

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2019 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. Andrew Ishibashi

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

Official School Name Lowell Alternative High School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1101 Eucalyptus Dr

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

San Francisco City                      CA State                      94132-1401 Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County California (CA)

Telephone (415) 759-2730

Fax (415) 759-2742

Web site/URL https://beta.sfusd.edu/school/lowell-high-school

E-mail swettd@sfusd.edu

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\*Dr. Vincent Matthews

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

District Name San Francisco Unified School District Tel. (415) 241-6121

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. Stevon Cook

(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. 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, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2019 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.
3. 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.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2013 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, or 2018.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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 (2018-2019) unless otherwise stated.

### DISTRICT

- Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
  - 72 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 13 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 15 High schools
  - 26 K-12 schools

126 TOTAL

### SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

- Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
  - Urban or large central city
  - Suburban
  - Rural or small city/town
- Number of students as of October 1, 2018 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	281	415	696
10	308	381	689
11	306	404	710
12 or higher	284	394	678
<b>Total Students</b>	1179	1594	2773

\*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 50 % Asian
  - 2 % Black or African American
  - 10 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 6 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 17 % White
  - 14 % 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 2017 – 2018 school year: <1%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	0
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	15
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	15
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	2730
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	<.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	<1

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

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):  
Arabic, Armenian, Bosnian, Burmese, Cantonese, Cebuano (Visayan), Chamorro (Guamanian), Chaozhou (Chiuchow), Chinese Other, English, Farsi (Persian), Filipino (Pilipino or Tagalog), French, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Khmer (Cambodian), Korean, Mandarin (Putonghua), Other Asian, Other non-English languages, Portuguese, Russian, Samoan, Spanish, Swedish, Thai, Taishanese, Turkish, Urdu, Vietnamese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 37%  
Total number students who qualify: 1035

8. Students receiving special education services: 4 %  
119 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>58</u> Autism                  | <u>3</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>1</u> Deafness                 | <u>3</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness           | <u>14</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay      | <u>20</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>4</u> Emotional Disturbance    | <u>46</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>9</u> Hearing Impairment       | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>30</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>5</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:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	5
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	123
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.	28
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	12

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 34:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Daily student attendance	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
High school graduation rate	98%	98%	97%	97%	98%

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 2018.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	672
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	88%
Enrolled in a community college	9%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	1%
Other	2%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes X No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2012

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

To encourage individuals who attend to contribute their skills, creativity, and intellect benefitting both themselves and the wider community of which they are a part.

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

Student admissions are based on three pathways or bands through which students may receive an admissions offer to Lowell. The purpose of the three bands is to ensure that Lowell maintains its academic rigor and to increase student diversity. In pursuant of student diversity, Lowell has a recruitment committee that actively and vigorously promote recruitment activities so that students throughout San Francisco will be made aware of the challenging educational opportunity presented by Lowell and feel encouraged to apply.

To apply to Lowell, students must provide proof of San Francisco residency and fill out an application along with a personal statement. The personal statement is used to expand the scope of information available to a school-based committee and principal in making determinations under Bands Two and Three and will not be given point value as a writing sample. Students applying to Lowell fall into one of three bands of candidates, each with its own set of criteria for selection:

1. Band One: Academic Criteria (70% of available seats). Applicants earn points for Grade Point Average (GPA) in the four core subjects of English, Math, Social Studies, and Science (with World Language as an acceptable substitute if no Science grades are available). The GPA is from two semesters of the seventh grade and the first semester of the eighth grade. Applicants also earn points for California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) scores in reading and math.

2. Band Two: School-Based Committee Criteria (15% of available seats). Applicants receive socioeconomic points for qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch, living in public housing, and/or belonging to a family participating in the CalWorks program. Students can also earn points for English Language Learner (ELL) status, leadership, community involvement, demonstrated ability to overcome hardship, and various types of extenuating circumstances. Students must have a minimum GPA of 3.0. Band Two candidates are assessed and recommended by a school site committee.

3. Band Three: Criteria for Principals of Underrepresented Schools (15% of available seats). Principals of middle schools that have been historically underrepresented at Lowell apply Band Two criteria to recommend students for admission. Principals send the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) Educational Placement Center their ranked list of all Lowell applicants from that school with the District's standardized scoring sheets for Band Three for each applicant. The SFUSD Educational Placement Center combine the principals' list with offers from the other bands and simultaneously send out all Lowell offer letters. Principals only recommend students who will succeed academically at Lowell.

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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Lowell High School is a magnet school accepting students from throughout San Francisco in pursuit of a rigorous academic education. Underlying Lowell's philosophy of education is the resolve that the young people of San Francisco continue to enjoy their traditional option of attending a college preparatory public high school. The emphasis requires an instructional program that promotes sound intellectual and aesthetic values while providing opportunities for self-discipline and individual decision-making. Lowell endeavors to create a just and equitable society where individual responsibilities are clearly defined and personal rights guaranteed. It endorses the concept of an integrated school where cultural and social diversity enrich the lives of all students.

Founded in 1856, Lowell is the oldest public high school in the west with a current student body of 2,784, which is as socially, economically, ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse as San Francisco. In addition, 37 percent of our student body are eligible for free or reduced meals.

Lowell students are encouraged to expand their horizon by joining any of the 34 sports teams (24 varsity, 10 junior varsity teams). Our Lowell Cardinals won 17 varsity championships and eight junior varsity championships last year. Both our girls' soccer and basketball teams won the Northern California State Championships! Students are also encouraged to join over 90 active clubs and service organizations which are all created and managed by our students. For those students interested in performance, there is Jazz band, the fall semester play, and the spring semester musical productions. As indicated by these extracurricular activities, Lowell provides a multitude of programs to nurture the interests and passions of our entire student body.

Adhering to our philosophy, Lowell is committed to equity and social justice by providing four consultancy programs. These programs were created for the purpose of closing the achievement gap, building community, and supporting our students academically and social-emotionally. Lowell is also in its first year of implementing the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program, which continues to support students academically. In addition, we have our Wellness Center, which provides all our students a confidential space with a multitude of support services at no cost. Lowell's Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) and Lowell's Alumni Association (LAA) also play a vital role in supporting the school community and maintaining its excellence.

Lowell is ranked in the top 10 high schools globally for the number of Advanced Placement (AP) exams administered. In the 2017-18 school year, Lowell offered 30 AP subjects. A total of 4,145 AP exams were taken by 1,616 Lowell students, of which 1,446 students received scores of three or above. The total percentage of Lowell students with scores of 3 or above is 85.5%, which is 21.8% above the California scores and 24.2% above Global scores. In addition, this year we had 11 PSAT National Merit Finalists, 11 PSAT National Merit Semifinalist, and 58 National Merit Commended Students. Also, Lowell has a college attendance rate commensurate with its status as an academically rigorous magnet school: 97% of Lowell graduates from the Class of 2018 planned on matriculating to a college or university this year with the other 3% either joining the military, enrolling in a trade school, or taking a "gap year."

Lowell High School is one of the highest performing public high schools in California. We are ranked in the top 100 nationally and #11 in California by U.S. News & World Report. Lowell has also been honored as a Gold Ribbon School, and nine times as a California Distinguished School. Lowell has also received the Exemplary Visual and Performing Arts Award twice. Lowell has been honored with the National Blue Ribbon four times. This recognition has increased our profile in the community. The 3,000 students and families attend Lowell's annual Eighth Grader's Night, as well as the approximately 2,000 new applicants each year, reflects the community's support for a high-performing school that offers a rigorous college-preparatory curriculum and a wide range of social and growth opportunities.

Lowell alumni are a very distinguished group, among whom are Nobel Laureates; California State governors; assemblymen and senators; a US Supreme Court justice; educators, world-renowned authors, artists, and actors; four-star generals and decorated admirals; and founders and CEOs of some of the most

successful companies in the world.

Our alumni and current students' achievements and school pride confirm that Lowell plays an important role in the education of San Francisco's young people.

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

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

#### **1a. Reading/English language arts:**

Lowell's English Department instructs students in reading, writing, listening, and speaking using primarily a literary analysis approach. All students take 9th and 10th grade English, survey courses which utilize novels, short stories, poetry, and expository texts to give students foundations of literary analysis and argumentative writing. At the 11th and 12th grade levels, students select four semesters of English from a variety of specialized courses (e.g. Shakespeare, Literature and Philosophy, and Film as Literature). Students in 11th grade must take a course on Critical Writing, which uses as a model, the California State University Expository Reading and Writing Program. This course prepare students for the rigors of college level writing. Finally, Lowell offers a variety of AP English courses for 11th and 12th grades.

Our English teachers use a combination of direct instruction, student-led discussions, and projects to teach the fundamentals of English. Technology is one tool we utilize to aid in instruction. Students use Chromebooks for in-class writing and the completion of visual projects. Teachers have incorporated multimedia projects such as short films and podcasting into their curricula.

The department uses the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) and formal assessments to revise and reconstruct our approach to teaching. In addition, data is used to drive professional development in order to establish best practices.

#### **1b. Mathematics:**

To meet the demands of our diverse student population with varying mathematical abilities and interests, Lowell's Math Department offers Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Precalculus, Precalculus Honors, and Algebra II + Precalculus (compression course). In addition to these core math courses, we provide five AP math courses: AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, AP Statistics, AP Computer Science, and AP Principles of Computer Science. Our core math courses prepares students not only for these AP courses, but also for the demands of STEM programs of our most elite and challenging colleges and universities. To help our students succeed in math, we use explicit instruction, model different approaches to problem-solving, have students practice these approaches in groups, and then have students explain how they derive their responses to the whole class.

Our core math courses contain, but are not limited to the California Common Core Standards of Mathematics. Our comprehensive curriculum results in our students being highly successful in their Math/Computer Science AP exams and SBAC testing. We select new schedules every semester and thus able to identify and support our students who are struggling by placing them into our off-semester program. This program provides our students with smaller class sizes and an environment that allows for them to revisit and relearn the necessary skills and concepts to stay on track for graduation.

Our student body of 2784 are enrolled in a total of 3030 math courses, plus an additional 490 in computer courses. Students frequently take two math courses simultaneously. Although SFUSD has eliminated Algebra 1 in all its middle schools, we have made it possible for students to reach Calculus by their senior year; either through doubling up on math courses or by taking our Algebra 2 + Precalculus (compression course).

#### **1c. Science:**

Lowell's Science department has adopted the new Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) through the implementation of SFUSD Science Core Curriculum. We are currently implementing the NGSS standards for Biology and Physics. NGSS Chemistry will be implemented in the Fall of 2019 according to SFUSD's NGSS three-year model.

Various strategies, such as differentiated instruction and scaffolding, are embedded in core content instruction to allow for student success. In addition to hands-on experimentation, the science department also uses technology in experimentation, data collection, and research through the use of Chromebooks and MacBooks. Teachers also use slideshows and Google classroom, as well as email to communicate with students and stakeholders.

Students will be evaluated on their proficiency in science from these three core NGSS science courses via the California Science Test (CAST). The CAST is not operational until the 2019-2020 school year; at which time, we will have data to drive our instructional practice. The department continues to look at D/F grade percentages to address performance gaps in underrepresented groups and has made improvements to assist those groups. The department also correlates AP exam scores and aggregated grade point average in science to assess student learning and understanding.

Science teachers avail themselves of the professional development opportunities provided by SFUSD, the California Science Teachers Association, the National Science Teachers Association, and College Board to continue to learn how to implement NGSS in their classrooms. Teachers in the core science classrooms collaborate on curriculum and in some instances common final exams. The department meets regularly to communicate the strategies being implemented within the department to teach the NGSS core curriculum.

#### **1d. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement**

The mission of the Lowell Social Studies Department is to help students discover and refine their understanding of history and the social sciences through standards-based curriculum. The department has articulated curricula and skills goals for each semester of every social studies course offered. Course curricula and skills development are from three main sources:

1. CA State Framework for Social Studies for each of the core courses (World History, United States History, American Democracy, and Economics) required for graduation.
2. SFUSD's mandated LGBTQ inclusion, Ethnic Studies curricula, and English Language learning strategies.
3. College Board's AP curricula for elective AP courses offered in the department: European History, World History, Human Geography, U.S. History, Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, U.S. Government and Politics, Comparative Government and Politics, and Psychology.

Lowell's Social Studies Department incorporates the standards above with its own articulation of additional curricula and skills. Throughout the year, subject teams discuss goals for each semester and evaluate best practices to achieve these goals. The department has created a tiered instructional process for skills building for each course. For example, in the ninth grade World History class, students learn Cornell note-taking method, understand point of view, use effective oral and digital presentations, evaluate primary and secondary sources, and defend a thesis. By senior year, students will have competency in media literacy, data analysis, and application to real world issues.

In addition to formative and summative assessments in the classrooms, the department continues to use data from AP scores and analyses from multiple years to determine our strengths and weaknesses in curricula to build a better learning experience for our students. The department also examines the State's English Language and English Learners' assessment data to determine which students need extra help in language development and comprehension.

#### **1e. For secondary schools:**

Each of Lowell High School's departments has identified the skills to be taught within their subject areas in order to support college readiness. For example, within the Science Department, a special program is designated to give students the opportunity to intern at University of California San Francisco (UCSF)

laboratories over the summer. This program has produced over 60 professional scientific papers and students from this program are recruited by elite colleges and universities.

**1f. For schools that offer preschool for three- and four-year old students:**

**2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

1. Lowell's Visual and Performing Arts department (VAPA) provides an opportunity for students to engage in a sequential standards-based arts education from beginning levels to AP. Lowell inspires and supports students in becoming joyful and disciplined young artists and life-long arts appreciators. Nearly 1200 students in grades 9-12 are enrolled in 34 sections of arts classes this year. In addition, hundreds apply their talents in extracurricular arts activities, such as concerts, school plays and musicals. A total of 34 VAPA courses are offered to our students such as: Arts, Ceramics, Photography, Band, Dance, Guitar, Orchestra, Piano, Vocal Music, Theater, AP Music Theory, and AP Studio Art.

2. Over 1000 students continue to take advantage of the physical education electives offered, such as weight-training, swimming, yoga, etc. Our department's mission is to provide equal opportunity to all students, concentrating on physical development in the areas of strength, flexibility, coordination, endurance, balance, agility, and range of motion. Lowell's diverse program provides students with the opportunity to develop individual skills and introduce new, enjoyable experiences for lifelong physical fitness and well-being. We provide information for knowledge-based learning in proper exercise techniques and practices, good nutritional habits, basic muscle anatomy, and elementary cardiovascular physiology. Rules of the game, game strategies, safety, and team building skills are emphasized for each unit and activity. Through health related fitness tests and portfolio assignments, students assess their personal general wellness level and understand the role it plays in developing an active lifestyle, focusing on healthy choices.

3. Lowell's World Language Department offers Mandarin, Spanish, French, Italian, Korean, Latin, Hebrew, and Japanese. We utilize a 3-B approach to learning a language: Bilingual, Biliterate, and Bicultural. Students learn to communicate in the target language in culturally appropriate ways by using four basic skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Teachers employ a variety of student-centered activities, such as choral responses, dialogues with peers, and skit presentations. Students learn and practice receiving, formulating, and sending real information in the target language. In addition, Lowell offers four AP World Language electives: Chinese, Japanese, Spanish Language and Spanish Literature, as well as ten Honors courses.

4. Lowell continues its mission to prepare students for the 21st century college and career by supporting technology throughout our curriculum. A steering committee consisting of an administrator, the Library Media Specialist, and the IT Specialist oversees allocations from school site funds and alumni donations. They serve specific department needs and implement a master plan to deploy technology throughout the school thus, creating a more modern, collaborative, and digital learning environment.

The library supports the school's mission to provide equitable access to technology with a drop-in computer lab. Librarians collaborate with teachers to ensure all students master effective strategies to be able to navigate an online environment, gaining a solid foundation in research skills. The library also celebrates the transformational growth that comes from making free reading a regular part of a student's life.

5. Lowell's Plan Ahead is a schoolwide interdepartmental coordinated effort to ensure that all of our 9th graders receive special skills that addresses college and career readiness. Each department has designed curriculum to address skills such as: building resumés, writing cover letters, mock interviews, budgeting, study skills, oral presentation, and other academic proficiencies that prepares students for to postsecondary success.

### **3. Special Populations:**

There are 119 students with an Individual Educational Program (IEP) who attend Lowell. Students with an IEP are given access to general education courses as defined by their IEP. All students with an IEP are supported in their academic, transition, and personal goals by a case manager and other support staff (e.g. paraprofessionals, speech pathologists, therapists, school psychologists, occupational therapists, vision and braille teachers, orientation and mobility specialists).

There are 32 students in the Learning Resource Program at Lowell. These students attend one support class (Skills Strategies) and are enrolled in all general education courses required for graduation. Students are supported in their classes by paraprofessionals, both through consultation with their general educators and through direct intervention with students. Some IEP students on the diploma track are supported by speech and language staff only.

All other students in Special Education are enrolled primarily in a Special Day Class or Community Access & Transition (currently known as ACCESS) classroom. Most of these students are working towards a Certificate of Completion. These students also access general education courses in accordance with their IEPs and many receive modified grading. It is the intention of the Learning Resources department to find inclusion opportunities for all students, including participating in homeroom, art classes, P.E., world language classes as appropriate and as defined by their IEPs.

The ACCESS program is a postsecondary program for students with moderate to severe disabilities in the Special Day Class, which focuses on living and social skills, job training, and employment in the community. These students are ages 18-22 and do not take general education classes however, they do receive a Certificate of Completion when they turn 22.

Another special population are Lowell's English Language Learners (ELL), which comprises less than 2% of our student population. Most ELL students are reclassified within their first year at Lowell. Reclassification involves: passing of the English Language Proficiency Assessment for California test, passing score on the Reading Inventory, A/B grade in their English class, and confirmation from their English teacher. Currently, there are five students still classified as ELL. These students are enrolled in an Academic Literacy class with a specially trained ELL English teacher who incorporates ELL strategies, such as scaffolding questions, metacognitive and comprehensive strategies in reading, and reciprocal teaching strategy for reading comprehension.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

Lowell's revised Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (ELSRs) and action plans provide a clear, global, and inclusive understanding of what it takes to educate high-achieving students from diverse backgrounds. Data analysis of our Socioeconomically Disadvantaged (SD) students showed a high percentage of students on the D/F/I list, lower scores on all metrics, and higher enrollment in off-track mathematics courses. This data identified the need to close the achievement gap between groups of high and low achieving students. As a result, we worked to provide substantive support and improvement for all our students, especially those coming from traditionally underrepresented and marginalized sub-groups, to succeed.

Unique to Lowell High School are our four consultancy programs:

1. African American Common Core Education and Support
2. Latino Equity and Achievement Program
3. Filipino and Pacific Islanders Academic Support Program
4. Individually Managed Programs for Asian and Caucasian Teens

These individually managed programs were created for the purpose of serving our SD students and eventually all our underachieving students. The liaisons of these consultancy programs collaborate and coordinate support between parents, struggling students, teachers, counselors, and peer mentors. Since the implementation of the consultancy programs, there have been ongoing parent outreach efforts. Additionally, students have gained more access to counseling and mentoring, field trips to job and college fairs, scholarship rewards for seniors, and more opportunities to actively participate in schoolwide events. The result of these support programs has generally shown a drop in Ds and Fs for the entire school community over three years; with notable gains for African-American and SD students in all subjects and notable gains in English Language Arts and Science from our Hispanic/Latino students. This success is also seen in our graduation rate of 98 percent, which also shows student engagement.

We continue to support and empower students who experience the least amount of success academically, socially and/or emotionally given their identity at Lowell. In our efforts, a new support program was created this year to address the needs of our LGBTQ students. Our LGBTQ program liaison works to educate and bring awareness of oppression and biases ensuring equally high outcomes for all students.

Lowell students have access to an array of personal support services and opportunities. Many of which are funded partly or completely through the PTSA and LAA. This indicates how the whole school community is committed to continuing to provide personal support services to students.

Teachers and staff are often recognized for their service to the community at faculty meetings. The administration funds professional development (PD) for teachers to attend conferences and workshops.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

Lowell's PTSA and LAA are integral parts of our community. Both organizations are committed to promoting a closer relationship among parents, faculty, staff, and students to enhance the educational opportunities for all students.

PTSA's general membership and leadership board meet monthly. In these general membership meetings, the PTSA provides a forum for addressing issues that might affect the instructional program and the health and wellness of the students. The PTSA also meets regularly with the principal to discuss relevant issues. Lowell's PTSA has a website ([www.lowellptsa.org](http://www.lowellptsa.org)) that keeps its members and the Lowell community informed about issues and events.

Lowell's Alumni Association has over 35,000 members throughout the United States. In addition to monthly meetings of the leadership board and general membership, LAA communicates with its members via their semi-annual alumni newsletter and website ([www.lowellalumni.org](http://www.lowellalumni.org)). Because LAA has

representation in the School Site Council, alumni are kept abreast of important issues that may arise and are ready to mobilize to ensure the school gets the support it needs.

Lowell's PTSA and LAA support school improvement and student success in many ways. Every year, the PTSA offers grants to teachers for equipment, special projects, field trips, and educational materials. The PTSA also has over a dozen volunteers to oversee and work in the College Center, Book-to-Book Center, Student Advocacy Committee, and School Site Council. The wide-ranging impact of LAA's financial support to the school community is tremendous. LAA continues to fund the Latin and Hebrew language programs, student travels for extracurricular activities, annual college scholarships and student awards, and a designated college counseling program director. LAA has also contributed to the construction of the batting cage, World Language building, reconstruction of the library, and the modernization of various classrooms.

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

Lowell's professional development plan is composed of four concurrent pathways of development. Whole school PD for the last three years has been focused on promoting equitable practices and strategies within classrooms and throughout the school with respect to race and culture. Embracing the multicultural heritage of San Francisco to ensure that all students are treated with respect both in and out of the classroom and feel inclusion in the learning community is the philosophical underpinning of these monthly equity meetings. This work supports the long-standing tradition of celebrating our diversity as evidenced by the number of cultural events and fairs held throughout the year. Workshops to support LGTBQ students, students with learning disabilities, and English Language Learners are also a part of this strand.

A second thrust of our PD is the support of teachers to further develop their curricular knowledge. Advanced Placement teachers attend summer workshops provided by College Board. World Language teachers attend seminars provided by Stanford University; English teachers attend the Bay Area Writers workshops; Math teachers attend national and state conferences. The budget includes funding for conference fees and substitute release time for teachers to observe model classroom practices both at our school and other schools within our district.

A third support in place for teachers is cross-curricular and subject area meetings; held after school by teachers who wish to examine student work and further develop curricula with their colleagues. This work is supported through the use of a locally legislated "Quality Teacher Education Act" (QTEA) monies. This support structure also includes monthly meetings to support new teachers and provide them with guidance regarding policies, teaching strategies, and best practices. New teachers are also provided substitute release days to observe other classroom teachers to further implement successful classroom practices.

Further PD is conducted by the departments and through the strategic invitation of outside agencies to support the needs of teachers, to further engage in the use of technology, to address the social-emotional climate of the classroom, to interact with local artists and writers, and to otherwise remain current in their respective fields. Examples of such development include workshops provided to increase facility with Google Classroom, Synergy, and other tools used in classroom management and testing. All of these strands are a coordinated effort and are supported by the Lowell's School Site Council, which annually allocates funding for professional development.

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

Lowell utilizes a distributive leadership practice in which a high level of collaboration between Administration, Department Heads, the Wellness Center Staff, and other key personnel contribute to the successful operations of the school. Central to this process is the regularly scheduled Administrative Council and Leadership meetings which address issues such as master scheduling, budget, special programs, and other day-to-day operational systems and procedures. The principal has an open door policy which supports communication with staff members on an informal basis in addition to the regularly scheduled meeting times expressly designed to assist in the facilitation of schoolwide communication. The philosophy of leadership at this school is one of shared decision-making and collaboration.

There are four Assistant Principals (AP) with designated areas of responsibility who support the Principal. Each AP is responsible for several subject area departments, in addition to other duties as assigned. The AP of Curriculum meets with the Department Heads and works closely with them to address all aspects of classroom instruction and professional development. The AP of Buildings and Grounds supports and manages student activities, special events, custodians, security, fire drills, evacuations, and emergency preparedness. The AP of Counseling oversees master scheduling, academic and college counselors, the College Center, as well as the Wellness Center. The AP of State and Federal programs is responsible for attendance monitoring, parent outreach, holding community meetings, and implementation of our special programs to support student achievement.

Another critical structural leadership element is the central role played by the Department Heads for Mathematics, English, Social Studies, Science, Visual and Performing Arts, Learning Resources, Physical Education, and World Languages. These educational leaders serve as role models to teachers within their departments and serve to assist in curricular design and implementation, master scheduling, room allocations within the department, department budgets, and allocation of resources. The Department Heads serve to advocate for the needs of the teachers, as well as communicate district and schoolwide initiatives, policies and procedures.

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

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Lowell High School is committed to building equity and community in order to address the social and emotional needs of our school population. We believe that learning and academic success can only be achieved when everyone in our school community feels safe, accepted, and supported. Our equity work became a greater focus three years ago when a racially charged incident brought attention to a need to rededicate ourselves to educating and supporting the whole student. For this purpose, a group of students along with administrators, faculty, and community advisors met to discuss the larger issues that exist within Lowell and the need for additional education. As a result, the San Francisco Coalition of Essential Small Schools (SF-CESS) was hired. Through our partnership with SF-CESS, we have changed our school schedule to incorporate 12 sessions of PD per school year. In 2016-17, district leaders from SF-CESS led workshops on the use of different protocols for a safe learning environment while exploring implicit biases and systemic educational inequities that affect student learning. Interest from student leaders led to training and inclusion of students in our equity workshops.

In 2017-18, we focused on sharing personal teaching dilemmas by looking at the skin in which we are in and how that affects student learning. Teachers shared and explored specific examples of biases from their practice, reflecting on how to effectively teach and reach all students. This year, we are focusing on pedagogy and different approaches (i.e. scaffolding, metacognition, discourse) to improve learning for our most vulnerable students. This equity training makes us more sensitive to what affects student learning and how best to create an environment conducive to academic success.

We have also ensured our commitment to incorporating equity into our instruction through the implementation of Instructional Rounds. Instructional Rounds are classroom observations done by a committee that collectively work to look for evidence of equity in the classroom and more importantly, how we can improve. As a result, we have been conscientious, purposeful, and strategic in the construction of student groups, sensitive to student feelings of inclusivity, and creation of group-worthy and student centered activities. We have also made it a priority to recruit and retain more teachers of color to better represent our student body.

We are proud to be a part of this equity journey to educate the whole Lowell community and reaffirm our mission to encourage individuals on our campus to contribute their skills, creativity, and intellect, which is how Lowell High School continues to succeed.