

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. 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

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2018-2019) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 0 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 1 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, 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	93	62	155
10	71	76	147
11	78	68	146
12 or higher	82	51	133
Total Students	324	257	581

*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
 - 2 % Asian
 - 9 % Black or African American
 - 9 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 78 % 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 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	1
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	1
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	2
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	582
(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: 1%
3 Total number ELL

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 13%
Total number students who qualify: 75

8. Students receiving special education services: 3 %
16 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>0</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>3</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>13</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

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

	Number of Staff
Administrators	6
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	31
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	0
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	0
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	9

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 19:1

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

Required Information	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	95%	95%	96%
High school graduation rate	98%	98%	100%	98%	99%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2018.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	141
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	96%
Enrolled in a community college	28%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	3%
Joined the military or other public service	14%
Other	0%

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

Yes No

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

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

Utilizing a military structure, DMA prepares cadets for their next level of education with a focus on our three "ships" - leadership, citizenship, and scholarship.

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

DMA has an application period that runs from November to January of the year prior to enrollment. All applications are reviewed and categorized based on our charter admission preferences. The preferences are: 1. Children of founding board members, 2. children of staff members, 3. siblings of currently enrolled cadets, 4. residents of Red Clay Consolidated School District (our chartering organization), 5. applicants with a demonstrated specific interest in the military/our programs and then 6. all other applicants. All applicants in groups 1-5 are offered an interview.

During the interview process, a rubric is used to ensure consistency. Any applicant who meets the predetermined cut score (21 or higher) on the rubric is considered for admission. The academy utilizes the Data Service Center to electronically pull our lottery for all other applicants. Approximately 190 applicants are offered admission each year with a wait list of over 225 applicants for 9th grade.

Admission for 10th and 11th grade is dependent upon openings that may become available due to attrition. This is usually only one or two openings each year for the 10th grade. Applicants for 11th grade are required to have completed at least one credit of Junior ROTC, or its equivalent, prior to applying. The Academy requires a minimum of three (3) credits in Naval Science for graduation. The lottery process for 10th and 11th grade applicants mirrors the process above. All 10th and 11th grade applicants are automatically placed on a wait list until we determine how many spots will be available for the upcoming school year.

PART III – SUMMARY

The Delaware Military Academy is located within the boundaries of the Red Clay Consolidated School District, which enrolls cadets from parts of the City of Wilmington, more economically affluent sections of the district to the north (bordering the Pennsylvania state line) and the suburban communities in the western and southern areas of the district. Approximately 20% of our freshman class reside outside of the district and encompass all of New Castle County. The immediate neighborhood of the school can be characterized as possessing suburban residential districts, commercial areas, sections composed of light and heavy industries, as well as a major multi-functional county park within walking distance of the campus. The political border of the City of Wilmington is within 3 miles of the school. Several major shopping malls, Christiana Care and St. Francis Hospitals, and the University of Delaware are all within a 20-minute driving distance of the school.

Presently, 581 cadets are enrolled in grades 9-12 for the 2018-2019 school year. The academy is accredited through the Middle States Association for Secondary Schools.

Our traditions are based on the traditions of the United States Navy and the United States Naval Academy. Some of our key traditions are: In September, we hold our annual September 11th remembrance ceremony. This ceremony occurs on or near the 9-11 date and ensures that the State of Delaware, and our cadets, never forget those who gave their lives on September 11, 2001. In November, DMA holds an annual veteran's breakfast at the local fire hall. This is an opportunity for us to give back to those that gave so much. DMA cadets have the opportunity to invite a friend, family member or alumni who has served in one of the branches of service for a full, hot breakfast buffet. There is a formal ceremony and a POW/MIA ceremony as part of the event as well. Over 300 veterans attend the breakfast each year. A very unique tradition at DMA is the Military Dining In Ceremony that is held in late November or early December. This is a formal event for cadets and staff which is based on Navy tradition. The intent of a dining in is to foster morale or esprit de corps. In February, DMA dedicates an entire school day to serving in our community. Our cadets will fan out across the county and volunteer at local schools, hospitals, military programs or other activities. We are committed to helping the community in which we belong.

Our biggest tradition occurs in the early spring and is our annual inspection by the Navy. In a regular NJROTC school, the inspection is small and takes just a few hours. As the only public school in the country where EVERY cadet is a member of the Navy JROTC unit, and the "flagship" program of NJROTC, our annual inspection is a two-day event. Each cadet in our unit is inspected, the records for each NJROTC department are reviewed and inspected and the entire school participates in a Pass and Review parade. It is a wonderful event that showcases the school and our cadets. Our last tradition is a very special one - our bell ringing ceremony. The bell ringing ceremony occurs on the last day for our seniors. In the Navy, when a sailor leaves a ship for the last time, their name is announced and a bell is rung as they depart the ship. DMA does the same thing with every senior as they leave the school for the last time. One by one, the seniors are announced as they walk through two lines formed by the DMA teachers and staff and into the waiting arms of parents and the rest of the cadets. It is a wonderful way to honor all the hard work they have put in while attending DMA. While DMA has many military based traditions, we have the typical high school experiences as well including: homecoming, spirit week, pep rallies, prom, dress down days and graduation.

Since its inception, the mission of the Delaware Military Academy has been the driving force behind the development of our graduates. The goal of the Academy is to educate the whole cadet, and to develop graduates who have a strong academic foundation, are adept leaders, and responsible citizens no matter which path they ultimately choose to pursue- college, career, or the military. Each cadet is challenged to be better than they were when they first entered the Academy, and to leave a positive, lasting mark for future cadets. What is more, cadets learn what it means to be a part of something bigger than themselves. They are a part of a team whether it is in their academic classes, Naval Science, sports teams, clubs, or out in the community. They are exposed to the reality that teamwork is crucial for success and that within any community, each member has value.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

The Delaware Military Academy English Curriculum is built on the five core standards: Literature, Informational Text, Writing, Language, and Speaking and Listening. These standards are prevalent in each of the English Department course offerings, which include: Grade 9 Introduction to Literature (CP and Honors), Grade 10 World Literature (CP and Honors), Grade 11 American Literature (CP and Honors), Grade 12 British Literature (CP and Honors), Be a Better Reader (remedial), Studies in Drama (elective), Journalism (elective), and Dual Enrollment English: 101 and 102 (college courses). Cadets learn to demonstrate curricular proficiency through literary analysis, close examination of informational text, research-based writing, vocabulary and grammar acquisition, group discussion, and oral presentation. This approach was chosen because it allows cadets to meet the standards and promotes college and career readiness.

Our curriculum includes a multitude of instructional approaches. Our department includes tiered instruction from remedial to college level courses, with college preparatory, honors, and electives in between. Our differentiated instruction is driven by data and meets the needs of all types of learners, including cadets with special needs. We also design classroom instruction to meet the needs of multiple learning styles. The foundation of the curriculum is problem-based learning and encompasses cadet-based, collaborative, and direct instruction, all supported by appropriate technology. The English department consistently analyzes PSAT/SAT score data; we identify gaps in learning in order to recognize and address deficiencies. The department realigns and rewrites course content and assessments to mirror PSAT/SAT format. We provide strategies, ideas, and assistance for incorporating PSAT/SAT-aligned instruction in classrooms across the content areas.

1b. Mathematics:

DMA follows a more traditional pathway in mathematics. Four years of math are required by the State of Delaware, so all cadets take Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2. Courses offered for the fourth year include Pre-Calculus, AP Calculus (AB/BC), Discrete Mathematics, and two Delaware Technical College Dual-Enrollment Courses (College Algebra and College Pre-Calculus). To maintain the shared national vision of goals and expectations needed, and so cadets can be prepared for college and the workforce, the department established vertical alignment with the Common Core State Standards.

Mathematics classes are fully inclusive, and therefore instruction is differentiated according to the abilities of individual learners as much as possible. While most classroom lessons utilize explicit instruction to help cadets develop the mathematical foundations needed to solve more complex and real-world problems, there are often times when cadets take ownership of the math. Problem-solving and modeling techniques taught frequently allow cadets to determine pertinent information, necessary assumptions, and the tools needed to make justifiable conclusions. Technology is used as an investigative tool through math department laptops, graphing calculators, and flipped learning models. The Standards for Mathematical Practice are more than posters on a wall or ideals in a lesson plan; instructors strive for well-rounded cadets of mathematics with every lesson delivered.

The department is data-driven to improve cadet and school performance. Frequent and immediate formative feedback is given via a variety of tools (question-and-answer, exit tickets, quizzes, homework, and classwork). Well-constructed units culminate in large scale assessments (projects and tests) worth most of a cadet's grade. Teachers use PSAT9/10 and SAT results to meet school needs, class needs, and the ever-changing needs of the individual cadets. Weaknesses and trends are analyzed, and the department works as reflective-practitioners to determine the greatest gaps in conceptual understanding that need to be filled.

1c. Science:

The core science curriculum offers a variety of courses that prepare cadets to excel in any rigorous post-secondary science discipline. Cadets are required to complete a minimum of one science course per year which must include Biology and Chemistry. Additionally, cadets may enroll in a variety of additional science courses that support possible career goals or interests, and ensure college readiness. According to our classroom survey data, cadets are interested in a variety of science career areas, in particular the healthcare industry. Cadets may choose from offerings including Anatomy and Physiology, Food Science, Integrated Science, Engineering, Environmental Science, Forensics, Physics, Advanced Placement Biology and Advanced Placement Physics.

The learning standards we use are Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). This framework incorporates the Disciplinary Core Ideas, Cross Cutting Concepts and Science and Engineering Practices. NGSS learning standards are addressed by utilizing learning focused strategies, back-mapping, problem based learning, differentiated instruction, laboratory experiments and hands-on activities. A common classroom tool is student-centered learning, such as when cadets are given the responsibility to design and manage an experiment to solve a posed problem. Cadets then document, analyze and communicate their findings in a variety of ways.

The science department uses SAT, State DeSSA Science test, classroom assessments and prior course grades to guide decisions on appropriate course choices for individual cadets and their post secondary goals. We use assessment data to identify and target cadet instructional needs, and to direct lesson planning. In order to improve cadet performance on school wide measures, we incorporate text based and graphic rich items into our classroom assessments.

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

The Social Studies Department at DMA is committed to the school's focus on citizenship, scholarship, and leadership. As instructors, we aim to achieve high academic standards and civic engagement through our rigorous curriculum. The program includes the study of Civics and Geography in ninth grade, Historical Economics in tenth grade, U.S. History in eleventh grade, and World History in twelfth grade. Our curriculum is defined by achieving DMA's goals, and courses are directly correlated to Common Core Standards and Delaware Social Studies Standards.

Instructional approaches are geared towards helping diverse learners experience success in the classroom. Multiple avenues of achieving academic success include: differentiated instruction through evidence based learning (using primary and secondary sources), tiered instruction, scaffolding, cooperative learning, project-based learning, cross- curricular reinforcement, and analysis and debate of current events. Technology is embedded within the curriculum across all levels to enhance the learning experience and increase cadet engagement. Methods include increased visual materials, interactivity, research, and analysis of sources, i.e. "fake news."

All cadets will experience a style of teaching and assessment modelled on what would be expected in a college-level setting. Our higher level cadets have the option for dual enrollment/college level classes. Assessments are designed to gauge cadet understanding and allow cadets and instructors to continuously reflect on academic progress. Using various levels of questions, such as: map analysis, evidence based questions, graphs and charts, real world application, and critical thinking skills, cadets demonstrate a higher depth of knowledge. Instructional strategies and assessments prepare cadets for the rigor of modern standardized tests such as the SAT. The data gained from state and national standardized testing informs teachers in the creation of daily lessons and assessments through learning to develop arguments, creating thesis statements and enhancing essay skills for a variety of formative and summative assessments.

1e. For secondary schools:

The core curriculum is rigorous and intended to prepare cadets for a four-year post-secondary program. DMA's CTE pathway through NAF (National Academy Foundation) allows cadets to earn a nationally recognized NAF Track certification. Honors and college level courses are offered in all four core subject areas. We offer Advanced Placement courses in calculus, biology, physics and computer science. In

addition, we partner with the local community college to offer college level courses in English, math and history. Through the Naval Science program, cadets are able to learn and practice soft skills that are required for success in a post-secondary program.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The Music Department provides four different challenging and relevant music experiences for cadets. Cadets have the opportunity to participate in band, choir, theater, or piano. Classes are developed to support National Core Arts Standards. Participating cadets learn discipline and dedication, create a family environment that nurtures leadership roles and encourages time management skills, and supports receiving critical feedback, self-assessing their own performances, and learning or exploring new ways to grow and develop their skills. Cadets act as school ambassadors performing in community events, school sporting events, and local festivals and competitions. Additional opportunities for band and choir members include auditions for the Delaware All-State Ensembles.

The Health Education course is a half credit (.5) online course offered through a partnership with Founders Education Services. All 10th grade cadets are required to complete the semester course which consists of 50 lessons over 10 units. Physical Education is a one credit course. The PE curriculum is sport based and includes 14 units over a semester. Cadets complete Fitnessgram Testing which tests the 5 components of fitness: muscular strength, muscular endurance, cardiovascular endurance, flexibility, and body composition. Cadets are also required to complete the AAHPERD (American Alliance of Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance) test at both the midterm and final. The goal of our health and physical education program is for cadets to live a healthy, safe, and legal lifestyle.

Spanish is offered as a core subject with a college preparatory curriculum. The curriculum is designed to prepare our cadets for success at the university level as well as for professional careers. All cadets are required to earn 3 foreign language credits for graduation with Spanish levels 1-4 being offered and an advanced elective course in Conversation and Culture. The Spanish curriculum develops proficiency in the target language by developing communication skills at all levels and expanding the knowledge of culture and language through hands-on activities, collaborative work, active participation and critical thinking. An elective course option is available to junior and seniors which includes conversational Spanish and an in depth look at the culture of many Spanish speaking countries.

The business pathway, associated with the National Academy Foundation (NAF), offers three courses to cadets beginning in 10th grade. The pathway courses include: Business Information Technology, Global Business Economics and Entrepreneurship. Each course requires cadets to demonstrate mastery through completion of culminating projects and course exams. Upon earning passing grades across the culminating projects and course exams, cadets will have the opportunity to gain experience through a paid internship. With successful completion of the internship, cadets will graduate the NAF program with a NAF Track Certification. The NAF Academy of Business Information Management program is designed to assist cadets in the development of organizational, analytical and leadership skills, and to help them become proficient in office applications (Microsoft Office and Google Office Suite) to help ensure college and career readiness. DMA currently has two computer labs containing 28 desktop computers each. In addition, there are four laptop carts containing 36 computers each and four iPad carts which house an average of 32 iPads each.

DMA's NJROTC program is considered the "flagship program" for the U.S. Navy. The Junior ROTC mission is "to instill in students the value of citizenship, service to the United States, personal responsibility, and the sense of accomplishment." There are many goals of an NJROTC program such as promoting patriotism and developing an informed and responsible citizen; in this, the cadet is taught to be aware of their responsibilities, duties and rights. The program promotes organization and an attention to detail. Experience shows that these habits help people succeed in life.

Our cadets are taught to develop a high degree of personal honor, self-reliance, self – discipline and leadership. These qualities are embodied by the Navy’s Core Values of Honor, Courage and Commitment. A major part of the curriculum is developing leadership potential. The cadets are provided a wide range of opportunities to test themselves in leadership roles such as leading a drill team or performing a staff job. Cadets are provided incentives to live healthy and drug free lives. The NJROTC program promotes high school completion and stresses the value of education. As part of this program, cadets are encouraged to explore post-secondary options including college and trades, as well as military service as a possible career.

3. Special Populations:

The Delaware Military Academy continually evaluates our learners and programming to ensure we are addressing the needs of all learners. Within each classroom, teachers reflect upon their pedagogy and utilize differentiated instruction to reach cadets of all learning modalities. For those cadets who excel and are performing above grade level, the Delaware Military Academy offers challenging academic courses at the honors level, as well as at the college level through Advanced Placement and dual enrollment courses. For our learners who struggle and may be performing below grade level, the Delaware Military Academy offers a myriad of support.

Cadets identified as having special needs and meeting eligibility for an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), receive specialized instruction through their general education teachers. This instruction may be in whole or small group depending upon the determination made by the IEP team at the cadet’s annual review. Accommodations for cadets with IEPs and 504 Plans are provided across all applicable areas. Cadets with IEPs also have goals and benchmarks which are worked on throughout the school year with their general education teachers and progress is measured quarterly. All cadets with IEPs also receive 75 minutes of weekly tutoring in either English or math, depending upon which core class they have in the current semester. The cadets are pulled from Naval Science one time per week to meet with a contracted tutor whom supplements what is occurring in the classroom and provides additional support with assignments and assessments.

English Language Learners (ELL) at the Delaware Military Academy, receive support in the classroom through their general education teachers, and when appropriate, may receive accommodations as determined by the Student Services Team. Depending upon their classroom progress and ACCESS scores, an English Language Learner may also receive weekly pullout instruction with a contracted, certified ELL instructor.

Response to Intervention (RTI) for English is provided in the general education classroom for all those with Tier I and Tier II needs. For those in need of Tier III English support, a separate RTI course is provided in addition to their typical English course. In the RTI English class, cadets work with an English teacher who utilizes research-based methods and programs to improve their reading and writing skills. In this class, cadets also preview the vocabulary and texts that will be taught in their English class. Math RTI is provided within the math classroom for all three tiers using research-based methods and programs.

Cadets in the 9th grade come to the Delaware Military Academy from 30 different middle schools where curriculum and academic rigor vary. Therefore, in response to cadet need during the 2017-2018 school year, the 9th grade College Prep Algebra I course expanded from a semester to yearlong course to provide more in-class time for intervention. Therefore, 9th grade cadets receive 82 minutes of math instruction each day for the entire school year.

After-school tutoring for English and math is available two times each week for any cadet in grades 9 through 12 in need of support.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

The NJROTC program provides a unique opportunity for the school to engage and motivate cadets. At our core, DMA is focused on creating confident leaders, well prepared students and engaged citizens. There are a number of ways we accomplish this mission: First, our cadets earn rank through the Navy Junior ROTC program and take on leadership roles in our regiment. In their positions, cadets practice leadership, organization, communication and supervision skills on a daily basis.

The Academy works to ensure that all our cadets have an appropriate post-secondary plan which is unique to the individual and could include a four-year or two-year college program, a trade or apprenticeship program, a service academy or ROTC scholarship program or direct enlistment in one of our branches of service. Our goal is that every cadet leaves the Academy with a plan that is right for them. However, as a college preparatory school, we work to make sure that all cadets are prepared for a four year college program, regardless of what their plan may be. Nationally recognized test scores, specifically SAT, often serve as a gatekeeper to post-secondary programs. At the Academy, SAT practice is integrated in to all classes and is a focus in our 9th - 11th grade Naval Science classes. Results from the previous PSAT and SAT are utilized as daily warm-ups in 9th and 10th grade classes. During the 11th grade year, cadets are utilizing iPads for daily practice related to SAT preparation.

The Academy has created a family type environment that encourages open communication between cadets, parents, teachers and administrators. We maintain an “open door policy” that allows cadets the ability to speak to any of us about concerns or issues at any time. Our teachers communicate, on a regular basis, with our Student Services team to ensure that cadets who are struggling, both academically or socio-emotionally, are identified and supported. The Student Services team reviews the report card and interim report for EVERY cadet and schedules an Academic Review Board (similar to USNA) for those cadets, and their parents, who are struggling. Our cadets have the opportunity to shine a “Spotlight on Staff” each month to recognize the efforts of staff members on their behalf. On the flip side, our teachers recognize the efforts of our cadets through our Shining Seahawk program.

The academy surveys staff, parents and cadets on an annual basis regarding school climate and safety. The results are discussed as an administrative team and then shared and discussed with our school planning committee. The school planning committee consists of parents, cadets, teachers, administrators and community members. The Academy encourages our teachers to continually improve their practice through on-demand professional development as well as funding to support masters level programs of study. Several teacher leaders serve as “building captains” and serve as a liaison between staff and administrators.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The Delaware Military Academy has worked hard to create a partnership with our parents as well as the local community. Our goal is to have open, two-way, communication with parents and to partner with them in their child’s education. The Commandant communicates weekly with all parents through an email blast called “Commandant’s Corner.” This weekly communication includes upcoming events and activities, shares cadet successes as well as challenges we may be facing and a weekly sporting report. In addition to the weekly update, the school utilizes a text based alert called Remind. This allows us to communicate any changes in plans or snow days. A similar text alert system exists for communication with staff members. We believe it is important for us to work as a team for the betterment and success of our cadets.

Our parents serve in various capacities in the school community. First, our parents participate in our three parent booster organizations: Our PTA, our Sports Boosters and our Music Boosters. These programs are the backbone of our school and function with the sole mission of supporting our cadets and the school as a whole. Lastly, our parents serve on our school board, Middle States committees and Perkins Advisory Committee. Our parents have an active voice in our school community.

Our local community is integral in our success. Many members of the local community serve on our board of directors. Our board, in conjunction with the DMA administration, have worked to expand the school campus and our educational program. In addition, local business representatives serve on our CTE Perkins Advisory Board. This organization supports the efforts of the business department in their mission to prepare our cadets for college or their career. The members of this board provide support in the form of attending quarterly meetings, serving as guest speakers in the business classes as well helping to create a new internship program. Perkins Advisory members also include DMA alumni, cadets and post-secondary representatives.

3. Professional Development:

The Delaware Military Academy is committed to providing a strong professional development program for our teachers. Our professional development plan is designed with three goals in mind: First, we design whole school professional development that meets the overall needs of the school. We conduct a needs assessment each year to determine what our professional development needs are for the current school year. This year's professional development needs include SAT preparation and how to integrate it across the curriculum, mental health awareness/suicide prevention and differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all learners.

Second, we support our teachers to create a personalized professional development plan that meets their specific needs. Teachers set specific goals each year and we work to support them in reaching these personal goals. We utilize an on-demand professional development program through Frontline Inc. to allow teachers to self-select professional development. In addition, supervisors can assign specific professional development to a teacher based on the strengths and weaknesses observed in the classroom. Supervisors complete formal announced and unannounced observations as well as walk through visits. All assigned professional development must be completed by the teachers.

Lastly, the Academy supports teachers in pursuing graduate degrees in teaching and school leadership. While it is hard to quantify the benefits from these programs, we believe that our cadets benefit from having teachers who are lifelong learners and are versed in the most up to date educational theory and practice. We provide partial funding through our tuition reimbursement to teachers who are enrolled in a graduate degree program. We believe that this three tiered approach encourages our teachers to continually refine their practice and ultimately results in better classroom performance.

4. School Leadership:

The Delaware Military Academy has a unique leadership philosophy that focuses on our three ships - leadership, citizenship and scholarship. We believe in leading by example and treating our teachers and staff as professionals and content area experts. The DMA leadership believes in supporting the whole child through classroom experiences, clubs and activities that support classroom learning, social development through the Navy Junior ROTC program and experiences on sports teams. Every decision that is made at the administrative level is focused on our mission and our three ships.

Our school structure is unique because, as a charter school, we wear many different hats. Our Commandant serves as the Head of School and is responsible for the overall operation and academic program of the school. He reports directly to the board of directors and supervises the rest of the administrative team. The Commandant is also responsible for maintaining open communication with parents and staff, fundraising and donor cultivation, project management and steering the strategic vision of the school.

The dean of cadets supervises and supports the English, science, business and expressive arts teachers. She serves as the homeless coordinator, state test coordinator and grant writer, among other duties. In addition, she works with seniors who are interested in attending a United States Service Academy or wish to attend college on a ROTC scholarship.

The dean of instruction supervises and supports the history, math and spanish departments. She serves as the 504 coordinator, special education director and SAT/PSAT test coordinator. The dean of instruction

creates the master schedule and handles the scheduling of all cadets.

The Academy has a unique administrator in our Head Naval Science Instructor. As the only all Navy JROTC program in the country, NJROTC is an integral part of our daily programming. The Head NSI supervises all the JROTC instructors, handles discipline for the 11th and 12th grade cadets and oversees the daily operations of the JROTC program.

The Dean of School Climate is responsible for the overall climate of the school. He works with the administrative team to ensure cadet safety and looks for ways to improve school climate. In addition, he serves as the disciplinarian for the 9th and 10th grade and the athletic director.

The school counselor works to prepare cadets for their post-secondary program. He handles all social-emotional programming for cadets including bringing in outside programming, college visits, evening parent and cadet workshops and one-on-one counseling. He is an integral part of our Student Services Team and ensures that cadets get the support they need to be successful.

Lastly, the administrative team includes our Chief Financial Officer who also serves as our head of Human Resources and transportation supervisor. He works tirelessly to keep our financials in order while ensuring that we have the capacity to grow in the future. In addition, he handles the hiring process for new staff members and coordinates all benefits.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The Delaware Military Academy prides itself on our “whole cadet” approach to education. Through our academic, NJROTC, and extracurricular programs, we promote the idea of being multifaceted with a focus on being the best student, athlete/drill member/musician, and person we know each of them can be. Our cadets are a reflection of our school, and we want them to be strong and competitive in all facets of life.

When we talk with cadets about being the best they can be, we often use the example of playing a sport. When you are a part of a team, such as baseball, you do not limit training to scheduled practice times; you work on speed and agility in the off-season; you practice hitting every day, and you continually strive to improve your skills. The same can be said of our academic classes. We encourage our cadets to continually challenge themselves to put the same level of effort into their education. What’s more, we encourage our cadets to recognize and embrace their weaknesses, and we provide them with the tools and coping-mechanisms to overcome and rise above. Some examples of the resources we make available for all cadets include weekly tutoring in math, English, science, and/or SAT preparation; open gym programs and weekly sessions with a contracted athletic trainer; a comprehensive guidance program and open-door policy with cadets, parents, and staff.

Furthermore, we believe our cadets learn best by seeing the examples set for them each day. We not only challenge our cadets to be their best, but our staff as well, and expect them to be role models and to lead by example. Though our teachers prepare effective lesson plans and carryout meaningful instruction daily, they are encouraged to be reflective practitioners who continually improve their pedagogy through a comprehensive professional development program. The administration supports teachers in pursuing post-graduate degree programs which sets a positive example for cadets. We equip our teachers with the tools needed to utilize data and formative feedback to adjust and differentiate instruction in the classroom. The administrative team routinely looks for ways to improve the campus, academic programming, and the resources available to cadets and staff.

At the Academy, we believe that our cadets are able to see that hard work pays dividends. We are the “Seahawk Nation,” and our focus is on the success of every cadet with whom we have the honor to educate.