

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. Khurshid Abdul-Mutakabbir  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Maspeth High School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 54-40 74th Street  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Elmhurst NY 11373-4702  
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Queens

Telephone (718) 803-7100 Fax (718) 803-7105

Web site/URL https://www.maspethhighschool.org E-mail kmutakabbir@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\*Mr. Fred Walsh  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail FWalsh@schools.nyc.gov

District Name CUNY Affinity Group (NYCDOE Geo. District 24) Tel. \_\_\_\_\_  
(212) 356-3754

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

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

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

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

## **Part I – Eligibility Certification**

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

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2018 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2012 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, or 2017.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
9. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
10. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
11. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
12. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2017-2018) unless otherwise stated.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 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:
- Urban or large central city
  - Suburban
  - Rural or small city/town
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2017 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
<b>PreK</b>	0	0	0
<b>K</b>	0	0	0
<b>1</b>	0	0	0
<b>2</b>	0	0	0
<b>3</b>	0	0	0
<b>4</b>	0	0	0
<b>5</b>	0	0	0
<b>6</b>	0	0	0
<b>7</b>	0	0	0
<b>8</b>	0	0	0
<b>9</b>	191	239	430
<b>10</b>	146	122	268
<b>11</b>	122	131	253
<b>12 or higher</b>	129	116	245
<b>Total Students</b>	588	608	1196

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 17 % Asian
  - 1 % Black or African American
  - 43 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 32 % 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: <01%

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

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

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	1
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	5
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	6
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	1046
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	<.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	<01

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

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):  
Albanian, Bengali, Chinese, Mandarin, Nepali, Pilipino, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 63 %  
Total number students who qualify: 758

8. Students receiving special education services: 16 %  
188 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>4</u> Autism                  | <u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>27</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>99</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>53</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>1</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: 7
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	4
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	64
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	24
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	8

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 17:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	92%	92%	93%	93%	94%
High school graduation rate	98%	99%	97%	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.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	237
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	60%
Enrolled in a community college	22%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	1%
Found employment	4%
Joined the military or other public service	12%
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.

Maspeth High School implements a classical, college preparatory curriculum that will train our students to become critical thinkers and life-long learners with strong character.

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

Maspeth High School is open to all rising 9th grade students in the New York City Department of Education. Students are randomly chosen to attend with first priority given to residents of District 24; secondary priority is given to residents of the borough of Queens.

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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Maspeth High School was founded in 2011 by current principal. Originally co-located on the Queens Metropolitan Campus, the school moved to its permanent home during its second year. The school was built to serve the families of New York City's Geographic District 24, which includes Corona, Elmhurst, Glendale, Jackson Heights, Maspeth, Middle Village, Ridgewood, and Woodside.

Maspeth High School's classical education model is based on a language-intensive and inquiry-centered approach to education that has existed for over 2,500 years and produced great minds such as Socrates, Copernicus, Galileo, Shakespeare, Goethe, Newton, and Einstein. Our faculty bases their instruction on the development of reading, writing, computation, problem solving and public speaking skills. Our students are taught to question the world that surrounds them and to set only the highest academic, social and physical expectations for themselves. To achieve these goals, Maspeth High School students participate regularly in Socratic seminars, debates, declamations, and inquiry-based laboratory experiments.

The principal designed our school to utilize a distributive leadership model, and since the school's inception teacher leaders and teams have been major contributors to student success. Two roles of considerable significance are those of department leaders and grade level leaders. Each academic department annually elects a peer as the department chair, who then reports to a supervising assistant principal. Department chairs are responsible for leading weekly professional development for their team, and ensuring vertical alignment of the curriculum. Grade level leaders are also elected annually by their peers. Grade level teams meet weekly during the school day to discuss students of concern and to ensure horizontal alignment of the curriculum across disciplines.

In addition to leading teacher teams, teachers assume numerous roles throughout the school which are often reserved for administrators. These roles include deans, coordinators of student activities, programmers, testing coordinators, and mentor coordinators. All Maspeth High School teachers are provided the opportunity to demonstrate their capacity for leadership in the aforementioned roles, or by serving as the advisor of a club or coach of a sports team. This dedication to shared leadership has fostered a sense of collective ownership and commitment to the success of all students.

Beginning with the 2016-17 school year, we implemented a dean's assistant program to provide students with the opportunity to assume a leadership role in the school. These students are selected and trained by the school's deans to conduct peer mediation and provide administrative support within the dean's office. This year we introduced our P.E. Leaders program; students who are accepted into this program enroll in a preparation period with our physical education department chair that prepares them to co-facilitate physical education classes. Also new this year is the role of advisory leaders, senior students assigned to facilitate advisory groups of underclassmen. Advisory leaders guide their groups in team-building activities and conversations about issues taking place within the school and at home. The advisory program is structured to provide freshmen and sophomores with social and emotional guidance, whereas junior advisory groups focus on college and career readiness.

One of our school's primary goals is to provide every graduate with a transition plan for post-secondary education, employment or both. The school's first graduating class received their diplomas at the conclusion of the 2014-15 school year; 97% of students in that senior class graduated with at least a New York State Regents diploma. In the following years, the school has maintained a graduation rate of greater than 97%, while increasing its college readiness score by 24%. The school has made several strategic decisions to improve college and career readiness for our students, from shifting the structure of our advisory to focus on preparing students for a post-secondary transition to changing our support network to the City University of New York Affinity Group - a collaborative of schools in the New York City Department of Education with a shared commitment toward college and career readiness.

Since its inception, Maspeth High School has been the recipient of numerous honors, both nationally and regionally. Maspeth High School was recognized as a bronze medal school by U.S. News and World Report during the 2014-15 school-year and is designated as a silver medal school beginning with the 2016-17

school year. The school has also been recognized by local media outlets, such as the New York Post, which designated the school as number 21 of its annual "Top 40 Public High Schools in NYC" feature in 2017. The school has also been the recipient of New York City's Green Apple Award from 2012-2016, recognizing the considerable efforts of our students and staff to minimize waste and conserve energy; the school is also the first-ever recipient of the city's Zero Waste Award (2017) and was honored as a "Respect For All" model school for the past two years (2015-2017).



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

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

Maspeth High School employs a classical curriculum built on two pillars. The first pillar of our classical education model is language-focused: learning is accomplished through the study of words, written and spoken, rather than through images. The second pillar is adapted from the trivium - grammar (the art of interpreting symbols), dialectics (the art of reasoning), and rhetoric (the art of expression). The trivium is the structure of every subject and discipline. To the classical mind, all knowledge is interrelated and derived from history. Eventually, our students develop an understanding of the role of their lives, families, and communities as part of the broad landscape of human existence and achievement.

We believe that a student who has engaged in English language arts, Mathematics, Science, and History for all four years of high school will be well equipped for post-secondary success. As such, all students are encouraged to enroll in the core disciplines in each year of their high school career.

English language arts (ELA) courses guide students toward mastery of the skills and standards associated with the Common Core curriculum through the lens of classical texts. Throughout their literary journey students at our school demonstrate their comprehension of each unit through participation in Socratic seminars and declamations. In 9th grade, students explore Classical Mythology through texts such as *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. In 10th grade, students are prepared to take the New York State Regents exam through the study of Philosophy and related texts. In 11th grade, students engage with the literary works of classical American authors and in their final year of study, students complete their classical journey with British Literature. Students also have the opportunity to enroll in AP Literature and Composition and AP Language and Composition throughout their high school career. The ELA department concludes each year by hosting a school-wide declamation competition.

Mathematics is our primary forum for teaching dialectics. Our teachers push our students to view mathematics as a method for logic and reasoning with applications in their daily lives. The mathematics department aims to dispel the stereotype that mathematics is only understood by some. All students are expected to follow the New York State mathematics sequence of Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II in their first three years of high school. Students who complete the sequence are provided with the opportunity to enroll in AP Calculus, a Pre-Calculus course sponsored by St. John's University, or Advanced Algebra with Financial Applications. Students are encouraged to take four years of mathematics in order to ensure college readiness. Each year, the mathematics department also hosts a school-wide Pi Day to promote mathematics through activities such as a competitive recitation of the digits in Pi.

All Science classes are scheduled to include a double period lab once per week in order to complete inquiry-based experiential laboratory experiments. Students are offered a wide array of science courses throughout their high school career; many choose to follow a traditional Science track of Biology, Chemistry, and Physics over their first three years of high school. In their senior year, students are given the option of four different Advanced Placement courses including AP Biology, AP Chemistry, AP Physics or AP Environmental Science. Students who choose not to enroll in an Advanced Placement course choose either Earth Science or College Astronomy sponsored by St. John's University. Additionally, each year the science department hosts a school-wide science fair in which students present their innovations and investigations of the world surrounding them.

Students begin their high school journey in history by enrolling in two years of Global History and Geography or AP World History. In 11th Grade, while students are exploring American Literature in their ELA course, they are also learning American History or AP United States History. This horizontal alignment allows for a more coherent structure and the opportunity for students to explore the content with greater attention to detail. Students in 12th grade have the option to take Government, AP Comparative Government, or AP United States Government, and Economics. The primary form of assessment across the history curriculum is a debate; debates are organized using various formats including team debates, Parliamentary debates, Lincoln-Douglas debates, and presidential debates.

Our curriculum supports college and career readiness by focusing on foundational skills that students require to be successful in their post-secondary endeavors. Our students use higher order thinking skills daily, as each lesson is built on the foundations of Webb's Depth of Knowledge and Bloom's Taxonomy. We challenge our students with daily writing prompts, class discussions and assessments of mastery. We also utilize resources such as career interest inventories, learning style assessments and self-discovery tools, such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, to guide our students toward making informed choices about their lives beyond Maspeth High School.

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

Maspeth High School's fine arts program consists of visual arts, chorus, string orchestra, classical ballet, and theater. Theater classes incorporate both elements of dramatic performance and technical theater, and student productions have included a range of classical works to more contemporary pieces, including *Lysistrata*, *Cabaret*, and *The Crucible*. In addition to acting, students produce all other facets of each show -- from designing and building sets to operating complex lighting and sound equipment. In addition to theater, the school's dance department stages annual performances of *The Nutcracker* in the winter and *Swan Lake* in the spring which are also student-produced. The school's orchestra and choral performances typically occur in joint concerts in the winter and again in the spring. The school's acapella group -- The Argonotes -- performs regularly at community events and school functions. Visual arts students have painted murals including replicas of famous works and original art throughout the school, and our students have had their work displayed at the Queens Museum and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The physical education and health department strives to develop healthy well-rounded students and to promote physical activity as a daily norm. The programs developed through the department are designed to promote physical and socio-emotional health that allow students to make well-informed, independent decisions regarding their health. Health courses introduced in the 9th grade provide students with a forum to examine the difficult transition between middle school and high school and prepare students with knowledge about self-care and nutrition. The physical education curriculum provides students of all abilities the opportunity to participate in a program that promotes a variety of sports and activities, while equipping them with exercises that can be replicated independently.

Foreign language is another strength of the school; considering the classical structure of the school, it was essential that one of the foreign languages offered was the study of Latin. Through a Latin language program, Maspeth High School students are equipped with a critical understanding of a classical language that served as the foundation for the majority of English words. Through the study of Latin, students are able to build their language skills and consequently enhance their English grammar skills, public-speaking capacity, and cultural understanding. Latin I students are able to explore translations of myths and stories that they are simultaneously learning in their Classical Mythology course, promoting cross-curricular studies. It is essential that students become well rounded in the culture and language that contributed to the growth of Western Civilization if they are to fulfill the school's vision of becoming leaders in the world. Similarly, in order to prepare students to enter an increasingly globalized world and economy, the introduction of the Mandarin curriculum provides students with the opportunity to study another unique classical language and culture. Through both language options, students are building a foundation of cultural competence and working to embrace different global traditions and cultures.

As a classical school, our approach to technology is that it should support the classical initiatives within the school. Each classroom is outfitted with the latest SMART Board technology, which provides teachers with the freedom to move around the room wirelessly while interacting with their presentations. Our science laboratories are designed to provide students with "hands-on" experiences and the most advanced technology possible. The school is currently in the process of acquiring a scanning electron microscope and will be one of the only schools in the New York City Area to offer such an experience to its students. Moreover, the school developed a library that is accessible to all students and serves as a resource for research and development of reading and writing skills. The library is open to all students during lunch periods and after school for students who need access to technology such as laptops, tablets, printers and desktop computers. The library also houses the school's writing center, which is staffed during student lunch

periods and provides an opportunity for students to receive non-evaluative feedback on their written assignments.

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

Maspeth High School is widely regarded throughout the New York City Department of Education as an exemplar in meeting the diverse learning needs of its students. Designated as an Instructional Co-Teaching Lab Site since 2015-16, we have opened our doors to other schools across the five boroughs in an effort to share best practices both inside and outside of the classroom. We believe it is essential to demonstrate successful models of co-teaching, differentiation, and resource adaptation to ensure that all learners are provided with equitable access to curriculum. Beginning with the normalization of shared educational jargon, our special education teachers have provided our staff, as well as those of our neighboring schools, with an extensive pedagogical skill set for adapting lessons to meet the needs of students.

Our instructional support services department, previously known as the special education department, also maintains a scholarship tracker for all students to determine the progress of students and identify areas in which students may require academic interventions. Through the collaboration of academic departments, the use of adapted instructional materials and accommodations to support students are frequently implemented and shared to ensure that students are equipped with the tools to progress appropriately. Collaboratively, through grade level meetings, school cabinet meetings, and a shared electronic resource bank, the use of differentiated materials including outlines, visual materials, and assessments are used to ensure high levels of student learning and achievement.

Our teachers administer quarterly Interim Assessments which are used to measure student mastery of skills and content across the curriculum. Each marking period, one week is designated for the administration and scoring of these interim assessments which is meant to replicate a college exam week. Before the test is administered, each teacher submits a predictive analysis of the questions on the exam. Teachers align each question to New York State and Common Core curriculum standards and hypothesize as to the level of difficulty. Once the exam administration is complete, teachers analyze the data and complete a comprehensive action plan for the remaining weeks of the semester which include both whole class supports and more targeted interventions for individual students. Through this action plan, teachers are able to examine achievement gaps that exist between students and student subgroups to create actionable steps to implement intervention for students. During the 2016-17 school year, the school's leadership recruited teachers to take part in a think tank to refine the assessment process and create a shared understanding of best practices for data analysis and implementation of academic support services.

Maspeth High School also offers Advance Placement, SAT and New York State Regents academies in which students attend classes after school and on Saturdays that are designed to help close student achievement gaps and ensure that students are prepared for the most rigorous examinations of their high school careers. These academies are designed to not only provide extensive test preparation for specific examinations, but also to provide students with study skills that will help to prepare them for their post-secondary endeavors.

Our school is consistently evaluating its progress and setting new goals to increase student achievement and maintain a high level of excellence. Each summer, our leadership team meets for several weeks to review various data points from the New York State Education Department, New York City Department of Education, The College Board and our own internal data collection - including student surveys, parent surveys, teacher surveys, attendance data, grade books, and anecdotal teacher reports.

Maspeth High School's School Leadership Team (SLT), which is comprised of parent, student and staff representatives also review this data and sets goals for the school year across five categories - collaborative teachers, effective school leadership, rigorous instruction, strong family and community ties, and supportive environment. Collectively, the school leadership team develops the school's Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP), which helps guide the school throughout the upcoming school year. The SLT meets monthly to evaluate progress toward these goals and revise the CEP accordingly.



## **PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS**

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

Maspeth High School's administrative team is comprised of former teachers with extensive special education experience who share the fundamental belief that all students can learn; this belief system serves as the guiding principle for all decisions made at the school. As a school known for its high expectations, we are consistently striving to provide students with the most comprehensive supports to ensure their physical well-being and emotional and intellectual growth. At the forefront of this approach is the school's pupil personnel team, which is comprised of the school's student support personnel and meets weekly to discuss and evaluate the social and emotional needs of our students. The school employs two guidance counselors, a social worker, a psychologist, two speech and language therapists, a college counselor, two community associates and - through a partnership with Catholic Charities - two additional counselors.

Our administrative team also entrusts our teachers to assume significant responsibilities beyond the classroom. In addition to their teaching duties, teachers host office hours and meet with an advisory group weekly. Teachers also serve the school as coordinators of student activities, advisory coordinators, club advisors, class advisors and coaches. Our school's comprehensive after-school offerings ensure that a vast array of student interests are met, which creates opportunities for students to build strong bonds with their teachers outside of the classroom.

Our administrative team considers teacher professional development to be a top priority. The team has coordinated opportunities for the entire staff to engage in professional development opportunities within New York State and across the country. Since the school's inception, teachers have been provided the opportunity to attend conferences hosted by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, The School Reform Initiative, Thayer Leadership Academy at West Point, The Council for Exceptional Children, The National Science Teacher Association, The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, The Danielson Group, The Yale School of Management and The National Art Education Association, among many others.

As a school, we recognize the importance of a productive collaboration between union leadership and our administrative team to ensure a supportive culture in which teachers feel appreciated and respected as professionals. School leaders and teachers regularly solicit feedback through formal surveys, panel discussions, and informal meetings. Teachers are recognized for their achievements through our various social media outlets and ceremonies throughout the year. Maspeth High School's Parent-Teacher Association also contributes to teacher recognition, regularly hosting teacher appreciation gatherings.

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

Maspeth High School implements numerous structures to ensure communication and transparency with community members and encourages families to be active participants in the school community. Our school also utilizes multiple methods of communication to keep families apprised of their student's progress and needs. Our primary vehicle for school-to-family communication is Pupil Path, which provides families with real-time attendance and academic performance information. Our community associates communicate via phone to any family of a student who is absent for the day, and teachers maintain regular communication with the families of students who are struggling academically or socially. The school promotes events and communicates urgent information through phone, text message, and internet communication. Families also receive a bi-weekly newsletter - *Happening at Maspeth* - which highlights staff and student achievement and promotes upcoming events.

Our Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meets monthly to discuss and promote events taking place at the school. The PTA is also a forum by which our school provides parents with insight and training regarding issues within the school. Our guidance counselors, college counselor, teachers, and administrators have presented to parents on a wide array of topics from drug awareness to college applications. The PTA also collaborates with the school to plan events, including the school's annual student award ceremony and

teacher recognition celebrations.

We are also engaged in several strategic partnerships with organizations throughout New York City and the surrounding area. Our string orchestra students collaborate with Juilliard-trained performers as part of Ensemble Connect and have subsequently performed at New York's historic Carnegie Hall. Theater students have studied with Broadway performers and attended numerous Broadway shows as part of our partnerships with the Theatre Development Fund Open Doors and The Broadway League's Broadway Bridges programs. Our classical ballet students have been trained through the Alvin Ailey Dance partnership facilitated by our dance instructor and our choir director formed a partnership with his Alma-mater, Syracuse University, to perform a joint concert for the families, students and staff of our school.

At the beginning of the 2017-18 school year, we partnered with the New York Jets to recognize the "Upstander of the Week," a student who has demonstrated leadership in promoting a safe and healthy school environment. By the end of the season, sixteen students were recognized through the collaboration.

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

Maspeth High School was built on the philosophy that a growth mindset is an essential component of education.

In the weeks preceding their first school day at our school, all newly hired teachers are provided with rigorous professional development. Over the course of three days, all new hires are taught the culture of our school in seminars led by existing school teachers and administrators. This intensive training is followed by two whole staff professional development days, in which new teachers and returning staff are unified through team building activities and a comprehensive review of goals and expectations for the year.

Throughout the year, our teachers are given the latitude to request to attend any professional development conference that they feel will help improve their practice. Our administrators also actively work with teachers to identify workshops which best fit their needs inside the classroom. Teachers are then expected to provide their peers with training based on their experiences at these conferences. This practice, which is highly encouraged, helps ensure that new and innovative pedagogy is shared throughout the staff.

During the city's Chancellor Conference Days teachers are given the opportunity to present what they have learned externally to their peers. Each Chancellor's Conference Day follows the same schedule in which the school's leadership team conducts a meeting in the morning, followed by a whole-staff seminar. The remainder of the day is designed to provide teachers with the option of attending the peer workshop which best fits their needs. These workshops are designed by teachers based on their own identified strengths within the classroom. At the conclusion of each Chancellor's Conference Day, the school's administrators solicit feedback from the staff and shares this information with the presenters.

During weekly grade level team meetings, teachers have developed professional development series in which they encourage the exchange of best practices and ideas. Each week, teachers sign up to present a professional development workshop in an area of expertise. These professional development workshops include implementation of Universal Design of Learning, increasing authentic questioning, meeting the social and emotional needs of LGBT students, and setting behavioral norms within your classroom, among others. These workshops have directly improved teacher pedagogy leading to an increase in student-centered activities and higher levels of authentic engagement.

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

Since its inception, Maspeth High School's leadership philosophy has been firmly grounded in a distributive leadership model. In an effort to ensure that the voices of all stakeholders of the school community are heard and represented, the school has developed numerous committees and teams to ensure the success of all students. Ingrained in the school culture is the belief that all members of the community are responsible for the achievement of students and that, as a team, we are most effective in advancing our school vision of creating life-long learners.

The manifestation of the distributive leadership model found at our school is most evident through the creation of teacher teams and quasi-administrative roles for teachers. Teachers are elected to grade level leader and department leader positions by teams of their peers. In addition to these roles, teachers are appointed by our administrators to serve as deans, testing coordinators, coordinators of student activities, programmers, and committee chairs. Teacher leaders meet once a month with school administrators to ensure alignment of the school's vision, measure the progress of shared goals and participate in a forum for school improvement.

In addition to the numerous contributions of teachers to the development of the school, student voice has been essential in the school's decision making. Our student body has governed the formation of over 40 clubs and 27 Public School Athletic League (PSAL) sanctioned sports. Student Government, which advocated for and was granted equal representation on the School Leadership Team (SLT) -- New York City High Schools are only required to admit two student representatives to the SLT, our school currently has five student members -- is directly responsible for the addition of a gender-neutral restroom in our school, and has petitioned the PSAL to provide gender-balanced sports programs. Students continue to advocate for projects -- such as upgrades to our auditorium and dance studio -- that will benefit future generations of Maspeth High School students.

The distribution of responsibilities among the staff and students creates an environment in which all stakeholders feel invested in the success of our school. From Maspeth High School's foundation of shared leadership and accountability, students, families, and staff have collectively built a thriving school that provides all students with the opportunity to become leaders in their chosen fields.

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

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Maspeth High School was founded on the belief that teachers are skilled professionals whose voices should shape school policy and procedure. As such, teachers are entrusted with responsibilities which are often relegated to administrators in other schools. The school culture developed at Maspeth High School is one in which students, and their well-being, are at the forefront of every educator's professional experience. By placing its trust in teachers, the school leadership team has established a community of educational leaders and innovators. Teachers have embraced the freedom to build their own curriculum and to experiment with the latest developments in pedagogy. By focusing on the student experience, the staff has collectively developed a shared set of practices and a willingness to solicit feedback from both their peers and supervisors. At its heart, Maspeth High School is truly a community of learners from school leaders to students, there is an understanding that we can always strive to be a better version of ourselves.

As part of this effort to constantly improve, teachers have assumed more formal leadership roles within the school. As of the 2017-18 school year, two Maspeth High School teachers were promoted to become assistant principals within the school, two teachers were nominated and approved as New York City Department of Education Model Teachers, and two teachers were enrolled in post-graduate programs to become school leaders. As a school that promotes leadership from within, Maspeth High School has remained committed to its core values of truth, beauty and goodness and its vision that our students will become leaders in all fields of personal endeavors through academia and to be physically, emotionally and intellectually healthy with determination and compassion.

The effect of Maspeth High School's shared leadership has trickled down to students who have impressively assumed leadership roles within the community and across the country. Maspeth High School students have been the voice of LGBT rights, lobbied with local politicians for equal gender sports offerings, raised funding and awareness for charitable causes -- including the March of Dimes, Women in Need, and the construction of a library in Ghana -- and achieved numerous honors from city championships for boys varsity basketball and varsity wrestling, to a Gates Millennium Scholarship and a Yale University scholarship.