

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 [X] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Yunus Bicici

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

Official School Name Dove Science Academy - OKC

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 919 NW 23rd Street

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

City Oklahoma City State OK Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 73106-5603

County Oklahoma County

Telephone (405) 524-9762 Fax (405) 524-9471

Web site/URL http://www.dsaokc.org E-mail alp@doveschools.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*Mr. Umit Alpaslan E-mail alp@doveschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Dove Schools Tel. (405) 605-0201

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Ms. Mary Pointer
(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):
- 0 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 1 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	36	47	83
7	44	40	84
8	34	51	85
9	35	43	78
10	30	35	65
11	25	26	51
12 or higher	29	31	60
Total Students	233	273	506

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 4 % Asian
 - 8 % Black or African American
 - 75 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 12 % 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: 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	5
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	14
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	19
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	485
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.039
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	4

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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 85 %
Total number students who qualify: 428

8. Students receiving special education services: 3 %
15 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>1</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>3</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>9</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>1</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Mental Retardation | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>0</u> 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	3
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	29
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	5
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	0
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 18:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	96%	97%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	98%	100%	100%	100%	100%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**
Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2016.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	46
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	40%
Enrolled in a community college	58%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	2%
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 provide a STEM-focused, college preparatory curriculum within a caring environment to ensure all students reach their fullest potential--intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically.

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

Dove Science Academy-OKC is a public charter school sponsored by the Oklahoma City Public School District. There are no pre-requisites or screening processes for acceptance to our school. Each Spring we accept applications for the next school year. If the number of applicants is greater than the number of anticipated spots for a specific grade level, we hold a public lottery for acceptance and waiting list. If the number of applicants is less than the number of anticipated spots, we accept all applicants for that grade level. The exception to this policy is for siblings of current students who are automatically accepted if spots are available prior to the lottery.

PART III – SUMMARY

Opened in 2001, Dove Science Academy-OKC is a college preparatory STEM-focused public charter school serving approximately 500 students each year from in and around the metro area in grades 6 through 12. The majority of Dove Science Academy-OKC students (85%) qualify for Free/Reduced Lunch and are of minority ethnicity (90%). While our mission is for every student to reach his/her full potential, our goal is for all DSA students to continue their education at a college or university upon graduation and to serve their communities as healthy, informed, engaged, and productive members of society. This is an especially challenging goal since the majority of our students come from poverty-level families with no college education or even basic awareness of the college/scholarship application process. With graduation rates of 98% or higher and 100% college acceptance rates for seniors for over 15 years, we have established a culture of success and a commitment by all stakeholders to the core belief that all students can learn and succeed at high levels.

In order to achieve and sustain these successes, we implement a wide array of programs and strategies to ensure that every student receives individualized goals, differentiated instruction, and multiple assessments to measure progress in all areas. It starts with our college prep curriculum vertically aligned through all core subjects from grades 6 through 12. Offering high school courses to middle school students, Advanced Placement courses for all levels of high school students, and concurrent college courses for all Juniors and Seniors ensures that every student is challenged and that opportunities to excel exist for every student at every skill level. We are also a Project Lead The Way (PLTW) campus for Bio-medicine, and this track of elective courses are available to all high school students without pre-requisites.

In order to support students in their efforts, we employ many supplemental strategies and programs to ensure that no student falls too far behind or is unable to catch up to progress toward their individualized goals. After-school tutoring (9th Hour), Saturday classes, inter-session remediation and credit recovery portfolios are all effective in helping our students learn to take responsibility for their education, chart their own goals and progress, and manage their time/effort to make sure they stay on track.

Additionally, we require all students in grades 6 through 12 to take the STAR Reading Assessment at least twice each school year. Based on a student's individual reading level, we set yearly and quarterly reading goals. Every student is required to reach his/her yearly reading goal through the Accelerated Reader program in order to receive full course credit and advance to the next grade. These reading goals encourage students to carefully track their goals and progress, but they also support healthy competition among peers since only the student and teacher know the individual reading levels and goals of each student. Only the percentage of the total goal is shared. This allows students who are deficient in reading skills to be openly celebrated among peers who read at the college level when they achieve 100% of their individualized goals.

Another required program is our Community Service component for all high school students. Every student must complete and submit verification for 30+ hours of community service each year of grades 9 through 12 with 120+ hours required to graduate. In addition to the hours, the submission log also requires students to reflect on what they learned during their service, what character traits they applied, and how they could expand their efforts. This instills in students the need for service in developing character and produces graduates who are experienced, confident, and comfortable in supporting their communities.

We have several organizations that ensure all students have a voice in the policy decisions of our school. The Student Ambassador program sends elected students from each Homeroom to bi-weekly meetings with school administrators to share student concerns, suggestions, and questions with administrators and to maintain an open flow of information between school leaders and the student body. Many of our clubs and student organizations, National (and Junior) Honor Societies, College Readiness and Leadership Program (CRLP) and Congressional Award Program all offer students additional opportunities to develop and apply strong leadership, social, and service skills in and out of school.

Dove Science Academy-OKC also utilizes a comprehensive Wellness Policy for students and staff that covers everything from Nutrition, Physical Fitness, and Tobacco-Free campus requirements for all students,

staff, and visitors to anti-bullying training for students/parents/staff, Digital Citizenship, and suicide prevention. Our school has been repeatedly recognized for our efforts in these areas for going above and beyond the local, state, and federal requirements and suggested guidelines. Our students and staff take great pride in our Safe and Healthy Campus. Earlier this semester, Dove Science Academy-OKC was recognized as a State School of Character by character.org and is currently being considered for the National School of Character designation.

While these examples offer only a snapshot of our school and the graduates we strive to produce, they are all fully integrated core programs that directly contribute to our sustained levels of achievement since opening our doors in 2001.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

In order to achieve the mission of our school, we have implemented a challenging college preparatory curriculum in all subjects with an enhanced focus on project-based learning in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, and mastery of strong academic writing skills in all subjects. Additionally, our character education and service learning components are integrated into every subject and grade to ensure students develop the skills, strategies, and character required to be lifelong learners and engaged members of society. As a public charter school sponsored by the Oklahoma City Public School District, we are also required to include the Oklahoma Academic Standards in our curriculum and prepare students for state assessments over these standards. Our core subject curricula are designed to encompass all required Oklahoma standards, a wide variety of content areas, college readiness skills, and college entrance exam preparation.

Our math curriculum is covers grades/courses 6th, 7th, 8th, Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2, Pre-Calculus, ACT Math, Math Applications, College Algebra, and AP Calculus AB. Each math course curriculum is designed to support students' mathematical literacy in the following 7 Mathematical Actions and Processes: Conceptual Understanding, Procedural Fluency, Problem Solving, Mathematical Reasoning, Communicating Mathematically, Predicting/Modeling/Generalizing, and developing a Productive Mathematical Disposition in students.

Our science curriculum covers grades/courses 6th, 7th, 8th, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Forensic Science, Environmental Science, Principles of Bio-medicine, Human Body Systems, Medical Interventions, Anatomy/Physiology, ACT Science, AP Biology, AP Chemistry, and AP Physics. Each science course curriculum is designed to support students' scientific literacy in the following Scientific Domains: Physical Science, Life Science, Earth/Space Science. Each Domain has a specific set of topics for each level course that fit within that Domain.

Our English curriculum covers grades/courses 6th, 7th, 8th, Intro to Literature, Cultural Lit, American Lit, British Lit, College Writing, Creative Writing, Poetry, Shakespeare, ACT Reading, ACT English, AP English Language & Composition, and AP English Literature & Composition. Each English course curriculum is designed to support students' reading/writing literacy in the following 8 standards: Speaking & Listening, Reading/Writing Process, Critical Reading/Writing, Vocabulary, Language, Research, Multimodal Literacies, and Independent Reading/Writing for Academic and Personal Growth.

Our Social Studies curriculum covers grades/courses World Geography-Western Hemisphere (6th), World Geography-Eastern Hemisphere (7th), US History 1754-1877 (8th), Oklahoma History, Geography, US History 1878-Present, World History, Government, Psychology, Sociology, Economics, Financial Literacy, European History, AP US History, AP Human Geography, and AP Government. Each Social Studies course curriculum is designed to support student mastery of the following Content, Process, and Literacy Standards: Reading/Writing-Key Ideas and Details, Reading/Writing-Craft and Structure, R/W-Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, R/W Text Types & Purposes, R/W-Production & Distribution, R/W-Research, R/W-Range of Writing, and Course-Specific Content Standards.

All middle school students have character education as a year long class. A significant portion of the Civic Engagement (CE) curriculum deals with civic engagement, good citizenship, and service learning. All high school students must complete 30+ hours of service each year in order to graduate. All staff are trained in effective implementation of CE into their subject curriculum and expected to document CE activities in their weekly lesson plans.

In addition to our Advanced Placement, Concurrent Enrollment, Bio-medicine courses, and mandatory ACT Prep course offerings, all seniors take a year-long College/Career Choice course with counselors. This course includes college visits, guest speakers from universities, college recruiters, financial aid advisers, scholarship applications, college applications, and tips for success during their freshman year of college.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

A major component of our school's mission is that every student reach his/her fullest potential across a broad spectrum. We strive to produce well-rounded graduates with a variety of interests and abilities. Our non-core courses are no less rigorous or rewarding than our core curricula. Every non-core class is designed to offer students opportunities to apply what they learn to their lives and future goals. For example, journalism publishes a monthly school newsletter, art classes host auctions of student-created art pieces, music and drama perform at quarterly events, PE students set and track their own fitness goals with heart monitors and tracking software, and technology classes provides students with the skills and time to create required technology presentations for core classes.

Our Art curriculum covers grades/courses Music 6th, Music 7th, Music 8th, Music Appreciation, Music Theory, Drama 1, Drama 2, Art 6th, Art 7th, Art 8th, Intro to Art (9th), Art History, and AP Art History. All middle school students are required to take Art and/or Music each year. All high school students must have 1 full credit of Fine Arts. Our music courses teach students to read and write sheet music, basic piano skills, musical genres, music history, and rehearsed singing and dancing. Our Art courses cover a variety of art media, art history and cultural impact, pottery, sculpture, and art criticism. All Art and Music course curricula address the following 4 Standards: Responding, Connecting, Performing, and Creating.

Our PE/Health/Nutrition curriculum covers grades/courses/sports for PE 6th, PE 7th, PE 8th, PE 9th, PE 10th, Sports and Movement, Extended Exercise, Health, Intramural Sports, Varsity Boys/Girls Cross Country, Varsity Boys/Girls Soccer, and Junior Varsity Boys/Girls Soccer. All students in grades 6 through 10 take PE and Health. All high school students must have 1 additional full credit of a PE or Health elective. All students can participate in intramural sports, and all students can try out for Varsity or Junior Varsity sports by appropriate grade level. Additionally, we schedule mandatory health seminars, HIV prevention, Child Abuse Awareness, Suicide Prevention, and Vision Screenings for all students (unless parents contact the school to opt out and provide instruction for their child privately). All seniors receive CPR certification before graduation (school covers all expenses). Our school cafeteria provides healthy breakfasts and lunches that exceed the local, state, and federal requirements for Healthy Schools.

Our foreign language curriculum covers Spanish 6th, Spanish 7th, Spanish 8th, Spanish 1 (9th), Spanish 2 (10th), AP Spanish Language, AP Spanish Literature, Turkish 6th, Turkish 7th, Turkish 8th, Turkish 1 (9th), and Turkish 2 (10th). All middle school students receive foreign language instruction each year, and all high school students must have 2 full credits of the same language to graduate. We also host a multi-cultural fair and a Language Olympiad, which are both open to the public and regional schools. We schedule local, interstate, and international trips during field study days and school breaks for students to apply what they have learned in real-world settings.

Our technology curriculum covers Desktop Publishing, Web Mastering, Digital Graphics & Animation, and Pre-AP Computer Science. All middle school students receive a full year of technology instruction. All students have 3 course electives to choose from in grades 9-12. We also offer Robotics as an extra-curricular program for middle school FLL (First Lego League), for high school FTC (First Technology Challenge) and FRC (First Robotics Competition). Our Engineering Club is partnering with local engineering firms to build a solar car for the Solar Car Challenge competition in Dallas, Texas. Our science department has a 3D printer that students learn how to program and operate. Technology is integrated into every classroom through SMART boards, digital projectors, document cameras, 2 classroom sets of Chromebooks, laptops, and student computers. We also have 3 computer labs with a usage schedule that allows every class to have protected lab hours plus student access before and after school and during all lunches.

Our curriculum also covers elective courses of Humanities, Journalism, Yearbook, and Study Hall. As mentioned earlier, all middle school students also take Character education each year.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Dove Science Academy-OKC uses a wide array of instructional methods, interventions, and assessments depending on the subject and skill level of the students, but this is an overview of the methods we

consistently use at all levels.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

It is crucial to our success that all students, staff, and parents feel they are part of a caring community with a culture of high expectations and collaboration. One of the most significant ways we accomplish this is through our HOME VISIT program. During the first quarter of the school year, our teachers and counselors will visit the homes of our students to meet their family, discuss individual goals, upcoming events, and ways the family can get involved at the school. This type of program is still rare in Oklahoma, but our staff, students, and their families have embraced it. Each year the number of families who decline to receive a visit decreases, and this year we visited over 90% of students' homes. The power of building strong positive relationships between school, student, and parent at the very beginning of the year and strengthening those bonds throughout the students' academic career is sadly underestimated in many schools, but we celebrate it at Dove Science Academy-OKC, and this program has become part of our culture.

When it comes to motivating our students, we place a strong emphasis on self-motivation and intrinsic rewards. Our school motto states that "every student has the potential for success intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically through their thoughts, words, and actions." We celebrate the achievements of the whole school rather than the individual whenever possible. We do have clear consequences agreed to by all stakeholders through our Student Handbook, Honor Codes, and Parent/School Compacts, but we also have many programs in place to teach good behavior and engagement through character and respect rather than just fear of discipline. Our Saturday Detention Character Workshops have students reflect on their lapse of character, ways to make amends and earn back trust/respect, and set goals for themselves to get/stay on track. Our "Charlie Bills" and Rocket Cafe incentive programs allow every staff member (including secretaries and custodians) to anonymously reward students for acts of observed good character. Students receive a brief description of the observed character trait and our "Charlie Bills" (Charlie is part of our mascot) to buy school supplies and healthy snacks from our Rocket Cafe during lunches. Another strong component of our school culture is our "DSA Pride Days" in which students and staff can wear any DSA club/sport/event shirt in place of their uniform shirt on certain event days (competitions, assemblies, testing, etc.). This allows the entire school to show support for our various extra-curricular efforts and also increase awareness of the students for the many opportunities for involvement we provide.

Academically, our students learn engagement and self-motivation through our Credit Recovery Portfolio Program. Students who fail a quarter have the opportunity to come to school during the quarterly break to work toward raising the failing grade, but students have the same chance to raise a passing grade as well. This is not required and students/parents aren't pressured to do so. If a student chooses not to participate, the grade locks and he/she must live with the consequences. This teaches students to make good choices during the grading period, sacrifice free time or even family vacations to repair the trouble they've caused themselves, or move forward to work to overcome the low grade. The result of this program is that our students are motivated to stay in good standing and/or to recover from mistakes on their own.

We make sure students, parents, and staff feel valued and supported by making sure all stakeholders have a voice in our school. Our Student Ambassador Program (mentioned earlier), Professional Learning Communities and Staff Committees, our Parent/Teacher Organization, and especially our Campus Improvement Committee all create an open flow of discussion and sharing of ideas among all stakeholders. Many schools boast "open door" policies for stakeholders, but it is another celebrated way of life at Dove Science Academy-OKC. Students, parents, teachers, and alumni visit at all hours of the school day with suggestions, concerns, or offering help in addressing the various new issues that arise each year. We have worked hard to create a caring community with a culture of success for all stakeholders over the past 15 years, and we do not take it for granted.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

We strive constantly to engage our families and community members as full partners in our efforts to help students succeed and improve our school. Every student and parent signs a contract pledging to support the school's program and promising to volunteer 3+ hours each semester as a chaperone, driver, cleanup crew, guest speaker, or any skill or trade they feel will benefit the school. Our Home Visit Program (explained earlier) makes sure staff and parents meet in the student's home to discuss school programs, student goals, core values of the school, yearly character themes, and ways parents can help. To accommodate parents' busy schedules, we schedule our outreach programs during the day, in the evening, on weekends, and during school breaks, and our Parent/Teacher conferences are held during extended hours. We offer trainings on parenting, bullying prevention, college prep, financial aid, intersession camps, and we offer free adult ed classes to any family member or family friend on Saturdays to learn English, Spanish, Computers, as well as resume and interview skills. We also host Family Picnics each semester at a city park with games, live performances from students, and hot dog eating contests.

Steady communication is crucial to maintain these relationship. Staff emails and cell phone numbers are listed in course syllabuses and available from the main office. We use email groups, "ALL CALL" and "Text Blast" school messenger programs along with social media outlets to keep information flowing. Monthly PTO meetings are scheduled around student performances with door prizes to encourage attendance. Our school newspaper and monthly character newsletters are distributed to homes and a current progress report goes out every other Thursday.

Community luncheons and breakfasts are held monthly to discuss new ways our students and staff can support the community. Local businesses are invited to request any help from clubs and student groups that we can provide. Some of these businesses sponsor scholarships, provide internships, and hire students (and even parents). We host a Career Day every spring where businesses and professionals spend the whole day at our school teaching students what it is they do and the path to do it.

3. Professional Development:

It is our belief that education is a never-ending lifelong pursuit. We work hard to instill this concept in our students and their families, and we model this belief as staff for our students. We start with the common professional development sessions for all staff. During a 1 week session each summer before school starts, the entire teaching staff, support staff, and admin team attend training sessions together that cover all shared expectations and school-wide programs. Classroom management, instruction methods, period pacing, Safety Net Program, OKA+ Arts Integration, Accelerated Reader, Turn-It-In.com, character education, special education, differentiated instruction, and our teacher evaluation and support program (Marzano's) are always covered during this week along with all school policies, procedures, programs, clubs, sports, and events. Even if a teacher is not responsible for these areas, our entire staff learns about them so we are unified and working together to support our colleagues and motivate students.

All staff (even new hires) are responsible for at least 1 additional week of professional development during the summer break. This PD must be approved by admin, but the teachers are expected to explain why they will benefit from the specific training and how the school will benefit in turn. Approved professional developments are paid for by the school with mileage reimbursements. Upon completion, the teacher is further expected to review the training and content with his/her department and, when relevant, with the entire staff. Administrators and support staff are also required to find PD opportunities that will strengthen a specific aspect of their professional endeavors. Oklahoma covers the costs of College Board Pre-AP and Advanced Placement conferences, and all teachers are encouraged to attend these PDs during summer months to keep the quality of instruction at the highest levels. All PLTW Bio-Medical teachers must attend a 2-week certification training for each course they teach.

Additionally, teachers are required to attend at least 1 weekend PD each semester of the year. These weekend PD sessions (or weekdays when necessary) are selected by admin based on each teacher's areas in need of improvement. We do not randomly send staff to generic PD sessions. During our teacher evaluations and post-eval meetings, we discuss strengths and weaknesses with the teacher and discuss

specific training available to address these focus points. The teacher's self-reflection and honest opinion is crucial in these meetings to identify what can be self-improved and what would require outside instruction. For example, if a teacher spends too much time lecturing and is struggling to keep students engaged, we would send them to a POGIL workshop (Process Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning) to learn effective ways to incorporate more student-guided learning and small group activities. If a teacher does not assign enough writing assignments, we might send him/her to the Writing Lab at a nearby university who partners with us on professional development for our teachers and their education students. This ongoing and collaborative approach to professional development keeps our school evolving and improving the education and character development we provide for our students.

4. School Leadership:

Dove Science Academy-OKC models a shared leadership among administrators, teachers, students, and parents whenever possible. Our philosophy is lead by example, share ideas for improvement, and listen to the ideas of others. We follow a fairly basic leadership structure. Our students report to teachers, teachers report to department heads, department heads report to the admin team of the Deans of Discipline and Academics, Counselors, and Principal. The admin team consults committees of students, parents, and teachers to reach a final decision. The principal then reports to the superintendent and central office who, in turn, report to the school board. We also report to Oklahoma City Public Schools, Oklahoma State Department of Education, and USDE since our charter is sponsored by Oklahoma City Public Schools in the state of Oklahoma, and we are responsible for all local, state, and federal requirements of all public schools. Although we follow this traditional structure, our school leadership encourages all stakeholders to take an active role and voice in school leadership and improvement. The structure is not meant to be a "chain of command" that must be followed at all times. Students go directly to the principal with suggestions, teachers are welcome at the central office to meet with directors and the superintendent, and parents are urged to visit the school at any time with concerns, questions, and suggestions for improvement.

As Principal, my philosophy is to lead by example. Many of the school's programs were in place before I took this position, but I always look for ways to strengthen or expand the parts that are working while revising or replacing the parts that aren't. During the Principal Leadership Academy intensive training program, I met and worked with principals from around the state teaching and learning best practices in a variety of school issues with a strong focus on student engagement and character development. Shared Leadership is another philosophy I believe in. I always try to include representatives from all stakeholders on all committees, and I encourage all staff, students, parents, and community members to seek out opportunities to lead and collaborate on efforts to improve our school.

After the principal is our admin team. These men and women are always visible and available and each also teaches classes. All character education courses are taught by administrators. They model the behaviors that teachers and students are expected to emulate. Through classroom visits and observations, they demonstrate an understanding and commitment to the school's mission, core values, character themes, and shared expectations for our students. All admin truly follow an "open door" policy and make time for students, staff, parents, and guests without appointments. Furthermore, they genuinely listen to concerns and ideas with the common goal of doing what is best for the kids and the school.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The single most important contributor to our sustained success is our teachers and staff. These men and women are among the very best that education has to offer. They work longer hours, have more responsibilities, and earn less than most teachers in the state of Oklahoma. The recruitment, training, continued professional development, and support of every employee in this building has enabled our school to accomplish what very few other schools in this city and state have been able to do--continually produce healthy, informed, engaged, and productive members of society with the skills necessary to succeed at the college level and life, in general.

Although it was described, in part, earlier in the section of Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments, the single program that makes Dove Science Academy-OKC so successful is our Safety Net Program. While the program itself is nothing more than high quality differentiated instruction, meaningful and multiple forms of assessments, followed by interventions that address specific student needs, it is the commitment to apply these practices to every student in every subject in every grade from 6th through graduation that has led to our sustained success. Students don't "fall through the cracks" at Dove Science Academy-OKC. Our teachers provide innovative quality instruction. Our system of assessing and identifying students who are below, at, or above their expected skill levels and gains is accurate. The interventions we provide are student-specific and designed to push every student to reach his/her fullest potential. Strong remediation and ambitious Gifted and Talented support keep all students focused on achieving at the highest level they are personally capable of. After-School, weekend, and intersession tutoring and credit recovery require all students and staff to recognize that education never ends and is often hard work, but once they have bought in to this concept, there is nothing we can not achieve together.

The Safety Net Program has been in place since we first opened our doors in 2001. We have changed much about our school since that time, but the Safety Net Program has remained. It proves that every child can learn and succeed at high levels. It requires an extra level of commitment from students, staff, and parents, but it also builds trust between these same stakeholders. It demonstrates that sacrifice and work are part of being successful.