

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. Timothy Voels

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

Official School Name W Tresper Clarke High School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 740 Edgewood Drive

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

Westbury NY 11590-5497
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Nassau County

Telephone (516) 876-7451

Fax (516) 876-7416

Web site/URL
http://www.eastmeadow.k12.ny.us/c
larkehs/index.html

E-mail tvoels@emufsd.us

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. Kenneth Card

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail kcard@emufsd.us

District Name East Meadow Tel. (516) 478-5776

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. Matthew Melnick

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Part I – Eligibility Certification

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 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):
- 5 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 2 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 9 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	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	97	89	186
10	105	107	212
11	92	77	169
12 or higher	92	98	190
Total Students	386	371	757

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 19 % Asian
 - 3 % Black or African American
 - 26 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 52 % White
 - 0 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2016 – 2017 school year: 2%

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	2
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	12
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	14
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	776
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.02
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
1 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: 24 %
Total number students who qualify: 185

8. Students receiving special education services: 8 %
58 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>9</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>12</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>30</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>5</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>2</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</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: 12
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	9
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	51
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	3
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	7
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	7

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 15:1

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

Required Information	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	97%	96%	96%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	99%	98%	98%	98%	99%

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	207
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	71%
Enrolled in a community college	19%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	1%
Found employment	4%
Joined the military or other public service	4%
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.

To provide a quality education, ensuring every student has the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills to lead a productive, responsible, and culturally enriched life.

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

The shared mission of the East Meadow School District and, thus, W. T. Clarke High School is to provide our students with a quality education, ensuring every student has the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to lead a productive, responsible, and culturally enriched life in the 21st century. We strive to develop attitudes that reflect empathy and caring for others and respect for the differences and diversity in our society, as well as the need to participate in the community as informed and involved citizens. We encourage our students to work cooperatively with others while becoming independent learners and productive thinkers. Through music, visual or performing arts, and literary expression we encourage students' creativity and support their physical and emotional growth and development. Lastly, we foster an understanding of the need to appreciate the Earth and protect the environment in which we live.

W. T. Clarke High School opened in 1957, as a Junior-Senior High School, and was the first school in Nassau County, New York to offer a full course of study in the technical trades, in addition to an academic program. When it opened, student enrollment was 2,440. At its peak, 2,800 students attended W. T. Clarke High School, which coincidentally housed the largest auditorium and gymnasium complex on Long Island. For many years, W. T. Clarke operated as a 7-12 building. In 1992 after much planning, the district reorganized and established W. T. Clarke Middle School, which was open to students in grades 6-8, while W. T. Clarke High School continued to support students in grades 9-12.

W. T. Clarke High School is committed to addressing the varied intellectual, physical, social and emotional needs of our students and to facilitate smooth transitions from high school to post-secondary education and career. We promote academic growth, self-respect, and respect for the dignity and diversity of others. Annually, we select a theme or motto, which is infused in the culture of the building, as well as the curriculum, to provide students with moral, ethical, and cultural values. This year, our focus is on Community, including the valuable connections and partnerships with parents and local residents and the responsibility we share relative to the students in our care. Our parents and local residents care deeply about their community, their children, and the East Meadow School District. Parents are involved in our Parent Teacher Student Association (P.T.S.A.), Curriculum Council, Planning and Management Team (P.M.T.), Parents and Boosters Club, Music Parents Association, and Theater Arts Parents Association. Our school has been a second home to generations of Clarke students, many of whom still reside in the community and a few who are current members of our dedicated staff. However, the culture of support extends well beyond the campus, and it is not uncommon to see community members, currently without children in the district, in attendance at our music concerts or athletic events. Community pride draws people to Clarke, and many veteran educators report they are now teaching their former students' children. With a deeply rooted sense of family and a shared vision, our teachers, parents, and administrators work together to the benefit of students, perpetuating of the adage "it takes a village." We teach the importance of community through various clubs, activities and school-wide events, including our Key Club. The Key Club of W.T. Clarke High School is a student-led community service organization, sponsored by the East Meadow Kiwanis Club. The objective of the club is to foster leadership and civic responsibility. Each year the Key Club members participate in food and clothing drives, a Thanksgiving dinner for Senior Citizens, a Pancake Breakfast, a Senior Citizen Dinner Theater Night and several blood drives coordinated with the local chapter of the American Red Cross. The club also raises funds to send elementary-age children to summer camp, assist disaster victims and provide aid to people in third world countries. Our aim is to cultivate independence, self-advocacy, content proficiency, and a rich understanding and awareness of the world.

While our academic programs are steeped in rigorous and richly rewarding curricula, character education continues to be a common thread woven into the fabric of school life. The faculty at W. T. Clarke High School is ever mindful of the need to maintain a safe environment for intellectual development and academic achievement. We use school-wide assemblies, peer mentoring, classroom activities and interventions, and extra-curricular clubs to address and resolve issues related to tolerance and acceptance. Our students are front-line activists for bullying prevention and accepting differences. Through participation in our Friends of Rachel, Peer Mentoring, Gay-Straight Alliance, Amnesty International and Clarke Connections Clubs, students promote cultural competency, with the latter club providing a vehicle for students on the Autism Spectrum to gain and strengthen skills through social interactions with their non-

disabled peers. Our hope is to successfully nurture caring, compassionate and considerate individuals who contribute positively to our Clarke Community.

Together, we encourage students to seize opportunities that will open doors to new ideas and create a deeper desire to learn and explore.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

The standards-based curriculum at W. T. Clarke High School is designed to challenge, inspire and engage all students. Curriculum is written with the support of District Directors and the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. All teachers meet monthly with their respective department chairperson to discuss concerns and share best practices. Our comprehensive program is richly varied and provides courses in the core disciplines of English, social studies, math, and science. Our goal in the area of the Humanities (English and social studies) is to foster confidence, skill and, ultimately a passion for reading and writing, to enable students to effectively communicate and participate as involved, conscientious citizens in our ever-changing global world. In math and science, we strive to implement innovative technology in all lessons, including the use of interactive white boards, hand-held devices, and graphing calculators. The use of technology allows for the creation of an interactive classroom, enabling our students to be competitive and successful in the 21st century. Instruction across all disciplines is also enhanced through the use of document cameras, cellular devices and various online resources, which allows students to take ownership of their learning and discovery. Students are enrolled in varying levels of study, including Regents, Honors, Advanced Placement and College Dual-Credit courses.

The English Language Arts curriculum is grounded in the Common Core Learning Standards, and is evolving as the Next Generation Learning Standards are implemented. The primary goals of each course within the English department are to develop students' literacy skills and promote life-long reading and writing. Each standards-aligned lesson allows students to explore both fiction and non-fiction texts and to create and support claims about these works.

The Mathematics curriculum is aligned with the New York State Learning Standards and the Common Core Learning Standards. In the first three years of high school, students are enrolled in a series of courses, including Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2. Although New York State requires only three credits of mathematics, most students continue to receive instruction in mathematics through college-level and Advance Placement courses, including computer science. The scope and sequence of all math courses is regularly reviewed and revised to meet the needs of both students and teachers. Staff development is provided for all math teachers to support the district goal of ensuring appropriate instruction for students at every ability level.

The Science curriculum is also aligned with the New York State Learning Standards and the Common Core Learning Standards. Students are required to earn three credits in science, but most graduate with four or more. Many also participate in our award-winning science research program. Our core science courses include Living Environment (Biology), Earth Science, Chemistry and Physics. The goals imbedded in our science courses are to develop a fundamental understanding of natural systems, foster proficient usage of the methods of scientific inquiry, and to prepare students to make responsible decisions that will aptly address science-related societal issues.

The Social Studies curriculum allows students to explore history in ways that develop the practices defined in the C3 Framework for Social Studies. In the Global History courses, students in grades nine and ten gain an understanding of the interconnectedness of the world and how enduring global issues such as conflict, power, technological advances, and human rights have shaped the development of society. The United States History course allows eleventh-grade students to further develop their ability to critically analyze primary and secondary sources and use their skills and knowledge to craft and defend claims about historical themes and events. During their senior year and through the United State Government and Economics courses, students gain the necessary knowledge and skills to become civically engaged and financially literate.

The curriculum at W. T. Clarke High School supports college and career readiness by encouraging independent thinking, promoting self-awareness and advocacy, and teaching our students essential life skills to navigate a variety of career paths. Through the use of a computer-based interactive program, school

counselors assist students in exploring different careers and college majors tailored to their strengths and interests. School counselors meet with each individual student to create a personalized schedule of courses based on their future career goals. Our core curriculum provides students with a robust skill set, and teachers introduce and encourage the practical application of such through field trips, videoconferences, and guest presenters. Our elective courses are also designed to provide essential skills in public speaking and presentation, collaboration and cooperation, communication and decision-making, and the use of technology. To enable our students to compete in the 21st century, we continually update our teaching and use of technology. We promote the technological development of all students at W. T. Clarke High School, and all courses are designed with today's digital learner in mind. Our students transition to post-secondary education with a solid academic foundation and the transferrable skills necessary to confidently pursue careers in any field of study, including art, business, computer science, engineering, English, law, music, psychology, science and world languages.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The visual and performing arts program services students in grades nine through twelve. Instruction is grounded in the basic elements and principles of art, the appreciation and history of art, and interdisciplinary activities.

Nearly 60% of our students participate in performing ensembles and/or music theory courses. Ensembles meet daily, and are supported by weekly lessons. Music theory and technology classes are taught in our production/recording studio. Students also participate in co-curricular groups, including Tri-M Music Honor Society, Marching Band, Select Ensembles, Musical Productions, All District, County and New York State (N.Y.S.S.M.A.) Music Festivals, and Summer Music Programs. Our music department has been recognized as one of the Top 100 Communities for Music Education in the United States, and one of twelve schools featured in, Model Music Programs: Ideas for All. We have been twice awarded the N.Y.S.S.M.A. Presidential Citation Award. Through participation in music, students learn the art of practice, self-discipline and enhanced cooperation. Most importantly, our students learn to enjoy, understand and appreciate music.

The art department offers courses in studio art (drawing and painting), creative crafts, photography, sculpture, printmaking, and computer graphics. Students receive a broad experience in all media. Technology, including the use of computers and digital cameras, is infused into many aspects of the curriculum.

The goal is to provide students a comprehensive art education within the context of a liberal arts experience. As a result, students are capable, knowledgeable, and fully prepared for the professional artistic domain, have an understanding of the visual arts in relation to other human endeavors, and become creative and contributing members of society.

The Physical Education and Health programs are aligned to the New York State Learning Standards. All students in grades nine through twelve receive Physical Education and Health classes. Our program offers challenging and innovative activities with an emphasis on lifelong fitness and healthy behaviors, including proper nutrition, cooperation through Project Adventure, sport skills, and physical fitness. Sportsmanship and teamwork are also key components of the curriculum. In addition, approximately 50% of our students participate in our interscholastic athletic program, where they further develop skills in a safe competitive environment.

The health program assists students in becoming self-confident, increasing communication skills at home and at school, aiding in decision-making, promoting conflict resolution and encouraging goal setting. Our students attend local health conferences and, subsequently, share information gleaned from such with their peers. By fostering an enriched school and community connection, our students learn the value of citizenship and service.

The study of World Languages is based on a whole language approach targeting listening, reading, writing and speaking skills. The program incorporates interactive technologies and online resources. The study of World Languages is offered to students who are accelerated in grade eight, and to all students in grades nine

through twelve. While students need only earn one credit of language, most continue to study American Sign Language, French, Italian or Spanish for four or five years. Regional assessments are administered in grades eight and ten and students are expected to achieve level-appropriate proficiency to earn language credit. Students may also acquire college credit prior to graduation, through advanced placement or dual-enrollment/college credit courses.

With a long history steeped in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) philosophy, pre-engineering and engineering courses are designed to prepare students in grades nine through twelve for all college engineering disciplines and to ensure acquisition of the skills and knowledge necessary to enter the industry as electrical, mechanical, or electromechanical technicians. Principles learned in class are applied through the design and construction of projects, as well as participation in local and regional competitions.

Courses in Carpentry (1, 2, 3) are designed to provide hands-on training in the ever-changing building trades industry. New technology and building products are introduced, along with hand machinery and power equipment. Safety and proper tool usage is continually emphasized. Production methods for translating blueprints, framing a model house, introduction of trade-related theory, and the construction of full-scale projects, such as sheds, gazebos, and various major carpentry structures are included. A segment of the course is also devoted to a program known as the “School to Work: Partnership with New York State Parks Department.”

The business department offers a variety of courses open to students in grade nine through twelve, including accounting, business management, marketing, careers and finance, and virtual enterprise. The New York State Learning Standards for Career Development and Occupational Studies are integrated into each course. Through studies in the business department, students become knowledgeable about the world of work, explore career options, and relate personal skills, aptitudes and abilities to future career decisions. Students are afforded opportunities to demonstrate the application of academic knowledge and skills in the workplace and other settings through various competitions and virtual experiences.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

We strongly believe in using a variety of instructional approaches, methods, interventions and assessments to meet the diverse and individual needs of students and to assist them in achieving their instructional goals. We understand fully that a one-size-fits-all practice serves to limit growth and does little to promote the advancement of each individual student. Instead, our staff is dedicated to the exploration and implementation of innovative, research-based practices that target specific learning styles and multiple intelligences to the benefit of all students, including those who are accelerated in their studies and others who may present with particular challenges.

In the core curriculum teachers utilize instructional strategies such as quick-writes and Socratic Seminars, as well as other formative and summative assessments, and provide targeted feedback to assist students in their pursuit of skill mastery. Furthermore, students are encouraged to read independently, with several teachers having worked with their students to create classroom libraries that foster intellectual curiosity and provide students with an outlet to explore their literary interests. Instruction is also focused on students’ ability to make connections between political and economic theories and their own lives, and to internalize these concepts and prepare to actively participate in society upon exiting high school. Teachers provide and encourage students to use various text resources in their analysis of historical events and to support claims regarding such in their writing. By the time students graduate, they will have developed proficient writing mechanics and an understanding of literary terms and devices that will allow them to excel in college. Additionally, they will graduate with a deeper love of reading that will assuredly remain with them for the rest of their lives.

Over the last several years, and with the implementation of the revised New York State Regents Examinations, the level of technology used in both the math and science classrooms has increased significantly. Appropriate use of calculators is taught in all core courses. Our teachers use online programs to assess and review their students’ current level of functioning, and to assign homework and enrichment

activities. Students also use these programs independently for additional practice and review. The use of these programs provides teachers with valuable data. All classrooms are equipped with interactive white board teaching systems, document cameras, and additional technologies that promote the development of engaging, interactive lessons.

Annually, select students are identified, based on assessment data and/or teacher recommendation, and scheduled for an additional period of math every other day. During this additional period of instruction students are provided differentiated support to address gaps in learning. All students are monitored throughout the year and their progress is published for parent perusal on the Home Access Center, and addressed by the Pupil Personnel Team during weekly meetings.

The ongoing monitoring of students' performance, all in subject areas, is done in several ways. Benchmark exams, constructed to mirror the New York State Regents Examinations, are periodically administered. These exams provide data relative to individual students' performance as well as instructional feedback for the teaching staff. All teachers use benchmark exams, online testing, as well as formative and summative assessments, to guide large group and individual classroom instruction, as well as support periods and/or after-school extra-help sessions.

During the second and fourth marking periods, all students are invited to attend before and/or after-school Review Sessions to bolster their classroom performance and prepare them for midterm, final and New York State Regents Examinations.

We devote considerable time toward the identification of struggling learners and to providing differentiated instruction to ensure their growth. Teachers in many curricular areas use a variety of instructional techniques, as well as formative and summative assessments to monitor progress. Simple formative assessments provide immediate feedback on student understanding. This knowledge is shared with the students so that each knows his/her personal strengths and challenges. With the assistance of their classroom teachers, students are able to set personal, measurable goals. Our teachers use common formative assessment tools including, stop and jot, red card/green card, exit tickets, beach ball, and quick write/quick draw, to guide further instruction. Teachers are accustomed to using tiered and/or spiraled lessons, flexible grouping, and peer teaching. They plan student-centered lessons that appeal to multiple intelligences and routinely use Bloom's taxonomy when crafting questions.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Although the alignment of curriculum and instructional practices may directly correlate to the overall measurable success of our school, we believe the climate and culture of the building are equal partners to that end. Through the empowerment of student leadership and the influence of empathy, we have cultivated a positive, wholesome culture that runs through every classroom and activity.

Throughout the years, our ever-changing demographics coupled with the evolution of new career pathways prompted the need for educational reform and resulted in a close examination of our core values and beliefs. Not unlike other schools, we have a diverse population of learners, whose socio-economic and familial circumstances, race, ethnicity, religion and educational aptitude challenge the daily operations of our school. However, with the support of our district stakeholders, we have embraced diversification and fostered a unique and richly nourishing school climate that promotes learning and growth. Simply stated, it works at Clarke.

We firmly believe that modeling behaviors and attitudes are the key to change. Several years ago, W. T. Clarke High School was home to the countywide program for students with hearing and vision impairments. Students with varying degrees of impairment were mainstreamed into classrooms with their non-disabled peers, to the benefit of all. Through conversation and coaching, preconceived beliefs were quickly altered as students grew in knowledge, awareness and understanding of one another. Similarly, we established a program for students with Autism and other developmental disabilities. Our REACH (Recognizing and Encouraging Accomplishments in Children) Program is an ungraded special education life-skills/prevocational class designed to increase skills leading to post-secondary daily living and employment opportunities. The students in REACH have paved the road to cultural competence in our school. They operate our school store, provide daily announcements, coordinate our recycling program, work in local stores and business as part of a school-to-work program, and serve as ambassadors of good will to all visitors. To say their non-disabled peers have accepted the students in REACH would be a gross underestimation of the love and approbation extended to them on a daily basis. As an example, when the REACH Program hosted their holiday concert this year for parents and other interested guests, what started as an intimate gathering culminated in a school-wide assembly unprompted by staff and organized by students. Nearly 800 spectators, joining together to support our Clarke Family, attended the concert. -The list of activities, programs, workshops, interventions and discussions leading to our present day culture is quite lengthy. We have immersed students in the national Friends of Rachel initiative, presentations by Holocaust survivors, workshops on racial and ethnic equality, several clubs devoted to tolerance and acceptance, and the positive power of social media. To say that we have mastered cultural competence, that our climate is without flaw, would be an exaggeration. However, we continue to enjoin all stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, and administrators in conversation – an ongoing dialog that has, thus far, resulted in student friendships blind to color, immune to religious beliefs and open to possibilities.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Parent and family engagement is paramount to the success of our students and programs. In September, parents attend our Meet-the-Teacher Night, follow their children's class schedules and learn about course expectations. During the year, workshops are provided for students and parents relative to the college search process, the nuances of financial aid, and the challenges facing every community in our nation, namely the drug epidemic. Parents also attend Parent-Teacher Conferences, where student-specific information is shared and a plan for improved performance is developed in collaboration. In the spring, parents partner with their children and guidance counselors to develop a course schedule for the following year. Parents are encouraged to communicate regularly, and as needed, with all teachers.

Evening assemblies and other face-to-face meetings are not the only means of parent and family engagement. Through our student management system, parents are registered users of our Home Access

Center, enabling them to view student grades and attendance. This valuable tool has led to meaningful discussions, improved student performance and overall parent satisfaction. We also use frequent and periodic newsletters, communications via voice and email services and our school website to disseminate information to all families. In addition, teachers have utilized the Remind system to inform parents of upcoming assignments, projects, review sessions and tests. These forms of communication have built a layer of transparency leading to an atmosphere of trust within our parent community.

Our parent organizations continue their involvement in school-related and school-sponsored events and activities. ACCESS (A Community Committed to Educational Success for Students) is a sub-committee of the district PTA Curriculum Council, sponsoring educational workshops for parents, and providing them with hands-on strategies to help children achieve the highest level of social, emotional and academic success. The Clarke Parents and Booster Club is a parent organization that supports the entire athletic program and provides scholarships for athletes, end-of-year awards dinners, and concessions at all athletic events. Similarly, our Music and Theater Arts Parents Associations support student scholarships and programs through fundraising and their active participation on performance evenings. Lastly, the Planning & Management Team (PMT) is a site-based team composed of administrators, teachers, staff, community members, parents and, at the secondary level, students. The PMT works throughout the school year to address relevant issues affecting the school.

3. Professional Development:

Our teachers receive professional development in a variety of areas. All staff development opportunities are aligned with the Core Curriculum Standards and the New York State Standards for Learning. The school has most recently provided staff development in differentiation and data-driven instruction.

There is a strong commitment from administration at the building and district levels to provide professional development that will directly and positively impact student learning. Our teachers have worked with numerous consultants to strengthen their pedagogical skills, using formative and summative assessments to inform daily instruction and track student performance. Our district directors also coordinate common time for the teachers to plan and engage in curriculum mapping, thus ensuring horizontal and vertical alignment.

Specifically, we have focused on developing a scope and sequence in the area of English and to align the current curriculum with such. Our teachers continue to create units of study and share such through cross grade-level conversations focused on the development of skills at each grade level. Teachers are also working to implement independent reading into the curriculum. Discussions have included student selection of appropriate texts, providing time during the school day to read, and conferencing with students regarding their reading.

Teachers in social studies have experienced professional learning focused on the implementation of the New York State Social Studies Framework and general social studies practices. Through department meetings, teachers have honed skills in analyzing best practices and explored ways to use data to guide future lessons and assessments to identify and address student needs.

We continue to follow the guiding principles of Response to Intervention (RtI), and staff at every level has developed a greater awareness of the need to tailor instruction to meet the needs of our at-risk population. Moreover, teachers have immersed themselves in creating differentiated lessons. Teachers are regularly afforded opportunities for professional development in differentiating lessons and creative alternative assessments.

Our leadership team conducts new teacher workshops, designed to share good practice and to aid in their acclimation to the school and district. In addition, new teachers are provided a mentor teacher to guide and support them in their first year.

4. School Leadership:

Our building leadership team is comprised of a Principal, two Assistant Principals, a Dean of Students, five full-time Chairpersons for English/Social Studies, Math, Music, Physical Education/Health and Science,

and four part-time Chairpersons who provide support in the areas of Art, Business/Technology, Music and World Languages.

The leadership philosophy is one that promotes shared responsibility and accountability. Teachers and administrators are entrusted to use their knowledge, creativity and unique talents to meet the goal of improving student achievement, while maintaining a safe and inviting climate for teaching and learning. Our administrators routinely enjoin teachers in evaluating student data and planning lessons appropriately aligned to their student's present level of functioning.

The full leadership team meets monthly to discuss current issues impacting education, collaborate on interdisciplinary matters and various other topics, including budget, classroom instruction, professional development, safety and security, scheduling, and the use of technology. Our leaders participate in and conduct collegial circles, workshops and conferences, where professional sharing increases the knowledge of team members in relation to all aspects of school operations.

District Directors and Central Administrators, including our Superintendent of Schools, conduct monthly leadership meetings to increase awareness, make and share decisions relative to curriculum and related programs, and network about best practices. Our combined leadership team continually encourages teachers and administrators to attend conferences, learn and explore new techniques, and share ideas and lessons with colleagues.

As the accountability manager, the Principal oversees and coordinates with the administrative team the conducting of observations and evaluations of all staff members. Collaboratively, the entire leadership team works to encourage, assist and, occasionally, redirect staff relative to the implementation of programs and practices.

The Principal, Assistant Principals and Dean of Students work cooperatively to manage the daily operation of the school. The vision of the school is transparent and is regularly communicated in a variety of ways, including faculty meetings, supervision and evaluation, committee meetings and communications with the parent community.

The leadership team is hands-on and visible when it comes to students. They attend weekly team meetings with guidance counselors and members of the pupil personnel staff. Through dialogue, they develop a keen awareness of the students and their unique circumstances. There is a genuine concern for all students and a seriousness of purpose as it relates to decisions made on their behalf. Interactions with teachers, parents and others are guided by an overarching student-first philosophy.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

While it is challenging to determine which practice has been the most influential to our school's success, one cannot dismiss the value and reliability of analyzing and utilizing assessment data to inform instruction. A few years ago, our district launched an initiative to explore data-driven instruction. Our teachers and administrators attended conferences, workshops, and received training and resources through the Board of Cooperative Educational Services (B.O.C.E.S.), including Banbrick-Santoyo's Driven by Data. Although our students had historically performed at a level above the state average on all New York State Regents Examinations, our use of data provided insight to teachers resulting in more focused instruction and, ultimately, an increase in student proficiency. In fact, this past year, the percentage of our students performing at the Proficient Level on the five Regents Examinations required for graduation increased from 97 to 99.

Each September, our teachers and department administrators meet to examine the previous year's Regents results by grade and teacher, noting patterns and areas of concern. They also conduct an item analysis to identify areas of strength and weakness. Together, they map out skills, develop instructional plans to address such, and set goals for the year.

Throughout the year, benchmark examinations, which mirror the Regents Examinations, are periodically administered in all subject areas. These diagnostic assessments are used to routinely assess and monitor student progress. Teachers and administrators compare the results to the previous year's examinations, make recommendations relative to future instruction and identify those students in need of additional support. Based upon the results, students who demonstrate weakness are recommended for before or after school review sessions where they can receive small group instruction. Students may also avail themselves of our Homework Offers Opportunities Promising Success (HOOPS) program, which provides an opportunity for students to begin their homework assignments under the mentoring of teachers from the core disciplines, as well as our Special Education department. Students may spend an hour or more in a pressure-free setting getting advice and guidance from a cadre of teachers as they begin their nightly homework assignments or prepare for an upcoming test.

The use of data has enabled us to provide differentiated instruction to all students, thus maximizing opportunities for success. Our teaching is informed and more purposeful, and instructional and professional goals are clearly defined. While student success cannot and should not be measured solely by an assessment, we have utilized the power of data analysis to steer instruction in ways that will ensure our students' success well beyond the classroom.