

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Dr. Matthew T. Lee

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

Official School Name Clinton Senior High School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 75 Chenango Avenue

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

City Clinton State NY Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 13323-1395

County Oneida County

Telephone (315) 557-2233 Fax (315) 557-2225

Web site/URL http://www.ccs.edu E-mail mlee@ccs.edu

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Stephen Grimm E-mail sgrimm@ccs.edu
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Clinton Central School District Tel. (315) 557-2253

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 Mrs. Mary Lou Lauchert
(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):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 3 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
 - Suburban
 - Small city or town in a rural area
 - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2016 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	45	42	87
10	55	62	117
11	44	39	83
12 or higher	47	50	97
Total Students	191	193	384

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 2 % Asian
 - 2 % Black or African American
 - 5 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 90 % White
 - 1 % 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: 4%

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	6
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	11
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	17
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	384
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.044
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	4

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

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

Spanish

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 23 %
Total number students who qualify: 90
8. Students receiving special education services: 7 %
25 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.

- 1 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 0 Emotional Disturbance
- 0 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Mental Retardation
- 1 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 13 Other Health Impaired
- 9 Specific Learning Disability
- 0 Speech or Language Impairment
- 1 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: 6
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	1
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	31
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	4
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	0
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

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 12:1
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	96%	96%	96%	97%	96%
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	111
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	65%
Enrolled in a community college	27%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	1%
Found employment	4%
Joined the military or other public service	3%
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.

Clinton Central School proudly educates and empowers students to realize their potential and become thoughtful, contributing members of society.

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

Clinton Central School has a long history of serving students through many incarnations. First consolidated in the early 1900s, Clinton sprang from a community that was very concerned about the role of education in American society. The community housed multiple private college preparatory schools as well as primary one-room school houses that all eventually melded into the public school district that we are so proud of today.

coupled with the influx of new families to the area, results in a district that takes education seriously.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Clinton High School provides a strong core curriculum focusing on the success of ALL students.

Students acquire foundational math skills starting with the vertical and horizontal alignment of the New York State (NYS) modules in the elementary school. Vertical alignment continues into the middle and high school with our math teachers participating in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) which connect the high school Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) to those found in the middle school.

In order to address the NYS CCLS, we have structured our Algebra, Geometry, and Algebra II Common Core Regents courses to provide students with one and a half periods of instruction every other day. Additionally, the math department offers Algebra 1-1 and Algebra 1-2, a full year course divided into two years. This additional time built into the school day allows students to have more independent and guided practice and allows teachers extra time to delve deeper into the curriculum and differentiate instruction as needed.

In order to make sure that students are ready for the rigor of postsecondary job training/education, our high school math department provides all students multiple opportunities to earn Mohawk Valley Community College (MVCC) credit, including Pre-Calculus, Pre-Calculus Honors, AP Calculus, Statistics, Intermediate Math, Concepts in Math and Introductory Math.

The Clinton English Department's goal is to meet and exceed the NYS CCLS. This process begins by choosing books that are vertically aligned to the content in the Social Studies curriculum. This interdisciplinary approach builds background content knowledge and encourages critical and analytical thinking. Additionally, the English Department teaches active reading strategies for sophisticated texts, both literary and expository, that students will encounter on college and workplace assessments.

The department also teaches writing for a purpose, including expository, synthesis, text analysis, and argumentative. Another strong component of the English Department is the senior research paper. Aligned to the NYS Information Literacy Standards, the research paper is scaffolded in every grade and chunks potentially complicated skills into manageable parts that are mastered before graduation and enable students to be college and career ready.

In fact, this focus on college and career readiness is emphasized in the fact that students of all abilities have the opportunity to succeed in the two English Honors and two AP courses offered by the department. Additionally, all students earn MVCC credit in their senior year upon successful completion of English 12.

The foundational skills for Science are developed through collaboration with a grades 6-12 PLC team that vertically aligns the curriculum through the incorporation of the Next Gen Science Standards, common formative assessments, and common lab-writing guidelines.

Our science curriculum is structured with three ideas in mind: to provide four years of science for every student of every ability level, to encourage students to take all four core sciences, and to provide students with flexibility to challenge themselves. As with all of our AP courses in the high school, the Science Department has an open access policy for students to enroll in Honors, AP, or SUPA (Syracuse University Project Advance) courses. We design our curriculum so that students have multiple options to strive for a higher level of learning and/or complete four years of science, regardless of ability. To this effect, we also offer electives like Every Day Science and Environmental Geology along with three AP courses. Combined, the systemic organization of the Science Department and the focus on the Next Gen Science Standards have proven invaluable when helping our students to be college and career ready.

The foundational skills of Social Studies are developed with a focus on horizontal alignment created through a PLC composed of grades 6-12 Social Studies teachers. Aligned with the NYS CCLS, the department also

makes current events a cornerstone of the curriculum while providing common assessments in order to ensure that all students have access to a guaranteed and viable curriculum.

The Clinton Social Studies Department also provides a rich curriculum focused on civic learning. While all high school seniors are expected to graduate with at least 10 hours of community service, 25 to 33 percent of our graduates complete the Diploma of Distinguished Community Service. This Diploma recognizes students who complete a minimum of 150 hours of community service during high school: 110 hours in a “long term placement” and 40 hours at “short term placements.” The goal of these different placements is to allow our students the opportunity to develop College and Career Ready skills (like communication and work ethic), while also exposing our students to various potential careers. The Diploma, spearheaded by the Social Studies Department, extends the civic learning taught in the classroom and exposes our students to the duties of citizenship including actively participating in and building relationships with the community. Additionally, this civic learning is extended to Model United Nations, Mock Trial, and Amnesty International. These clubs not only support the core curriculum of the International Studies I and II, AP US History, AP Government, Government and Economics, Sociology, and Psychology courses; they also extend the 21st century skills our students learn in class, such as public speaking.

As mentioned above, preparing our students for college and career readiness, in conjunction with meeting and exceeding the State Common Core Learning Standards, is the foundation of the curriculum of Clinton High School. The decisions used to incorporate these skills into our curriculum, whether it be the Diploma of Distinguished Community Service, the focus of reading complex texts, preparing students for writing research papers, and providing students with the opportunity to potentially graduate and enter college at the sophomore level, are both deliberate and systematic with a focus on helping students to succeed in life after high school.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Although Clinton High School has a total of 384 students, the school prides itself on offering multiple options for students to acquire essential skills and knowledge.

In the visual arts, Clinton offers Studio in Art, Photography, Sculpture, and AP Studio in Drawing for all students to be able to participate in the arts in grades 9-12 every day. The curriculum, developed and continually refined in a grades K-12 district-wide PLC team and based on the NYS Standards for Arts Education, provides students with such essential skills and knowledge as responding to and analyzing art, actively engaging in the process of art, and making use of art materials. These essential skills and knowledge are transferred to the core curriculum through interdisciplinary projects with Global History 9, through our students’ participation in programs such as Junior Curator at Munson Williams Proctor Arts Institute, and close work with the Hamilton College Wellin Art Museum.

In the performing arts, Clinton offers Symphonic Band, Mixed Choir, Music Appreciation in Our Lives, and Orchestra for all students in grades 9-12 every other day. The High School Musical, a point of pride with our district, is a bright spot in our music curriculum as 182 of 384 students in the high school demonstrate the skills developed through the performing arts curriculum. In addition, approximately 50 students showcase their talent every year at regional and state-level music competitions.

Like all of our subject areas, Physical Education and Health also actively work on a PLC team to develop and collaborate on their curriculum, specifically focusing on developing lifelong skills that directly reflect the NYS Physical Education, Health and Family & Consumer Science Learning Standards. Specifically, in physical education, students identify their target heart rate and measure if they have been successful at achieving this goal during class. Developing basic knowledge of lifelong sports such as golf and volleyball, in addition to measuring and staying in one’s target heart rate zone, help to ensure that all students have the skills to remain healthy after high school. In health class, guest speakers are regularly brought in as regional experts to educate students. These speakers include, but are not limited to: the YWCA to discuss healthy relationships and dating, the Q Center for gender differences and acceptance, and our school social worker for mental health and anxiety. Our curriculum develops students who have the practical knowledge to stay physically fit beyond high school. All students in grades 9-12 take physical education every other day and

students are required to take a half year of Health before graduation. Additionally, every student in grades 9-12 is provided with “recreation” time during open campus lunch where many students participate in “open gym” to play badminton, volleyball, basketball, etc.

In World Languages, students in grades 9-12 have the opportunity to take French I, II, and III, IV, Spanish I, II, and III, IV, Mandarin Chinese I and II, and AP French, AP Spanish, and AP Mandarin Chinese every day. While students are required to take one course for graduation, 200 students are enrolled in these courses. The cornerstone of the department is the speaking component of the curriculum. The department wrote and received a grant to create a Foreign Language Speaking Lab and requires 20 percent of a student’s time in their language class to focus on improving their speaking skills.

Our technology department has recently adopted the Project Lead the Way Curriculum and created a partnership with the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) to vertically align the middle school with the high school to advance students through an elective engineering curriculum. All students in grades 9-12 have the opportunity to take the sequential, full-year Design, Drawing, & Production, Principals of Engineering, Computer-Integrated Manufacturing, or Manufacturing and Construction courses. These courses provide students with a hands-on opportunity to solve real-world engineering problems and develop collaboration and teamwork skills while earning college credits through RIT. Additionally, students are being exposed to engineering careers and gaining the hard skills necessary for the regional demands of advanced manufacturing.

Our Business electives enable students in grades 9-12 to gain essential skills like balancing a checkbook through the Money Skills course, navigating software programs through Computer Applications, in addition to higher level college credit-bearing courses in marketing through MVCC and accounting through Syracuse University.

Each of these electives, in its own way, grounds its curriculum in essential content knowledge that incorporates 21st century hard and soft skills. At Clinton, we believe that, for a small school, we provide a multitude of electives that provide students of all ability, interests, and grade levels the opportunity to develop and pursue their passions. Whether that passion be reverse-engineering a hydraulic bearing, interacting with art at the Hamilton College Wellin Art Museum, or participating in the high school musical, we develop students who are well-rounded and exposed to a variety of careers and educational disciplines.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

At Clinton, we believe in using reflective instructional design and research-based instructional methods to help students succeed. Our instructional design process begins by unpacking the CCLS for each subject. While critically analyzing these standards, teachers constantly refer to DuFour’s Four Essential Questions (outlined in Part IV). Teachers work on breaking down these standards during PLC meeting time and/or during teacher “Summer Camp” where 65 to 75 percent of teachers choose to participate in PD on refining their instruction.

outcomes and has students showcase their learning based on the Gardner Multiple Intelligences Theory. In a Physical Education class, the students learn to calculate their target heart rate and are provided with multiple activities that they can do to keep their heart rate in their “zone.” Similarly, in an art class, students are provided with a learning outcome and develop art that showcases that outcome.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

The culture of Clinton Senior High School is grounded in effective teaching that results in high degrees of student achievement. A visitor entering the building is met by the timeless accomplishments of students and faculty. Adorned on plaques are the names of valedictorians, salutatorians, scholarship recipients, athletic record holders and students who have met levels of achievement on state and national exams and academic competitions.

At the heart of our success is our faculty and staff who work tirelessly to help ensure all students succeed. Teachers are celebrated by the administration and Board of Education (BOE) at monthly meetings to praise their efforts in assisting students and growing as a professional, are presented with luncheons from the student body and Parent Teacher Association (PTA), and are invited by graduates as honorary guests to attend awards ceremonies in college. Every spring, faculty members are celebrated for their devotion and commitment to the district. Teachers receive a standing ovation from their colleagues for their years of service and dedication to educating students. Teachers are lifelong learners perfecting the art and science of teaching and learning and bringing learning to life. Teachers apply annually to a community organization, The Kirkland Fellowship, to travel around the world and see their curriculum, attend national conferences and follow their passion for teaching and learning. Teachers have traveled to Peru and Mexico to gain a deeper understanding of the Indigenous empires, Switzerland to see and learn about the world's largest particle accelerator for their physics program, and England to visit the birthplace and home of William Shakespeare. With each experience, teachers return with immense enthusiasm and passion that is contagious for our students.

The school is fortunate to have a student body that believes in their education and the doors that can open based on the knowledge and skills an individual possesses. The school recently adopted the slogan, "Little District, Big Results," a motto that is supported in the high school by a counseling office that creates an educational plan for every child to serve as their focal point for success. Supporting the counselors and teachers are a full time social worker and nurse who coordinate weekly with the building principal to ensure all students' needs are being met to be successful in the classroom.

Despite having a total student population of 384 students, the school has eleven Advanced Placement offerings, has received grants from senators and the district's foundation to provide students with an engineering-based curriculum aligned to the skills needed in the region for engineering and advanced manufacturing, and has fostered partnerships with area colleges for students to study. The sum of these accomplishments has enabled a deeper understanding of a particular discipline and exposed students to rigorous and relevant offerings.

In support of a student's academic program, the school hosts numerous clubs and activities to help meet the needs of all students. Despite a decade of declining student enrollment and fiscal stress, the school has focused on the importance of social and emotional learning. The constant that has remained throughout it all is a dedicated faculty, administrative team, and Board of Education who have continued to recruit, promote, showcase, and ultimately ensure the culture of the building remains diverse and ever-present for the needs of our students. Model United Nations, Science Olympiad, Gay Straight Alliance, and Rachel's Warriors have provided students with an opportunity to identify challenges in the school, region, or country and create localized solutions to improve the learning environment for all students.

In the arts, dozens of students have received numerous regional and state awards in art and music. The Art Department is grounded in the importance of STEAM and recognizing that art plays a vital role in nearly every career field. The Music Department celebrates the accomplishments and talents of students through local concerts and regional competitions in addition to the annual musical that sells out the 1,000-seat theater annually.

Athletically, programs have been created and sustained for our students. When it was not possible to

continue to field athletic teams, the school collaborated with other schools in the region to create combined teams. One of the most impressive was the girls varsity ice hockey team that just celebrated its second year. Under the leadership of Clinton schools and a strong community of support, eleven school districts came together to form the area's first program. The most successful program each year is our boys and girls track and field programs. The teams, which comprise nearly 25 percent of the total student population, have won numerous titles and send several athletes to the state championship competition each spring.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Clinton High School strongly believes that our mission in education should be “supported through collaborative partnerships with family, businesses, civic organizations and institutions of higher education.” We consistently work with parents and community organizations to make this vision a reality. Since we know that family partnerships support academic success, we involve parents and caregivers in a variety of ways. In addition to frequent communications through our parent portal, emails, and phone calls from teachers and staff, parents learn about school activities through the PTA Facebook page and monthly newsletters they distribute in conjunction with the schools. We make it a priority to invite families on campus for school events and host workshops that are specific to this audience (e.g. college prep and FAFSA seminars, anti-bullying presentations, cyber awareness film Screenagers). We value parents/guardians as stakeholders in our school community and they are essential resources on our curriculum and technology teams. Thanks to our strong relationship with families, CCS' parents/guardians are largely supportive of academic endeavors and eager to collaborate with teachers to promote student growth. Parental commitment is evident in the large PTA and Clinton Music Parent membership, as well as the strong family attendance at sporting and music events.

As our mission is to create “thoughtful contributing members of society,” we work closely with the community to meet that goal in terms of service, scholarship, and preparation for the future. We believe in fostering a spirit of community service and citizenship in our students. Clinton students embody this philosophy; each year approximately 25 to 33 percent of graduates receive the Diploma with Distinguished Community Service, a distinction for students that complete over 150 hours of service during their high school career. Academically, we partner with local institutions of higher education to prepare our students for college. Through MVCC, Rochester Institute of Technology, and Syracuse University, we offer 22 dual-credit courses on campus. Senior students also have the opportunity to bridge to Hamilton College, Utica College, and MVCC, to earn college credits and experiences while still in high school. Thanks to our proximity and partnership with Hamilton College, students also benefit from use of their art gallery, science labs, and field house. Additionally, we work with community partners to prepare students for careers, through job shadowing experiences in 11th and 12th grades. We are grateful for our community connections and the community is very kind to CCS, as evidenced by the \$150,000 in scholarships that are donated by community members each year.

3. Professional Development:

Clinton believes in providing students engaging, meaningful and challenging learning opportunities delivered by motivated and inspired professionals. We invest in our teachers through high quality professional development (PD) related to supporting students' needs and research-based pedagogical practices. Our district and teacher leadership agree that ongoing professional learning is essential for instructional excellence and have negotiated an annual PD requirement to receive fourteen uncompensated hours annually beyond the school day. Teachers are fully encouraged to attend additional PD requirements beyond this fourteen hour requirement, and all do so. Additionally, Clinton invests in an on-site Professional Development Center (PDC) that actively seeks and facilitates PD opportunities that support student achievement by fostering teacher growth.

Working collaboratively with both teachers and administrators, Clinton has developed a focused PD plan that incorporates building, district, and individual teacher goals around three main components: providing coordinated Response to Intervention (RtI) training, incorporating research-based instructional strategies, and providing training on horizontal and vertical alignment of the curriculum focused on CCLS. Our PDC has been instrumental in bringing educational thought leaders to Clinton (e.g. Harry Wong, Jim Grant, etc.)

whose work supports these PD goals. While working with a wide regional network of training resources (such as the local Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) and Center State Teacher Center), the PDC also utilizes teacher leaders to provide topical workshops and book studies on a regular basis. Based on the PD they've received, Clinton teachers have been invited to present at state-level and national conferences.

In addition, the PDC and the leadership team actively analyze district data to identify gaps and growth opportunities, and then seek relevant and responsive opportunities to provide teachers the tools to better serve students. Recently, in response to a growing number of students suffering from social/emotional challenges (like anxiety), the team, consisting of teachers, social workers, counselors, and nurses, identified the challenge and set a goal on how to help students. Educational and health care leaders attended trainings, conferences, and met with college counseling personnel to implement a series of best practices to help our students. This is just one example of the PDC using data to inform instruction.

The cornerstone of the Clinton's PD is the focus on collaborative Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Every teacher, teacher assistant, and administrator in the entire district is an active member of at least one PLC. Taking a constructivist approach to PD, these PLC groups are vertically organized so that teachers work together, using data, to focus on a "passion project" that directly impacts student achievement and helps to accomplish the district and building goals.

Another strong component of PD at Clinton is the mentoring program called "Clinton CARES - Coaching and Retaining Educators for Success." Regardless of previous teaching experience, all teachers participate in a three-year program beginning with a four-day New Teacher Academy. A QR code scavenger hunt about the history of the school, participation in team building experiences, reflective mentoring journals, continual observations of each other, and focusing on foundational knowledge that the district feels all teachers should have in order to improve student achievement are some of the components of this mentoring program. The result of the Clinton CARES Program is a 93 percent teacher retention rate. By ensuring that all teachers have the same foundational knowledge and are assimilated quickly into the school culture, student achievement is assured.

Because Clinton believes in and invests in professional development, teachers and administrators have improved their practice. This is evidenced by the extraordinary movement toward collaborative student work and 21st century skills that came with a shift to the Google Suite and the support of the 7 teachers who are or are in the process of becoming Nationally Board Certified in the district. Clinton's teachers model the value of lifelong learning and the district provides a supportive framework for ongoing, job-embedded professional development that directly impacts student achievement.

4. School Leadership:

Clinton Senior High School's leadership begins with a unified and systematic set of questions on which the elementary school, middle school, high school, administrative team, and Board of Education all work collaboratively and cohesively to support. The deeply embedded PLC culture we have maintained for decades, when merged with the four guiding questions of Dr. Rick DuFour, have kept the district, buildings, departments, and teachers working together under a guided and proven practice to maximize student learning. The questions we use to guide our actions are:

What do we expect students to learn?

How will we know if the students learned the material?

What will we do if they did not learn it?

What will we do if they learned it?

To answer these questions, the culture of the high school has taken on a leadership role of transformational leadership naturally. Burns (1978) described transformational leadership as a process in which "leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation." With each passing day, month, and year, one thing has remained clear about Clinton Senior High School - we are not satisfied by standing still and doing what we have always done. We have found ways to change, improve the social and emotional learning of our students, and have found deeper levels of academic success through shared

decision-making and continuous learning and growth of faculty and staff.

The school is broken down into core departments: English, Math, Science, Social Studies, and World Languages. Supporting the core departments are the encore departments: Art, Music, Technology, Physical Education, Counseling, and Special Education. Each department has a department leader who has the charge of leading his or her respective department through the four aforementioned guiding questions, creating vertical consistency in curriculum and grading, and differentiation to help struggling and accelerated learners. Within each department, the department leader serves as the facilitator through which communication flows from teachers to leader and vice versa. The same holds true in monthly Department Leader meetings in which leaders consider a wide array of data and current literature to identify and implement solutions to challenges encountered. The symbiotic relationship within a department and among departments working together, has helped to ensure that everyone knows what each department is doing and why it is occurring.

Through transformational leadership, we have stopped looking at student success as measured on state and national assessments at the macro level and have moved to the micro level. We have begun to study every subgroup, their success on cognitive assessments, involvement in clubs and activities, and post-graduation success. This level of detail enables us to identify specific areas of growth aligned to social, emotional, and academic success while implementing DuFour's four guiding questions.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

At Clinton Central School, our students' success rests on the focus and implementation of Social Emotional Learning (SEL). Due to the relatively small size of our district, our highly qualified faculty and staff, and district leadership, we are able to connect with students both inside and outside the classroom to create an atmosphere of caring, safety, and engagement that leads to high student morale and achievement in many areas. "Little District, Big Results," is Clinton's newly adopted district motto that perfectly encapsulates a long history of academic success. Walking the hallways of Clinton High School it would be easy to observe the relevance of such a motto. With Clinton being a rather small school, there is an assortment of courses with varying levels of purpose and intensity running concurrently to fit the individual needs of the student population. Success is not narrowly defined; each student's academic interests, strengths, and weaknesses are continually being evaluated through a collaborative system supported through communication. Clinton's small size and legacy of togetherness help foster the family-like environment that students, faculty, and staff refer to as our home.

While data and test scores are often the focus in a district, our district allows instructors to create a learning environment and engaging curriculum that focuses on the whole student. Because we make meaningful connections with our students, the ideas of high expectations, motivation, positive behavior, engagement, character and responsibility flow naturally. Clinton offers an expansive amount of support services to students in need of academic intervention, social/emotional support, and personal guidance. An example of an uncommon avenue of intervention includes our school's Learning Center. For six periods a day, one of our Special Education teachers provides support to approximately 55 students each year, first serving as a personal mentor and next helping them with academic needs, executive functioning skill development, and test preparation.

Students who are in safe and encouraging environments thrive across curricular and extracurricular environments. We are student-centered. Students know we care because we are there - at their games, meets, performances, and funeral services. In times of celebration and in times of sadness, a constant is the band of togetherness within the Clinton School Community. A frequent celebratory event takes place each time students are able to qualify for state championship competitions. Before departure to the state competitions, the hallways are lined with students, faculty, and staff; the honored students are called to the office and led through a sea of applause, congratulatory remarks, and musical recognition. These celebrations also exist for faculty when they achieve a milestone in their career. Perhaps the most memorable was when a beloved retired Clinton teacher and substitute celebrated her 80th birthday. However, the value of such interrelatedness is felt most intensely in the rare occurrence of traumatic events or in times of loss. At the recent passing of a current student member, the outpouring of support within the school community helped get everyone through a very difficult time. Walking with over 50 percent of the student body, faculty, and staff to the funeral arrangements demonstrated just how tightly coupled our learning community is. In good times and bad, we remain together, as a family supporting each other.