

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 [] Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Todd Briley

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

Official School Name Midland High School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 735 South Crocker

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

City Midland State LA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 70559-1943

County Acadia Parish

Telephone (337) 783-3310 Fax (337) 783-3332

Web site/URL http://www.acadia.k12.la.us/MHS/ E-mail tbriley@acadia.k12.la.us

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. John Bourque E-mail jbourque@acadia.k12.la.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Acadia Parish School District Tel. (337) 783-3664

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. Douglas LaCombe
(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):
- 17 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 4 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 5 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 26 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	27	26	53
9	23	39	62
10	37	19	56
11	27	28	55
12 or higher	17	27	44
Total Students	131	139	270

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 7 % Black or African American
 - 0 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 93 % 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 2015 – 2016 school year: 12%

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	10
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	22
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	32
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	274
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.117
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	12

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):

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 100 %
Total number students who qualify: 270

8. Students receiving special education services: 5 %
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.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <u>3</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>5</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>1</u> Mental Retardation | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 3
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	4
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	21
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	1
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	3
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

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 13:1
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	94%	94%	94%	94%	93%
High school graduation rate	95%	92%	90%	87%	87%

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	47
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	53%
Enrolled in a community college	11%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	21%
Found employment	9%
Joined the military or other public service	6%
Other	0%

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.
To create productive members of society, establish life-long learning skills and effective citizens for our country who recognize not only rights but responsibilities.

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

In 1956, the Fifth Ward area of Acadia parish consolidated three small high schools into one, thus creating Midland High. The school was built to serve the communities of Midland, Morse, Estherwood and Mermentau, located in rural south Louisiana. All of these communities were settled by French, Acadian, and German immigrants in the 1800s, creating a rich culture full of strong traditions in the area. For many decades, the main industry for the area was rice farming, but over the years, the number of farmers has declined. The increase in oil production over the last thirty years or so and the area's close proximity to the gulf created oilfield related jobs for many area residents. Economic decline in the past few years has also led to a loss of these common blue collar jobs for many members of the community which has created a financial strain for many families.

In the sixty years of Midland High's history, only six principals have served the school, with one serving for 37 years. His strong leadership during this extended time led to the establishment of a culture that promotes hard work and academic success at Midland High. Today, his son, who was previously a coach at Midland High for many years, serves as the principal. Both the assistant principal and the disciplinarian taught for many years at Midland High before moving into administration. These leaders have tried to maintain and improve upon standards and goals previous leaders have set. Not only does the administration have strong connections to the school, but several members of the faculty and staff do as well. Several members of the faculty and staff have attended Midland as students or have children who attended and many of the faculty and staff live in the community. All of these factors create an environment of loyalty and pride in the school and its community.

In many ways, the students at Midland are typical high school students, battling issues with friends, family and the like. In other ways, students are sheltered from many situations and problems inner city students face. Someone mentioned it is like going back in time when observing the "kids from Midland."

The students work in the nearby cities and villages in order to afford teen age luxuries. School functions are well attended by students who readily participate.

Faculty and administration are instrumental in instilling good work ethic, morals and overall positive attitudes.

Comfort and safety are also factors of the environment at Midland High School. The majority of the student body has never witnessed a student altercation. During the 2015-2016 school year, there were only three student fights. The year before, there were none. It has been many years since there was any incident involving weapons or drugs on the campus. Bullying is not a major issue among the students. The school is able to provide a safe environment where students are emotionally and physically safe. It brings stability for students who may not always have that experience at home.

One disturbing incident occurred on September 11, 1998, when Midland High School was struck by a tornado. Fortunately, it was late in the day and no one was injured, but the school, however, was left in shambles. For two years, temporary buildings housed the classrooms, library, and the school cafeteria. Teachers and students made the best of a difficult situation until the rebuilding of Midland High was completed in 2001.

Another milestone from 2001 was the being of the four-day school week. The shortened week began as a pilot to motivate students. Fridays were to be used as a remediation day if needed or a day off for those who did not. Students who failed a subject would be required to attend three Fridays at the beginning of the new nine weeks for tutoring to prevent future failing grades. Students were also encouraged to volunteer for Friday Remediation to improve grades through additional tutoring, completing makeup work and/or extra assignments. This innovative program has been instrumental in academic success since it was implemented. It is one of the contributing factors in Midland High earning a letter grade of an "A" for the 2015-16 school years.

Historically, this school has seen steady growth in its School Performance Score which is issued by the state. Despite numerous changes in curriculum and testing, Midland High has been able to maintain high goals and expectations from students as well as faculty and staff.

Additional factors contributing to academic success include the use of ACT practice tests. The school librarian acts as ACT coordinator, and she provides materials for core teachers to aid juniors and seniors in reaching the highest ACT score possible. The school is able to fund a program that supplies a practice test with a complete analysis of each student's results. This practice test takes place in November each year. Students are encouraged to test at local test centers throughout the year in order to become more familiar with the test as well increase their scores. For the December ACT test, the school provides a portion of the testing fee, bus transportation, calculators, and breakfast for students taking the test. The school's ACT coordinator organizes the entire program, aiding students with registration and making the necessary arrangements. Since the ACT test sites are usually unfamiliar locations for the students, this practice empowers the student with a sense of belonging to a group and provides security rather than the fear and uncertainty that a new environment can cause.

In addition to a strong ACT program, Midland High offers Advanced Placement Biology to sophomores. These students attend additional classes for three hours during the Friday Remediation schedule. The AP Biology class exposes students to more rigorous subject matter which requires higher level application and evaluation skills than a typical biology class.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

For Midland High, major curriculum decisions are made at the district level. A school curriculum team consisting of administration and teachers determines the implementation plan (including time line) along with materials used for instruction.

Midland High houses eighth grade through twelfth, and therefore, must address varied curriculum needs for eighth grade and ninth through twelfth grades at the high school level. In the eighth grade section of Midland High, the core curriculum is again designed by the state and district levels, but teachers are afforded some autonomy in how the standards are implemented. With the requirement of passing standardized test scores at the end of the year in order for eighth graders to advance to high school, teachers must meet the standards and ensure that students are strong in all foundational skills. In the ELA classes, standards for reading literature, information text, writing, and speaking and listening are all developed through the Scholastic Read 180 program as well as the Louisiana ELA curriculum. Scholastic Read 180 is a multi-faceted learning tool for at risk readers with allows for differentiated instruction through grouping, independent reading, and various center designed learning activities.

The science curriculum is based on earth and space science which includes not only classroom learning activities, but lab experiences as well. Students are exposed to a variety of active learning opportunities through project selection and experiments.

In the eighth grade, students study Louisiana history, which includes the physical, cultural, and political makeup of the state. Students learn citizenship skills as well as grasp the importance of the political system through interactive lessons, projects, and activities.

The pre-algebra curriculum provides students with a strong foundation to ensure a successful transition into algebra, geometry, and advanced math. The curriculum address the number system, expressions and equations, functions, and basic geometry.

High school curriculum is also designed by both the state and district. Again, teachers have some flexibility in implementation.

The ELA classes taught at Midland are English I, II, III, English IV, Senior Applications in English, and virtual dual enrollment for college level course ENGL 1001 and 1002 (in cooperation with LSU-E). The standards for the high school level are based on a two year span, and the Louisiana ELA curriculum addresses standards for reading literature and informational text, writing, speaking and listening, as well as college and career readiness. English II and III have standardized tests which students must pass at the end of the school year to determine their strength in foundational skills before moving to the next level. Through literature and informational texts, Socratic seminars, writing activities, and research students study ideas and issues connected not only to the local area, but America's history as well as the history of the world. The topics of these texts range greatly, but each level covers material related to social, political, and personal areas of life.

The math curriculum includes Algebra I, geometry, Algebra II, math essentials, financial math, advanced math, virtual dual enrollment for college level course Math 1021 and 1022, again in cooperation with LSU-E. The foundational skills for algebra, geometry, and advanced math are built gradually over the course of each grade level with the end coal of career and college readiness for all students enrolled. Math essentials is designed to bring students who are weak in math foundations to a career readiness level. Students in advanced math who are also in physics participate in Engineering day at McNeese, which allows them to take both their strong math and science foundations to a whole new level. Students have built robotic machines and competed against other local schools.

Our science curriculum focuses on basic skills that span all of the many fields of science. When focusing on

foundation skills, discussion, real life application, and hands on/practical approaches are taken to discuss topics. We make sure that each GLE and common core benchmark is discussed in terms of how it is used in science as well as common application in life.

Many topics in the science curriculum deal with the protection and advancement of future generations on Earth. For these benchmarks, an understanding of appropriate scientific processes and principles are promoted through discussion, hands on application, and practice of these processes. Labs are focused on the application and self-discovery of scientific processes and laws so that understanding of these processes is maximized.

Debate and discussion of current and future matters of scientific and technological advancement enhance student's ability to decipher between positive and negative ideas for our future. The curriculum provides topics that allow students to think not only of personal scientific problems such as vaccinations, but also the scientific goals of society as a whole. One example of how Midland High students have taken this knowledge and worked to improve their scientific mark is through the implementation of a recycling program that reduces Midland High's carbon footprint.

Overall, group discussion, hands on labs, and debates on information provided for in the curriculum presents a platform for students to gain the foundation needed to excel in the next journey of life they choose to undertake.

The social studies curriculum at Midland includes civics, US history, world history, and world geography for students in 9th-12th grades. The civics class holds mock elections to demonstrate their understanding of the political system in the US. World geography and world history expose students to a broad understanding of not only the physical characteristics of different regions on the globe, but how the social and cultural aspects developed and relate to the daily lives of students. Students in the 10th grade must pass an end-of-course exam in US history to demonstrate the strength of their foundational knowledge of the country, how it began, and the issues it faces today to ensure their readiness for careers and college.

Louisiana is implementing two new diploma tracks beginning with 2017-2018 11th graders: TOPS University and JumpStart. TOPS University diploma follows a more traditional path with students focusing on advanced learning in core curriculum subjects. The Jump Start program is "Louisiana's innovative career and technical education (CTE) program. Jump Start prepares students to lead productive adult lives, capable of continuing their education after high school while earning certifications in high-wage career sectors.

Students are required to attain industry-promulgated, industry-valued credentials in order to graduate with a Career Diploma. Jump Start is an elective path for students pursuing a university-preparatory diploma. (Copied with permission from Louisiana Believes located at <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/courses/all-things-jump-start>).

Following extensive one-on-one conversations with students as well as an in-depth look at local and area industry, Midland High has expanded the number of career classes previously offered. The three pathways are Business Management, Hospitality, Tourism, Culinary, and Retail, and Manufacturing, Construction Crafts and Logistics.

Two career classes are required for all Jump Start students. These classes take an in-depth look at each pathway giving students a better understanding in order to make a successful decision. Guest speakers are brought in to share experiences with students in different career fields, and a mock Career Day is held with business persons attending to interview students.

The Master schedule includes nine classes which are universally required by all three pathways, thereby creating some continuity in students' schedules until a pathway choice is made. The choice must be made at the end of the 10th grade year in order for the students to have the remaining two years to specialize. These universal electives include: Accounting, Business Computer Applications, Customer Service, Education for Careers/Journey to Careers, First Responder, and Introduction to Business Computer Applications,

Principles of Business and Speech I. Students in the Tops University pathway are given the opportunity to take these electives in addition to their required classes.

Midland High school works to provide students with every learning opportunity possible while addressing the demands of the curriculum and standards.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Midland High offers a variety of other curriculum areas including French, Family and Consumer Sciences, Ag, and Band. Each curriculum supports students' acquisition of essential skills and knowledge in its own way. While many students opt to take more than one class, 75% of students at Midland High School take at least one Family and Consumer Science or AgriScience class during their four years. In these classes, students begin the year learning safety and how to use each tool or machine needed. Then students are given opportunities to apply safety measures while learning basic skills in hands-on activities. The Family and Consumer Science department offers classes which teach students lifelong culinary and homemaking skills. Throughout the year, students participating in sewing class will each sew a pair of pajama pants, as well as a quilt. Students who take cooking class, work together to make holiday meals from scratch for the faculty and staff. This gives the students the opportunity to work on a particular sewing machine, or practice cooking meals while also learning about kitchen safety.

In AgriScience students learn basic welding skills by building a BBQ pit and throughout the year can earn a Welders Helper Certificate. Students build shelves and their own bird feeder which teaches them to use saws and basic woodworking. All students maintain a garden including planting, caring for, and then later, picking and selling plants and/or produce. The basic skills students learn in AgriScience often encourage the students at Midland High to pursue a job in welding or farming.

Midland also offers Business and Finance classes for those students who wish to know more about managing money. All Business and Finance classes utilize technology on a daily basis. In these classes, students work to become certified in Microsoft Word and PowerPoint. The teacher also familiarizes students on Google Doc, which allows sharing, publishing, and presenting of projects they have finished with classmates for give feedback. Students who take these classes will also take a personal finance class, which teaches how to manage money, balance checkbooks, and fill out taxes. Business Finance classes are essential to all students no matter what line of work they would like to do upon graduating because all students will one day budget and manage money.

Midland High School has chosen to offer French as a foreign language to preserve its Cajun French heritage. Many students' parents and grandparents speak Cajun French which has been passed down generation to generation in this small community. All college bound students are required to take French in their sophomore and junior year. French at Midland High is taught by a native French speaker in a traditional classroom rather than a virtual setting. Students in French analyze sentence structure and syntax comparing it to English Language. This act helps students better understand their own language and how it derives, and relates to French.

Fine Arts and Band both offer a chance for students to learn more about the arts. All college bounds students must take a course in Fine Arts. Here students are exposed to classical music, paints, and sculptures. Students learn to analyze the different time periods and how the arts have changed throughout the years. Music and Band classes are offered to those students wishing to continue their education from elementary band. More than 25% of the student body belongs to the MHS band, and many opportunities are given to perform publicly. The band gives musical performances at many Christmas parades, Veterans' Day programs, competitions, and even community concerts. The director helps to incorporate technology with I pads and AppleTV projectors to give visual and auditory examples.

Students are mandated to take a minimum of 2 ½ years of Physical Education and ½ year of Health. Health class incorporates students' health issues and develops skills to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Physical Education builds on health by teaching which muscles are being strengthened during physical activity. Physical Education classes focus on maximum student involvement to build lifelong physical activity.

Students are exposed to lifelong sports such as volleyball and tennis as alternate means of physical activity.

Midland High School's other curriculum areas give students a head start on real life skills and trades. Students who complete a class in any of these areas can be proficient in managing money, woodworking, house making, arts, and many other skills.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Midland High teachers are always looking for new ways to engage students and deepen student learning. Technology, such as laptops, online courses, and the World Wide Web, assists and supports both teaching and learning in our school. Our teachers use technology in their classrooms on a daily basis. Virtual classes allow our students to learn in dual enrollment courses, credit recovery classes, and other courses that are not offered in traditional classrooms. Chromebook usage in our school has opened the World Wide Web to our students. Our teachers' lessons come to life with the help of technology. Relative, real world examples of current lessons are available to students in many formats, including pictures, visual and audio interviews, movie clips, newspapers, and essays. Students are able to work at their own pace while collaborating with peers and the teacher electronically. Teachers no longer have to lecture for entire class periods. Technology makes it possible for teachers to accommodate every student's learning style by allowing each student to work on a different part of an assignment at different times. Technology has given our students more independence and has better prepared them for real world jobs. Technology also assists our teachers with individual student needs while still engaging the whole classroom.

Differentiated instruction is common and an encouraged practice in most classrooms. Prior to the first day instruction, teachers receive students' previous standardized tests scores. At this time, teachers are able to create groups and customize instruction.

While, many of the new standards for core subjects as well as the Jump Start credentialing classes (non-core) include scenarios with problems students must solve, many teachers find a short lecture with visuals or notes for students to be quite effective. At other times, lessons must be front loaded with the majority of skills taught in the days prior to the instruction of the new standard or skill.

As each school year begins, core teachers administer a benchmark or diagnostic test in order to determine level of instruction necessary and skills needed to be addressed. Teachers and Assistant Principal create a scope and sequence in order to be able to cover standards being tested. Teachers will progress monitor their students with the same test mid-year. The end of the year testing begins in late March and end early May. End of year tests include Louisiana End of Course exams the following subjects: English II, English III, Biology, US History, Algebra I, and Geometry. 8th grade students take the LEAP test in all four core subjects. Data from these tests determine whether the student must repeat the course or if an 8th grader, whether the student must repeat the grade. Often a student is placed in a transitional program where the student may earn high school credits while repeating core 8th grade subjects.

Test data is used in a variety of ways. In some instances, administration uses data to help students and their parents choose diploma pathways. Often, it is used to determine whether a remedial class is necessary or how many students will qualify for Dual Enrollment or Advance Placement classes. Test data may indicate high quality instruction where a teacher adheres with state provided assessment guide. The data might prove the opposite, the instructor failed to use necessary testing guidance.

The Scholastic Read 180 program was purchased following consecutive years of lower than average Reading scores. Over the course of a school year, this intervention type reading program has enabled the 8th graders to improve reading comprehension skills.

With the ever changing formula used by the state to produce a school performance score, the school's leadership team strives to do everything possible in order to earn as many points as possible.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Midland High has a mentoring program in which each teacher with a first period serves as a mentor for their students. They monitor grades at progress report time as well as when report cards are issued. Teachers comment with supportive advice, recommendations and praise on each student's grade sheet. Periodically, mentors are asked to speak with students regarding attendance, attitude or behavior. Students come to rely on these teachers and often ask for advice with other issues they may face.

Midland offers an "open door policy" when honoring the Homecoming Court. Any senior girl who chooses to is allowed to be on the court. The administration began this practice a few years ago because many of the young ladies would not have an opportunity to experience a moment such as this otherwise, and it has been very successful. These girls are introduced during the homecoming basketball game and escorted by a family member. Each girl is made to feel special during the homecoming activities at school throughout the week, at the game, and the dance the following night.

Midland offers many extracurricular clubs to meet a wide variety of student interests. Most of these clubs do not have membership restrictions. Some require a member to be in a particular class. Student Council has elections and the National Beta Club has a GPA requirement. Through these clubs, students are afforded opportunities to develop their potential as leaders in the school.

Often students request the school organize a new club with a specific interest or purpose. Students are asked to provide justification as well as need, and most times the request is granted. Teachers are willing to sponsor these clubs so that students can be provided opportunities for growth.

School environments don't develop by accident, and this is extremely evident at Midland High. The administration, faculty, and staff are more like a family than a group of co-workers. The principal and vice principal have an open door policy for their staff. A teacher can go in to ask for advice, help with strategies, or just to talk. Both the principal and vice principal check in with their staff every day. They notice body language and facial expressions, whether or not a teacher feels well, is stressed, or has personal issues outside of school. They care about each and every one and offer support constantly.

On a more professional level, the principal and vice principal value teachers' input. Teachers have a voice at Midland High School. A teacher's experience, knowledge of their curriculum and subject matter, and their knowledge of what is best for their students is considered in every decision made by the administration. Teachers are told often and sincerely that they are doing a good job and when improvement is needed, it is not just demanded, it is guided. The administration sets the bar high for themselves, their teachers, and students. Excellence is expected, but the administration does not micro-manage their staff. Teachers are afforded autonomy in making decisions on instruction as long as the overall goals and demands of the curriculum is met. Teachers also support each other. New teachers are guided, advice is offered, and questions answered by any one on staff. New and veteran teachers alike are afforded opportunities for professional development which leads to new and innovative teaching that challenges and engages students while pushing them to meet the expectations demanded in the educational system of today. Midland High goes beyond the status quo in academics and extracurricular activities. The drive to excel is evident not only in the administration, the faculty and staff, but in the student body as well.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

"It takes a village to raise a child". This statement is evident in Midland's relationship with parents and community members which helps to strengthen the success of its students.

Academically, two technology-based components that help build the relationship between the school and parents are the parent command center and the administration and teachers' use of the Remind application. The parent command center gives parents real time access to students' grades, homework and attendance

records. Teachers can email parents grade reports to advise them of issues with their child's grade, and parents can check daily for updates. Personnel from the school phones home to check with parents for the reason for the absence. The Remind app is a notification system that is utilized to keep parents and students up to date on special events, meetings, test days, and a host of other information. Club sponsors work hand in hand with parents and community members to ensure students' success. Students in the Bass Fishing Club interact first hand with members of the community who volunteer their time, equipment, resources, and knowledge to help future anglers. In the athletic department, parents and businesses donate their time to support the program. For instance, for every home game there are parents that volunteer in the concession, to work the clock and to announce the starting lineups. Not only do parents encourage their child to work harder and do better in their extracurricular activities, but so do community members. It is a normal site to see fans leave the stands after a game to encourage, hug, and support the athletes, cheerleaders, and band members. Local businesses donate their time and money throughout the year to support all of the extracurricular programs at Midland High. The FFA, FCCLA, and band all have parent groups that help with fundraising, planning and preparing for competitions as well as state and national conventions. The parent groups utilize social media to keep parents, students, and the community up to date on activities at Midland High connected to these organizations. The yearbook has several community members who help students learn photography skills by donating their time to teach workshops and answer students' questions. Members of all extracurricular programs are encouraged by the positive role models and learn that contributing to the community and school can be more than just monetary. Students strive to do their best in school and in the extracurricular activities to make their parents, school, and community proud.

Another factor of Midland High School's success is the open door policy of the administration. Time is made for parents as needed. The administration also plans and executes meetings to inform parents on critical policy issues for their children such as Jumpstart, TOPS, and testing requirements.

All of these components combine to give Midland High School and its student population a strong foundation of support from the community. This relationship allows for students success not just in academics, but all aspects of their education.

3. Professional Development:

As instructional leader, the assistant principal plans all staff development with input from the school's leadership team. The goal is to provide the teachers with the information and training each needs without disrupting class time.

The assistant principal attends district and state meetings as well any others that may arise. Should there be an upcoming staff development day, that time is used to redeliver information and provide training.

Most often, she meets with each teacher on an individual basis during that teacher's planning period. This method is planned with each teacher in advance as a method of time management. If the information applies to a particular subject, all teachers of that subject will attend. This helps with dialogue and discussion and allows for teacher input when creating a plan for implementation. This also gives a less experienced teacher guidance and allows conversation in a more casual atmosphere.

The school district will periodically provide training for a group of teachers on a particular subject. This may be for a change in standards, new text books, or new assessment information. Teachers of a tested subject may be called together for collaboration in creating sample tests and test practice packets.

Teachers share classroom success with the assistant principal on a regular basis. Often, these teachers are asked to share with the entire faculty during staff development. This practice empowers teachers' feeling of worth as a successful and valued teacher.

Professional development at Midland High provides for teachers learning new or better methods in order to provide quality instruction. Confidence and professionalism are key ingredients in successful staff development.

4. School Leadership:

The philosophy at Midland High is success based on pride and hard work. A key component of maintaining this philosophy lies in the principal's responsibility of hiring strong employees. The principal must supervise all staff, faculty, and students to ensure everyone is doing their job effectively. Common sense and a strong understanding of policy are traits a good principal must possess to create a healthy, productive school environment.

The role of the assistant principal is multi-faceted. One of the most important duties is to ensure teachers adhering to standards. This is often a challenge due to the ever-changing curriculum and the revamping of state testing. Teacher observations and evaluations are time-consuming and stressful for teachers, as well as the administration. The assistant principal enables the teachers to better understand the rubric used by the state, secure the best resource, and incorporate instructional strategies to improve teacher performance and student outcomes.

The disciplinarian has the responsibility of evaluating and implementing strategies and standards pertaining to successful school wide discipline. The disciplinarian assists the principal and vice principal with assigned responsibilities to implement and manage the policies, regulations, and procedures of the Louisiana Board of Education to ensure that all students meet or exceed directives of Midland High School. Achieving academic excellence requires that the disciplinarian work collaboratively to lead and nurture members of the school staff and to communicate effectively with parents and the community. Inherent in the position are the responsibilities of disciplining students, performing teacher evaluations as a part of the administrative team, and supervising staff, extracurricular activities, and the general operations of the school.

The school counselor focuses on four components in order to help students reach their full potential: guidance activities, individual planning, responsive services, and system support. The guidance activities include meeting with students and parents to provide information on diplomas and pathways available at MHS. Individual planning consists of helping students in the areas of academic, career and personal/social development. Some examples include course selection, post-secondary plans, the FAFSA, and scholarship applications. Responsive services entails meeting the immediate needs of the students, usually through individual and small group counseling. System support is achieved through parish meetings and professional development.

Because teaching as well as life in general is demanding and stressful, the administration tries to be proactive with addressing the needs of the teachers and students of Midland High. A satisfied and healthy teacher is more productive and efficient in the classroom which leads to successful outcomes for the students. A school where people are generally happy, and morale is positive will be successful.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

In 2002, Midland High School implemented a four-day school week.

The purpose of this program was to provide a positive incentive for students doing well in school, to provide time for students who needed remedial help, and to provide an opportunity for students to make up tests and missed assignments due to absences.

School days at Midland High are typically Monday through Thursday, from 7:44 until 3:59. If a school holiday falls on a Monday, then Friday will be a full day of school. In the four-day week program, Friday is Grade Recovery Friday, and the hours are 8:30am until 11:30am. Parish school buses run their regular routes on these days for those students who need transportation.

Most Fridays require three teachers with one always being a math teacher. These teachers monitor and tutor students who have either volunteered to attend and/or those required to attend. The principal and assistant principal both work on Fridays as well as the aides and secretary.

The students who have volunteered to attend, may do so for only one or two hours, providing they have their own transportation. It is common to have close to 100 students willingly attend Friday Remediation.

Each week, students who are required to attend for the three hours must tell the disciplinarian on Monday in which subject(s) they need extra work. These names are then given to the corresponding teachers who provide supplemental classwork for the students to complete. Students who correctly complete the work, earn points for the nine weeks give in a separate grade. Students who fail to do so do not receive a failing grade. The philosophy supporting this decision reflects the belief that students who voluntarily give up Friday mornings to come to school should not be punished academically if their work is substandard.

Students who fail a subject for a nine-week grading period are required to attend three Fridays. Students who have excessive absences may use Friday attendance to make up missed seat time. Students who receive excessive demerits for uniform infraction or for being tardy are also required to attend one Friday. All of these situations result in students choosing to complete work in subjects with which they need extra help.

Students are provided access to the computer labs, internet, and printers in order to complete assignments, projects, or do research.

Before state testing in the spring, teachers of tested core subjects offer a “CRAM” session for their students on Fridays. Teachers prepare for three hours of material delivery and drill, and an average of 75% of the students being tested attend these sessions.

Advance Placement Biology class meets on Fridays as well. The AP teacher uses this time to teach the additional materials and conduct the many laboratory projects.

In order to not take away instructional time, elective field trips are often held on Fridays. This has also become the time for students to meet to decorate for dances, work on projects, and other club related activities. Student athletes work out and practice at this time as well.

Over the course of 15 years, the administration, with input from the faculty, has formed a successful tool for academic success in the four-day week and Grade Recovery Fridays.