Geography, Civics, United States History, and World History are made available to all students. Advanced social studies students may take pre-AP Civics, AP U.S. History, and AP Psychology. Either the Biology or U.S. History EOC exam must be passed for graduation. Teachers require tutoring during and after school for struggling students. Sociology and Western Civilization dual enrollment courses are available, as well.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Unless otherwise noted, courses are open to all NDHS students. Percentages listed are 2015-16 data that relates to the total student population who chose each area.

ACT Prep: All students not scoring a 20+ on the ACT are enrolled during their junior and senior years, as well as students that have already reached the 20+ mark but choose the class for possible higher scores in the future, 24%.

Agri-Science and Welding: NDHS offers Agriculture Science I and II, Horticulture, and Welding I and II (25%). Students can earn National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) Welding I-II certifications and OSHA compliance certification.

Arts: NDHS offers Art I, Art II, Art III, and Survey of Fine Arts (22%). The art curriculum follows the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) visual arts standards to give students the opportunity to discover their sense of creativity and develop evaluation processes and public speaking skills by critiquing their works in front of their classmates and experiencing and participating in oral presentations.

Band: Beginning and Advanced Band are offered (7%). The band participates in concerts, competitions, and local events, and performs at football games. Students enrolled in Marching Band earn ½ PE credit. In 2014-15 the band scored "Sweepstakes" ratings (the highest) at District competition, earned the Best in Class Award and Most Outstanding Soloist Award at National competition, and garnered Superior ratings at the LMEA state competition.

Business: The business program offers courses in Business Computer Applications, Desktop Publishing, and Accounting (32%). Emphasis is placed on skill developing technology skills to perform advanced information processing. All students have the opportunity to obtain advanced certification in Microsoft Office including word processing, spreadsheets, databases, e-mail, and presentation programs to become Microsoft Office Specialist Certified in several areas, such as IC3 and Word.

Drama and Speech: NDHS offers Speech I and II and Drama I, II, III, and IV, encompassing an Introduction to Theatre, Stagecraft, and Children's Theatre (16%). Each year the drama department develops an in-house production that is attended by ND elementary and middle school students, as well as community members. Students also compete in regional and state competitions, with ten first place district wins, eight state superior awards, nine sweepstakes recognitions for speech and theatre, and numerous first place district speaking awards as well as superior rankings at state speaking events, all of which occurring over the past decade.

Foreign Languages: NDHS offers Spanish I, II, and III (35%) with the curriculum being set by the LDOE to equip students with communication skills that they can apply in real-world situations outside the classroom which can open career paths, facilitate travel, and provide bolster interaction with members of the

community.

Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps: The NDHS Army JROTC program is accredited by AdvancED, the parent organization of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI), because the program demonstrated a commitment to student performance and continuous improvement in education. The program also is an Honor Unit with Distinction and the top school in the Sixth Brigade Forward with a score of 199 out of 200, as assessed in February of 2016, (23%).

Physical Education: Students are required to take 1½ credits in P.E. plus a ½ credit in health to meet graduation requirements, and the curriculum is designed by the LDOE (45%). On average, 20 students per year certify as an emergency responder, training for which is an option in the PE program. The training program for athletes is one of the most advanced in the state, as athletes are exposed to a variety of training methods and techniques. The Alliance for a Healthier Generation, founded by the American Heart Association and the Clinton Foundation, recognized NDHS with a 2014 National Healthy Schools Award for transforming its environment into a healthier place.

Project Lead The Way: Students completing engineering or biomedical science courses (32%) in this nationally recognized curriculum may earn college credit for scoring at the advanced level on the PLTW EOC exams. In the engineering pathway, students take Introduction to Engineering Design, Principles of Engineering, Digital Electronics, and Engineering Design and Development. In the biomedical sciences pathway, students take Principles of Bio-Medical Science, Human Body Systems, Medical Interventions, and Biomedical Innovations. In these programs, students have the opportunity to be mentored by and make presentations to industry professionals from the community. The NDHS biomedical sciences program is the only PLTW-certified program in the state.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

NDHS faculty members develop data-driven instructional plans and organize student-centered, needs-based tutoring and remediation following content presentations and major assessments. Teachers and administrators make parental contacts to explain needs and to encourage students to attend after-school remediation. Teachers establish high expectations and work to ensure content is personally meaningful and relevant to all students. A school website is utilized to keep students, family and community members informed of classroom instructional activities and educational resources. Additionally, the district provides a Student Progress Center on the district website that students and families can access that keeps real-time data records on class assignments and grades, test scores, attendance, behavior, etc.

Teachers use WIN block time ("Whatever I Need") to examine and discuss student data with students. Each daily class period is extended 45 minutes one day per week to allow for individual student progress monitoring. This time is also utilized for specialized support time as student skill deficiencies are identified. Fridays are utilized for whole-school assemblies, grade-based homerooms, club and organization collaboration needs, and additional time for student make-up work after absences.

Based on daily and weekly student data analysis, teachers employ classroom grouping techniques to maximize student learning. With implementation of the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) in August 2009, NDHS witnessed a shift to more student-centered classrooms where student data determines differentiated instructional practices. Data sources include norm-referenced tests, benchmark pre- and post-tests, and section and unit assessments. Based on student data, activities and materials that are challenging, engaging, product-based, and relevant. Teachers and administrators also analyze student data to guide decisions regarding scheduling, enrichments, and interventions such as ACT prep classes and boot camps.

NDHS also offers free, self-paced credit recovery online to students who previously failed a course and to students who desire to work ahead to earn graduation credits. Students utilizing this program have access to a certified instructor who works in the same classroom.

The NDHS faculty and administration work to close the achievement gap for special education students

through a life skills program and a regular diploma program. Special Education teachers and paraprofessionals work closely with regular education teachers to offer support systems in core classes and in the Content Mastery Center (CMC), a center for tutoring, re-teaching, project completion, testing, and psychological and emotional encouragement.

Special Education teachers mail weekly progress reports and information to their students' families because the program strives for passing core classes and EOC tests and earning diplomas. The teachers are also committed to observing their students fully involved and submerged in the high school experience, including course offerings and co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

4. Assessment for Instruction and Learning and Sharing Assessment Results:

Teachers and administrators review various assessments in weekly, departmentally-organized, 65-minute cluster meetings, weekly 60-minute leadership team meetings, and monthly 30-minute faculty meetings to evaluate data. Analysis of data is very strategic and includes the following: PLAN and ACT scores identify scheduling needs for ACT Prep classes and boot camps, as well as remediation; semester proficiency checks assess student performance throughout the semester to determine extra support needs; iSTEEP (System to Enhance Educational Performance) evaluates reading skills to detect needs for reading remediation. Master Teachers develop a research based focus strategy with segment assessments that are used to evaluate student understanding and growth throughout the implementation and progress of a student strategy.

Faculty members spend significant time before school begins building benchmark assessments and unpacking standards that will drive classroom instruction. Teachers analyze all student data available to set goals for students, make projections for student growth, and devise instructional plans that will ultimately lead to high student achievement. Throughout the year teachers utilize assessment resources such as Interactive Achievement (onTrac) and the Louisiana Department of Education EAGLE platform to develop Benchmark assessments, unit tests, proficiency checkpoints, and post-tests. Particular attention is paid to standards-based proficiency checks that allow teachers to measure student progress towards mastery of skills, which also speaks to progress made towards class goals, department goals, and the overall school goal. Working with these resources and the student assessment data, teachers ensure alignment of instructional methods with student needs.

For students who seek job employment after high school, NDHS offers ACT WorkKeys, a series of tests that measures foundational and soft skills. This assessment's results help employers select, hire, train, develop, and retain a high-performance workforce.

Parents, students, and community members may be informed of students' academic achievements through the NDHS website, local newspapers and other media outlets, daily morning assemblies, and progress report nights at the end of 9-week intervals. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled when needed and upon request from parents and/or teachers. The online student progress center is accessible for all parents of NDHS students.

iSTEEP alerts when students need additional support or when they have reached their goals; math remediation for college is offered with college credit hours. After-school tutoring for all academic core departments give students opportunities to address personal academic needs and deficits. Reading remediation classes help students to strengthen their reading comprehension skills so that they may be on grade level with their peers.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Forging strong relationships is a whole school priority at NDHS. Staff-student relationships influence all aspects of campus life. NDHS embodies a culture of teachers and students working together as partners. These cooperative learning activities help students realize that personal effort can contribute to the group as well as individual goals. The goal for every adult in the building is to maintain a high rate of positive interactions with students and to show genuine interest in their lives, activities, goals, and struggles.

These genuine relationships have created a culture of learning that reflects the importance of work undertaken by both the students and teachers. A culture of Individual goal-setting structures that allow students to define their own criteria for success. A culture where teachers, students, and parents perceive the school as positive and well-functioning.

In morning assemblies, students compete for “Pizza with the Principal,” an opportunity for winning students to invite a peer to share pizza and conversation with the principal in his office with the door open to a hallway for observations during both lunch shifts.

The administration also celebrates the “Over the Top” Club that recognizes students who improve their ACT scores by four points or who score a 25 or higher. For students who score a 30 or higher, the district Superintendent recognizes them in morning assemblies with a personalized vinyl banner to hang in the foyer. School and district websites display pictures from these acknowledgements.

After being named an A-school, Student Council partnered with administrators, faculty, and community to organize an entire school day celebration of various amusements, food, games, and photographic moments.

Homecoming, pep rallies, sports, and Mardi Gras encourage student, faculty, and family involvement to revel in celebratory practices each year; events often incorporate all North DeSoto schools. For most football games at the school stadium, vehicles fill all parking spaces and line the highway as people participate in free community-funded and -organized tailgate parties in one of the school’s exterior courtyards for the entire community, including the visiting teams’ spectators, to enjoy a meal and fellowship; several student bands rotate to provide free entertainment of music and dancing. Afterwards, the revelers move to watch games as part of a standing-room only crowd in a state-of-the-art stadium and facility.

Distinctive to NDHS is the athletic support of the academic classroom in which the entire coaching staff reinforces academic success and positive behavior practices in the academic setting and constantly holds all student-athletes accountable for their actions and study habits.

Student achievements are promoted daily on announcement screens in the gym and throughout the hallways. In the classroom, teachers implement positive reinforcement practices to motivate student achievement.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The Student Progress Center keeps students and parents up-to-date; when an F is input, the database calls, texts, and e-mails contact information that families provide. As a result, parents may e-mail teachers through the system or teacher webpages. Some teachers make use of cell phone apps that send daily reminders; even students have begun to form their own group messaging to stay informed about events and assignments. When announcements are needed, the principal formulates a message that calls, texts, or e-mails every contact in the system. Also, teachers make use of e-mail, telephone calls, and postal mail to encourage students as well as to inform parents when their students are not performing up to their capacities.

Counselors hold several informative meetings throughout the year during the day and evenings to address scheduling concerns for incoming freshmen as well as the entire student body, college scholarship and finance options, and iPad policies and distribution. The principal hosts two Back to School Night events, one each semester due to block scheduling, that allow parents to come and meet teachers and learn expectations.

The NDHS principal formed a 10-person Principal's Advisory Board that includes the town mayor, parents, and representatives from the teaching staff. This group aids the principal in being aware of all issues concerning the well-being of the students at the school as well as the physical plant and the community at-large, including events, celebrations, and necessary improvements.

Teachers also invite members from the community and non-profits to share relevant information on current teaching topics. Each year, a non-profit from Shreveport organizes an assembly on the day before Prom to motivate students to make good choices on Prom night. The principal and Student Council invites guest speakers to share their personal stories of struggle and triumph, including a former Olympian, motivational speakers, lawyers, dirt bike stuntmen, and military heroes.

During the course of English IV classes in both fall and spring semesters, teachers often invite speakers from local colleges and universities to give suggestions to the students about how to portray themselves on applications and during their Senior Project presentations. Through collaboration with other members of the school faculty, English IV teachers arrange for college recruiters and members of the community to evaluate the Senior Project presentations.

Many opportunities are used to highlight the campus for the community. These include major celebrations for sports successes, honoring distinguished individuals for service, promoting talent through performances in the arts, and bringing all campus communities together to celebrate holiday events. High School students are frequently visiting the lower grade campuses to promote a community that values service as they spend time reading to younger children and building positive relationships.

3. Professional Development:

All administrators, counselors, and faculty members participate in a minimum 65-minute job-embedded weekly professional development called "cluster." With common planning periods, all teachers from each department attend the same cluster each week to study, develop, and implement data-driven and research-based strategies into all classes. As a result, the principal and school district holds all faculty members accountable for pertinent information and data gleaned from the implementation of strategies that have included school-wide writing strategies, deconstruction of CCSS, vertical alignment, individual growth plans, analysis of each individual piece of the ACT, among others. Professional development also may occur during teachers' planning periods as TAP encourages Master Teachers and Mentor Teachers to support Career Teachers' growth and professional advancement with personal, verbal, and written constructive feedback after classroom observations, clusters, and walkthrough observations.

The district designates four specific dates during the year for professional development. The school leadership develops and implements an agenda that is site specific based on identified areas of need. Often, district leaders attend professional development that they share with the school's TAP Master Teachers, who then communicate to the school's leadership team that in turn shares with the entire faculty through cluster new learning or a monthly faculty meeting. This method of professional development allows everyone to become invested in the success, growth, and improvement of the school and its students. Master Teachers also attend additional monthly professional development that they present at the school level as part of cluster new learning or a faculty meeting. Twice a school year, administrators and faculty members attend national professional development at TAP conferences, among others, which they redeliver at the school level.

The school has developed a mission plan aligned with the district mission plan which helps the school prioritize goals. All faculty members are involved in at least one Goal Theme Team that encompasses data and academic growth; student and teacher attendance rates; student involvement in school activities, sports,

clubs, and organizations; and community awareness. The school's goals develop from testing cycle goals that are set from teachers' class goals that are made personal with each individual student's academic goals. All goals are communicated publicly to students during the morning assemblies, in their classes, and on the electronic announcement boards displayed throughout the school's hallways. Faculty and administrators meet every second Tuesday of each month to review mission plan goals and progress.

4. School Leadership:

The school's leadership philosophy is characterized by collaboration and team-building which focuses on academic, intellectual, physical, and psychological growth of the students at NDHS. The Leadership Team aligns itself with the school district mission: "to care for our students, ensure their learning, and celebrate their graduation as citizens prepared to transform their dreams into realities." The school leadership team is supported by the work of the district leadership team which is very hands on when it comes to support. The supportive presence of district leaders on our campus, from the Superintendent down, is a regular occurrence.

The NDHS Leadership Team that consists of principal, assistant principal, administrative assistant, two master teachers, and six mentor teachers meet every week to monitor student success, support 37 career teachers, assess school improvement goals and data, and review the school's mission plan. The mission plan drives the leadership team's decision-making; the leadership team sets expectations for educational excellence as teachers monitor student learning and growth. The leadership team focuses on identified needs based on instructional issues that specific teachers face with specific students. During cluster, teachers use data and targeted strategies to address these areas of need. The results of their effort loop back to the leadership team in the form of student artifacts and data, allowing the team to dig deeper into the critical attributes that may enhance students' growth.

When our district shifted to e-textbooks with the use of iPads the technology team facilitated the process. The team was charged with the task of devising plans to make sure students are on task while using the devices in school. Ongoing professional development with iPads continues through cluster meetings along with steady monitoring, troubleshooting, and aligning of resources to ensure effective implementation during each semester of the academic school year.

Each faculty member receives three formal classroom observations throughout the school year that include a lesson observation, teacher reflection, and a valuable piece of feedback in the form of a post-conference plan that contains a reinforcement (strength of lesson) and a refinement (area to work on) and utilizes the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) lesson evaluation rubric.

In addition, members of the district and school leadership teams make use of daily and weekly cluster follow-up walkthroughs called mini-observations to help gather classroom evidence to determine additional support needs to better impact student achievement. Also, informal classroom walkthroughs are conducted by all members of the school leadership team as well as various district leaders on a daily to weekly basis to provide individual additional constructive feedback opportunities.

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The strongest indicator of academic success at NDHS is the data-driven instruction that is guided by ongoing progress monitoring of student data. Teachers take the results of the progress monitoring and collaboration and share those findings with students through classroom posters and Excel spreadsheets. When success is noted, teachers celebrate with students and encourage further progress towards personal, classroom, and school goals; when struggle is observed, teachers plan for re-teaching opportunities. Progress monitoring is an integral part of the NDHS identity – who we are and what we do. Because of this, the principal has a constant line to “live” data results that can be input into the school performance calculator at any time and provide a current status or where the school is in relation to goals and projections. This data allows teachers and administrators to collaborate weekly to identify characteristics of student learning in each class and from that, attributes are identified in order to help students refined their skills or advance their learning to an even higher level.

The overall school SPS goal, cluster goals, and classroom goals are based on student need that is driven by individual student data collected from standardized tests, formal and informal assessments, and formative and summative assessments. During the nine-week summer break, teachers collect data on their incoming students and make initial projections based on previous standardized test scores. This data is revisited and revised after course benchmarks are administered and teachers collect data on student achievement within the first weeks of class.

Teachers plan and implement various instructional strategies based on student need determined by data collected through constant progress monitoring. Teachers continually collect, record, and reflect on assessment data in weekly cluster meetings and provide remediation to those students who are not performing to the expectations of course standards. In addition, NDHS implements both in-school and after-school EOC test tutoring for students whose data recognizes them as “borderline” test-takers for passing an EOC test. Progress monitoring occurs not only at an in-class level but at larger level with ACT scores as well. NDHS evaluates PLAN and ACT scores of juniors and seniors to determine those who score below a 20 on their ACT, and administration requires these students to be enrolled in an ACT prep course. With the school district, the faculty organizes ACT boot camps for students to attend during school hours before the March on-site test and on weekends before national test dates.