

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mrs. Phyllis Santiago

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

Official School Name MaST Community Charter School (Math, Science, and Technology Community Charter School)

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1800 East Byberry Road

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

City Philadelphia State PA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 19116-3012

County Philadelphia County

Telephone (267) 348-1215 Fax (267) 348-1218

Web site/URL http://mastccs.org E-mail jswoyer@mastccs.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. John Swoyer III E-mail jswoyer@mastccs.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name MaST Community Charter School Tel. (267) 348-1215

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. Karen DelGuercio  
(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**

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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

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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
  - 0 High schools
  - 1 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	36	41	77
1	53	51	104
2	47	61	108
3	58	52	110
4	48	60	108
5	42	44	86
6	42	43	85
7	58	57	115
8	50	65	115
9	52	59	111
10	62	47	109
11	55	49	104
12 or higher	50	50	100
<b>Total Students</b>	653	679	1332

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 10 % Asian
  - 8 % Black or African American
  - 9 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 69 % White
  - 3 % 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: 2%

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	17
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	8
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	25
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	1313
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.019
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

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

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):  
Chinese (Mandarin), Chinese, (Yue/Cantonese), Russian, Spanish, Urdu, Vietnamese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 42 %  
Total number students who qualify: 563

8. Students receiving special education services: 13 %  
182 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.

- 18 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 9 Emotional Disturbance
- 3 Hearing Impairment
- 1 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 44 Other Health Impaired
- 74 Specific Learning Disability
- 33 Speech or Language Impairment
- 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 0 Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 2
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	6
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	62
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	19
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	19
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	8

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 22:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	97%	96%	99%	0%	0%

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.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	100
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	60%
Enrolled in a community college	27%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	3%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	5%
Other	5%

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.

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

MaST's mission is to create innovative pathways for students pursuing knowledge focused on Mathematics, Science, and Technology.

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

MaST holds a public lottery in February of each year for admission to the school. The application process opens on the first of October every year and remains open until January 31st. Applicants can apply online. If the applicant does not have access to a computer, they may come to MaST to complete an application. A computer will be available in the main lobby each school day from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The application is available in various languages.

### **PART III – SUMMARY**

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MaST Community Charter School is a K-12 public charter school that serves over 1340 students across 41 different Philadelphia zip codes. Over the years, MaST has been recognized for its unique programs and spaces, high academic achievement, and a positive school culture. MaST has been recognized as a Title I Distinguished School for High Achievement the last two years. The school was named a 21st Century Learning Exemplar School by P21 organization, the only public or charter school in PA to be awarded this honor. MaST was also recognized by Apple as a distinguished program for innovation, leadership, and educational excellence from 2014-2016. Most recently, MaST was named the top charter school in PA and 30th in the country by Niche.com and was also recognized as top charter school by the City Council of Philadelphia in 2016.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum:**

The core MaST curriculum provides students with unique experiences, challenging content, and a variety of learning activities on a daily basis. Aligned to PA Core standards, infused with technology standards, and delivered with cutting-edge best practices, MaST’s curriculum ensures that students will be more than prepared for the future. As a K-12 school, teachers are able to collaborate across grades and disciplines to continually refine the curriculum, assessments, rubrics, and innovative practices offered in every classroom

#### English Language Arts

Our elementary school students have a concentrated 120 minute daily reading block and our middle school students receive an hour of English per day. ELA instruction includes phonics, fluency, comprehension, guided reading, vocabulary instruction, grammar and writing. As we have aligned more closely with the PA Core, MaST has incorporated content-rich materials. Texts include McGraw-Hill Wonders, Scholastic News, and fiction and nonfiction selections. Teacher developed text materials and well developed questioning techniques which guide students in constructing meaning. All students write on a daily basis as they respond to text in a variety of ways. Spelling and grammar are infused into daily writing tasks.

During the 2016-2017 school year, members of the ELA/SS Professional Learning Community have been designing and implementing a school-wide, K-12 writing initiative focused on using common language and scaffold instruction through the acronym R.A.C.E. (restate the question; answer the question; cite and explain evidence). The initiative centers around leveraging our unique K-12 community by using common texts, written at various student lexile levels, to study ELA instruction, rubrics, grading, and student outcomes at all grade levels throughout the school.

The Comprehensive Literacy Program at our high school consists of a 5 semester, sequential and cumulative program designed to develop 21st Century readers, writers, speakers, and listeners. Courses emphasize literacy measured by PA Core State Standards. As we seek to foster the development of lifelong literacy learners, MaST is dedicated to a research-based literacy program. Students are scheduled for English Language Arts for the first 4 semesters of their high school career and a minimum of one additional semester in 11th grade.

#### Mathematics

MaST elementary school students have a dedicated 90 minute block of mathematics daily. Each grade level has closely aligned their curriculum to the PA Core Standards and teachers are embedding mathematical practices that promote critical thinking skills. Students learn: numbers and operations in base ten; numbers and operations–fractions; operations and algebraic thinking; geometry and measurement and data. All students are expected to demonstrate mastery via benchmarks every quarter. Students who score basic on the benchmark are provided remediation via our RTII program during our intervention period.

Mathematics at MaST is designed to prepare our students to become skilled mathematical problem solvers, able to transfer the skills and concepts they learn into tools for finding solutions to problems in any discipline. Every teacher has access to a variety of tools and programs, and math teams create grade and course specific programs of study, optimizing learning time by utilizing flipped, blended, and online skill building programs, including IXL and Think Through Math. The K-12 mathematics professional learning community focuses on ensuring the content and curriculum at every level meets PA state standards, while utilizing a robust data collection to ensure content spiralling and focus takes place.

MaST’s high school mathematics program provides courses to meet the educational needs, interests, and ability levels of all students. Additionally, courses demand that students develop a depth of understanding and ability to apply mathematics to various situations preparing students for future college and career expectations. Five of the credits required for graduation must be earned in mathematics. Students are required, at a minimum, to have completed course requirements in Algebra I, Algebra II & Geometry,

though additional courses and electives in Statistics, Precalculus, Calculus, and Financial Math are also offered.

## Science

The goal of our science curriculum is to provide instruction in the PA Core Standards consisting of biological sciences, physical sciences, earth and space sciences, technology and engineering education. In addition to instruction in general science and technology skills, students are challenged to be curious and develop a deeper understanding of content via project-based learning activities.

MaST's K-12 science program is designed to apply scientific ways of thinking to real world situations; they prepare students to appreciate and explore the world around them. Concepts are taught through a progression of knowledge across multiple grades, building a deeper understanding as part of a comprehensive science education. Students learn through exploration, labs, and hands on instruction, with outcomes that engage and challenge all learners. High school students are required to take 4 credits of science, with options including Environmental Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, AP Biology, and AP Chemistry.

## Social Studies & Civics

The goal of the Social Studies Program at MaST is to develop citizens who capably participate in a culturally diverse, democratic and global society. The Social Studies Program provides an integrated study of history, geography, civics, economics, and related social science disciplines, with an embedded focus on active learning strategies, research and inquiry skills, as well as reading, writing, and critical thinking. To satisfy high school graduation requirements, students must earn four credits in the core courses, which consist of World History II, United States History II, Government & Economics and Modern World, or AP US History.

## College & Career Supports

MaST's guidance counselors, teachers, and transition coordinator personalize guidance for every individual student in their transition to postsecondary schooling or community enriching career paths. Career days for grades K to 8 and 9 to 12, the spring college fair, PSAT day where 9th and 12th grade students visit college campuses, and an introduction to Naviance college and career interest inventories in middle school are all examples of MaST's streamlined K-12 focus on college and career. Students start out their study of careers as early as Kindergarten and first grade with Community Helper Day. Throughout their years at MaST, students are exposed to a variety of careers, paths, and opportunities. MaST encourages students to engage in collegiate work as soon as they enter high school, with many dual enrollment opportunities and relationships established. The most involved initiative is the partnership with the Community College of Philadelphia (CCP) where beginning in 10th grade, qualifying students join cohorts leading them to graduating with an associate degree in either business or health careers.

## **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

Students in grades K-6 go to five "specials" on a weekly basis. These "specials" include technology, media center/library, art, music, and physical education. Students in grades 7 and 8 continue to have music, gym, technology, and art incorporated into their schedules for a quarter each year. High school students are required to take courses in technology, health and physical education (PE), and foreign language.

## Art

Art is offered to all students from kindergarten through 8th grade. Students integrate ELA and math skills into their projects, while teachers focus on cultivating creativity and curiosity through their lessons. Student work is showcased at all levels each year. High school students have elective options in graphic design, product design, videography, and other technology-rich, art focused classes using professional quality equipment and software.

## Music

Students in grades kindergarten through 6th grade receive music instruction weekly while 7th and 8th grade students have music for one quarter per year. Students K-12 have access to choir, orchestra, and ensemble music groups and individual instruction. School plays, talent shows, concerts, and musicals provide students with outlets to demonstrate and celebrate their talents and musical creativity.

## Media Center/Library

MaST's K-6 media/library program aims to provide a technology focused class where students learn to read, write, and research in all media forms. Students in grades K-6 attend weekly classes with the media specialist. K-6 lessons supplement content taught in ELA, science, and social studies classes. Grades 7 to 12 utilize the space through their classes for research from databases, the internet, and from the traditional library shelves.

## Health and Physical Education

Health and PE is not only taught through PE classes in grades K to 8, but is integrated into the science curriculum in each classroom. Elementary and middle school counselors provide lessons on decision making, friendship, and healthy choices. With a focus on the wellness and prevention, students learn personal care and safety necessary to lead healthy lives. In high school, students take one credit of health and one credit of PE, focusing on lifelong fitness and positive decision making. In health, students specifically study drugs, nutrition, sexual health, first aid, mental illness, violence prevention, and relationship building through real world scenarios and case studies. Lastly, MaST's school board and community is very involved through the school's Wellness Committee, which promotes healthy lifestyles and choices through guest speakers, events, and promotions throughout the year.

## Technology

Engagement through technology is a goal in every classroom at MaST! Students and staff have access to a variety of platforms, programs, and devices. Technology courses begin in Kindergarten with introductory lessons on typing, coding, and computer skills. During the K to 6 technology special students learn how to build and program through the Lego Robotics program. Students also work on multimedia projects while developing new technology skills that build from year to year. 7th and 8th grade students get a survey of technology courses that will be offer in high school technology electives. Components of video editing, web design, robotics, engineering, photography, animation, and 3D design are infused in the middle school survey course. The K-8 technology courses prepare students to choose a technology pathway once they get into their high school years. High school courses include: Product Design, Video Production I and II, Video Journalism, 3D Design, Engineering, and Game and App Design. All courses require students to think creatively, problem solve, and build skills that will carry them into careers of the future.

## Foreign Language

MaST requires two credits of foreign language for all high school students. Many students choose Spanish I and II in a traditional classroom setting, however, there are a variety of options for student language. Through partnerships with universities and online providers, students take online Spanish I, II, and beyond, American Sign Language, Latin, and French.

### **3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:**

At MaST Community Charter School our mission is to provide innovative pathways for all students to learn and achieve at high levels. Through a rigorous, state aligned curriculum, teachers K-12 implement a variety of instructional methods to meet the needs of all learners in their class(es). Teachers at MaST have mastered the art of implementing a variety of instructional methods in order to meet the needs of their students and lesson plan objectives. Through the use of whole group, small group and individual instructional strategies, teachers plan and offer a variety of engaging learning opportunities that integrate technology and hands-on learning experiences.

As a part of a data-driven culture, MaST teachers use daily formative assessment data to target the individual strengths and needs of their students. If you were to walk into a classroom at MaST, you would be able to see the variety of formative assessment tools that teachers integrate into their daily instruction

using a variety of technological applications (Plickers, Kahoot, Nearpod, Socrative). In addition, teachers use a variety of teacher, school and textbook created summative assessments aligned to Pennsylvania's Common Core standards to monitor student mastery of standards. Quarterly universal screening assessments are administered to students in grades Kindergarten through sixth grade to determine and identify students who may require additional support inside and outside of the classroom by using DIBELS. MaST also administers the Study Island benchmark assessments four times during the academic school year in preparation for the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) to students in grades 3-8 and for the Keystone Exams to students in grades nine through eleventh.

Students that are identified as needing additional support through multiple measures (teacher data, DIBELS) and a multi-disciplinary team decision receive supplemental support both inside and outside of the classroom. Title I money is allocated in MaST Community Charter School's budget to provide classroom assistants that have been trained and receive ongoing professional development focused on providing instructional supports to students based on their individual strengths and need. Students who are considered significantly below grade level in grades Kindergarten through eighth, receive intensive, small group reading interventions through a daily pull-out model. Based on the individual needs, students are placed in small groups to receive targeted, interventions focused on phonics, fluency, reading comprehension or a combination of skills. Programs such as Foundations, Read 180, System 44 and Wilson are utilized to support and monitor progress of the interventions.

In addition to the reading needs of our students, teachers, parents and students are provided with a variety of supplemental resources that are utilized both at school and at home in the areas of math and science. Subscriptions to online resources such as iXL, Think Through Math and Study Island provide students with specific and targeted supplemental support and practice aimed at standard specific strengths and needs of individual students. Teachers use this data to continue to personalize the instructional needs of all students both inside and outside of their classrooms.

Differentiation at MaST does not end with struggling students, but extends to providing enrichment for all students. MaST has a school-wide culture of meeting student needs at every level, with a focus on providing engaging, technology-rich lessons and activities for students to reach their highest potential. Average students are challenged daily with a rigorous core curriculum and advanced students have Advanced Placement, dual enrollment, and a variety of elective options to meet their enrichment needs.

Members of our Professional Learning Communities (PLC), grade level leads & department heads, leadership & administrative teams and the Board of Trustees regularly evaluate school-wide data to proactively identify strengths and needs and to make adjustments to the educational program to better meet the needs of all students. Throughout the school year, periodic audits of resources are conducted to ensure that services, contracts and materials are effectively meeting the needs of students.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### **1. School Climate/Culture:**

MaST has developed a positive culture and reputation within its school by engaging board members, teachers, students, and community members to be part of the MaST family through engagement and participation. MaST believes in a system and culture where everyone's ideas are valuable and contribute to the success of the model. The school had the highest culture/participation score in the School District of Philadelphia's SPR rating of any elementary charter school.

Student focused initiatives and new opportunities is a key element that contributes to MaST's positive school culture and climate. Students are engaged from the moment they walk into the building. The school's goal is to offer programs, opportunities, experiences, electives, and clubs that challenges, motivate, empower students on a daily basis. Lessons and projects are tailored to student interests so that each child is invested and becomes the driving force behind their own education. A variety of in and out of class experiences promote strong relationships between students and the entire school community. MaST provides a safe and welcoming environment where students best interests are behind every decision that is made. School-wide initiatives are taught through our positive behavior program called Panther Pride. Students receive counseling services and small group and whole class lessons on character building, social and emotional wellbeing, and positive decision making throughout their time at MaST. Through assemblies, career days, guest speakers, grade level and school-wide team building students and staff become a connected and inclusive community.

Valuing staff is another piece of the formula for MaST's positive school culture. Some of these staff appreciation practices are simple, but go a long way. Staff appreciation practices include dressing down, free meals for teachers, opportunities to try new things, and staff recognition which presents itself in a multitude of ways. Staff members are encouraged to seek professional developments opportunities and build upon their talents. Staff members have a variety of resources from technology to personnel to ensure they are properly supported. Staff members are all welcome to join committees where their voices can be heard on the following topics: staff appreciation, strategic planning, professional learning communities, comprehensive planning, Title I planning, wellness, technology, and department/grade levels committees. Staff members invest time above and beyond their classroom duties to strengthen the school community and build positive experiences for all students.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

MaST prides itself on family and community engagement practices. Our school runs multiple events every year that are focused on educational involvement and growth. These events have become positive school traditions that connect our families and staff for the benefit of our K-12 students.

MaST currently has two parent groups who are involved in several components of the school's functions. One parent group helps in providing family events and also in fundraising to raise monies for school projects. The Association of MaST Parents (AMP) meets once a month to discuss the needs of the school and how their fundraising efforts can benefit the students. AMP sponsors fundraising activities for the school. A few examples include: the Annual Raffle, Yankee Candle Sale, Candy Sale, and Voucher Contests. They also sponsor free family activities for students, for example, roller skating parties, dances, seasonal festivals and bingo events.

Parents are also invited to join the Parent Liaison Committee (PLC), and each elected PLC member is a representative of the one of three different school levels. The mission of the group is to establish direct lines of communication between the parents and school administration. The group forms a round table once a month to meet with the administrative team to address parent concerns. It is also the responsibility of PLC to host informative parent forums on topics that would benefit parents and students alike.

An additional way that parents are involved in the learning of their child is by school hosted family events

that focus on academics. As a Title I school, we understand that our school needs to encourage family involvement and team-building and many levels. Parents have the opportunities to learn along with their children with a series of technology, literacy, and math involvement nights. MaST also holds evenings to engage the community and future parent community such character breakfasts, fall festival, wellness fairs, open houses, high school/college information nights, middle school information nights, parent-teacher conferences, and back to school nights.

Parents are also encouraged to participate in field trips and to volunteer during school hours. School communication is another important facet. Families are sent weekly announcements and events are posted on the website and through social media channels. Classroom pages and text alerts provides safe and effective communication from teacher to parent. These elements all strengthen our school community and ensure that all members are engaged, involved, and informed.

### **3. Professional Development:**

MaST Community Charter School is committed to creating a culture of continuous professional learning. Professional development is based on the notion that all teachers are learners and leaders. Teacher learning and development is part of a school-wide design that establishes professional development as a regular, legitimate entity of the school organization. The professional development plan is based on current trends and best practices.

The major components of professional development being targeted at MaST Community Charter School include the following: providing intensive advanced professional development in theory, practice, integration and effectiveness of Science, Technology, Robotics, Engineering, Arts and Math. (STREAM), developing and sustaining Professional Learning Communities, implementing an effective RtII and Inclusion Education model in which all students in the school, regardless of their strengths or weaknesses in an area, become part of the school community and have access to the curriculum, developing a comprehensive, integrated system of assessments and understanding, implementing and using data that supports a K-12 educational program for every student, utilizing state-of-the-art technology that is currently available to our staff and students, and utilizing current trends and best practices, by providing challenging experiences for all students.

Teachers and administrators have many opportunities for professional development. Teachers can request outside professional development opportunities and then are encouraged to return and provide turnaround training for their colleagues. MaST also employs a Technology Integration Specialist who provides on-site opportunities for technology integration in their classes. Staff members participate in mandatory webinars to stay up to date with required training. Staff and administrators have scheduled grade group, department, and faculty meetings each month. Additionally, MaST has several Professional Learning Communities to gather teachers across the K-12 pathway to focus on specific subjects.

In addition to working towards the school-wide vision, each teacher is required to build an Independent Professional Development Plan, based on professional goal based on the Danielson Framework. The teachers can work on independently chosen activities that help them reach their goal and must maintain a log for submission.

MaST values and encourages learning opportunities for all; students, parents, staff, and administrators. Just as we do with our students, we strive to provide professional development opportunities to address the needs and interests of each of our teachers and administrators.

### **4. School Leadership:**

The leadership team at MaST is very unique and special group of individuals dedicated to creating the most innovative and kid-focused, K-12 environment. The MaST leadership team consists of a CEO, K-12 Principal, a K-6 Assistant Principal, a 7-12 Assistant Principal, Head of Curriculum, Head of School Operations, Head of Special Education, Head of Community Relations and Innovative Projects, and a Technology Integration Specialist. Each administrator plays a key role and piece of the puzzle when it

comes to tying in curriculum, data, budget, learning environment, technology and overall instructional practices. Most importantly, our MaST leadership team is focused on the development of well-rounded students who are able to leave MaST prepared for the real world. The CEO believes in promoting from within and has seen 6 of its nine members move up to leadership from other roles in the organization. The primary leadership focus has become how to differentiate our model so that it stands out as the most innovative and successful model it can possibly be. Often this means focusing on community involvement, extra-curricular opportunities for kids, internships, and new student experiences that push learning beyond the walls of the classroom.

MaST's CEO is forward-thinking and drives the leadership team to think differently about learning. He empowers and support each member. The leadership team's philosophy can be embodied in the following statements: "learning something new every day" and "If you can imagine it, you can build it." MaST's CEO expects our leadership team to collectively think about the future of learning, rather than the present and to never stop adapting and changing. Our board president and founder has empowered the leadership of the school to think outside of the box and into the 22nd century of learning. Our leadership team collaborates throughout the day, but specifically each week at a leadership, academic, and operations meeting. Led by our K-12 principal, our instructional team utilizes data and assessments to help drive the direction of Professional Development and the differentiated approaches used in the classrooms. The innovative/operational side of our leadership team focuses on our environment and the functions of our school inclusive of unique community events, parent involvement, student engagement and participation, and managing all of the ECs that our school offers. MaST administration has empowered over 40 teachers to take on supportive leadership roles. PLC leads, grade lead teachers, department heads, tech liaisons, and support specialists have all become part of our leadership in order to zero in on needs and gaps in achievement. By empowering more people, MaST has created a teacher-driven, student-focused, innovative model with over 9,000 applications last year.

## **Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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MaST Community Charter School is an extraordinary school model. MaST has created a unique educational setting that includes over 1,300 students in grades kindergarten through twelve on one campus. At MaST, there is a distinct sense of school community that begins when most students enter as five year olds and lasts well after high school graduation. Our school's academic success is directly linked to this sense of community.

Our accomplishments as a K-12 school can be directly attributed to our instructional practices, opportunities for strong relationships between teachers and students; cross-grade learning activities; positive mentoring and role modeling; and the K-12 flow of community.

The foundation for all teaching and learning at MaST is based on trusting and positive relationships. Teachers, students, and parents develop strong relationships and teachers are always willing to support students with academics and to help them grow physically, socially and emotionally. This commitment fosters a strong home and school connection and the expectation that parents are our educational partners carries K-12.

Opportunities for mentoring and role modeling present itself at MaST in very powerful ways. MaST encourages students to explore their science, technology, robotics, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STREAM) curiosities from elementary to high school. Every teacher is fully committed to making sure that each student reaches his or her highest potential.

High school science, robotics, math, and English teachers partner with elementary teachers in planning and implementing innovative lessons. It is not unusual to find 3rd graders working in a high school classroom with sophomores solving mental math problems or to observe 2nd graders participating in tailor made chemistry learning labs with high school juniors. Senior English students help emerging elementary readers learn to read and analyze poetry and the high school robotics class works with 4th grade girls to help spark their interests in robotics and engineering programming.

These opportunities for the high school students to be mentors and role models for younger students is something that the teachers and students look forward to and deeply value. By establishing a K-12 STREAM curriculum, MaST provides unique opportunities for collaboration at all grade levels.