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

Official School Name MS 216 George J. Ryan School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 64-20 175th Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Fresh Meadows   NY   11365-2199
City   State   Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Queens

Telephone (718) 358-2005   Fax (718) 358-2070

Web site/URL http://www.Ryan216.org   E-mail   rlandea@schools.nyc.gov

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*Ms. Danielle Giunta
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)   E-mail DGuinta4@schools.nyc.gov

District Name New York City Geographic District #26   Tel.   (718) 681-6300
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. Alan Ong
(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):

   927 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   282 Middle/Junior high schools
   530 High schools
   67 K-12 schools

   1806 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

   [X] 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	268	238	506
7	243	227	470
8	248	240	488
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	759	705	1464

4. Racial/ethnic composition of   0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
    the school: 65 % Asian
                                           5 % Black or African American
                                           13 % Hispanic or Latino
                                           0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
                                           14 % White
                                           3 % Two or more races
                                           100 % Total

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 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 *to* the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	18
(2) Number of students who transferred *from* the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	5
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	23
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	1428
(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: 11 %
                                                       159 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French, German, Greek, Haitian Creole, Hebrew, Hindi, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish, Urdu and Vietnamese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 67 %
    Total number students who qualify: 987

8. Students receiving special education services: 13 %
                                                       186 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.

9 Autism	0 Multiple Disabilities
0 Deafness	0 Orthopedic Impairment
0 Deaf-Blindness	12 Other Health Impaired
0 Developmentally Delayed	91 Specific Learning Disability
4 Emotional Disturbance	66 Speech or Language Impairment
3 Hearing Impairment	0 Traumatic Brain Injury
1 Intellectual Disability	0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 13

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	5
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	80
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	15
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	11
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	18

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the
    school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1   18:1

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

Required Information	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%
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 X

    If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

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

At Ryan, we have a diverse community focusing on a student-centered environment, promoting respect for all, and maximizing students' potential for high school readiness.

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

Ryan Middle School 216 is located in the town of Fresh Meadows. Fresh Meadows is a residential community in the northeastern section of the New York City borough of Queens. Linguistically, Fresh Meadows is rather special; over half of its residents are of Asian ancestry and primarily speak Chinese at home. Because parents in our community have a lengthy commute home from work, Ryan has a large after-school population. Students involved participate in various educational and extracurricular activities sponsored by the Samuel L. YMCA Beacon Program.

Ryan is a comprehensive middle school with 1,456 students in grades 6-8. We have a multicultural population of Asian, Black, Hispanic, and White students; 23% are English Language learners and 27% receive special education services.

In 2004, Dr. Reginald Landeau Jr. became the principal of Ryan Middle School. At that time, Ryan was the lowest performing middle school in New York City's best performing district. The first order of business was to systematically restructure the school to build community, improve the learning environment, and advance the quality of instruction. A "sustainable growth team" was created, establishing the following goals for the following school year:
Create a new vision and mission statement;
Restructure "academies" (school-based smaller learning communities) into authentic theme-based entities; and
Determine instructional needs and create an action plan to reach our goals and overarching objective.

After year one, Ryan's ELA and Math scores increased by 10% respectively. Within the first five years under Dr. Landeau's leadership, our ELA scores increased from the 50th percentile to the 87th percentile for students scoring at or above grade level. For Mathematics, there was an increase from the 61st percentile to 97th percentile for students scoring at or above grade level. Currently, Ryan has been deemed the highest rated middle school and the highest ranked for English Language Arts in the district.

Ryan Middle School prides itself on embracing the unique educational and social needs of the early adolescent. Our theme is "building community with a student focus". Our mission focuses on a student-centered environment, promoting mutual respect for all, and maximizing students' potential for high school readiness. We prepare all learners with a differentiated curriculum that is relevant, meaningful, and actively engages students in our commitment to high standards. Our teachers strive to produce exceptional lessons emphasizing individual and group instruction encouraging student exploration and inquiry, and promoting critical thinking skills. All stakeholders are dedicated to preserving a positive atmosphere where our students' unique talents are developed and celebrated.

We support the research acknowledging that regular participation in extracurricular activities enhance students' personal, social, and academic development. Thus, we offer our students a plethora of opportunities and experiences that complement their interests and promote self-discovery and inquiry. These include: Math Team, Robotics, and our newest programs, Broadway Junior Musical Theater Program – a partnership with The Shubert Foundation/Music Theatre International – where students will engage in creating musical theater, and New York City's Software and Engineering Program (SEP) – where students learn computational thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and critical thinking via computer programming, web design, game design and 3D printing.

We also have a chess team, boys and girls basketball, cheerleading, volleyball, and guitar club. Fellas, GEMMs (Girls Empowerment Movement in Mathematics), and Pretty Tough are three of Ryan's gender-sensitive mentoring groups. Our Saturday Academy offers dance, English Language Learners enrichment, filmmaking, and photography. Students are also encouraged to propose new ideas for clubs and each year, new experiences emerge based upon their suggestions. This year, we instituted a soccer team and a running club that is in partnership with New York City Road Runners.

Ryan's student organization gives students an opportunity to develop leadership skills and promotes school

and social involvement by highlighting issues and supporting causes that concern students. Service projects through our Project Boost Team (Building Options and Opportunities for Students), sponsored by the Center for Educational Innovation (CEI), provide students with cultural experiences and community service activities. Each year, we participate in Toys for Tots, New York City Harvest Food Drive, Jeans for Teens, Adopt a Soldier, and The Breast Cancer Awareness Walk. Students also have an opportunity to visit museums and attend Broadway shows.

Ryan Middle School 216 is a school where parents are regarded as partners in their child's education. Parents are encouraged to participate in decision-making and collaborate with teachers and administrators to make our students college-ready, career ready, and life ready. Our active Parent Teacher Association and Parent Involvement Committee work vigorously to improve the home/school connection creating better options for communication, some of which include: Pupil Path (online and text message system), the principal's weekly phone messages, monthly parent calendars, and newsletters.

Ryan's "secret sauce" for success is a combination of our motivated students, supportive parents, and a dedicated staff.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

At Ryan Middle School, we have the flexibility of being able to write curriculum that addresses the culturally and socially diverse nature of the school. Thus, all core subject areas utilize a completely original curriculum composed by the teachers to meet the various needs of their students.

In English Language Arts, our curriculum is comprised of five units of study each horizontally aligned between standards and assessments. Vertical alignment also exists to ensure that teachers can plan classroom instruction in a way that follows the standards, reflecting the logical and consistent order for teaching the content. Units are organized by theme and contain thought-provoking and intellectually engaging essential questions that challenge students to think deeply and analytically about the text. Unit components encompass the study of rich and varied literary and informational text exhibiting a range in genre and content. Also included are writing in the genres of argument, informative/explanatory, narrative, summaries of reading materials, and direct instruction in language arts skills and strategies. Students work independently, as well as collaboratively, to learn how to understand what they read and evaluate an author's assumptions and claims. Students and teachers utilize technology and digital media strategically to enhance reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. Additionally, built into each unit are supplemental resources, learning activities and assessments that enable us to address the needs of our English Language Learners, students with disabilities, as well as our gifted and talented students.

The Social Studies curriculum is the embodiment of 21st century education. Content is presented to the students in a rich curriculum that encourages the use of technology, and teaches history through literacy. This continuity of practice reinforces the use of literacy skills and strategies that will help students master critical thinking and analysis of historical content. With this foundation in literacy, each grade team has composed and implemented ever-evolving original Common Core aligned curriculum with a focus on humanizing their respective areas of study. Each unit requires students to read various rigorous texts from both primary and secondary sources. These resources are differentiated for our English language learners and students with disabilities. Starting with poignant essential questions, each unit goes beyond teaching just the content, but instead bridging the past and present through common themes. This process affords students the opportunity to view history from the lens as someone who is not just a bystander, but as someone who experiences it. Lastly, utilizing technology as a teaching and learning tool is a deeply embedded practice and is an integral part of the curriculum that will prepare them for the future.

Our Science curriculum encompasses three branches of science: Physical Science, Life Science and Earth Science, and embraces 21st century skills of literacy, creative thinking, critical thinking, collaboration and communication. Interdisciplinary units of study are created incorporating Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) in which our entire student body participates. Each unit takes students through the engineering design process in which they are given an objective/task and they develop a solution. For example, in the 6th grade, during the unit on heat, students designed solar cookers with household materials to make s'mores. In the 7th grade, students are given the task to design a zoo enclosure for a designated animal. Students researched the animals' habitats and conducted Skype interviews with a herpetologist. In the 8th grade, students study the Keystone Pipeline Project, and based on research they design, develop and test the most economic and eco-friendly pipeline.

The Math curriculum is an original living document that is aligned with the Common Core Math Learning Standards. We use a variety of research-based resources that challenges students to think deeply about problems and encourages/models a variety of approaches to a solution. We have designed rigorous performance tasks for each unit of study, and at the conclusion of each quarter, we assess our students with "on-demand" summative assessments. These assessments mirror the New York State Exam format. After each assessment is completed, our grade teams collaborate and analyze students' common thread misconceptions, challenges, and successes in addition to reflecting on and improving teaching practice consistency. For students, this feedback helps them recognize what proficient work looks like and determine steps necessary for improving their work. We employ the Sheltered Instruction Observation

Protocol (SIOP) Model for English Language Learners and supplemental learning resources in order to support all learners. Most resources consist of multi-media software accessed through a variety of electronic devices; iPads, MacBooks, swivels, Plickers, electronic whiteboards, and other cutting-edge materials are utilized in order to meet the needs of our 21st century learners.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Ryan Middle School offers a full continuum of exploratory and encore subjects designed to expand and enrich student learning.

Learning a foreign language builds students' cultural understanding and provides deep insights into how others see the world. At Ryan, the Spanish department focuses on the appreciation for and articulation of the Spanish language. Students acquire the linguistic, grammatical, and cultural knowledge necessary for oral and written communication to demonstrate understanding, express ideas and feelings, and exchange information. Students are afforded the opportunity to experience real world connections by visiting Spanish restaurants and venues where they can practice speaking Spanish to others.

The Fine Arts program offers visual and performing arts experiences in vocal music (chorus), instrumental music (band and orchestra), dance and art. All sixth grade students, receive a quarter of each elective, twice a week. At the end of the year, students are afforded the opportunity to choose an arts elective for the next two years. For seventh and eighth grade, students specialize in one of the four Fine Arts electives with classes meeting 3-4 times per week.

Students are exposed to a diverse curriculum designed using the New York City Department of Education Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts and is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards, which includes opportunities for creativity, literacy instruction, and performance experience.

The art curriculum is guided by Teaching for Artistic Behavior (TAB), a choice-based art education approach to teaching art. Students work as the artist directing their own learning, controlling the subject matter and the materials utilizing a studio/learning centers approach.

Our school provides a comprehensive physical education curriculum mandated by the NYC Department of Education that teaches students to be physically active and work as a team. Instructional units within the curriculum create opportunities for: Physical Fitness (Fitness gram testing), Floor Hockey, Soccer, Football, Team Handball, Wiffleball, Track and Field, and various group games. These activities incorporate the main physical education components such as cardio-respiratory endurance, agility, balance, stamina and conditioning.

Two years ago, Ryan was chosen to participate in Computer Science for All (CS4All)/Software Engineering Program (SEP). The program is a multi-year, standards aligned computer science education program that develops computational thinking and problem-solving skills. The core curriculum focuses on computer programming, robotics, web design and development, physical computing, mobile computing, game design and 3D printing. Our SEP program currently has over 210 participants spanning across grades 6-8. The curriculum begins with an introduction to web design, computer programming with Scratch, and Lego Robotics. It continues with physical computing, advanced web design, and an introduction to JavaScript, GitHub, and Interface Design. SEP students also participate in local and central hackathons and in work-based experiences with major industry leaders and partners.

Robotics:
All sixth grade students at Ryan are introduced to Robotics, an extension of Science, attending twice per week. Students are presented with real-world engineering challenges where they strategize, design, build, program, and ultimately test a functioning robot. Instruction commences with an introduction to Google, and then students explore the world of robotics by creating models of gears, wheels and axles, and pulley and lever systems. After students physically create these working systems, they apply their understanding of Google technology by transforming their designs into 3D drawings illustrating the working parts of each system. The final assessment requires students to use the EV3 software program to design, create and

program their own robot to successfully move around a field and perform a variety of functions. Ryan's Robotics curriculum nurtures our students' ability to apply real-world math and science concepts while developing employment and life skills including critical thinking, time management, collaboration, and communication skills.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

At Ryan Middle School, we offer a student-centered program where teachers address the New York State/City Common Core Learning Standards in every subject area. Our teachers strive to produce lessons emphasizing individual and group instruction that encourages student exploration and investigation, and promote critical thinking skills. The Workshop Model is utilized vertically/horizontally in order to execute teaching and learning objectives. We use a plethora of instructional strategies and approaches to ensure that we are meeting the needs of all students, including students with disabilities and English language learners, such as posted agendas and process charts, word walls, WOW (words of the week) words, glow/grow student feedback, Socratic seminar, Depth of Knowledge to increase rigor, differentiation, and stop-jot-pair-share.

Technology and many technological applications and platforms such as Google Classroom, Plickers, Kahoot, Khan Academy, and Nearpod are infused within the culture of teaching and learning. Teacher-led professional development is a significant factor in how Ryan is able to consistently and effectively support teacher growth, particularly with reference to enhancing student achievement. Empowering teachers to share knowledge and skills with each other has significantly enhanced implementation of instructional strategies. Teachers design and attend professional learning opportunities focused on looking at student work, lesson planning, curriculum design, and modifications for continuous support of our diverse learners.

At Ryan, we implement specific and various approaches to meet the needs of all our students, including those who may struggle academically. Purposeful grouping and/or differentiation based on students' needs are implemented. Students who need additional support are directed to go the "Help Desk" for individualized assistance. For our students who are advanced, our teachers infuse enrichment activities and tasks that may be multi-level or multi-dimensional providing further rigor.

At the beginning of the school year, the administrative team reviews the most recent ELA/Math state test scores and item analysis. During our initial faculty conference, the data and trends are analyzed, shared and reviewed with teachers. Baselines are administered in order to identify students' strengths and deficiencies. Teachers are then able to develop a "targeted" list of students, creating individual learning goals for these students. Additional diagnostic, formative and summative assessments are also used to inform curriculum and instruction, and allows teachers to make adjustments to daily lessons.

We also utilize our assessment data to formulate our Academic Intervention Services (AIS) for both Math and ELA to support students performing below grade-level expectations. Services are provided to students in small groups, in a pull-out or push-in model, utilizing certified reading teachers or via our after-school AIS program.

Assessments are wide-ranging, with each designed strategically to encompass individualized understandings, collaborative assessment, and criterion-referenced performance. In ELA, Social Studies, and Math, teachers create their own interim assessments informed by Common Core Learning Standards which also reflect the line of questioning found on New York State examinations. The results are used to track progress in the content area and to guide planning and instruction throughout the school year. Our ELA and Math teachers use a tool called IO Assessment to analyze provisional data to determine areas that need to be re-taught and/or skills that students have mastered. Improvement areas become instructional foci for all content areas.

To ensure high levels of student learning and achievement as well as close the achievement gap, Ryan's administrators and teachers employ a wealth of strategies and initiatives to engage and support students. Students are offered opportunities to obtain support in small group settings such as after-school extra help in ELA and Math, peer tutoring, and "Lunch and Learn" gatherings designed for extra help led by teachers

and/or peers during the lunch period. We have also instituted a mentoring program for our "at-risk" students, who regularly meet to offer encouragement, guidance, advice, and when necessary, academic assistance.

Finally, the diversity of unique and relevant programs, (i.e. Robotics Team and Coding Program), diverse instructional practices, and tactical academic interventions allow Ryan students to maintain high levels of student achievement.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. **School Climate/Culture:**

A school's climate and culture are essential for building a solid and sustainable school community. Ryan prides itself on fostering a student-centered atmosphere that is engaging and motivating. Our school also presents a culture in which teachers are valued for their expertise and highly supported in their pedagogy. Through communal efforts, we have succeeded in establishing an environment that yields positivity and promotes growth within the school community.

At Ryan, student engagement and motivation include, but is not limited to, the school-wide application of the Growth Mindset Initiative. Developing and maintaining a growth mindset is particularly important because students' beliefs about personal and academic success directly correlate with performance. Our design is to provide students with the cognitive tools and strategies in order to learn from challenges, make self-directed improvements, and embrace an attitude for excellence. The Growth Mindset Initiative funnels through classroom instructional practices. Opportunities are created within the execution of curricula for students to improve upon learnings through discovery and provision of support. Students are encouraged to transition from fixed mindsets and realize potentials and abilities through engaging in Lunch and Learn and Peer Tutoring, to name a few. Students are also engaged and motivated through varied technological implementations across content areas. Utilizing students' existing interest in technology, teachers provide opportunities for them to apply and showcase learnings via multiple entry points. In doing so, learners are better equipped to participate in and fulfill future activities and expectations for college and career readiness. Further supporting the Growth Mindset Initiative is our school-wide technological implementation of G-Suite, specifically the Google Classroom Application. Additional academic enhancement is made possible by the opportunity for students to craft digital products, and receive actionable feedback from instructors and peers in a real-time setting. Moreover, after-school endeavors strive to tap into the social-emotional needs of students. Gender-specific initiatives, Fellas and GEMMs, allow students to build strengths and leadership skills through hands-on activities and community exposure. Ongoing feedback reinforces the communal support students need to build and maintain self-esteem, awareness, and capacity for continual academic improvement.

Teachers at Ryan are valued and supported through autonomous opportunities to create and facilitate professional development, and host classroom inter-visitations. These endeavors are innovative approaches of utilizing staff strengths – which is necessary for professional growth. This further enhances the environment and teachers' sense of value. Our school culture includes celebratory opportunities; Ryan's "Shout Out" board and "Caught Working Hard" in our weekly newsletter exemplify contributions to the school community.

2. **Engaging Families and Community:**

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Research shows that parent engagement in schools is closely linked to better student behavior, higher academic achievement, and enhanced social skills."

Ryan upholds the embodiment of collaborating with parents, students, teachers, and the community. We utilize the efforts of our Parent Coordinator and the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) members to assist in connecting with community schools of higher education, businesses and organizations, such as St. John's University, Applebee's, TD Bank, Community Board #8, Fresh Meadows Civics Association, New York City Department of Mental Health and Hygiene, and more.

The Samuel Field Beacon Program is a partner organization that assists us to reach members of the school community and beyond. We also host the First Lego League Challenge – where teams of students solidify their STEM skills by programming robots and developing solutions to real-world problems.

Our school has a Parent Resource Center equipped with full technology for parent use (i.e., iPads and/or

laptops). With approximately forty-two percent of our parent population identified as non-English speakers, our Parent Coordinator provides cultural support groups. The groups are spearheaded by parents in their native language, e.g., the Bengali or Chinese Cultural Support Group. Additional workshops are provided based on needs of the community.

We pride ourselves in always looking for ways to better educate the whole child in academics and with their social-emotional well-being. Ryan supports holistic education by providing mentorship programs for students: GEMMs, Pretty Tough, and Fellas.

Each month, our school celebrates students based on character and commitment to education. Teachers select two students who exemplify the monthly theme for character. For example, students may be selected by a team of teachers for demonstrating "Integrity: Kindness, Honesty, and Respect". Students are honored with an award from school leader, teacher, PTA member, and Parent Coordinator. Also, each quarter, students with an average of 80% or better receive a Principal's Honor Roll commendation certificate and medal. Family members are always invited to share in the celebration of their children.

The most successful strategy that works well for Ryan is using the online data platform IO Classroom, Google Classroom and Pupil Path. These platforms are accessible to all staff members, students, and parents. In its use as a communication tool, teachers are able to upload class activities, homework, facilitate testing, as well as update parents regarding conduct and academics via digital commentary.

3.   Professional Development:

At Ryan Middle School, we found there is no single approach to professional development. We use multiple approaches, some which include: workshop/presentation, observation/feedback and inquiry/research. These approaches are integrated with one another to address our instructional focus, current data trends, teachers' learning styles, student/teacher needs and teacher capacity. Our goal is to assist our teachers to become reflective practitioners in their pedagogy, in addition to building their capacity to self-monitor and evaluate practice as part of effective instruction.

Our professional development is built on the following three ideals:
Content determined by our instructional focus and teacher/student needs;
Context embedded in daily teacher practice and supported by administration' and
Process linked to observed classroom practice, providing opportunities for reflection and collaboration with colleagues .

Content
Our professional development sessions are aligned and determined the following:
collaborative effort of teachers, administrators, and support staff;
student needs based on measurable data that includes a variety of assessment tools (as well as standardized test scores, and classroom assessments); and
on best-practice research on teaching and learning.

Context
We understand that our framework for professional development is crucial for its success. It is our belief that professional development rests in a philosophy that supports inquiry, reflection, the pursuit of new knowledge, problem solving, new approaches, and assessment of the results.

Our instructional team and cabinet ensures that our professional development efforts are aligned with and support the instructional initiatives of the district and New York City.

Thus, we are participants in our professional development plan, assisting with problem solving, nurturing collaboration and collegiality, and dispelling the notion of teacher isolation. We hold teachers accountable for improvement. Teachers are recognized for their efforts as it relates to the implementation new instructional strategies. When necessary, the provision of resources, funding, and time allocation for learning, planning and collaboration are provided. Teachers are duly acknowledged for their achievements

and accomplishments.

Process
Our process of professional development is guided by the following:
a variety of approaches including individually-guided activities, workshop/presentation model to introduce new instructional strategies or refine prior skills, observation of and feedback regarding classroom instruction (via snapshot, clinical observation, teacher to teacher inter-visitation);
support for implementation including peer inter-visitation/coaching, collegial support groups, mentoring and study groups;
opportunities for teacher collaboration: common planning time, peer study groups, peer coaching, model/master teachers and lab classrooms, leadership teams and teacher teams; and
activities aligned to SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely), theory, demonstration, practice, feedback, and coaching, follow-up and support.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy of Middle School 216 is derived from team cohesion, shared values/beliefs and sustainable growth with excellence and integrity. Our principal is an instructional leader who fosters and emboldens teacher leadership. He is designated as a "Master Principal" by the New York City Schools' Chancellor, a mentor to students, parents and other administrators. His role as a leader is multi-faceted, comprised of various duties and activities ensuring excellence by all constituency groups. His leadership touch is evident in our school's instructional systems/structures, school programming, teacher selection, staff placement, assistant principal coaching/mentoring, lead teacher coaching/mentoring, academy creation, external partnerships, and school tone.

The assistant principals of Ryan supervise vertically and horizontally, each overseeing one of our three academies (Law & Justice, Media Arts, and Scientific Exploration) as well as content specific departments. Each assistant principal is responsible and accountable for instruction in one of our core content areas (English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies). Having all served previously in the role of Instructional Coach and/or Staff Developer, each assistant principal has had extensive experience in training teachers and designing professional development. All assistant principals deliver high quality professional development to teachers and support staff throughout the year on best instructional practices. Additionally, each receives weekly professional development from our principal to hone their administrative skills.

MS216's school structure has several components. Teacher leadership is celebrated as part of our high performing learning culture. Our Instructional Team is comprised of our principal, four assistant principals, teacher union leader, model teachers, and teachers from each department. Ryan's instructional team meets on a regular basis, including bi-annual off-site retreats, to plan, develop, and assess our professional development goals and objectives. All team members volunteer to facilitate professional development workshops for our instructional staff throughout the school year. The core value that instructional experts can be found in our school permeates through our staff, as evidenced by over 90% of teachers regularly assisting other teachers in pedagogical growth.

Within the school schedule each department has a designated time frame during the week to meet with their Instructional Grade Team (IGT). Teams are grade and content specific (i.e. 8th grade ELA). During IGT time, each team has the opportunity to plan, discuss, and work collaboratively on lessons, units, and review student work. Consistent weekly time is placed in the program for teachers to create and adjust curriculum with the overall goal of improving Ryan students' aptitude and academic achievement.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Ryan's success is built on three core valued pillars, which includes effectively utilizing a sound instructional core, developing master practitioners, and most importantly adhering to an impregnable systems and structures model.

Instructional Core
It is our credence that teacher effectiveness is in direct alignment with student achievement and progress. In virtually all core discipline areas, we ensure an engaging, rigorous, and coherent state of the art curricula, which has been created and designed internally. This high-level curricula is a living document driven by a shared belief that all students can and will learn under our tutelage. By closely analyzing both student and teacher data through the means of formative and summative assessments, we are able to adjust our pedagogical approaches to meet the multifaceted needs of all learners. Instructional strategies employed for academic success include:
designing differentiated tasks within lessons;
infusing the use of electronic devices and tools including, Google Classroom, iPads, MacBooks, Google Chromebooks, Plickers, swivels, Dash and Dot robots, 3D printers, and other tools; and
making real-world connections via student-led classroom debates, facilitating Socratic Seminar discussions framed around topical events, testing hypotheses through experiments, constructing 3D prosthetics through technology, and building partnerships with neighboring colleges and universities through field trips.

Developing Master Practitioners
At Ryan, it is has been a normal practice to develop the leadership capacity of our teachers. Approximately 10% of our instructors are currently designated as Model Teachers. These educators are equipped with the mastery skill set needed to help promote the mission of our instructional team. Their classrooms are used as instructional lab sites and they have been charged with the role of sharing their expertise through coaching, mentoring, and spearheading professional development learning opportunities. This significant factor largely contributes to the overall success of our students.

Systems and Structures
Ryan's systems and structures have been established to foster and cultivate a professional learning environment for all. The leadership team works closely alongside all school-wide constituents to ensure that procedures are regularly transparent and monitored. These established practices include, but are not limited to, teacher teaming, collaborative planning, Looking at Student Work (LASW) protocols in each discipline, and student-centered classroom environments with technological access for all. These measures are put in place to guarantee that all school community members are in sync with the overall mission, which is to stimulate viable student growth and success.