

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 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

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):
- 35 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 3 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 16 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 54 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
PreK	29	33	62
K	45	43	88
1	31	30	61
2	24	14	38
3	23	14	37
4	26	21	47
5	21	24	45
6	20	24	44
7	22	14	36
8	22	25	47
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	263	242	505

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 13 % Asian
 - 32 % Black or African American
 - 53 % 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: 12%

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.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	31
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	29
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	60
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	494
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.12
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	12

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 4 %
21 Total number ELL

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 100 %
Total number students who qualify: 505

8. Students receiving special education services: 12 %
59 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>4</u> Autism | <u>3</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>8</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>9</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>17</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>18</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	26
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	20
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	13
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

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 19:1

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

Required Information	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	94%	94%	92%	92%	92%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	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 2017.

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

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.

The mission of Public School Twenty-Eight is to provide an optimal learning environment, which results in our students achieving excellence.

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

PART III – SUMMARY

Paterson School No. 28 is a Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 8 Elementary School that is committed to providing a safe and intellectually challenging environment—one that will empower students to become reflective thinkers, creative problem solvers, and inspired learners who will be prepared to thrive in the twenty-first century.

With an enrollment of approximately 505 students, School No. 28 is one of fifty-four schools in Paterson, NJ, that has established a proud tradition of providing children with a quality educational program in a safe, caring and nurturing environment for all students. With approximately 100% of our student population being from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, 12% of our students with disabilities, and 4% of our students being English Language Learners, the administration, faculty and staff work collaboratively to nurture each student’s academic and personal growth, and provide students with an optimal learning environment.

Paterson Academy for the Gifted & Talented (PAGT) at School No. 28 opened its program doors in September of 2012, and remains a program of high academic rigor and expectations. The student body is comprised of students throughout the city in grades 2-8 who have qualified at the highest level through the gifted screening and identification process. These students demonstrate the need for a rigorous curriculum and an environment that meets their unique social, emotional and academic needs. Students partake in an academic program with their peers in which they work at an accelerated pace in all core subject areas. Lessons are differentiated and include activities and problem-based learning.

In 2013, School No. 28 redeveloped its traditional schedule to ensure that it would reflect our commitment to creating a supportive educational environment. Our 10-block schedule allows for all School No. 28/PAGT students to participate in Academic Choice or Clubs as additional support for intervention and enrichment based on students’ individual needs. Some of the clubs that are currently in place include: National History Day, Theater, New Beginnings, Woodworking, H2O, DIY Craft, Coding, Drama, Helping Hands, NJHS, Chess, Blocks, Battle of the Books, Mathletes, Career Quest, Girls Who Code, Web Design, Art, Vocal Technique, and Science Olympiad, to name a few. Additionally, PAGT’s National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) is comprised of sixth, seventh and eighth grade students who are committed to providing service to our school and community. Serving as positive role models, the members of NJHS coordinate a number of school-wide philanthropic projects and activities.

The history of accomplishments of the students at School No. 28 continues to serve as an exemplar for excellence. Administrators, teachers, and support staff members work collaboratively to ensure that students receive a high quality education, while preparing students to become leaders in a global society. In 2016, School No. 28 was chosen by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) to be the State’s designee as a National Title I Distinguished School for exceptional student performance of our students for two or more consecutive years.

Our vision here at Public School No. 28 is that every Eagle will soar to his/her fullest potential. Our mission is to provide an optimal learning environment, which results in our students achieving excellence. Each year, overarching themes are identified for infusion through instruction and school activities throughout the year. Over the last three years, some of our overarching themes have included:

2015-2016 Ownership- Taking ownership of our professional learning and opportunities to be creative.

2016-2017 Growth Mindset- How can we learn to fulfill our potential?

2017-2018 The Art of Engagement- Engage students to unleash their motivation and self-efficacy.

Additionally, a macro concept is chosen. Macro-concepts are sometimes referred to as “integrating concepts” because they integrate thinking across different disciplines and are broad. On the other hand, Micro-concepts are discipline-specific and are critical for providing increasing depth and rigor to curriculum and instruction. Macro-concepts give us breadth and micro-concepts give us depth. Below is a list of the Macro-concepts we have chosen each year and they continue to circulate on a 5-year cycle:

2012-2013 Change

2013-2014 Systems
2014-2015 Global Awareness
2015-2016 Patterns & Relationships
2016-2017 Identity

Individual counseling and specialized focus groups, including a New Beginnings Club, are provided to encourage and challenge all students to develop their full potential academically, emotionally, physically, socially, and culturally. In order to make the transition into each grade effective, the academic program at Paterson School No. 28/PAGT is enhanced by instruction in art, physical education, music, technology, library/media services, world language and public speaking.

Ongoing assessments are used to monitor individual student growth in all disciplines, including ELA and mathematics. The data from these assessments is carefully analyzed and used to guide instruction. In our effort to provide appropriate support for diverse learners, the Intervention & Referral Services (I&RS) Committee works with parents and educators to assist students who exhibit academic and/or behavioral difficulties. Our guidance counselor supports students' academic, social, and emotional development. Additional programs and services are provided to children with special needs, as well as our bilingual population. Resource instruction in the areas of ELA and mathematics through a combination of a "Resource Room" and "Inclusion" (in-class support) model is available. Each of these supports greatly enhances our abilities as a school community to develop our students' full potential.

The parent community is an essential component of School No. 28's success. The PTO is dedicated to enhancing and enriching the academic, social and physical climate of our school. The PTO also organizes a variety of extra-curricular activities for our students and their families throughout the year, including STEM and Literacy Nights, Family Fitness and Movie Nights. Indeed, a community working together as a team is unquestionably the most effective way that our students will get the most out of their educational experience.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

School No. 28 adheres to the Paterson Public Schools Department of Humanities' philosophy in order to promote the enrichment of all students through rigorous classroom instruction while utilizing 21st Century Skills and technology. The Department's mission is to help produce well-rounded globally cognizant citizens capable of employing a skill-set grounded in classical studies, while simultaneously being able to assimilate emerging technologies at an ever-changing pace of the world today.

As a district and as a school, we promote learning using quality instruction through the implementation of the literacy workshop model. In grades K-2, our ELA workshop model consists of the, "I Do, We Do, You Do" learning technique and empowers our students to become active stakeholders with their education. Immersing our students in the process of reading and writing across all disciplines and presenting them with realistic problems to solve using textual evidence shows them the power of enlightenment. K-8 language arts literacy lessons are delivered utilizing the Institute for Learning (IFL) methodology to allow students opportunities for self-discovery, problem-solving and academic language acquisition. Our K-2 English language arts district scope and sequence consists of reading, writing, speaking, listening and media literacy skills. During the block of literacy instruction, students learn to use reading strategies that help them become effective readers. Some of these strategies include questioning the author, inferring, visualizing, synthesizing and learning multiple strategies to help students learn to monitor their reading comprehension. Additionally, our grades 3-8 ELA district scope and sequence consists of universal themes and essential questions to promote literary analysis of reading, incorporation of textual evidence when writing, and encourages students to engage in deep meaningful discussions to socialize intelligence. The students are exposed to multiple genres of reading and writing such as fiction, non-fiction, short stories, essays, novels, drama and poetry. Students compose narrative, informational, expository, persuasive, and other pieces of writing required by the teacher. 21st Century Skills are intertwined into classroom experiences that allow students to visualize and conceptualize complex ideas, knowledge and skills. Students apply a range of knowledge and skills such as: critical thinking, problem solving, reasoning, analysis, interpretation, synthesizing, research skills and practices, questioning strategies, leadership, teamwork, collaboration, and cooperation.

Our K-8 mathematics district scope and sequence addresses a range of tasks focusing on the application of concepts, skills and understandings. To that end, students solve problems involving the key knowledge and skills for their grade level, express mathematical reasoning, construct a mathematical argument, and apply concepts to solve model real-world problems. The conceptual-based model is used as the basis for all mathematics instruction. As students enter kindergarten, they begin to connect counting to cardinality; add and subtract; learn place value and measurement; and are introduced to geometric shapes. By the end of grade 1, students continue to add and subtract within 20, and also begin to reason with shapes and their attributes. By grade 2, students add and subtract within 100, and begin to reason with data. Grades 3-5 begin to explore topics such as multiplication, division, applying area and volume, fractions, decimals, operations, coordinate geometry and classifying figures. In grade 6, students begin to reason about ratios; grapple with expressions and equations; explore the rational number system; and contend with variability, distributions and relationships between quantities. Specifically in grades 6-8, classes are designed to address children who demonstrate exceptional academic aptitude in this content area. All students take Algebra I in grade 8, while select students take Algebra I in grade 7, followed by Geometry in grade 8. Algebra I provides a formal development of the algebraic skills and concepts necessary for students to succeed in advanced courses. Our Geometry scope and sequence emphasizes the ability to reason logically and to think critically, using spatial sense. A major part of the course is devoted to teaching the student how to present a formal proof. Geometric properties of both two and three dimensions are emphasized as they apply to points, lines, planes, and solids. In this course, students learn to recognize and work with geometric concepts in various contexts. They build on ideas of inductive and deductive reasoning, logic, concepts, and techniques of Euclidean plane and solid geometry, and develop an understanding of mathematical structure, method, and applications of Euclidean plane and solid geometry. Students use visualizations, spatial reasoning, and geometric modeling to solve problems. Topics of study include: points, lines, and angles;

triangles; quadrilaterals and other polygons; circles; coordinate geometry; three dimensional solids; geometric constructions; symmetry; similarity; and the use of transformations.

Our science scope and sequence for students in grades K-8 revolves around habits of mind and having students engage in an engineering challenge during the school year. Throughout all units, students engage in science and engineering practices by asking questions, participating in collaborative investigations, observing, recording, and interpreting data to build explanations. The science interactive notebook, or “notebooking,” is a key element across all classrooms in K-8. It is within this interactive model where students gain insight into collection of data, observation, hypothesizing and drawing conclusions. Moreover, it is a tool that our students use to strengthen student learning of curriculum through increased student participation. Students learn to not only categorize and implement new knowledge creatively, but they are also able to use the science interactive notebook to process information through brainstorming and reflection. Moreover, our teachers embrace the Next Generation Science Standards through implementation of FOSS Units in grades K-8. At School No. 28, science is used as a lens through which one experiences the world, by observing, collecting, manipulating, and analyzing data as well as evaluating and interpreting results. As students are engaged in guided inquiry, teachers nurture their wonder and curiosity as they explore crosscutting concepts and develop a coherent and scientifically-based view of the world around them. Through an Inquiry-Based Model, students are able to explore and make sense of ideas, data and explanations around a posed question or problem. As they ask questions and define problems, develop and use models, plan and carry out investigations, analyze and interpret data, construct explanations and design solutions, they are able to engage in spirited discussions grounded in evidence. Through the course study of science, students gain experiences that will contribute to an understanding of the crosscutting concepts of patterns; cause and effect; systems and system models; structure and function, scale, proportion, and quantity; energy and matter; and stability and change. Across each grade level, students are also introduced to the nature of science, how science affects everyday life, and the influence of engineering, technology, and science on society and the natural world.

As our social studies K-2 scope and sequence progresses through the units of study, there are areas of focus that examine the following topics: culture through friends and family; geography through areas in which we live; citizenship/workers in the community; and economics by exploring where things are made in the community as a means of supplying basic needs and wants. As students progress through the units of study, they focus and examine the family structure from a global perspective that reinforces understanding of cultural practices and the emphasis on geography identifies where students live and the world beyond. Students in these grade levels use literature to identify the role of a citizen and reflect upon the characteristics of good citizenship and its impact on the community. Students also focus and examine the Earth and its functions, and are given an historic overview of the United States and its beginnings, the role of government, and economics in our community, country and the world. Our grades 3-5 scope and sequence units of studies include communities and progressed deeper into the role and composition of our nation. Sixth graders begin to discover world geography and human origins, while seventh grade is introduced to world religions and the Scientific and Industrial Revolutions. Finally, grade 8 is exposed to origins of American democracy, the Revolutionary War, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, as well as civil rights- race, gender and equality in the United States. Additionally, seventh and eighth grade social studies students compete in the National History Day Competition. Students are challenged to create documentaries, exhibit boards, papers, performances or websites connected to the theme each year. For instance, the 2017-2018 theme was Conflict and Compromise in History. Students produced amazing work reflecting rigorous skills such as collegiate-level research, public speaking and 21st century technology integration. This past school year, topics included the Salem Witch Trials, the Korean War, the Harlem Hellfighters, and the Paterson Silk Strike. An exploration of history reinforces concepts of then verses now, through inventions along with the use of timelines. Through the use of critical thinking, creative thinking, problem solving, metacognitive strategies, and meaningful discussions students gather and reinforce the essential knowledge being presented throughout the school year.

Finally, in 2013, we embraced our newest addition to our family. School No. 28’s Preschool Program, which includes 3 and 4 year old classrooms, uses the Creative Curriculum. This is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum that highlights exploration and discovery as a way of learning. This curriculum focuses on the following domains of learning—social-emotional, physical, cognitive, and language. It also

fully integrates content learning including literacy, mathematics, science, and social studies, and supports English language acquisition. Our curriculum aligns with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards, but most importantly aligns with the New Jersey Teaching and Learning Standards for Preschool. District data has shown that students, who attend our preschool program for the full 2 years, demonstrate more school readiness for kindergarten.

It is our goal to establish a community of learners to become productive citizens in society striving towards pursuing their life-long goals. Through an enriching and rigorous education and with on-going support, our students will be fully prepared for the future to compete successfully in the global economy. Our district scope and sequence is designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young learners need for success in college and careers. Through an enriching and rigorous education, and with ongoing support from all stakeholders, we will ensure the success of all our students now and in the future. Overall, it is our goal to establish productive citizens in society who are able to problem-solve in their future undertakings, in both college and career.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

School No. 28/PAGT's other curriculum areas enhance our students' acquisition of essential skills and knowledge by supporting cross-curricular content and making real-life connections for all of our students in grades Pre-K-8. These additional curriculum areas include: art (PK-8, ½ year course, 2x per week); music (PK-8, ½ year course, 2x per week); physical education (PK-8, full year course, 2x per week) and health (K-8, full year course, 1x week); technology (PK-1, full year course, 2x per week; grades 2-8, full year course, 1x week); library/media (PK-4, full year course, 1x per week); world language (Spanish) (grades 5-8, full year course, 1x week); and public speaking (grades 2-8, full year course, 1x week). Our staff is encouraged to integrate learning experiences into our students' schemes of meaning, so as to broaden and deepen their understanding of themselves and their world.

For instance, arts education is an essential part of school curriculum and life. In a purely educational sense, arts are important to education reform and give meaning to cognitive, psychomotor, kinesthetic, and affective domains of learning. Our arts specialists establish a hallmark of quality learning that will continue to enhance the academic, social, cultural, and behavioral development of the student throughout adult life. The arts, engages all learners in analyzing, reasoning, problem solving, higher-order thinking, articulating, and synthesizing within a continuum of flexibility, persistence, collaboration, and cooperation to accomplish a common goal, valued by all. Through the arts, lives and communities are changed; diversity is embraced as students learn to study and play together so that as adults, they will garner the same respect in work and life. Music, visual arts, and media arts, allow our students to become part of the human heritage of creating, producing, and responding. These courses are offered as half year courses to all of our students in grades Pre-K-8. The STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics) movement has been taking root over the past several years and is surging forward as a positive mode of action to truly meet the needs of our students. Additionally, our music department is able to coordinate concerts and other events for our school community to enjoy. Education can no longer be defined without the arts. Participation demonstrates infinite knowledge building strategies that are systemic and unique to the learner and a necessary part of 21st Century Skills in a changing global society.

For students in grades K-8, a key element in the district's effort to meet its goal to increase student achievement and prepare students to be successful in college and career is to use an explicit research process skills curriculum. To that end, all students engage in inquiry-based learning via technology class and/or library media services. The activities completed in each course addresses both the learning objectives of the NJSLS, as well as the 21st Century Skills embedded in them. As part of the district's homegrown initiative for Google Apps for Education (GAPE), staff and students have access to Google Drive (Docs, Sheets and Slides) and are able to use other additional resources, such as Google Classroom.

Additionally, our district's Department of Health and Physical Education's mission is to educate students to develop a healthy lifestyle which encompasses the physical, mental and emotional aspects of life. Health and Physical education aims to build strong bodies and healthy minds. As such, our physical education team works together to create experiences beyond the curriculum, that work to promote awareness and healthy

lifestyles. For instance, our Physical Education and Health Team spearheads events and courses such as: Fun Run, Hoops for Hearts, Field Day, CPR, and nutrition, just to name a few.

Our school envisions a community and society which enjoys a high quality of life through participation in health-promoting life-styles. Our students are able to make healthy choices and are eager to participate in activities throughout the year that will enhance their overall health.

Moreover, our World Language Program at School No. 28/PAGT focuses on acquiring communication skills and cultural exposure in the Spanish language. Offered to students in grades 5-8, World Language is divided into four units of study and addresses the need to prepare all students for an interdependent world. We are committed to seeing that all students progress and develop the required skills to support second language acquisition.

Finally, Public Speaking is offered to students in grades 2-8. Some of the constructs measured include: Reading- comprehension of key ideas and details; Writing-development of ideas, organization, clarity of language, and knowledge of language and conventions. At School No. 28, Public Speaking is not only an important aspect of students' academic work and success, but similarly, it is a foundation for their social achievement. Throughout the sequence of this weekly course, students develop a broad range of skills including, but not limited to: reading, observing and listening to a variety of texts and speeches; critical thinking and listening; and the art of persuasion. Likewise, students are able to become independent, life-long thinkers and consumers of spoken and written information as they conduct research to synthesize their ideas, while supporting their feedback to each other. Moreover, students in Public Speaking create multimedia presentations to accent their speeches and maintain a credible presence as they conduct their discourse. The principles of Public Speaking go hand in hand with explicit strategies, techniques and approaches- which are a key component of the scope and sequence for this course- while allowing students to become aware of mechanisms used for controlling levels of anxiety related to the presentation of student speeches. Indeed, it is the synthesis and application of listener feedback that allows our students to become independent thinkers and problem solvers of the world surrounding them.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

In keeping with the commitment to meet the diverse needs of our students, instructional staff members are encouraged to partner with colleagues to assist in progress monitoring, tracking, remediating, or developing behavioral supports. There is evidence of these practices during professional learning communities and grade level meetings. Moreover, the use of data to drive instruction, in addition to informal and formal assessments, allows teachers to disaggregate and utilize student data to assist in determining learning priorities, monitor progress, and help sustain continuous improvement. Our continuous goal to maintain high levels of achievement is to have teachers in our school who are data-driven in order to improve instruction, while revitalizing their professional fulfillment.

Teachers' professional development plans are directly correlated to differentiated instruction. Each professional development plan includes specific methods on how to improve Teacher Performance Standard Four- Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners. Data is compiled on how to differentiate instruction based on the student's needs and backgrounds. For example, STAR data, PARCC data, and Unit Assessments data are all readily available to staff in order to drive instruction. Pre-Test and Post Tests are used to evaluate student performance. Adjustments are made to future lessons and assessments to reteach and re-assess the concepts in which students are weak. Teachers provide examples of differentiated lessons, process and/or products according to readiness, interest and Pre-Assessments.

One particular instructional strategy, the Multiple Response Strategy (MRS), is used to improve student learning and engagement within our school. White board activities, Whip-Arounds, and Choral Response are evident in classrooms. The goal of this instructional strategy is to provide teachers with a quick assessment of student learning so that they can adjust the instruction instantaneously to accommodate students' needs. Moreover, strategies including Think-Pair-Share, Table Talk, and Jigsaw activities dominate the classroom experience.

For students in grades 4-8, acceleration is a means to experience the curriculum through the most effective implementation. Specifically, students in these grade levels are grouped together in a classroom with other high achieving students, where there is a deliberate adaptation and modification of the grade level curriculum, instructional process, and assessments to respond to the needs of the learners. Differentiated curriculum features (i.e., subject acceleration, complexity, depth, challenge, creativity and abstraction) are evident throughout instruction.

Instructional methods utilized at School No. 28 are derived from a variety of leaders in the field of gifted education including, but not limited to: Van Tassel-Baska, Kaplan, Tomlinson, Jarvis and McTighe as well as and the Institute for Learning (IFL). Moreover, teachers utilize strategies such as subject acceleration, curriculum compacting, creative and critical thinking, problem-based learning, scaffolding and tiered instructional process. These strategies provide challenge and complexity, as well as opportunities for independent study and research related to core curriculum concepts.

Two of the most common strategies used with our grade 4-8 population are the acceleration strategy and compacting. The acceleration strategy has proven effective for our students in grades 4-8. Students are advanced to a higher level class covering material more suited to their abilities and preparedness. Subject acceleration is a flexible approach which advances our students in either mathematics or language arts, without changing other courses such as social studies. Similarly, the general curriculum is compacted for these groups of students by utilizing a pre-testing method to establish which skills and content have already been mastered. Pretests are presented at the beginning of a unit of study; if a student demonstrates an appropriate level of proficiency, further repetitive practice can be safely skipped, thus reducing boredom and freeing up time for the student to work on more challenging material. Additionally, students are engaged in creative thinking, which requires the use of fluency, flexibility, elaboration, and originality applied to tasks in relevant areas of learning. Creative thinking dispositions include imaginativeness, openness to new ideas, adventurousness, curiosity, and inquisitiveness. In addition to critical thinking, problem-based learning is frequently used with all of our students, as it inspires students to be self-directed and inwardly motivated to learn, emphasizing problem solving and collaboration. Students work with their peers to seek a solution to an ill-structured, real-world problem that is relevant to a key area of school learning. The teachers design an active learning environment in which students are encouraged to ask questions. Solving the problem often requires the entire class to investigate solutions collaboratively. There is always a direct connection to the curriculum and the curriculum is inherently interdisciplinary. The content focuses on questions or problems that the students must grapple with in order to discern the meaning of the curriculum concepts. Students are self-directed to a significant degree in their quest of the resolution to the problem, and the problems are always based in real or authentic scenarios. Students learn research skills, understand the subject matter at a deeper level and are more deeply engaged in their work. Finally, each of these models is used in addition to differentiated instruction, which allows our teachers to maximize each student's learning by providing instruction well matched to his or her unique background knowledge, readiness and ability, interests and talents, and learning profile.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Our vision here at Public School No. 28 is that every Eagle will soar to his/her fullest potential. Our mission is to provide an optimal learning environment, which results in our students achieving excellence. Each year, overarching themes are incorporated throughout our year for staff and students to integrate across the curriculum.

In 2013, School No. 28 redeveloped its traditional schedule to ensure that it would reflect our commitment to creating a supportive educational environment, with high academic standards at the forefront. Our first block from 8:20-9:00 am is dedicated time for relationship building between staff and students. During this “Community Building” block, and based on our newly implemented ten-block schedule, our school has witnessed an increase in student safety and has also boosted academic success. As a result of this implementation, our school practice has revealed that even a modest delay in school start time (40 minutes) produces improvements in measures of student mood, alertness, and health in our students.

In addition to this schedule, we commenced our Phase One NJ Positive Behavior Support In Schools (PBSIS) in the 2013-2014 school year. With these two key components in effect, the School Leadership Team adopted a newly created Office Conduct Referral (OCR) form and procedures to manage OCR data entry. The revised expectations were communicated to all stakeholders within our school. The OCR data indicates hotspots throughout the school, the frequency of particular school wide behavior problems, and when and where they occur. Based on the data collected, modifications to behavior strategies have been implemented to reduce the number of OCRs. The OCR data has been analyzed to identify students with a high number of infractions. The identified students have been placed on a school-created behavior plan and given extra support to reduce future infractions. Additionally, the school staff has conducted check-ins with students who have been identified as chronic offenders, and to determine the effectiveness of the new universal OCR procedures, while modifying behavior plans as needed. As a result of this implementation with fidelity and consistency, we have been able to reduce the number of office conduct referrals and out-of-school suspensions for all students over the last five years.

In an effort to promote civic responsibility, service learning plays a crucial part of our school culture. Students are always putting the needs of others first. School No. 28 students participate in a number of annual events spearheaded by individual grade levels. Likewise, School No. 28 students participate in raising funds for monthly awareness (i.e., Breast Cancer, Lymphoma & Leukemia Society, St. Jude, etc.). One of our students’ most rewarding experiences is to give back to the community and beyond. For instance, our children have collected various items throughout the year, and donated them to help support philanthropic initiatives, such as: the Puerto Rico Disaster Relief, as well as the Paterson Public School District’s McKinney-Vento Program food pantry.

Our school culture creates an environment where teachers feel valued and supported. Teachers are supported throughout the year by administration by allowing them the flexibility and creativity when it comes to the disciplines they teach. For example, although the scope and sequence in the curriculum tells teachers “what” to teach, they are supported in knowing that “how” to teach comes from their students’ diverse backgrounds and the vast creativity that teachers own. Additionally, the staff is supported through teacher leadership projects, as they create, spearhead and campaign various needed platforms for teachers to share what they are best at. This includes but is not limited to projects including science, technology, art, reading and many more professional workshops and series of coursework teachers are responsible for partaking in and turn-keying to their colleagues. Administration works alongside the teaching staff in order to create this collegial atmosphere and environment.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Parental involvement is strongly encouraged at School No. 28. Parents routinely visit classrooms and maintain communication with teachers and administrators. PTO Meetings provide a venue for parents to

ask questions and interact with school stakeholders. School wide cultural celebrations, i.e. Hispanic Heritage Month, Black History Month and Asian Pacific Month are celebrated annually to promote the diversity of our student body. In addition to celebrating events such as Read Across America, Veteran's Day, Earth Day, and Autism Awareness, students, parents and faculty interact often in an effort to build communal relationships.

School No. 28 maintains partnerships with three universities: Rutgers, William Paterson and Ramapo University. Our partnership with William Paterson has been a very positive addition to our school. Through the collaboration with two Professors in Residence (PIR), we have been able to gain valuable resources through several avenues, including, but not limited to: their ongoing support in fostering group learning with Professional Learning Communities; supporting big picture goals through workshops; working with individual teachers to help build skills; providing resources through a community library and school visits; and finally, helping maintain a positive culture and climate through a nonjudgmental lens, in which communication is enhanced and teachers are encouraged to continue their professional growth. Throughout the course of their residency, our PIR have arranged Parent Workshops, arranged for a local librarian to discuss the importance of reading.

Donors Choose, a 501-c organization, allows individuals to directly contribute to classroom projects. School No. 28 has received Chromebooks, document projectors, a 3D Printer, and other instructional materials. Staff members also receive school supplies and materials from Tools 4 Schools. In order to maintain the partnership and continue to have access to materials, teachers must attend ongoing training sessions.

School No. 28 has strengthened its community collaborations and partnerships. The various academic and social accomplishments of School No. 28 serve as a springboard for the future leaders of the twenty-first century.

One of the many partnerships School No. 28 has established is a school gardening program. Our middle school students installed 7 raised beds for our neighborhood kindergarten students to integrate into their curriculum. It encourages healthy eating by introduces fresh vegetables. We also garden 9 raised beds on the adjacent firehouse property. This partnership with local firefighters has been rewarding for the students and the firemen. The community is free to eat from the garden in the summer and many homeless have access to tomatoes and other produce.

In addition, School No. 28 partners with the Buggs/Collins family and our community for an ongoing garden project at Tyrone Collins Park. Collins Park is across the street from our school, and it is also near the location where a local 14 year-old student, Nazerah Buggs lost her life to violence. School No. 28 hosted a mobile garden with City Green, DPW, Westside Park as well as the Buggs and Collins families. Our civic engagement extends beyond the school year. During the summer, students and some staff were involved was a cleanup event and book bag giveaway at the park. The students also helped to paint a "Stop the Violence" mural at the park. Each season we plant pots painted in our school colors to beautify that area. This gives students the opportunity to continue to beautify and show pride in taking care of their neighborhood.

3. Professional Development:

Professional development drives the instructional practices and strategies at School No. 28. Each instructional staff member is required to develop his or her professional plan with the building principal and or assistant principal. At least two of the three areas of professional development must be linked to the teachers' summative evaluation in accordance with the TEACHNJ/ACHIEVENJ Teacher Evaluation Rubric. The seven standards of teacher practice are observed during the school year. Each teacher's summative evaluation outlines specific areas that need improvement. Teachers are required to complete a Professional Development Plan (PDP) based on tangible evidence and practical experience. The areas for development and the rationale for sources of the evidence are also outlined. Professional Development Plans are linked to the priority problems that are identified in the school wide plan.

The most tangible evidence of researched-based professional development is The Gifted Education

Graduate Certificate Program offered through Rutgers University. Our previous State District Superintendent, Dr. Donnie Evans, determined that the district should obtain professional development in gifted education for district teachers and administrators to assist Paterson Public Schools in developing an expertise in gifted education. Rutgers University offers a rigorous 15 credit graduate certificate series for K-12 educators, resource specialists, counselors and administrators. The Gifted Education Graduate Certificate Program enabled us to not only meet state mandates but more importantly the academic, social and emotional needs of our students. Coursework included five courses that explore the social and emotional development of the gifted child, pedagogy, instructional strategies and the development and administration of a gifted education program. The final project (Practicum) was to complete a 200-hour project-based field activity focused on gifted learning.

School No. 28 uses the methodologies of The Institute for Learning (IFL). District-wide professional development of IFL enables our school to work towards developing tools and support to improve teaching, learning and leadership. IFL demonstrates what effective pedagogy looks like in each content area, deepens and extends prior knowledge, is curriculum based and uses cognitively demanding tasks and texts with instruction. IFL Creates a foundation across grade levels and subjects in a school for developing a common vision of high quality learning and teaching.

Moreover, our teachers embrace implementing the Next Generation Science Standards through implementation of FOSS Units. At School No. 28, science is used as a lens of thinking that includes observing, collecting, manipulating, and analyzing data as well as evaluating and interpreting results. As students are engaged in guided inquiry, teachers nurture their wonder and curiosity as they engage in crosscutting concepts and develop a coherent and scientifically-based view of the world around them. Through an Inquiry-Based Model, students are able to explore and make sense of ideas and data and explanations around a posed question or problem, as they ask questions and define problems, develop and use models, plan and carry out investigations, analyze and interpret data, construct explanations and design solutions, and engage in argument from evidence.

Science teachers attend professional development sessions on Introduction to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). NGSS presents a new vision of science learning that integrates core disciplinary ideas, science and engineering practices, and cross-cutting concepts. In this interactive workshop, teachers were afforded an opportunity to understand the ideas behind NGSS and engage in cross-grade examples of learning activities that embody the NGSS student performance expectations. As a result of these professional development experiences, classroom instruction is full of high-interest investigations and hands-on activities that motivate students and keep students actively engaged in the science and engineering practices.

Document-Based Questioning (DBQ) Professional Development was designed to give Social Studies teachers exposure to the DBQ process. Professional Development included an overview of The DBQ Project 6-Step Method in an interactive session. The elements of a powerful DBQ essay were emphasized and teachers were introduced to writing supports they can use to promote strong, evidence-based writing. Participants also spent time analyzing student work and norming student essays using our DBQ Project rubric.

4. School Leadership:

The administrative team (principal, vice principal and the Supervisor of Enrichment and Advanced Learning Programs), strives to embrace lifelong learning, and promotes the development of positive relationships among students, parents, faculty, and administrators. Our school fosters lifelong learning, encourages relationships, academic excellence, personal and professional growth, respect, diversity, collaboration, open communication, organization, creativity, work ethic, community, and responsibility, that will ultimately lead to life-long success. Our administrative team values human development, a growth mindset and a vision and mission that empowers all stakeholders to accomplish great things. As leaders of our school, pride is taken in addressing the needs of both students and parents and their overall social, emotional and physical health and success. Our goal is to maintain an environment that is conducive to learning and is based on collaboration, adaptability and the overall well-being of our students.

As our mission and vision is reinforced, deliberate attention is focused on where our school was, how it fairs presently, and how it is envisioned in the future. As an administrative team, our partnerships with our community and in philanthropic service take immense priority. By taking ownership of our day-to-day operations, our school family strives in enhancing our positive school climate and culture, while partaking in their desires to improving the school environment. The energy of the school is what builds morale and school spirit that is so important in improving the climate of our school. As a family, diversity, respect, and open communication allows our school community to hold academic excellence in the highest regard.

The administrative team creates an environment where students and staff are motivated through rewards/recognition, challenges, and personal and professional growth. Our team is charged with ensuring that students and staff are emotionally and academically involved in the learning process. This involvement motivates all stakeholders and creates energy, creativity, and initiative. Our learning process builds on positive relationships amongst all stakeholders. As an administrative team, pride is taken in the use of intrinsic motivation and the belief in self in order to enhance personal satisfaction and performance.

Moreover, our school is committed to creating a positive learning environment, whereby students are academically and socially successful; in its most simplistic state- different minds, yet one mission in supporting and influencing our 'Eagles' to soar to their fullest potential. Our commitment is to do "whatever it takes" to help our students achieve success as our students and staff strive for excellence everyday! As a team, it does not go unrecognized that children are the link to our future; therefore, there is a tremendous responsibility to help them strive for excellence. Our team's efforts ensure that the whole child is nurtured and developed. As our school motto states, "We are the Eagles of Excellence, and Together We Can Soar!"

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The socio-emotional well-being of our students here at School No. 28 is of paramount importance to our overall success as a school community. As a staff, we pride ourselves in recognizing the points at which interpersonal and intrapersonal connections are made for each student in order for them to understand, manage and apply their emotions, while setting and achieving positive goals. It is important that we continue to provide outlets for our students to express their feelings, which will continue to play a crucial role in their overall social, emotional and academic health.

In order to identify and regulate emotions from an early age, our staff at School No. 28 engages in multiple strategies geared at educating our children. Social and emotional skills play an important role in our students' lives. Through community building and student clubs, children have various opportunities to express their emotions, while the staff is able to give them the tools for success they need. During the morning first block of the day, students in grades PreK-3 engage in community building, while students in grades 4-8 participate in clubs. Clubs are an essential part of our school program; they are a critical stepping stone in allowing our students to contribute to something outside of the typical academic environment. They offer students the ability to: build their communication skills; opportunities to exercise leadership skills; acquire teamwork skills; build on computing skills like programming, robotics and web design; and most importantly, networking with other students or community members that the standard daily academic routine would not have otherwise provided. One specific club is geared towards all incoming new students in grades 2-8, assisting them in making the transition into each grade effective. Our 'New Beginnings Club' has sessions that are focused on meeting new students, explores what it means to be identified as "gifted" and talks about some of the changes students will experience as new students to the program. Different topics related to giftedness are explored, along with ways to express their mental and emotional anxiety. As needed, individual counseling and specialized focus groups are offered for all of our students.

Additionally, we partner with community organizations in order to meet our goals and influence change. Some of these partner organizations include: community health education consultants from Horizon Health, who educate us on the three pillars of healthcare success, ensuring that the mental, emotional and physical aspect of our students and families are met; and Oasis youth development programs, which encourages respect, teamwork and tolerance for one another, and promotes healthy and productive lifelong habits in our students.

The socio-emotional aspect of our students' lives influences their academic achievement and provides a foundation for ensuring long-term achievement. It is this philosophy that guides us and that has been the single most influential aspect in our school's success. Surely, academic achievement over the long run can be attributed as a singular achievement, not taking into consideration the overall whole learner; however, it is this trifecta of the social, emotional and academic well-being, which in turn creates a safe and positive school environment, expanding on our ongoing mission to improve our culture and climate. We will continue allowing our children to communicate their emotions and to perceive and attempt to understand the emotions of others.