

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2017 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mrs. Starla Rae Metz

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

Official School Name St. Petersburg Collegiate High School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 6605 5th Avenue North

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

City St. Petersburg    State FL    Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 33710-6801

County Pinellas

Telephone (727) 341-4368    Fax (727) 341-7166

Web site/URL http://www.spchs.spcollege.edu    E-mail Metz.Starla@spcollege.edu

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\*Dr. Tonjua Williams    E-mail Williams.Tonjua@spcollege.edu  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name St. Petersburg College    Tel. (727) 341-3153

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board  
President/Chairperson Mr. Nathan Stonecipher  
(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**

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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. 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 and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2017 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.
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 2011 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: 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016.
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 has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.
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.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2016-2017) unless otherwise stated.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 96 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 24 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 28 High schools
  - 4 K-12 schools
- 152 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, 2016 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	0	0	0
10	29	38	67
11	22	65	87
12 or higher	32	48	80
<b>Total Students</b>	83	151	234

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 9 % Asian
  - 10 % Black or African American
  - 4 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 64 % White
  - 12 % 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 2015 – 2016 school year: 1%

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, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	0
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	3
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	3
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	242
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.012
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1

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

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

NA

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 29 %  
Total number students who qualify: 71

8. Students receiving special education services: 1 %  
1 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.

- 0 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 1 Emotional Disturbance
- 0 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 0 Other Health Impaired
- 0 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: 9
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	5
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	0
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	0
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 14:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	99%	99%	99%	99%	98%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

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 2016.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	86
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	88%
Enrolled in a community college	6%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	1%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	1%
Other	4%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.  
Yes \_ No X

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.

Vision: We cultivate motivated learners, develop critical thinkers, and empower visionary leaders. Mission: SPCHS students will simultaneously earn a high school diploma, an Associate in Arts degree, and a Bright Futures scholarship.

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

In December of each year, every ninth grade student who has an unweighted grade point average of 3.0 or higher and is enrolled in a Pinellas County Public School is sent a letter of invitation to attend a St. Petersburg Collegiate High School (SPCHS) Information Session. In early January, reminder postcards are also mailed. Private or home schooled students also apply; however, we do not have access to their addresses so they do not receive a letter or postcard. During the month of January, SPCHS holds four Information Sessions, throughout Pinellas County, for prospective students and their families. After the application deadline of February 10, students who meet criteria and are eligible for a preference (employee or sibling) are deducted from the number of openings. Then, the remaining eligible applicants are entered into the Microsoft Excel program which randomly assigns a number between 0 and 1 to each student. Once each student has a number, the numbers are mixed-up by the computer and the computer program randomly selects students to create an invitation list and a waitlist if there are more applicants than openings. Two people are always present when the lottery is conducted.

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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St. Petersburg College (SPC) opened St. Petersburg Collegiate High School (SPCHS) in August 2004. SPCHS students are enticed by the unique opportunities available by being on a college campus with the support provided by the SPCHS staff. We provide a unique educational experience with all the challenging academic rigor of college, balanced with an age-appropriate social environment that includes traditional high school events and activities. We serve students from all of Pinellas County with 29% of our students qualifying for free or reduced lunch. Students are selected via a computerized random lottery, thus creating a diverse student body.

assignments. In addition, the National Honor Society Peer Tutoring program, developed about five years ago, provides peer-to-peer support.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum:**

The school's tenth grade curriculum supports three major objectives: mastery of the Florida Standards, completion of required courses for high school graduation, and preparation for college-level academics.

#### Mastery of the Florida Standards

Each course at SPCHS offers instruction based on the Florida Standards, critical thinking, regular homework, cross disciplinary projects, and mentoring and tutoring as needed. Group projects provide a bridge between course standards and real life challenges. Students are given choices to determine how and what they would like to learn within course parameters.

In World History, students examine the development of the democratic process and its evolution into the United States' system of representational democracy. Through collaborative and creative projects, students analyze the foundations of Athens, Rome, and the Enlightenment in order to understand the rights and responsibilities in the American government and how understanding history is required of aware and active citizens. Students put this understanding into practice through participation in the Student Government Association. The ideals of a representational democracy are supported in the development of a responsive government body and an active electorate in fostering a culture where students have agency in their school environment.

In Economics, students are involved in civic engagement through their experiential learning in various issues including: taxes, environmental issues, and the causes of poverty. Students reach out to their representatives, community stakeholders, and take personal initiatives to improve their communities and advocate for themselves and the fellow man.

In English, students create multimedia files to demonstrate their understanding of complex literature. Across the curriculum, teachers instruct students on the proper techniques for writing, how to read and process information efficiently, and how to transfer that information into long-term memory.

In Chemistry, students research real world problems, publish their findings in an e-book, and present their findings.

Instructors regularly communicate student success goals during meetings and offer supportive lessons to enhance one another's lessons and projects.

For example, the math instructor re-teaches logarithmic functions or scientific notation as students are using these skills in Chemistry. Engaging lessons, required homework, cooperative projects, mentoring, tutoring, technology infusion, college lab for Chemistry experiments, and integrated class curriculum themes comprise a thorough, relevant, high quality educational experience for students.

#### Completion of Required Courses for High School Graduation

The second objective, completing required courses for high school graduation, is met by providing courses, such as Geometry, Algebra II, English II, English III, World History, Economics, and Chemistry. Many of these courses are required for high school graduation, but cannot be achieved through dual enrollment during the students' junior and senior years. As such, these courses require students to be committed to their education and be dedicated and motivated learners. By concentrating these courses during the sophomore year, SPCHS ensures students are prepared to graduate high school on time and meet our goal of 100% high school graduation rate.

#### Preparation for College-level Academics

These courses also help meet our final curriculum objective, which is to prepare our students for college-

level coursework during their junior and senior years, where all students will be fully dual-enrolled in college courses. To ensure college readiness, SPCHS works with college faculty to understand the knowledge and skills needed for success in college courses. Using this information, the sophomore teachers infuse these skills into their curriculum so students are prepared and confident in their abilities to perform at college level while completing their junior year of high school. All students take the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT) as part of the admission criteria and after acceptance into SPCHS. The PERT provides baseline data regarding student preparation for college when they enter the school and to track individual student's progress in becoming college ready. Using the baseline data, students are placed into appropriate courses. SPCHS also uses the PERT to guide curriculum changes necessary to help students succeed. Using the data from the PERT, Florida Standards Assessments, and their own classroom assessments, the faculty creates a curriculum that engages students in learning that requires them to work collaboratively to prove mastery of skills through projects, demonstrations, and tests. In addition, all students create an online portfolio of their accomplishments while attending SPCHS. Students are continually engaged in a process of planning for their education and career after graduation. They take several career assessments to determine a college major and career pathway. This process requires students to think critically about their own education plans and how those plans will influence their future goals. Once a major is selected, the SPCHS academic advisor and guidance counselor guide course selection to ensure students are competitive applicants for colleges and universities in their desired major. Students and parents also prepare for postsecondary success by attending workshops, such as College Transition, PSAT Results and Support, College Application, and FAFSA workshops offered by the SPCHS guidance counselor and academic advisor.

## **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

For sophomores, the other curriculum areas focus on college preparation; students take college courses, such as The College Experience, to help them learn the difference between high school and college as well as how to use the college resources to succeed. Another area outside of the core curriculum for sophomores is our high school Creative Writing course. This course is designed specifically with the SPCHS student in mind. Students work through the writing process on writing projects that mirror those they will be expected to complete in Composition I and II and in other courses at SPC with a rigorous writing requirement. Students learn how to peer edit, use rubrics to enhance their writing, and polish drafts to ensure quality work. In Florida, high school students need to meet the Health Opportunities through Physical Education (HOPE) requirement in order to graduate. SPCHS uses two semester classes to meet this requirement and educate students about living a long and healthy life. First, students take a semester long high school Physical Education class. Next, students are required to take a college level health class. By combining these two courses, SPCHS offers students the information they need to make good health choices while helping them become better prepared for college-level coursework.

Since SPCHS is a charter school operated by St. Petersburg College (SPC), our juniors and seniors may choose from almost the entire college catalog when selecting their classes and preparing to enter a university after their academic career at SPCHS. To meet foreign language requirements, the college offers advanced courses in Spanish, French, and American Sign Language. In addition, if students wish to become a sign language interpreter, they can continue with the Sign Language Interpretation degree program after graduation.

In addition to the foreign language options, the college offers SPCHS students a wide variety of options in the arts. SPCHS students have access to the music program to learn about music theory, take music lessons, and participate in the choral and musical ensembles. The college also offers SPCHS students several dance class options and the opportunity to join SPC's award winning CoMotion Dance Theatre. For visual arts, students have access to drawing, design, digital arts, and ceramics classes offered by the college. SPC also owns the Leepa-Ratner Museum, which is free for students, giving them access to the college's art collections as well as the traveling exhibitions the museum offers throughout the year. Finally, the college offers an excellent theater program that allows students to take classes on acting, script-writing, and all aspects of theater. Our students can even audition and perform in the college's annual plays and productions.

While students are in their sophomore year, they gain experience in using various technology tools to help them succeed in college. Every classroom at SPCHS has twenty-five computers available for student use while in class. Students are required to use the computers to create presentations, videos, research papers, and e-books. If students do not have access to technology at home, SPCHS has a laptop lending program for home use. Because SPCHS students are students of SPC, the students have access to free software programs including Microsoft Word and PowerPoint for school and home use. As for technology courses, SPCHS students have access to the programming, business technology, information technology, and cyber security courses that the college offers. If SPCHS students wish to pursue a technology certificate, they can take the courses and exams free of charge through St. Petersburg College.

Finally, SPCHS has created a Leadership Program that helps students gain important career and life skills, such as resume development, etiquette, interviewing skills, and ethical leadership. In the Leadership Program, juniors learn skills that will help them in a business environment, such as business etiquette, dressing for success, and communication skills. They also develop an online portfolio, which serves as an archive of high school and college work as well as a tool students can use at university and at work. Seniors showcase their portfolios and demonstrate their business etiquette to parents and the community at the SPCHS Senior Capstone networking event.

### **3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:**

All SPCHS instructors base their lesson plans on the Florida Standards. Warm-ups, reviews, lectures, labs, projects, presentations, lessons, critical thinking questions, vocabulary tests, reading assignments, quizzes, pre-tests, tests, and exams are designed to meet these standards and progressively assess students' mastery of the standards. Reading, writing, and research are infused in all disciplines. Much of the learning is done in collaborative groups to allow students the opportunity to share and discuss possible options as they work through the process of learning the material. Students are given specific rubrics for projects that provide the benchmarks that will be required of them to ensure mastery of the content. In some classes, students use a quiz and self-grading assessment to foster self-reflection. For example, in Chemistry Honors, all students take chapter quizzes that are self-graded, and then all questions are reviewed as a class with the instructor. In the English class, students are given vocabulary words to learn that are constantly reinforced and reviewed. Correct answers to the critical thinking questions are shared with the students after a lesson is finished, so that when exams are administered, the students have had the opportunity to self-reflect and correct any misconceptions before taking the exam. In Creative Writing, students serve as peer editors who give feedback based on rubrics to help each other refine their writing. Individual conferences are also held with the instructor, so students receive the guidance needed to continually refine their writing.

Teachers personalize instructional strategies and interventions to address individual learning needs of students. Students who have an IEP or 504 are given the appropriate accommodations to ensure their success. The plans are specifically reviewed before the student begins the school year. If a student has a 504 or IEP, SPCHS seeks resources from the school district to help meet the needs of the student, and works with the SPC Disability Resource Specialists and an ESE contracted teacher.

For those students who need extra support, SPCHS has a number of interventions to help students stay on track towards meeting the mission. Within the first three or four weeks of the school year, all tenth grade instructors prepare a list of possible at-risk students based on professional examinations in each of the courses. If a student may be at risk for failure, conferences are scheduled and support systems are put in place to ensure the student has what he/she needs to be successful in the program. For example, if time management is recognized as an issue for a student, he/she will be scheduled to conference with the resource instructor, who will give one-on-one instruction in time management, and the student will be assigned regular check-in dates to make sure progress is being made. If tutoring is needed, an NHS tutor is assigned or the student is required to attend tutoring. Sophomores also receive a progress report every 4 ½ weeks. Report cards are reviewed by the principal to assess achievement, and comments are written to encourage students. All grades are available online so students and parents may track achievement. Junior and senior students receive significant guidance and support from the Leadership Team, which is comprised of the principal, curriculum specialist, guidance counselor, academic advisor and resource instructor. The Leadership Team holds a Junior Seminar and a Senior Seminar once a week to provide the students support

in making decisions about scheduling, college admissions, preparing for college, and making a major/career choice. Finally, the students have access to all the tutoring and resources provided by SPC and SPCHS.

All SPCHS faculty members use multiple assessment measures to evaluate student learning and the curriculum. These measures include authentic assessments, project-based assessments, critical-writing assignments, research papers, tests, and quizzes. The teachers inform students of their expectations by providing students with a detailed syllabus at the beginning of the course, and providing weekly objectives and goals. In addition, the teachers regularly conduct formative assessments that provide information to students regarding their own learning and areas where they need improvement. For example, for projects assigned to the students, teachers provide each student a rubric with detailed expectations and samples of previous exemplary projects that have met the high expectations for students at SPCHS.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### **1. School Climate/Culture:**

The mission, vision, and core values create the culture of SPCHS. Our mission states, “Students will simultaneously earn a high school diploma, an associate in arts degree, and qualify for a Bright Futures scholarship;” our vision states, “We cultivate motivated learners, develop critical thinkers, and empower visionary leaders;” and our core values are, “Students First, Collaborative Learning, Continual Improvement, Integrity, Mutual Respect, and Family/Community Environment.” These aspirations are the foundation for all we do at SPCHS. The vision, mission, and core values are internalized by staff and students and are used, with data, to inform decisions.

Students are introduced to the positive culture of SPCHS during orientation, where they participate in team building activities, learn expectations, write their mission statement, establish goals, and discover resources and support to empower them to excel. The dedicated SPCHS staff nurtures a culture of learning by empowering students to take responsibility for their education and by serving as coaches and mentors. Students quickly discover that SPCHS staff care about them as individuals, which builds trust and removes barriers. This “family-like” culture encourages students to collaborate and ask for help when needed. Students thrive in a culture of collaboration and respect. They encourage each other to meet the mission and vision while realizing their goals. To spur continual success, student and staff recognition occurs informally on a regular basis and formally during our awards programs and at graduation.

Guidance counseling, academic advising, weekly seminars, and the numerous social events offered by SPCHS and SPC foster students’ academic, social, and emotional growth. Our students enjoy a unique educational experience as college and high school students, broadening their perspectives and knowledge. Furthermore, SPCHS offers many of the social events one would expect at high school, such as prom and a fall dance. Students also enjoy numerous college events for free as SPC students.

Teachers are empowered as highly qualified professionals and held accountable to ensure students meet our vision and mission. Trust, camaraderie, and a sense of family/teamwork define the relationship the staff enjoys and serve as a catalyst for continual improvement. Teachers enjoy the freedom, resources, training, and support to implement best practices and to innovate. Decisions are made collaboratively, with the best interests of students in mind. Finally, the principal serves as a coach and mentor, guiding each teacher to realize his/her professional goals while contributing to school goals so our students’ dreams are realized.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

SPCHS values community and parent involvement. Our active Parent, Teacher, and Student Association (PTSA), provides input and helps plan social events for students. The School Advisory Council (SAC), comprised of parents, students, staff, and community members, provides feedback and offers suggestions for continual improvement. Parents and students are encouraged to take an online survey each year to provide feedback for continual improvement, and the principal has an open door policy. Parents also serve as chaperones, volunteers, and guest speakers. For example, one parent, who is a licensed counselor, offered a student workshop on stress management and wellness strategies.

Parents are kept apprised of their child’s academic performance through progress reports, report cards, and online posting of grades. Furthermore, parents are encouraged to contact any member of the SPCHS to voice concerns and check academic progress. When a student begins to struggle, a conference is scheduled; there the student, parents, and staff create a success plan to raise the student’s achievement. Struggling students are monitored closely, and additional resources are provided to promote improvement and build skills. Students’ accomplishments are noted via informal celebrations, in the weekly principal updates sent to all families, and in blog posts on the SPCHS website.

The SPCHS staff and stakeholders collaborate to continually improve performance by reviewing data and providing feedback to promote best practices, resulting in high student achievement and stakeholder

satisfaction. Rotary sponsors the SPCHS Interact Club and is a strong community partner, supporting collaborative community service projects, such as raising funds to eradicate polio and collecting bikes and toys for Toys for Tots. Another outstanding partner is Junior Achievement (JA). This organization empowers SPCHS students to facilitate a financial literacy program for elementary-aged children and provides leadership training for juniors. This year, JA presented SPCHS with the Outstanding Achievement Award for our students' leadership and service for the past ten years.

As a result of SPCHS' continual focus on student achievement, Newsweek ranked SPCHS 2nd in Florida, 55th nationally, and 53rd nationally for helping students of poverty excel in 2016. In the 2017 Niche Rankings SPCHS was #3 for Best Public High School in Tampa Bay and #7 charter school in the state. Furthermore, as a result of the SPCHS School Advisory Council efforts to document our community service, SPCHS received the Five Star Community Involvement Award for 2015 and 2016.

### **3. Professional Development:**

The principal designs a professional development plan, which includes team and individual training, for the SPCHS staff based on various data points that are aligned to school, district, and college goals. This year, team training focused on Youth Mental Health First Aid training to enable the staff to identify and assist students who may be struggling with a mental health challenge.

Individualized learning is embedded in the evaluation process, which requires each staff member to create a professional development plan. These plans are aligned to state assessment data, school, college, and personal goals to foster professional growth and to enhance effectiveness to increase student achievement. For example, the Deliberate Practice component of the evaluation system requires SPCHS teachers to select one or two areas of their professional practice to focus on for improvement. These Deliberate Practice plans are monitored, and evidence of effective implementation is noted during teacher observations by the principal.

Other professional development offerings include attendance at conferences for professional organizations, such as the National Council of Teachers of English, the National Council for the Social Studies, and the National Science Teacher Association Conference; while there, SPCHS teachers gleaned best practices and innovative teaching strategies. Knowledge gained at these conferences is shared with the SPCHS Professional Learning Community to increase the capacity of all teachers, thereby increasing student achievement. For example, writing strategies gleaned from the National Council of Teachers of English over the past few years has helped SPCHS teachers infuse effective reading and writing strategies in all disciplines, thus providing students the skills necessary to read college-level text and demonstrate their knowledge through effective writing. In addition, the Leadership Team's attendance at the Freshman Experience Conference, Collegiate Conference, and the Florida College Access Network Conference has enhanced the support offered to students through weekly seminars and parent/student workshops to ensure success now and as students continue their postsecondary education.

SPCHS administrators attend conferences, such as the College Experience, Improving Schools: The Art of Leadership, the Instructional Leadership Academy, and Coaching for Success. Ongoing leadership development includes Leadership SPC and Mentee Leadership Team. In addition, SPC and Pinellas County Schools (PCS) provide several online and face-to-face workshops. Staff may also take college courses at SPC for free. All staff participate in professional development aligned to school, college, or professional goals, to ensure they are highly effective so students successfully meet the vision and mission of our school.

### **4. School Leadership:**

The leadership philosophy of SPCHS is focused on service, collaboration, and continual improvement. All decisions are made based on data and with the best interests of students in mind. At SPCHS we strive to empower all students to meet our mission and vision while enjoying an exemplary educational experience.

SPCHS is operated through a charter by SPC. The SPC Board of Trustees serve as the Governing Board

for SPCHS, monitoring the charter, approving the budget and audit, and providing guidance to the principal and the principal's supervisor, who is an Associate Vice President at SPC.

There are five members of the Leadership Team: the principal, the curriculum specialist, the guidance counselor, the academic advisor and the resource instructor. The principal is responsible for all aspects of school operations, including staff evaluations, school improvement, and the budget. She navigates SPC's and Pinellas County Schools' (PCS) policies and procedures, as well as state statutes, to ensure the school is in compliance with all regulations. Furthermore, she works collaboratively with PCS's and SPC's staff to ensure SPCHS is fiscally responsible, effectively managed, and students are achieving at high levels. As a result, SPCHS has been designated a High Performing Charter School since 2011.

The curriculum specialist assists the principal with operations, leads curriculum and technology initiatives, and disseminates textbooks and other resources to students.

The guidance counselor and academic advisor facilitate weekly seminars, provide parent/student workshops, guide and monitor students' attainment of high school and AA requirements, and provide academic and regular counseling to support students.

The resource teacher is the final member of the SPCHS leadership team. In addition to teaching Creative Writing courses to sophomores, she teaches the SPCHS Leadership Program, which includes a college-level Leadership Development course and a college-level Study Skills for Academic Success course, providing just-in-time support for students as they begin all college courses. Furthermore, she provides one-on-one assistance to strengthen students' college readiness and writing skills for struggling students.

SPCHS faculty and staff serve on numerous college committees to ensure SPCHS is an integral part of SPC and to foster the mutually beneficial partnership. SPCHS students are also encouraged to participate in SPC events and become leaders in both high school and college to gain valuable skills, experience, and confidence.

## **Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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The overarching strategy used at SPCHS that makes us so successful is the ability to build relationships with students so we can provide the support required for them to excel. Although many aspects of our supportive culture have been previously highlighted, an important aspect that has not is the indispensable support offered by the guidance counselor and academic advisor, especially as our juniors and seniors matriculate to all college courses.

The Junior and Senior Seminars are facilitated by the guidance counselor and academic advisor, who provide ongoing support to our students in all college courses on the college campus. These required seminars are held on Tuesdays for juniors and on Thursdays for seniors during the SPC activity period, so all students may attend.

Students benefit from the support offered in these seminars by SPCHS staff and gain valuable information from a diverse group of guest speakers. A sampling of topics includes, but is not limited to, career and college majors, healthy living and safety, interviewing skills, leadership development, career assessments (such as the ASVAB, Future Plans, and Focus II), study abroad opportunities through SPC and Rotary Youth Exchange Florida, events offered through college and high school clubs or organizations, special events offered through SPC, and civic engagement activities. These offerings expand students' perspectives, prepare them for success as they transition to postsecondary education, and foster social and emotional growth.

Additionally, the guidance counselor and academic advisor guide the students in course selection aligned to their college major, through individual conferences. During these conferences held with students and their parents, various data are reviewed to guide students in selecting a college major and career pathway. Workshops are also provided for students and parents that help students transition to college, navigate the college application process, apply for scholarships, and complete the FAFSA to determine if they qualify for financial aid.

The guidance counselor and academic advisor also monitor students' success in college coursework to ensure requirements are met for the high school diploma, Associate in Arts degree, and Bright Futures scholarship. If a student is struggling, the guidance counselor facilitates a student, SPCHS staff, and parent conference, creating an Academic Support Plan to monitor performance until the student has improved his/her grade(s).

It is evident, the support provided by the guidance counselor and academic advisor are key to our students' success and part of the support structure that empowers SPCHS to soar.