

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2018 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Ms. Shannae Bea Jackson

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

Official School Name Gwendolyn Brooks College Preparatory Academy

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 250 East 111th Street

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

Chicago IL 60628-4324  
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Cook County

Telephone (773) 535-9930

Fax (773) 535-9939

Web site/URL http://www.brookscollegeprep.org E-mail sbjackson1@cps.edu

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\*Dr. Janice Jackson

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail jkjackson@cps.edu

District Name City of Chicago School District 299 Tel. (773) 553-1600

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. Frank Clark

(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 2018 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 2012 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: 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, or 2017.
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 (2017-2018) unless otherwise stated.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
  - 471 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 11 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 181 High schools
  - 8 K-12 schools

671 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
  - Rural or small city/town
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2017 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
<b>PreK</b>	0	0	0
<b>K</b>	0	0	0
<b>1</b>	0	0	0
<b>2</b>	0	0	0
<b>3</b>	0	0	0
<b>4</b>	0	0	0
<b>5</b>	0	0	0
<b>6</b>	0	0	0
<b>7</b>	23	35	58
<b>8</b>	21	40	61
<b>9</b>	67	115	182
<b>10</b>	94	142	236
<b>11</b>	97	132	229
<b>12 or higher</b>	57	130	187
<b>Total Students</b>	359	594	953

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 0 % Asian
  - 80 % Black or African American
  - 18 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 1 % White
  - 1 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2016 – 2017 school year: 1%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain.

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	1
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	9
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	10
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	916
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1

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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 70 %  
Total number students who qualify: 664

8. Students receiving special education services: 6 %  
57 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>12</u> Autism                  | <u>15</u> Multiple Disabilities                |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                 | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness           | <u>15</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>18</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>5</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance    | <u>4</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment       | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability  | <u>2</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

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	3
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	30
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	18
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	11

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 30:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	91%	92%	92%	89%	90%
High school graduation rate	96%	90%	91%	85%	88%

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 2017.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	205
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	90%
Enrolled in a community college	5%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	3%
Joined the military or other public service	1%
Other	1%

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.

Brooks College Prep's mission is to ensure each student learns at high levels.

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

Brooks College Prep is a Selective Enrollment Magnet High School and Academic Center. Students are selected based on their selective enrollment admissions exam score. When students apply for the exam they also rank the school in which they are interested. They are selected based on a combination of their score, ranking of the school and available seats at the school.

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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Gwendolyn Brooks College Preparatory Academy ("Brooks") is a high-poverty, high-minority, yet high-performing 7th-12th grade selective enrollment urban public high school nestled in the Roseland community on the far South Side of the City of Chicago. The Roseland community has an estimated 5,851 crimes a year and an unemployment rate of 14.3%. At Brooks, 98% of the student body is African American and Hispanic while 70% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch. Drawn from boundaries that span the entire City of Chicago, the student demographic is traditionally underrepresented and underserved in college and advanced careers; however, as a result of the school's intensive college planning and support initiatives, Brooks boasts a 96% college graduation rate and 90% of students attend 4 year universities. Additionally, the Class of 2017 earned 34 million dollars in scholarship offers and awards.

As an institution of learning, Brooks exists as a singularly unique educational environment for each student to learn at high-levels; to earn admission with essential scholarship support to excellent colleges and universities; and to thrive and contribute in the world they will inherit as adults. To fully realize these imperatives, Brooks is committed to advancing personalized learning through competency-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment; flexible use of talent, time, and resources; growth mindset culture among adults and youth; and extensive community engagement. Brooks subscribes to a student first philosophy; the school values and validates their voices and views students as co-designers of the learning environment. Brooks provides an array of organizations and opportunities for student expression and leadership based on their interest.

Brooks has established a set of shared core values which are integral to both curriculum and practice, entitled, the "Be's of Brooks" (i.e. Be a Problem Solver, Be Socially Conscious and Responsive, Be Global...). Taken together, these also serve as the school's graduate profile and social curriculum.

Academically, Brooks offers an all Honors, Advanced Placement, and Dual Credit curriculum for students enrolled in the school. Students are required to take at least one Advanced Placement course each year with the majority of the student body taking multiple AP courses every year. Additionally, multiple academic pathways exist for students: Brooks offers a rigorous integrated STEM program based on project based inquiry, open access to AP courses in science and mathematics, and a computer science pathway focused on computer programming and data analytics; an eclectic art program helps students learn more about themselves and the world through the curation of multiple forms of art and the development of art portfolios; a thriving performing arts program that empowers students to be co-designers of performances; and a world-renowned spoken word poetry program that produces nationally recognized authors and poets.

Brooks functions on a unique 104 minute block schedule; longer class periods provide teachers with enough time to engage students in deep learning experiences, assess student learning, and provide a differentiated response to student learning during the same class period. Brooks subscribes to the Professional Learning Communities philosophy; all teachers belong to common course teams where they develop common units of study, daily lessons, assessments, and analyze student learning data. Brooks has also bravely taken on grading reform, becoming one of Chicago's first high schools to implement standards-based grading school wide and to participate in the ISBE (Illinois State Board of Education) competency based learning pilot. As a result of these and other academically focused initiatives, Brooks has achieved many accomplishments. In 2015, Brooks achieved the highest growth on the ACT in CPS (Chicago Public Schools). Last year, US News and World Reports ranked Brooks as the top 10 Best High School in Illinois. This year, Brooks was recognized by the College Board for substantial increases in the number of Advanced Placement course offerings.

In addition to the school's strong academic focus, students who attend Brooks College Preparatory Academy achieve balance by immersing themselves into an array of extracurricular sports, clubs, organizations, and activities; Brooks' students often compete on the local, state, and national levels in many fields and have produced city and state championships each year. Another hallmark of the Brooks experience is the Seminar program. The Seminar program provides an opportunity for students to engage in educational opportunities beyond the classroom. This bi-weekly program allows students and teachers to participate in

non-traditional courses such as yoga, Zumba, robotics, and notable courses. This unique program exposes students to a different type of learning experience that cultivates closer relationships with teachers and their peers. The Seminar program also provides an opportunity for SAT and college admissions preparation for students, as well as an opportunity for students to receive additional targeted academic support.

Through the Seminar program and other organizations, students have an opportunity to develop leadership skills and a voice. Seniors have the opportunity to serve as Leader Assistants with our 7th and 8th grade students during Seminar and regular classes. The students work with teachers to learn pedagogy and teaching strategies. In addition, Brooks has a Principal Student Advisory Council which is a group of student leaders who work with the principal to provide school recommendations, create, and lead school wide student activities. Last year, the Assistant Principal Student Advisory Council was established for 7th and 8th graders to also create and lead Academic Center student activities. Lastly, Brooks has a Student Council which gathers suggestions from the student body and shares this information with the principal to recommend changes and/or additions.

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

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

#### Core Curriculum Overview (Be Intelligent):

Brooks provides a rigorous college preparatory curriculum for all students 7th-12th grade. All foundational courses are taught at the Honors level while Advanced Placement and Dual Credit course offerings are extensively represented in each academic discipline. Students are required to take at least one Advanced Placement course per year beginning at the freshman year. Five years ago, the school went through an interdisciplinary process to develop a graduate profile that would clearly articulate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions students must acquire before their diplomas can be conferred. Each department took the graduate profile, the standards and skills outlined by the Common Core State Standards, NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards), Advanced Placement, SAT, and NWEA to identify the most important learnings in each course, starting from the most rigorous courses offered during the 12th grade year, to the Honors level courses offered during the 9th grade year. The product of this herculean effort was an intellectually coherent, vertically and horizontally aligned, curriculum map for each department that clearly articulated what students should know and be able to do in each course. The clear curriculum maps in each department provides the foundation for key pillars of the school's major components of personalization; students are provided choice in what they learn and how they demonstrate learning and mastery, students are able to progress through content and skills at their own pace, and students are able to access course materials and learn anytime, anywhere.

Teachers use gradual release of responsibility, a research based method of providing students scaffolded instruction which begins with modeling, then allows students to work in groups to practice skills taught, and concludes with students independently demonstrating mastery of skills. Block scheduling affords teachers the opportunity to informally assess students' mastery of skills taught during class by administering a quick formative assessment. Based on student results, teachers provide differentiated instruction to meet the individual needs of students. Students have access to playlists which personalize their educational experiences. Students take pride in developing ownership, authority, and agency for their learning by utilizing electronic mastery trackers or continuous progress reports to track their own progress of mastery as a vehicle for individualized pacing.

#### Core Curriculum Areas:

##### English (Be A Critical Thinker and Reader):

The English curriculum at Brooks is aligned to CCSS reading, writing, listening, and speaking standards. Students engage in a wide range of literacy and informational texts which build upon English I. Students produce literary critiques and engage in project based learning to create their own plays by applying various literary devices. Students are able to understand how literary texts connect to their lives while developing analytical skills necessary to comprehend and think critically about rigorous texts. In addition, students learn to express themselves in multiple writing formats including narratives, investigative reports, literary analyses, and research papers.

##### STEM (Be Creative and Innovative):

Brooks is one of the only schools to offer an integrated, inquiry based math/science of scope and sequence STEM curriculum courses. Teachers are certified in both math and science. STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) at Brooks provides every student the opportunity to learn science, technology, engineering, and mathematics in a standard-based, trans-disciplinary, and coherent curriculum. Students gain knowledge and skills and develop scholarly habits of mind in the natural sciences and mathematics as they progress through each year. Science, mathematics, technology, and engineering design are integral to the program at every level, creating a well-balanced and rigorous STEM experience. Problem-based and project-based encounters challenge students to apply what they are learning, transfer knowledge, and seek

higher understanding. Advanced scholars can apply for authentic research or engineering design opportunities.

Social Science (Be Socially Conscious and Responsive):

Brooks offers a variety of Honors and Advanced Placement history courses which expose students to a combination of content knowledge, inquiry, and appropriate analytical skills in a literacy-rich fashion. Students engage in thematic investigations which include an emphasis on interdisciplinary social sciences and build understanding of cultural, institutional, economic, and technological patterns that, along with geography, have set the human state. Students learn how historical events have had an impact on current events and are given the opportunity to work in collaborative groups to create solutions to real world global issues. In addition, students engage in entrepreneurship projects to gain an understanding of governmental policies, economics, and civic duties.

Describe how the curriculum supports college and career readiness:

Brooks' course levels are Honors, Advanced Placement, and Dual Credit to support college and career readiness. To expose students to rigorous curriculum early, all 9th graders take an Advanced Placement course. Students are encouraged to take at least one Advanced Placement course each year to prepare for rigorous college curriculum. In addition, Brooks provides pathways to help guide student course selections based on career interests.

Counselors teach College Knowledge courses which support students' post-secondary goals. These courses a variety of topics such as college fit, selectivity, loans, scholarships, etc. This preparation begins with counselors meeting with students at every grade level to provide a comprehensive data driven program with engaging curriculum that encourages a college going culture. Counselors also organize an annual spring College Signing Day. At this school wide event, seniors proudly announce the college they will attend in the fall and sign their pennant which is then displayed in Brooks' hallways. This event not only celebrates students' post-secondary accomplishments but promotes the college prep culture of the school.

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

Other Curriculum Areas:

Brooks provides students with a well-rounded learning experience by offering course work in World Language, Physical Education, and Visual and Performing Arts. Again, all courses are taught at the Honors level with extensive Dual Credit and Advanced Placement options for students. At Brooks, all departments and the majority of classrooms are equipped with technology to advance learning and facilitate personalized learning.

Arts (Be Yourself):

Brooks College Prep Arts Department has a visual and performing arts pathway to meet the interest of students. Visual arts courses encourage creative and systematic investigation of formal and conceptual issues; emphasize art-making as an ongoing process in which the students makes informed and critical decisions; help students develop technical skills and understand the functions of visual elements; encourage students to become independent thinkers who contribute inventively and critically to their culture through the making of art. For students who have an interest in the performing arts, Brooks offers beginning/intermediate band, orchestra, and chorus. Brooks is one of the few schools on the South Side of Chicago that offers students a comprehensive beginner and advanced orchestra program.

At the end of the semester, Brooks' Art Department has an Arts Showcase which highlights the artwork students have created and their skill development over the course of the year. Parents and families are invited to attend this event and participate in art critiques with their child. This not only allows students to display their work, but also helps to build a strong family community that supports the arts.

## World Language (Be Global):

Brooks' World Language Department helps students to connect globally by exposing them to other rich cultures and their language. Brooks offers Spanish and French courses. World Language courses provide students with skills in speaking, reading, writing, and understanding of the spoken word. Linguistic awareness, culture, and civilization are introduced through the use of audio-visual materials, authentic publications, web assignments, reading and discussion. For students who want to engage and extend their use of the language beyond the classroom, Brooks has extracurricular organizations where students can practice communication with other students in the language. In addition, students also have the opportunity to participate in international trips to apply their linguistic skills. This Spring Break, some students traveled to Portugal, Spain, and France.

## Physical Education (Be Healthy):

Brooks College Prep values students' mental and physical health. Through the Physical Education curriculum, students learn and develop healthy habits, mindsets, and lifestyles which they will continue throughout their lives. During the courses, students study health issues facing humanity today. Students evaluate their own level of health and research health risks, nutritional needs, exercise, drugs, self-care, environment, and safety as it relates to their community. In addition, students learn to take charge of their own health by practicing preventative health habits. Application of these skills includes student engagement in targeted physical activity which helps students to learn by practicing proper techniques and skills to achieve optimum health.

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

#### Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments (Be Adaptive and Agile):

Brooks College Prep has a robust multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) for students to be successful. Brooks' MTSS Team, also known as IAT (Intervention Assistance Team) consists of administration, counselors, related service providers, and teachers who meet bi-weekly to discuss student progress and tiered supports. Teachers analyze the failure report every two weeks in professional learning communities (PLC) to determine what tiered interventions are needed to support students.

Tier 1 interventions are available for all students to be successful and consists of tutoring, parent contact, and intervention/acceleration activities in the classroom. Tier 2 small group interventions consists of flex seminars, counselor workshops, parent workshops, and mentor programs. Tier 3 individualized interventions consists of parent conferences, individual conferences with students, weekly administrative check ins, and individually assigned mentors. Referred students receive a minimum of 5 weeks of interventions.

Brooks provides extra support for 7th, 8th, and 9th graders to ensure they are supported in their transition to the school. During seminar, students who need to continue to work toward achieving mastery of standards or need more targeted academic interventions are programmed into intervention seminars. Students who only need to master a couple of standards are programmed into a flex seminar. Once students reach mastery, they are able to flex out of the intervention seminar. Students who need intensive targeted academic support are programmed for a semester long seminar course in specific content areas.

In PLCs, teachers analyze data from common assessments, review the failure reports, and use a Data Analysis Protocol to determine what tiered MTSS interventions need to be implemented to support student success. These recommendations are discussed during IAT meetings to determine appropriate student supports. As a result of MTSS, the past 5 years, Brooks' Freshman On-Track rate has been above 90% and the graduation rate has been above 90%. This is a result of students receiving the academic and social emotional support necessary to be successful.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

School Climate/Culture (Be Better and Be Ethical, Honest, and Just):

At Brooks College Prep, student voice matters!! Student organizations allow students' voices to be heard and considered in the school culture and climate. Organizations such as Student Council, Principal Student Advisory Council, and Assistant Principal Student Advisory Council allow students to be more engaged in their school community by helping to shape and develop it. For instance, students plan and lead homecoming activities, staff vs. student game day, and "Brooksapalooza". In addition, Brooks has a dynamic group of Student Ambassadors who represent what it means to embody the Be's of Brooks. They help to plan admission events, lead school tours, and participate on discussion panels.

To motivate students, Brooks has a Student of the Month program. Students are nominated by teachers for their hard work and commitment to their academics. Also, Award Ceremonies recognize students' academic achievements and their attendance. Brooks' PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Supports) are centered around the Be's of Brooks. If students display one of the Be's of Brooks, they are awarded with a Brooks Point. They can turn these in to be eligible for raffles to win prizes. The PBIS system is designed to help motivate students to always do their best and display appropriate behaviors.

Brooks' students accept and celebrate the differences that exist among the student body so that everyone feels they are valued members of the school community. Students have a profound sense of school spirit which is electric. Many students attend several different extracurricular events to support and encourage their classmates. This includes events such as sports, plays, pep rallies for Diverse Learner students, poetry bouts, and chess tournaments. Brooks truly has a culture and climate where students and staff "Bleed Blue"!

Teachers feel supported at Brooks because they are provided the resources and time to collaborate. In addition, Staff Member of the Month Award allows teachers, staff, and students to nominate a staff member to recognize their proclivity for hard work and show their appreciation. Eagle Notes help to "Spread the Love" at Brooks. Students and staff can write appreciation notes to students and/or staff and the notes are delivered by National Honor Society students and Eddie the Eagle (Brooks' mascot).

All of these structures and incentives allow students and staff to feel appreciated for their contributions to the school community. This positively adds to the culture and climate of Brooks so that everyone feels they are a part of the Team working toward the same mission.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

Engaging Family and Community (Be Collaborative):

At Brooks, engaging family and community is important for school success. Therefore, electronic newsletters are sent out bi-weekly to keep parents informed about events at the school. Brooks has a dynamic and involved parent club which holds monthly meetings; the parent club invites a different department each month to speak with parents about the curriculum and other important information related to the department. The principal is accessible at these meetings and addresses parents' questions and/or concerns. In addition, the principal engages the LSC (Local School Council) in school wide decisions and allocation of resources. Administration, counselors, and teachers frequently contact parents to discuss student progress and supports to help students be successful.

Brooks College Prep engages the community by forming partnerships with local organizations, businesses as well as universities. Partnerships provide students with community resources and information. For example, Brooks has a partnership with a technology organization that works with students to develop computer and phone apps. Students also partner with local businesses to help them develop apps and

websites to make their business run more efficiently.

At Brooks College Prep, students "give back" to the community. Annually to celebrate Gwendolyn Brooks' birthday, there is a Brooks Day of Service. All 953 students go to different locations in the Chicago area. Students help clean up, paint buildings, help garden, and read to young children. This provides students with the opportunity to Be Socially Conscious and Responsive to their communities and the world they reside in.

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

Professional Development (Be Collaborative):

At Brooks College Prep, job-embedded professional development that focuses on "learning by doing" and teacher leadership are key components to success. The Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) helps to make school wide instructional decisions, participates and leads instructional rounds focused on developing instructional practices within the classroom, and leads department meetings. In addition, the PD@Brooks Team, which is comprised of teacher leaders, develop PD by creating differentiated professional development based on instructional goals and also lead professional development. At Brooks College Prep, teachers are valued as leaders and are empowered to partake in shared leadership of instructional goals and professional development.

Teachers engage in on-going job-embedded professional development through PLCs. PLCs support teachers' advancement of their own professional learning through collaboration and relevant external professional engagement as they are expected to concurrently foster a community of continuous learning among all Brooks' teachers. Brooks' master schedule supports the work of the PLC by providing dedicated time weekly for teachers to collaborate.

All teachers and administrators participate in instructional rounds to continue to enhance pedagogical skills and develop a culture of collaboration. Teachers and administrators observe classes looking for evidence of implementation of school wide instructional goals of DOK (Depth of Knowledge) levels and differentiated instruction. Then teachers and administrators debrief to analyze patterns that emerged across classes. The information collected is used to continue to develop school wide instructional practices. In addition, administrators conduct feedback loops to provide on-going informal support, coaching, and feedback to advance teachers learning and instructional practices.

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

School Leadership (Be a Problem Solver and Be Courageous):

Brooks College Prep's core values are going the extra mile, energetic, and collaboration. The school leadership team encompasses these core values. The principal and assistant principals' work collaboratively with the ILT (Instructional Leadership Team), Departments, PLCs, and Grade Level teams to ensure instructional goals are met and implemented. The ILT meets weekly to discuss the progress of school wide implementation of goals and to collaboratively make school wide decisions.

The administrative school leadership team is involved in every facet of the school community and work to collaboratively support teachers and students. In addition, the administrative school leadership team ensures that operational tasks are intended to, with the main goal focused on instructional leadership. The principal understands and believes it takes leadership from everyone on all levels working as a Team to reach Brooks' mission to ensure each students learns at high levels. The school leadership strives to continuously improve and challenges the school community to do so as well.

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

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Strategy for Academic Success (Be Better, Be Brooks):

One practice which has led to academic success is teachers' collaborative work in PLCs (Professional Learning Communities). Teachers work in PLCs on program design (primarily curriculum, instruction, and assessment), development, implementation, and continuous improvement of both student and adult learning. School goals and teacher learning are advanced during engagement in PLCs. Departmental level PLCs work on vertical alignment of standards and implementation of department goals. Common Course PLC teams use collaborative instructional design through application of Understanding by Design (UBD). PLCs develop common formative and summative assessments which are aligned to standards. PLCs meet weekly to analyze data based on the results of common assessments and determine intervention strategies and acceleration activities. In addition, based on students' assessment results, PLCs conduct a deep dive into the data to determine emerging trends, discuss individual student progress, analyze strengths and weakness of assessment tools, determine instructional strategies, create SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely) goals, and if needed, revise unit plans.

Moreover, teachers meet in grade level PLCs to determine which students across each grade level require more targeted support and work to identify and provide feedback on appropriate targeted MTSS tiered interventions to meet students' individual needs. Discussions are concentrated on proactive identification of students who are struggling in multiple courses and development of individualized teacher-led support and remediation. In order to ensure students who need it are provided wrap around services, the social worker, case manager, and counselors are also included in grade level PLC discussions.

PLCs have led to Brooks' academic success because teachers collaboratively work together to create curriculum and assessments aligned to standards. It has also created a school community which is reflective of educational practices and data driven. In addition, PLCs provide the opportunity for teachers to discuss students' progress and create targeted MTSS interventions to support mastery of standards. As a result of PLCs, Brooks' test scores have increased significantly, the culture and climate of Brooks has become one that values collaboration and students receive personalized learning that supports their academic and social emotional success.