

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 Mr. Louis A. Adipietro

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

Official School Name Hastings High School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1 Mount Hope Boulevard

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

City Hastings-on-Hudson State NY Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 10706-2394

County Westchester County

Telephone (914) 478-6250 Fax (914) 478-7842

Web site/URL http://www.hohschools.org E-mail adipietrol@hohschools.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. Antony Sinanis E-mail sinanisa@hohschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Hastings-On-Hudson Union Free School District Tel. (914) 478-6200

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. Lisa Eggert Litvin
(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	57	71	128
10	73	55	128
11	59	64	123
12 or higher	55	56	111
Total Students	244	246	490

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 8 % Asian
 - 3 % Black or African American
 - 8 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 75 % 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: 3%

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	1
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	15
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	16
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	521
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.031
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

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

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Spanish, Serbian, Japanese, Arabic

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 7 %
Total number students who qualify: 34

8. Students receiving special education services: 13 %
64 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.

- 3 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 9 Emotional Disturbance
- 0 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 24 Other Health Impaired
- 22 Specific Learning Disability
- 5 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: 8
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	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	33
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	15
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.	6

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 15:1
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%	96%	97%	96%
High school graduation rate	96%	99%	99%	98%	98%

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	147
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	86%
Enrolled in a community college	6%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	1%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	1%
Other	6%

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

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2002

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

It is the school's responsibility to prepare students with the knowledge, understanding, skills, and strategies they need to be productive, responsible citizens in a democratic 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

Located in Westchester County, New York, Hastings High School is the sole high school of Hastings-on-Hudson, a suburban village of approximately 8,000 residents located 15 miles north of Manhattan. With 490 students and a faculty and staff of 58 for grades 9-12, the size of the school enables us to establish a sense of community and caring. Through careful planning, we utilize our resources to produce a wide-ranging program of rigorous academics and a rich suite of extracurricular activities that extends the school day. Our students see the school as central to their lives, a gathering place to learn, to socialize, to form friendships, and to discover themselves and the world in which they are growing up.

As home to a diverse collection of learners, the school believes that all students can learn. It is the district's responsibility to prepare students with the knowledge, understanding, skills, and strategies they need to be productive, responsible citizens in a democratic society. For the past 25 years, our students have hosted a Thanksgiving dinner for the homeless that feeds over 500 people. We are proud to be one of the first schools in Westchester County to have formed a Genders and Sexualities Alliance (GSA) club, and we have recently begun a partnership and exchange program with a school from the South Bronx. These initiatives came directly from our students, who know that we expect them to take ownership of their education and to advocate for what they see as important.

Our school offers a rigorous academic program in addition to the New York State Regents curriculum. We offer fifteen Advanced Placement Courses, five Syracuse University Project Advance courses, and an elective in Advanced Geology accredited by the State University of New York at Oneonta. Teachers develop coursework that is engaging and aligned with state and national standards, they are also encouraged to develop half-year electives that reinforce these standards while focusing on areas outside the traditionally prescribed curriculum. Some examples include Forensics, Engineering Technology, Coding, Statistics, Middle Eastern Studies, Detectives in Film and Fiction, and Nanotechnology. In addition, our school has a strong tradition of supporting the arts. Students enroll in a variety of Visual Art electives including Drawing and Painting, Animation, Ceramics, Sculpture, and Creative Construction. Our student artists have won many awards and have had work displayed at several local museums. In the musical arts, our students have been recognized at the national level. Most recently, we competed at the World Strides Heritage Festival in Philadelphia, PA, where we were named best all-around musical program. In sports, our students receive notable local and state recognition. This past year our boys varsity soccer team won the New York State Class B Championship.

We are committed to supporting all our students. One way we do this is through the Hastings Alternative School Program (HASP), a school within our school, which has a core philosophy rooted in community, individual accountability, and social justice. Students apply to be a part of the program and begin each day with their HASP family. The success of the students in the program is a testament to our school and community. We also strive to educate our Special Education students in-district, developing a collaborative-teaching model that allows a broad range of student learners access to the curriculum. The support we provide serves all of our students as they recognize their own areas for growth through working with peers and teachers on their team.

Our teaching staff is a unique group of professionals, many of whom have received national awards such as Fulbright Fellowships. Our faculty members perform in local orchestras, bands, and theater groups, serve as adjunct professors in area colleges, and take leading roles in civic and charitable organizations.

Our students are actively involved in shaping the culture of their school and community. They elect and serve in student government and sit on district committees. Our students take the leadership skills they learn in our building and go on to become leaders on their college campuses, to serve with distinction in the military, and to assume meaningful roles in their communities.

The Blue Ribbon distinction we received in 2002 has helped strengthen our reputation as an extraordinary high school and likely contributed to growth in our enrollment. We are regularly acknowledged by US News and World Report, Newsweek, The Daily Beast and the Washington Post as being among the best in

our state and the nation. We have also seen a rise in the number of tuition applications, attracting students from other communities who look to Hastings for a premier educational experience. Our Blue Ribbon distinction, paired with endorsements from national media outlets and the Tri-States Consortium, continues to validate our core philosophy: a community-based, student-centered approach to learning offers the greatest opportunity for student growth and success.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Hastings High School's curriculum follows the New York State Common Core Learning Standards for each content area. Each subject area benefits from significant input from our teachers, allowing us to embody the principles of a student-centered, learning-rich academic environment. We are proud to offer courses in subjects few other high schoolers get to experience—such as classes in the Modern Middle East, Advanced Geology, and Race and Gender in Contemporary Society. Teachers pursue their own educational interests far beyond the Master's level and frequently turnkey those academic passions into relevant, rigorous classes. College and career readiness is part of the daily school experience of all students. This is consistent with several core values of the district: that all students can learn, and that learning is an active, reflective, and constructive process.

The English department is committed to the idea that students should not merely read and write about the world, but rather should read and write as ways of engaging with the world. 9th and 10th grade English classes are heterogeneously grouped to ensure a commonality of experience. 11th and 12th grade classes are open enrollment. Students read to experience perspectives that are different from their own, and write to construct, communicate, and defend their own narratives, learning to use a wide variety of voices to appeal to diverse audiences. Students choose from course options that range from thematic semester electives to AP and college-level courses. All English classes encourage students to develop critical thinking skills, from analyzing protest songs in our class on 1960's culture to creating segments for our newest course in TV broadcasting.

The curriculum in Mathematics follows the NYS Common Core Learning Standards, with Algebra, Geometry, and Algebra II following the state curriculum closely. Higher level courses, including Pre-Calculus, Calculus, AP Calculus AB and BC, and AP Statistics round out the upper level offerings. We offer two semester classes, one on the Visual Beauty of Mathematics and the other in Statistics, to ensure that we have a number of ways for students to explore this content area. The mathematics department fully supports the constructivist philosophy of the school and the practice standards appended to the Common Core. Our students design their own solutions using dynamic mathematics software, describe and defend their approaches, and explore concepts through experimentation and modeling. In support of these high standards for all students, the department offers academic support, lab classes in algebra, and co-taught classes with a special education teacher; senior enrollment in mathematics is a point of pride for the district - almost 80% of the senior class earn a math credit, going above and often well beyond the state requirement for graduation.

The science department offers classes in Living Environment, Chemistry, Physics, as well as AP level classes in Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Environmental Science. A number of our students participate in Science Research, an extraordinarily successful two-year program in which students design their own research projects with local and expert support. Students have advanced to the finals of the prestigious Siemens and Intel competitions and have been awarded grants for product development. The department also offers a variety of electives, including MythBusters, Meteorology, Engineering, Forensics, Disease and Society, Nanotechnology, and Advanced Geology. The department is using the Next Generation Science Standards to ensure a rich understanding of key content and skills -- such as communication, collaboration, inquiry, problem solving, and flexibility.

The Social Studies department seeks to empower students to see their role in shaping the world as they study events from the past and consider the how and why of history's construction. Freshman take World History I and earn another ¼ credit for participation in the Peer Leadership program, in which they meet with senior students in heterogeneous groups to discuss issues related to their social and academic lives. As sophomores, students take World History II; as juniors, students study US History, choosing from among Regents, AP, and college courses. As seniors, students take Economics for a semester and chose an elective from among Anthropology, Trial Law, Criminal Justice, Arts Perspectives, Sociology, Modern Middle East. Students can, and frequently do, take coursework beyond this sequence by doubling up on courses or

electives throughout their four years.

At Hastings, we believe that developing college and career readiness is part of good teaching. It isn't a separate category—instead, readiness is threaded throughout our coursework. Whether through our collaboration with Syracuse University's Project Advance or through the College Board's Advanced Placement program, our students participate in courses that embody college level work. At all levels, regardless of discipline, students learn the essential skills of the future: the ability to appropriately manage a number of different technologies; to summarize, generalize, analyze, present and appropriately apply or utilize material; and to negotiate their own identities in a complex world.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Hastings High School sees the Arts as a celebration. The Visual Art department offers several sequences for students, with an emphasis in either studio or digital media. After taking a foundational course, students can take classes that include Animation, three levels of Ceramics, Construction, Design for Publishing, Drawing and Painting, Media Arts, Photography (both traditional print and digital media), Illustration, Sculpture, and Studio Art. Works produced in these classes do more than simply decorate the walls—they remind us that art is an integral part of human experience. In understanding the art of portraiture, for example, students in the National Art Honor Society create portraits from photographs sent to them from orphans in Uganda who are subsequently delighted when they receive these portraits from their new friends in America. Student work is celebrated in district-wide art shows, community displays, and in juried competitions. We are very lucky to have a teaching staff in the visual arts who love teaching their specialties to students and who continue to work as artists themselves.

The music department has enjoyed recognition well beyond the confines of a small suburban school. In addition to classes in music theory and orchestration, the music department instructs a number of student groups, including jazz band, chorus, madrigals, orchestra, and even a steel drum band whose instruments were purchased with the support of a community foundation. Our music ensembles have earned recognition at competitions from Philadelphia to Montreal. As with the Art Department, our music teachers are themselves accomplished in their field. We also have a robust theater program that puts on four shows a year. Our production of *Les Miserables* was awarded the Metropolitan High School Theater Award for Best Overall Production. The success of our theater program has laid the foundation for us to work on creating our own theater department, which will offer a sequence of classes in all aspects of theater next year.

Physical Education is a four year requirement for all students, but students build their own curriculum by choosing from among a group of 'selectives' so that their experience follows their interests. Healthy lifestyle choices and developing personal fitness routines are an important part of the Phys Ed curriculum, with students analyzing menu choices, collecting heart rate data, and designing their own fitness routines as part of their experience. The department has worked to integrate writing into the curriculum and has diversified the range of units offered, from traditional sports and fitness to dance, yoga, and even snowshoeing.

Graduation requires one credit unit in a language other than English (LOTE). Almost all of our students meet this requirement before entering high school. We offer French, Spanish, and Latin, with courses that start as introductions and culminate at the AP-level. In recognition of student readiness and interest, the World Language department was reorganized around the idea of cultural experience as the driving force of language acquisition. Students read original sources, stage debates, and critique movies, all as part of a vibrant cross-cultural experience. Each language becomes the centerpiece of cultural exploration. Field trips to nearby New York City as well as to local cultural events help students experience the connection between language and the lived experience. The department has also brought students to Rome to study Latin and Cuba to study Spanish.

Computer science is available to the general school population at several levels with semester electives in Block Coding and Java, in addition to the year long AP course, Computer Science Principles. These are real-world courses in which students design their own games, create apps for tablets and phones, and problem-solve by programming robots to accomplish tasks. Applied technology classes are available from

several departments, such as the Engineering elective through Science, Filmmaking and TV Studio classes through English, Media Arts through Art, and through an elective exploring art through dynamic modeling in Math.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Hastings High School is a high-performing school whose achievements are the result of continuous, focused attention. The school adheres to a constructivist philosophy with instruction centered on students' strengths and needs. We utilize a carefully articulated curriculum, integrated technology, and formative assessment.

The school participates in the New York State Regents assessments, with students taking common core exams in mathematics, science, and history. Most students take the English Common Core exam in the middle of their junior year, which allows for early intervention for students who struggle to meet this key graduation requirement. The school year includes two major cumulative assessment periods, in January and June.

All classrooms at Hastings are equipped with interactive whiteboards and high speed wifi. Starting this year, all students have Chromebooks in a 1:1 initiative. Hastings has adopted the Google suite of office applications, which allows students to work with the same kinds of productivity software they will see in college and after. In addition, teachers use Google Classroom to distribute classroom handouts and activities to students and to collect assignments. The district has invested in technology training focused not only on the mechanics of the new tools but also its pedagogical implications. The Chromebooks allow teachers and students to explore new software and media, such as Geogebra and Desmos in mathematics, and original source material and first person narratives in the English, History, and World Language departments. The science department uses technology to enhance instruction and to create spaces in which students can experiment and explore. For instance, students use Vernier probeware to analyze the data. A zSpace lab creates a three dimensional virtual workspace that students use in such varied applications as the dissection of a human heart or the exploration of how coefficients of friction affect an object's motion.

Most importantly, the 1:1 initiative has opened up more collaborative opportunities for our students, allowing them to move their group work into the digital realm. Teachers and students engage with each other's work well beyond the confines of the school building, proposing revisions to each other's poetry or posting links to interesting scientific research.

Teachers employ several different instructional approaches, including small-group work, direct instruction, and inquiry-based activities. Instruction is differentiated throughout, with teachers providing multiple entryways into the content of their courses. Student assessment data is maintained by teachers within a digital environment that allows students (and their parents and guardians) to keep track of progress throughout the school year. Strong teachers who are passionate about their subjects drive student engagement.

There is extensive support for students who are struggling or performing below grade level. In addition to the 30-minute extra help period built into our school day, content-area teachers and specialists provide Academic Intervention Services through separated classes built into the student schedule. Students are assigned into these classes based on assessment data, but can also opt into these classes for additional support.

We also deliver our curriculum through an integrated special education program. Collaborative, co-taught classes provide additional support. Additionally, the district is in the second year of a student-directed IEP initiative. Students are empowered by helping to create their own Individual Education Plans. By senior year, students chair their own Post-Secondary Exit Summary meetings.

In a rigorous, high performing school, it can sometimes be difficult to find one's place. The Hastings Alternative School Program (HASP) targets at-risk students by providing general school support, dedicated classes in English and History, peer mentoring, and other community support.

When students encounter academic difficulties, the school community works together. We initiate case conferences early and bring together everyone from students all the way up to administrators to brainstorm interventions and supports that will help the student get back on track.

Students return to the community saying that they felt much better prepared than their peers for the rigors of college. Some graduates have returned after years, telling us how excited they are that their own children have just begun their journey through the district. This is a measure of the success of our instructional program: our graduates are proud to return and share their success with us.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Our students see their teachers as personally and professionally invested in their growth and success. Interactions between students and faculty tend to be informal and comfortable, which fosters a sense of community and trust. As a result, students feel safe being themselves; moreover, students generally feel accepted and cared for by the faculty, which leads to their being more accepting and supportive of their peers.

Our daily schedule facilitates meaningful interactions between students and faculty. 80-minute block classes allow us to delve more deeply into material and to provide more opportunities for students to work independently, collaboratively, and directly with their teachers during each class session. Teachers make themselves available to students before and after school, and many members of the faculty each lunch at their desks in order to be available for students during the school's shared lunch period.

The diversity of the honors, advanced placement, college satellite classes and electives we offer speaks to our commitment to helping students discover and pursue their passions; the same is true of our various clubs, sports, and activities. While we are proud of our long-running extracurricular activities, such as the school newspaper and the nationally recognized Academic Challenge team, we are even prouder of the fact that our extracurricular offerings change from year to year, as students step forward with ideas and projects they want to explore. Over this past two years alone, we have had students independently organize a drive to collect water and toiletries for those suffering in Flint, Michigan, a club dedicated to exploring race in America, and a massive celebration of the school's cultural diversity called "Culture Shock."

Our school is responsive to events within the community and in the world around us, from embracing a refugee family from Syria to establishing a lecture series in memory of a beloved history teacher. These are just two examples of how the school and community work together to respond dynamically to big events in our lives.

While teachers value so many things about working in Hastings, none is more significant than the genuine curiosity and engagement of our students, who consistently demonstrate how much they believe in, count on, and appreciate the school's commitment to their growth and success.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The Hastings public schools are the center of our community, and Hastings High School sees our students' families and the larger community as our partners in education. In much the same way that teachers are accessible to students, our online gradebook allows parents to monitor their children's progress in real time, and our use of google classroom provides them access to class policies, syllabi, assignments, materials, and student assessments. The size of our school affords students and families tremendous access to each student's guidance counselor. The four counselors, who share responsibility for the school's roughly 500 students, meet with students, their families, and entire grade levels regularly throughout a student's high school career. These counselors help students create their schedule each year and guide them through their post-high school planning, making the process collaborative and transparent. The guidance staff, like teachers, are known for having an open door and support students in a range of academic and personal ways.

Parents may access and interact with their children's teachers via email and by phone, and a wide variety of professionals, including social workers, school psychologists, guidance counselors, and administrators, are available to work with students and their families, often in conjunction with one another.

The school is supported by parent organizations, both the Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) and Special Education Parent Teacher Association (a new organization focused on supporting our special education program), and community organizations, such as the Hastings Education Foundation, that

provide financial and hands-on support for special projects and activities. Our administration meets with these groups, and with the Parent Liaison committee, to address questions and to seek input on school-related practices and issues. Additionally, parents have the opportunity to help shape the school through their participation on the school's building leadership team and on committees to screen and hire teachers and administrators.

Technology enables us to share school schedules and successes through a number of platforms, from email blasts to the school webpage to local newspapers. Student-written plays are performed during the year, and special musical and dramatic performances are staged for seniors and other community members. The school comes together to host our annual Thanksgiving Dinner, where we serve dinner to more than 500 homeless people on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. Many businesses and individuals within the community serve as mentors for our students throughout their education and during senior internships.

3. Professional Development:

The school district believes that meaningful professional development for teachers and staff is essential to fostering growth and development among our students, and the district provides a number of contexts through which teachers can continue to hone their craft. The high school has recently adopted a schedule that includes a monthly "late start Friday," where classes begin 90 minutes later than usual so teachers can pursue initiatives that they and the school administrators design collaboratively. These meetings allow teachers to exchange ideas and best practices within their departments, in small interdisciplinary teams, and as an entire faculty.

While much of our staff development originates within the building, teachers are also provided ample access to resources outside of school. Members of our faculty have long collaborated with collegiate institutions such as Syracuse University and the State University of New York at Albany, and the district has recently brought in experts in student-centered classrooms, technology infusion, and co-teaching in the collaborative model to coach teachers across grade levels and academic disciplines. Our teachers often benefit from the work they do outside of school through our school's partnership with a number of local professional development networks.

In keeping with our commitment to serving our students as people, we've invested significant professional development time and resources to building our understanding of issues that are relevant to our students' lives. This past year, we've received training in recognizing and responding to signs of trauma in the lives of our students, facilitating conversations about race and equity, and supporting members of the school's LGBTQ community.

Teachers are encouraged to take courses and apply for grants that expand and enrich their knowledge and expertise, and the district funds summer work for teachers looking to develop new materials or innovative approaches to the work we do in our classes. In its ongoing support of staff development, Hastings High School affirms its belief that professional development translates directly to better experiences for our students. In addition, teachers who seek out and utilize professional development opportunities are recognized as models of the sort of lifelong learning that we value so highly as a community.

4. School Leadership:

Leadership has long been a pillar of our school's success. Our principal and assistant principal share a unified vision and a commitment to maintaining a warm, safe, supportive environment at Hastings High School. Students feel comfortable with both of the school's administrators, who know every student by name, most of them before their first day of high school. Students flow in and out of the high school office all day long though our administrators are out of their offices as often as they are in: walking the halls and chatting with students, talking and eating lunch most days the cafeteria, or sitting in the stands or the auditorium at sporting events and artistic performances. The very popular student lounge is actually an open section of the school's front lobby, and that this "hotspot" is located directly across from the high school office speaks to the trust and affection students have for our leadership.

The administration is equally committed to making staff feel respected, and teachers are given every opportunity to experiment, innovate, and pursue their passions. Faculty input is sought out in every aspect of school life, and teachers are given the opportunity to design programs such as the Academic Field Day, in which teachers run workshops on interests outside of their traditional disciplines. Decision making is a shared process: teachers serve on all major committees, department chairs work with the principal and the assistant superintendent to plan staff development, and members of all school constituencies participate on the school's building leadership team and hiring committees. Teachers are frequently called upon to be leaders within the building, whether in formal positions, such as the department heads, or in less formal contexts, as when they are invited to run workshops for other teachers.

Administrators act as ambassadors for the school and liaisons within the community. They are as available to parents and community members as they are to students; whether by phone, email or in person, the principal and assistant principal are always ready to answer questions, address concerns, and listen to suggestions. Regardless of who they interact with—students, teachers, parents, or community members—our school leaders are warm, receptive and confident about who we are and where we are going as a school. As a result, everyone associated with Hastings High School comes to share in the leadership's pride, sense of purpose, and commitment to our continued success.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Hastings students believe that their teachers, administrators and staff members respect them and are committed to helping them achieve their personal, social and academic potential. As a result, students feel comfortable, if not inspired, to push themselves to pursue their goals in all aspects of their lives.

The small-town feel of the community and the school itself is certainly present in our classrooms, where students often work collaboratively and serve as coaches and editors of one another's work, building trust for the recipients of help and confidence in those who are giving it. Teachers and support staff are available to students throughout the day, in both the structured settings of Resource Rooms, Academic Intervention Services and Learning Centers, or in less proscribed situations. Student and teachers often work and eat together in the middle of the day as well as conferencing before or after school. Our alternative school provides a structured, supportive environment where students often experience the sort of self-confidence, belonging and academic success that has eluded them in previous school experiences.

Our network of experienced non-teaching professionals, from guidance counselors to school psychologists and social workers, are not only invaluable resources to students on their own, but together, working in conjunction with classroom teachers and school administrators, ensure that students have a variety of programs and possibilities in place to help them through their challenges.

The emergence of new electives across disciplines in response to student interests or teacher passions reflects our commitment to keeping our curriculum relevant and engaging. Our students are eager to participate in the world around them, and new clubs and organizations regularly emerge from these interests, thanks largely to the willingness of faculty members, especially those who share their interests, to advise and support their endeavors. The strategies we teach students in class help them to become independent thinkers in all aspects of their education.

More than the number of students who sign up for and succeed in honors or college level classes, more than our impressive test scores on statewide or advanced placement exams, or the number of students who enroll in academic electives on top of their required courses, the true testament to our success is the fact that our students come to school with tremendous ambitions, believing in themselves and trusting in our capacity and commitment to helping them achieve their goals and realize their dreams.