

U.S. Department of Education
2017 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 Ms. Jacqueline Ingratta

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

Official School Name Edgewood Junior Senior High School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 180 East Merritt Avenue

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

City Merritt Island State FL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 32953-3413

County Brevard County

Telephone (321) 454-1030 Fax (321) 452-1176

Web site/

URL http://www.edline.net/pages/Edgewood_JSH E-mail Ingratta.Jackie@Brevardschools.org

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Desmond Blackburn E-mail Blackburn.Desmond@BrevardSchools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Brevard Public School District Tel. (321) 633-1000

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 Ms. Misty Belford
(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. 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

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):
- 55 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 11 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 16 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 82 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	89	93	182
8	91	93	184
9	71	75	146
10	89	75	164
11	61	75	136
12 or higher	75	61	136
Total Students	476	472	948

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 3 % Asian
 - 2 % Black or African American
 - 6 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 82 % White
 - 6 % 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	7
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	7
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	949
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.007
(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):
None.

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 13 %
Total number students who qualify: 121

8. Students receiving special education services: 1 %
14 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
- 0 Emotional Disturbance
- 0 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Mental Retardation
- 3 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 2 Other Health Impaired
- 2 Specific Learning Disability
- 3 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: 1
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 including those teaching high school specialty subjects	52
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	12
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	2
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	15

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 18:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	99%	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.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	117
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	98%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	1%
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 X No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2008

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

To provide a positive and safe environment for all students with a challenging curriculum, with high expectations for student achievement, with emphasis on critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, a sound knowledge base, and lifelong learning skills.

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

A student must qualify to attend Edgewood. The student must be on academic grade level to be considered for enrollment in the appropriate grade. "On-grade level" is defined as maintaining proficient EOC and FSA scores in mathematics and reading, and maintaining C's or better in each core class. A lottery/waitlist system is utilized as applications exceed available seats.

PART III – SUMMARY

Edgewood Jr/Sr High School is located in the Space Coast area of Florida, a central coastal region along the Atlantic Ocean, and serves 950 students in grades 7-12. Edgewood is a School of Choice with a focus on excellence and rigorous academics that has served the area for fourteen years. Our student and community population tends to be middle-class, with a high population of engineers and scientists due to the Kennedy Space Center, Cape Canaveral Air Force station, and a high concentration of engineering and tech companies. We have over 35 after school clubs that range from anti-bullying, 3D printing, to service and honor societies, and offer a wide range of athletic opportunities. We work hard to support our vision: to seek excellence in who we are, what we know, and what we do.

Our students are enrolled in the school based on academic performance and a lottery. Students commit to meet the graduation requirements for a Diploma of Distinction: this includes additional coursework, 25 hours of service learning per year, and culminates with a senior project. In their senior year, students focus on an area of interest and write a senior paper, complete a project, and make a presentation to a panel of school and community leaders. This affords students invaluable experience with planning and presentation skills and pushes them beyond their comfort zones as they explore a potential career or passion. Another unique focus for Edgewood is our homeroom concept; in 7th grade, students are assigned a homeroom teacher who rolls up with them each year until they graduate. This long-lasting interaction creates a unique bond and support system for our students.

At Edgewood, all middle school courses are an advanced level; the students are motivated and curious and thrive in an environment with fewer students. We believe this academic rigor and focus on serving the community creates an environment that fosters both excellence and empathy. Additionally, the student's family must also volunteer for the school at least 20 hours per year. This creates a strong bond between families and the school and engages parents with our school mission. We have amazing opportunities for students; however, we face geographical challenges. There is no district-provided busing to our school; parents are responsible for transportation. We offer extended hours in the media center as many students are dropped off outside of the school day.

According to U.S. News and World Report, Edgewood was the top-scoring Brevard County school for 2016 and was ranked 30th nationally, 4th in the State of Florida, and the top high school in Central Florida. Edgewood has been recognized as a Florida Arts Model School (2016), a Florida Power Library School (2015), a National Model PLC School (2014), and a National Blue Ribbon School (2008). In 2013, the Washington Post ranked Edgewood as the 58th most challenging high school in the nation. The students of Edgewood share a common goal of high academic achievement, and achieve amazing results with the structure and support of the school community.

Since receiving our National Blue Ribbon School award in 2008, Edgewood has continued to grow and excel within the school district and community. One new initiative has been a focus on the social-emotional well-being of students. Our students are high-achieving, but they are also children who have trouble coping with the academic, social, and home pressures. To that end, our professional development has focused on supporting teachers with this endeavor, as well as creating and implementing additional supports for students.

To encourage students to develop their athletic potential, we offer a highly competitive array of middle school, junior varsity, and varsity sports, where we have won district championships, and competed in both regional and state finals. Ultimately, despite our small and academically-inclined population, we have sent athletes off to college on athletic scholarships nearly every year of our existence.

We have also worked diligently to collect input from our students, parents, teachers, and community on a regular basis to assess our strengths and weaknesses and identify areas for improvement. Some changes that have been implemented include: a focus on professional learning communities, common benchmark assessments to monitor student progress, and improvements in communication.

In addition to taking a very demanding academic course load, students are also heavily involved in afterschool activities. To support students' social-emotional needs and address anxiety concerns, we are restructuring the traditional school day to include a "Power Hour" which expands the lunch period and increases student opportunities for success. Teachers will offer tutoring and provide opportunities for make-up work with students, as well as create a time and space for extended learning activities. This time will help build relationships with students while at the same time providing an opportunity during the school day to alleviate concerns over workload and anxiety. In the new schedule, homeroom will be expanded to a weekly 30-minute session and focus on supporting student needs, teamwork, and bonding.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

The academic curriculum encompasses a faster-paced learning environment which prepares students for college-level studies. Students can take accelerated, advanced Placement, dual enrollment, and virtual school courses while working toward a Diploma of Distinction (DoD). This advanced diploma requires additional high school credits and an additional year of foreign language. Students are required to earn a minimum of 28 credits, rather than the standard 26, for graduation. The DoD also requires acceleration in middle school, completion of two college-level classes in high school, civic engagement through community service, completion of a senior project, and development and maintenance of a competitive college/career portfolio that includes documented leadership experience.

1. The English/Language Arts curriculum offers thought-provoking literature, analytical and argumentative writing for all students. Teachers provide a variety of research-based strategies and collaborate to ensure our curriculum addresses the shifts within the state standards for English/Language Arts. By incorporating complex texts with a focus on academic language, reading, writing, and speaking grounded in using text-based evidence, and building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction, our students leave our school college and career ready. Furthermore, the English/Language Arts curriculum is vertically aligned, building a staircase of knowledge with regards to text complexity, writing, and mechanics, so that all students are ready for the demands of college and career level reading by the end of high school. Instruction is differentiated by the teachers to meet the needs of each student and ensure mastery of the standards at each level.

2. The math curriculum offers students foundational skills through the scaffolding of courses from basic concepts in advanced math (7th grade) to college-level classes such as AP Calculus AB and BC. The school follows the curriculum guides developed by Brevard Public Schools which were created to address the state mathematics standards. The department also offers a course that combines Algebra II Honors and Pre-Calculus Honors into one class, which allows our best students to advance quickly to get to the higher level classes in preparation for college readiness. Instruction is differentiated by the teachers who monitor student progress through benchmark testing. Students struggling with the curriculum are invited to teacher and peer help sessions.

3. Collaboratively, the science teachers work to provide a rigorous curriculum for all students. Students have the opportunity to take an accelerated path which allows them to take more science courses throughout their academic career. Science research is a course offered from 7th through 12th grade to allow budding scientists to conduct their own research, have an opportunity to engage in civic learning, and help the scientific world around them. The science curriculum consists of biology, chemistry, and physics, which are complemented by AP Biology, AP Chemistry, and AP Physics as well as science electives. The science curriculum addresses the standards through challenging coursework, hands-on activities, and lab work. The Edgewood science teachers collaborate to create common formative assessments which they use to monitor student progress. Students that are not progressing proficiently are invited to individual help sessions and peer tutoring.

4. Curriculum in social studies incorporates higher order thinking skills and problem solving skills, and many projects/assignments focus on making the subject relevant. Inter-disciplinary lessons augment student writing gains through primary source and nonfiction text. Students are encouraged to conduct in-depth explorations of topics with which they connect, and employ their own talents and interests to produce differentiated, student-driven presentations that put the student at the center of content delivery. The social studies department uses standards-based benchmark testing and common assessments to drive the instruction and monitor student progress. Civics and Government are required courses at the middle and high school levels, through which students gain an appreciation for civic duty and responsibility, the forms and functions of government, and the structure of our legal system. Student civic engagement is encouraged through a vigorous student government program, mock elections and campaigns, and an emphasis on community involvement and service.

We support our students for college and career readiness through a multi-faceted approach. Edgewood students have the opportunity to take college readiness exams beginning in 9th grade and continue through their senior year. Additionally, students are exposed to an introductory career course in 7th grade and Career Research in 9th grade, where they explore different opportunities available and visit university campuses. Edgewood students meet individually with their counselor on a regular basis to discuss college and career plans in comparison to course selection, college entrance exams, and college readiness. For SAT/ACT readiness, guidance counselors work with each 10th grade student to examine their strengths and weaknesses and provide strategies to increase their scores on the SAT and prepare them for college readiness.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Edgewood offers a robust array of elective courses for students to explore their particular interests. From digital design to volleyball to culinary arts, involvement in electives courses allows students to build 21st-century skills including collaboration, critical thinking, and innovation. With the exclusion of some upper-level courses, all electives are open to all grade levels, giving students of all ages the opportunity to pursue their interests. Students typically take one to four electives each semester, depending on their grade level.

1. Edgewood's performing and visual arts programs inspire students to pursue their passions as they explore and excel in music, drama, and art. Students have earned numerous district, state, and national awards and Edgewood has achieved the designation of a Model Arts School. All students have the opportunity to enroll in classes from foundation level to advanced placement in music theory and visual art, in which they maintain an outstanding passing rate on the AP exam.

2. Edgewood embraces the vision of sound minds through sound bodies via our vertically-aligned physical education (PE) courses. All students are required to take a PE credit, and we have a large participation in our PE electives as well. From middle school PE through advanced weight training coupled with a nutrition and wellness elective course, students do not just passively receive information, but frequently plan for and reflect on the impacts that their health, exercise, and nutrition choices have on their lives. Enthusiastic and experienced instructors coach our students on forming healthy training regiments, using weight training equipment properly, and even securing Red-Cross sanctioned CPR certification.

3. The Foreign language curriculum at Edgewood is challenging and relevant to the students' lives. The languages offered at Edgewood include Spanish (levels 1 through AP Spanish Language and AP Spanish Literature), and Latin (levels 1 through AP Latin). All Edgewood students are required to complete at least three consecutive years of one language to ensure mastery. Students are required to demonstrate learning through authentic and alternative assignments such as the Hispanic Festival and a cultural day. Each year the Latin program offers students the opportunity to compete at the district and state levels, where Edgewood is consistently top-ranked. Edgewood also offers a travel club to students which allows them to travel to places such as Spain, Honduras, and Greece; in 2019, a group of our students are going to Spain during spring break.

4. Technology plays a critical role at Edgewood; students can elect to take courses in robotics, digital design, TV production, and computer science. Students are able to engage their passions and leave with real-world experience and industry certifications. Students can obtain certification as Adobe Visual Design Specialists (InDesign, Photoshop, and Illustrator) and as Avid Certificated Users (TV production). Technology use and application is also embedded into the curriculum of many of our core and elective courses. We have over ten 1:1 classrooms, and students use a variety of multimedia tools to create presentations, websites, videos, and other technology-infused projects. Students explore a variety of options and must use critical thinking to find the most effective approach to convey their information.

5. Edgewood also offers some unique programs such as AP Capstone and Senior Leadership, as well as typical electives such as speech/debate, culinary arts, journalism, fabric construction, and driver's education. These courses are available to all students. Students benefit in all curricular areas by participating in speech and debate classes; this program gives the students skills and confidence in public speaking and offers the

opportunity to participate in debate competitions. About a third of our juniors and seniors enroll in our AP Capstone Program, a two-year track that teaches students teamwork, research, and presentation skills. Junior year, students engage in three research projects, each one progressively more independent and more challenging. Senior year, the students contribute original research to a field of study of their choice. The Capstone program challenges students to research a contemporary issue in-depth. Senior year, all students must enroll in Senior Leadership, Science Research, or AP Capstone Portfolio. In these courses, students develop their senior paper, portfolio, and presentation in an area of their particular interest. Students develop skills to analyze sources and their credibility, build a defensible argument, and present and defend their findings to an audience.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Edgewood teachers use a variety of instruction methods to assist students in reaching their full potential. To that end, both vertical and horizontal alignment are crucial to our instructional success. In the cycle for continuous improvement, teachers work to revise curriculum for vertical alignment. As a 7-12 school, we are uniquely positioned to have served the same students for six years, and we work to examine the skills and concepts being taught so they build in an effective manner. Horizontal alignment occurs through teacher teams who plan by grade and subject level to ensure consistency throughout our program.

Instruction methods differ depending on subject matter, grade level, and specific lessons. A combination of indirect and interactive instruction is frequently used at Edgewood, as engaging students through student-driven coursework is a major focus. Students in all grade levels engage in a research-driven curriculum where students hone critical thinking skills to gather, analyze, and in some cases, generate data to make and support claims. At every level, the research is student-selected. Teachers also frequently use student-led discussions or group multimedia projects or presentations to spark student interest and build critical thinking, brainstorming, problem-solving, and collaborative skills. Virtual field trips are very popular and students are able to engage with experts outside our school walls.

Experiential instructional methods are also used at Edgewood. In science classes, students frequently conduct experiments and participate in field observations and simulations. We have a thriving robotics program through which students build and test models, with constant tweaking to see cause-and-effect. Teachers organize field trips for students to participate in activities such as author workshops, marine science explorations, and museums tours. Direct instruction is used when introducing new concepts and is often paired with demonstrations. We offer a virtual lab on campus where students engage in independent learning, and they are able to take courses that we do not offer or to give students more flexibility in their schedule.

Differentiation is a key strategy to reach our diverse learners. Through the use of blended classrooms and platforms such as Google Classroom, assignments are easily adapted to include multiple options for a variety of learning styles while students receive individualized and immediate teacher feedback. The platform also offers specific customization where different students can receive different assignments in their classroom stream. Using this technology, assignments and rubrics can easily be customized to support all levels of student learning. Many teachers structure projects so students are assessed on how they meet certain goals, while the process and methods used are student-directed.

For intervention, low-performing students meet with a counselor on a weekly basis to receive feedback. They review the student's progress and coach the student on organizational and planning strategies to aid in classroom success. "No Zero" is another intervention used at Edgewood to enhance student performance in middle school. This intervention ensures student completion of work and ultimately promotes academic success. After success with our pilot program, Power Hour will be another intervention to promote student success. Students will be able to make-up work, receive extra help and tutoring, and use school resources during the school day without conflicting with their classes.

Common benchmark assessments are a crucial tool for teachers to assess students so they may identify student strengths and weaknesses as well as modify their instructional techniques. These assessments are both formative and summative and are continuously updated collaboratively and independently.

In addition to school-created common assessments, all teachers have access to a database that houses student performance data including test scores, item analysis, and attendance. The database includes state and national assessments such as Florida Standards Assessments in English Language Arts, Mathematics, U.S. History, and Civics, Statewide Science Assessment, ACT, SAT, and AP courses. Teachers use this resource to monitor student progress and identify students not performing at proficiency, both individually and in their Professional Learning Teams (PLTs). This data is used at the classroom level to inform and guide instruction, and is used at the school level to inform our school improvement and other school-wide goals.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

At Edgewood, we believe that educating the whole student is vital to the future success of the child. Our academics are rigorous, but allow for a variety of different paths and pursuits to flourish. By engaging our students positively and addressing their interests, we instill emotional and personal connections between students and their peers and teachers that make our school a safe and special place to be and learn.

Our students have the opportunity to immerse themselves in our challenging academic programs, with the classes frequently bolstered by an array of robust extracurricular clubs that delve deeply into different subjects. We produce a literary magazine, put on stunning musicals, engage in Model Student Senate, participate in computer programming competitions, complete waterway reconstruction projects, engage directly with local and national politicians, construct and compete complex robots, and log thousands of hours of community service. Each of these extracurricular elements is rooted in a classroom foundation; we provide opportunities for a student's spark of interest during a lab or lecture to ignite into a passion that guides and motivates them through their years at Edgewood.

Further, we seek to motivate all of our learners with recognition of their success. Our annual awards ceremony recognizes not just those top scholars, but the outstanding artists, musicians, citizens, and athletes within our ranks; we strive to make sure any student earning a scholarship is recognized, both to honor that student and instill the possibility of tangible success in their peers.

On the other end of the spectrum, we invest time and energy in helping along the students who struggle. Through regular grade checks and meetings with counselors, mentor teachers, and administrators – without threats or punishments being involved – the students are reminded that they are a part of our family. This one-on-one focus is vital to keeping these students engaged in our school.

Administrators work closely with teachers, seeking input, creating multiple committees for important policy shifts, and recognizing and rewarding those who go above and beyond their duties. Just this year, as a faculty, we voted to move to a “Power Hour” schedule of elongated student lunch and flexible tutoring/study hall time. This decision, which affects each teacher significantly, was made by the faculty and staff working together, rather than being passed down to the teachers from an authoritarian administration. As such, the faculty support of the new policy has been overwhelmingly positive, and that positivity has been registered through frequently solicited feedback and opinion surveys that keep administration and faculty working in harmony.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Family involvement is a key component to Edgewood's success. Since volunteer hours are a commitment for parents as well as students, parents are heavily involved and present in school activities. Throughout the year, parents assist with administrative tasks, plan fundraisers, and help out with special events. We have an extremely active PTO, and parents are a crucial component of the School Advisory Committee as well as several other school committees dedicated to targeted issues such as student workload and anxiety, and Power Hour implementation. By involving parents in all aspects of the educational process, students achieve more and the school benefits from their direct contributions and indirect support at home. Many school fundraisers are primarily parent-run, and the money raised is used to better the school by providing special opportunities to students, technology and equipment for the classrooms, and other school improvements.

Communication with parents and families is a major part of the student success at Edgewood. Teachers and school leaders use Edline, our school website and grade-reporting system, to keep parents up-to-date on student performance. Grades are updated and posted weekly, and parents have access to view coursework, calendars, and grades. Edline allows teachers and parents to easily communicate about students' educational challenges and work together to address potential issues. Through a weekly email, a monthly

newsletter, e-flyers, and daily digital announcements available on our website, we inform parents about important dates, events, news, student accolades, and school initiatives. Each year, Edgewood invites incoming 7th grade parents and students to an informational session to explore the campus, meet their peers, and learn regarding available classes, graduation requirements, clubs/activities, and organizational strategies for success.

Outside organizations throughout the community are very involved in the student success at Edgewood. The school has several local business partners who work closely with the teachers, students, school leaders, and parents. The business partners contribute monetary and in-kind donations, and award student scholarships and other special recognitions. For example, the rotary club recognizes high-performing seniors at a monthly breakfast, a local bank sponsors an Edgewood bank card and donates a percentage of the profits, and a local dentist contributes in-kind donations for student recognitions.

As part of our senior board process, Edgewood reaches out to community members to judge student projects. The students and school benefit from feedback from professionals from a wide variety of fields: engineering companies, military personnel, business leaders, school and district administrators, judges, lawyers, scientists, doctors, and journalists. Community leaders also get a first-hand look at student work and see how we are preparing the next generation of employees. Community and parental involvement is a crucial component of our continued success.

3. Professional Development:

At Edgewood, our professional development focuses on the idea that “if the organization is to be more effective in helping all students learn, the adults in the organization must be continually learning” (Learning by Doing). Activities are in place to address district and/or state initiatives as well as school-based and teacher learning goals. In order to serve the unique needs of all students, our professional development focuses heavily on the social-emotional development of the students as well as their academic success.

Our students are high-achievers; as a whole they are focused on academic success. However, many students are on the autism spectrum or struggle with anxiety and coping with challenges. Through continuous training, we work to build teacher capacity to both recognize the necessity of addressing a student’s social-emotional progress and provide them with the tools to help. We cover areas that directly relate to our school population such as at-risk gifted students and autism-spectrum disorders as well as challenges faced by all adolescents such as coping with loss and grief. Building relationships with all students is another focus of their social-emotional well-being. Our professional development centers around the idea that in order for a student to learn, they must feel safe and valued. When relationships between teachers and students are forged so that there are no students who feel left out, undeserving, or unnoticed, we can raise the achievement of all students. By educating teachers on recognizing and responding to behaviors and providing strategies, we are building teacher capacity and fostering both academic and social-emotional success for our students.

Technology support is another crucial component of our professional development approach. We focus on the use of technology in the classroom as a means to an end, not as a stand-alone approach. We focus on technology that will help teachers become more efficient and more effective, rather than just implementing something because it exists. We have three major focus areas in our professional development approach – classroom management, teacher and student creation, and formative assessments. Tools are chosen that help build teacher capacity and promote efficiency, differentiation, critical thinking, and engagement. Our professional development regarding formative assessments tools centers around the benefits of frequent formative assessments to inform and shape instruction, and the technology available to efficiently implement such assessments. The technology aspect of our professional development supports all other areas of focus, such as differentiation and data-informed lessons.

4. School Leadership:

Edgewood is an organization where leadership is defined by action, not position. Teacher leadership is celebrated and needed as part of our high performing learning culture. The principal serves as a facilitator and models the latest relevant information by inspiring staff on best practices and educational research. Student performance data is revered and used as a powerful tool to guide instruction, staffing, and curricular decisions. The principal serves as the conduit to ensuring fidelity in the implementation process of school improvement and survey goals.

The school's leadership structure is comprised of several parts. The administrative team includes a principal and two assistant principals who assist in guiding the implementation of school goals and objectives. One assistant principal oversees the school curriculum and the master schedule while the other assistant principal manages our facility, master calendar of activities and testing, and student services. Each academic department has a lead teacher that we collectively refer to as the Professional Learning Leadership Team (PLLT). The PLLT meets monthly for information on district and state policies. Departmental highlights on instructional curricular best practices and procedural efficiency measures are also shared at these monthly meetings. Each PLLT leader subsequently holds monthly meetings with his/her team to disseminate district and/or state policy and important school information. Connections to information presented are progress monitored through direct and informal observation by administration and lead teachers.

In addition to our PLLT, our departmental meetings, also known as our PLTs, meet for the purpose of reviewing, discussing, and focusing our attention on formative and summative assessment, and bottom quartile data. Teachers who teach the same subjects work collaboratively to plan lessons, create common assessments, and disaggregate data to hone in on those student areas of strength as well as those opportunities for growth. Singleton teachers, those teachers who serve as the only teacher of record on campus for a particular course, are given release time to collaborate with teachers outside Edgewood to target the various needs of students while building those professional relationships with colleagues for the benefit of the collective community.

In summation, the philosophy of Edgewood's leadership team is to cultivate relationships with students through an academic lens that fosters rigor, relevance, community service, and character building.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

With a highly diverse array of students at Edgewood, we must employ a diverse array of tactics and strategies to serve their needs. However, the single most effective practice that we have implemented over the past few years has been the focus of Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) across the curriculum.

The PLTs have served us and our students extremely well. Administration has bolstered our PLT's effectiveness by arranging, whenever possible, for subgroups amongst our PLTs to have shared planning time, generally based on similar courses. Most immediately and obviously, these PLTs and shared planning times allow our teachers to employ common assessments, creating them in concert and giving them at similar times. The three teachers covering Algebra I track each other's pace, compare successes and failures on particular lessons, seek counsel after setbacks, and support the learning of their own students and their colleagues'. Alongside these common assessments, the teachers regularly share lessons and project ideas as a common resource but without the pressure to conform to another teaching style. This allows for individual instructional autonomy, letting teachers play to their strengths, while covering identical topics and reaching for identical goals. Our continued success on county and state exams is the measurable byproduct of this cohesion.

A concentration on vertical alignment, facilitated through the PLTs, has brought intense focus on the standards of each class, ensuring that vital and significant foundational skills are covered at an agreed-upon level. Middle school language arts, for instance, begins the research process with an introduction to finding and citing sources. By English I, students progress to a more critical view of sources, assessing them for bias or flaws; by senior year, students compile seven- to twenty-page research papers (depending upon their track: AP Capstone, Science Research, or Senior Project), in which sources must be integrated and compared, cross-referenced, and co-analyzed. Each level requires the scaffolding of the previous, and every level must be covered. As we plan our instruction with end goals like these monolithic research papers in mind, our PLTs work closely to ensure that there are no gaps along the way. The strength of this program has earned us top marks on the AP Capstone test, countless ribbons (and scholarship dollars) from local and state science fairs, and the certification of the National Senior Project Center.

These shared outcomes and broad, multi-year goals are nestled within the purview of our Professional Learning Teams. Each meeting is guided toward maximizing our collective abilities to meet these exceptional standards year after year.