

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. Theodore Panagopoulos

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

Official School Name Terence C. Reilly School No. 7

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 436 First Avenue

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

Elizabeth NJ 07206-1122
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Union

Telephone (908) 436-6030

Fax (908) 436-6012

Web site/URL https://www.epsnj.org/reilly

E-mail panagoth@epsnj.org

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*Mrs. Olga Hugelmeyer
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail hugelmol@epsnj.org

District Name Elizabeth School District Tel. (908) 436-6131

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

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

Date _____

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

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

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

Part I – Eligibility Certification

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

1. 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):
 - 29 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 7 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools

36 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	61	59	120
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	61	63	124
3	71	75	146
4	65	85	150
5	50	90	140
6	58	84	142
7	59	83	142
8	52	74	126
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	477	613	1090

*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):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 4 % Asian
 - 13 % Black or African American
 - 72 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 11 % 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: 4%

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	19
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	25
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	44
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	1076
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.04
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	4

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 4 %
40 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese, Haitian/Creole, Gujarati, Lithuanian, Polish, Pilipino(Tagalog), Cantonese, French, Urdu, Hindi, Swahili, Bengali, Mandarin, Amharic

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 69 %
Total number students who qualify: 754

8. Students receiving special education services: 4 %
45 Total number of students served

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

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>9</u> Autism | <u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>8</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>1</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>3</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>2</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5
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	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	54
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	23
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	13
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

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	96%	96%	96%	96%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

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

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

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

Yes No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2011

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

Terence C. Reilly School No. 7 will provide an innovative and personalized learning environment that ensures that every child achieves excellence.

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

In order to maintain a high degree of achievement, the school created and sustained a strict admission criteria. Students are accepted through an admission process that begins in late winter with an online application followed by recommendations from parents and teachers. These materials are combined with the student’s academic records to develop the child’s admission package and is submitted by a guidance counselor to the school.

Our program seeks to enroll creative, spirited thinkers who demonstrate talents in academics, performing arts, visual arts, and physical education. Students are accepted based on multiple measures of academic performance in relation to all applicants grades 1-7, and/or are recommended to attend based on teacher observations, performance assessments and rubrics in the performing arts, physical education, or the visual arts. As such, past alumni have included star athletes, artists, musicians, performers, and scholars that have excelled in high school and beyond.

PART III – SUMMARY

The Reilly Motto, "Together We Can," exemplifies the spirit of the Terence C. Reilly School No. 7 family. A Gifted and Talented Academy within the Elizabeth Public Schools, the school has a clear mission: to provide an innovative and personalized learning environment that ensures that every child achieves excellence. Set in the seaport section of Elizabeth near the city's Hope VI zone, the school is a reflection of the community it serves. A port of entry for families from across the globe, our city exemplifies the greatest challenges and the highest hopes of schooling in an urban setting. Our students hail from homes where 16 languages other than English are spoken, and 69% of our population is eligible for free/reduced lunch. At the same time, Reilly remains among the highest achieving schools in the State of New Jersey and has been recognized with countless awards in the arts and athletics.

School No. 7, which houses students in pre-K and grades two through eight, opened in September 2009 in one of Elizabeth's historic school buildings on First Avenue, expanding Elizabeth's nationally recognized Gifted and Talented program School No. 7. At the core of our success is our dedicated staff of teachers and support professionals who work tirelessly to create excellent educational experiences that inspire all students to think, to learn, to achieve, and to care. Our staff, community, and families are an outstanding team and work together to build a better future for our students.

The school is named after Terence Christopher Reilly, a local boy who was class valedictorian of the Gifted and Talented program in 1988 before tragically losing his life in a motor vehicle accident. As a student, Terence was known for his good character and gentle spirit, as well as his enthusiasm for learning. These qualities reflect the greatest traditions of the Gifted and Talented program, and in recognition of this, the school bears his name.

School No. 7 has been completely renovated for 21st century teaching and learning. The staff and student population is equipped with interactive StarBoards, Apple TV's, iMacs, MacBook Airs in grades 3 through 8, and iPads for both our pre-K and 2nd grade programs. We also have an interactive television studio and media center, digital media and piano midi labs, and the Reilly Auditorium, which is one of the largest performance venues in Elizabeth. Staff and students have fully leveraged technology to increase overall student ownership and engagement. School No. 7 often hosts site visits on how to effectively implement and manage a one-to-one learning environment, including for outside districts looking to establish their one-to-one programs. This instructional focus resulted in School No. 7 receiving Apple Distinguished School designations in 2015 and 2017.

As one of Elizabeth's premier academic institutions, School No. 7 maintains high expectations for students in terms of academics, attendance, and discipline. All Reilly students are required to wear school uniforms. Student uniforms highlight the school colors, blue and gold, and feature the gifted and talented emblem. The high expectations set forth at Reilly communicate our desire to achieve excellence for our students and the Elizabeth community. Our character education initiatives such as our character education calendar, which focuses on specific character themes each month, foster an environment of support and trust. School No. 7 has been recognized both as a State and National School of Character by character.org.

The school offers a rigorous curriculum and high-quality instruction that enhances all four components of the Gifted and Talented program: academics, performing arts, visual arts, and physical education. Elementary-age students at Reilly experience the breadth of the components and take advanced classes in each of these areas. Students in grades two through five undertake advanced classes in visual arts and participate in weekly dance and performing arts classes led by our own professional dance and performing arts teachers. As early as second grade, our students receive instruction in how to play the recorder, and our upper elementary students study piano in our state-of-the-art midi lab. To further enhance students' academic capabilities, all students are enrolled in an accelerated math program, ending with placement in a high school geometry class in 8th grade, and our fourth and fifth graders attend departmentalized classes akin to a secondary education setting, taught by highly qualified teachers in literacy, mathematics, social studies, science, and other disciplines.

Our middle school students also participate in rigorous academic course work, while choosing electives based on the four components of the Gifted and Talented program that allow them to advance their respective talents and take greater ownership over their learning. Electives ranging from painting and advanced drawing to art history and sculpture offer our students a wide spectrum of mediums to explore in the fine arts. For those more athletically inclined, we offer sports clinics, exercise science, and "Project Adventure." Advanced digital media, journalism, photography, and creative writing electives provide development opportunities for students who are part of producing the school-sponsored newspaper and yearbook. Literature studies, 3D development and design, coding, Destination Imagination, and numerous other choices as decided by the student population show a wide array of subjects in which students submerge their passion.

School No. 7 features performing arts ensembles that have become the hallmark of Elizabeth's award-winning Gifted and Talented program. They include dance, several choral groups, the Terence C. Reilly Orchestra, and the Terence C. Reilly Jazz and Concert Bands. The outstanding performance of our students, along with the instruction of our staff, led School No. 7 to be recognized as an NJ Model School in the Arts.

Since Reilly's 2011 National Blue Ribbon School recognition, we have continued to act as an instructional beacon for our district, having been recognized as a National Title I Distinguished School. In 2018, School No. 7 was rated in the 99th percentile in all New Jersey performance indicators resulting in a No. 22 ranking of out of all public schools in the State of New Jersey.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

Terence C. Reilly School No. 7 employs a research-based, balanced curriculum throughout grades two and three. It is enriched by differentiated instruction and cooperative learning centers that focus on rigorous collaborative and independent activities, along with guided reading and writing. To address different and diverse learning styles, the curriculum is formulated utilizing data-driven instruction aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS). There are two components within the continuous 80-minute block of instruction. The first is whole group instruction that focuses on the five components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The second is comprised of small group instruction and student-centered activities that address academic challenges. By utilizing diagnostic assessments (Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) 2, district-created benchmarks, formal/informal assessments) instruction can be differentiated ensuring overall proficiency of the NJSLS. With the small group instruction, guided reading/writing are implemented to enhance learning in the humanities through social studies and science challenge-based learning activities.

As a result of the fundamental proficiencies acquired in second and third grades, upper elementary students participate in an arduous curriculum aligned to the NJSLS and the Literacy is Essential to Adolescent Development and Success (LEADS) framework. Through this interdisciplinary framework, literacy and social studies standards are achieved through the utilization of thematic novels/units, multiple styles of writing and project-based learning. As a result, critical-thinking and problem-solving skills are augmented allowing for more authentic student learning and achievement. LEADS is a three-tiered approach aimed at the academic needs of all students utilizing differentiated instruction. Tier 1 is whole group instruction implementing thematic units. By using anticipatory guides, activation of schema, and integration of Bloom's taxonomy, learning is accelerated and intensified. Tier 2 consists of differentiated and collaborative learning centers. Within these centers, students are exposed to multifaceted tasks. Accordingly, complex strategies are generated in order to solve these tasks. Both guided reading and writing are incorporated to intensify academic achievement. Tier 3 offers one-on-one intervention. During this time, struggling students receive individualized instruction to aid in meeting and exceeding standards set by the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. Overall, our language arts curriculum and the LEADS framework provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to excel at the secondary and post-secondary levels of study. Through their learning, students acquire the tools necessary to be college and career ready.

1b. Mathematics:

The mathematics program is based on the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) and embedded in daily instruction are the Standards for Mathematical Practice with the intent of helping students develop the "process and proficiencies" important for success in all levels of mathematics. There is an accelerated mathematics curriculum in elementary and middle school with sixth grade students taking pre-algebra, seventh grade students taking high school algebra and eighth grade students taking high school geometry. Eighth grade students take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) in order to begin the process of college readiness. Students are then encouraged to create an account with the College Board to begin an individualized study program through Khan Academy. Through this individualized study program, students develop the kind of analytical thinking needed to score well when they take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT).

The accelerated curriculum prepares students to take Advanced Placement (AP) Calculus AB during their eleventh grade year and AP Calculus BC, or AP Statistics, during their twelfth grade year. Use of the Agile Mind mathematics program for upper elementary and middle school provides for early development of algebraic thinking, the ability to reason mathematically, and to apply concepts to solve real-world problems. Students are instructed in 80-minute blocks where subject certified teachers differentiate instruction through whole group instruction, small group, and one-on-one instruction.

Using data from various assessments, students who need intervention are offered small group instruction that targets skills to develop strong foundational knowledge. Lessons are designed to accommodate all learning styles through presenting concepts concretely, pictorially, and abstractly, which aid in the development of mathematical thinking, and problem-solving abilities.

Students are provided opportunities to learn at their own pace and explore mathematical concepts through the use of technology, especially utilizing the Apple suite of applications which include iMovie, iBook, Numbers, and Keynote. These tools allow students to design and implement projects to demonstrate their understanding of how mathematics can be used to describe, analyze, evaluate, and solve problems that interest students. Students are engaged through open-ended questions, mental math, hands-on explorations, writing activities, and the use of technology to develop mathematical thinking and confidence. Instruction provides opportunities for students to focus on questions that are designed to create a mathematical discourse. Students and teachers discuss different strategies used, the reasonableness of answers, and brainstorming techniques. Math classes are structured to provide students opportunities to develop their mathematical skills by working both collaboratively and independently, creating learning experiences that prepare each child for success on district-created benchmarks and standardized tests at the current and next grade levels of study.

1c. Science:

Terence C. Reilly School No. 7 science curriculum is designed around active investigations that provide engagement with science concepts and science and engineering practices. As one walks through our science classrooms, one finds students articulating thinking, posing questions, generating hypotheses, analyzing and interpreting data, and engaging in differentiated tasks. Students in grades four through eight have content certified teachers and five class periods of instruction per week (including two additional periods in eighth grade for laboratory work). The Full Option Science System (FOSS) modules, which form the basis of the curriculum, provide students with opportunities to engage in engineering experiences to develop solutions to problems, construct and evaluate models, and use systems thinking.

The FOSS Program has conceptual structure at the module and course level. The concepts are carefully selected and organized in a sequence that makes sense to students when presented as intended. FOSS has elaborated learning progressions for core ideas in science for kindergarten through grade eight. The FOSS modules and courses are organized into three domains: physical science, earth science, and life science. Laboratory work and hands-on experiences are essential throughout all grade levels. A unique strength of the program is the engineering component where students are presented with a problem to solve and challenged to create a solution with the resources available.

The content is fully aligned to the national Next Generation Science Standards. Achievement is assessed by teacher-created assessments as well as district-created benchmarks. In previous years, fourth and eighth grade students completed the NJASK Science assessment. In 2019, fifth and eighth grade students will complete the New Jersey Student Learning Assessment-Science (NJSLA-S).

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

In an age of increased awareness of the importance of civic engagement and productive public discourse, educating students as citizens is becoming a priority for forward-looking schools. School No. 7 offers a unique social studies curriculum that emphasizes an understanding of past events, choices, and consequences as a foundation upon which our students build their own civic participation that they will carry into their college and professional careers.

Our fourth and fifth graders are fortunate to have dedicated, content-certified social studies teachers for a full period every day. These students investigate New Jersey and U.S. History, focusing on topics including the Colonial and Revolutionary Eras, the Civil War, and the Great Depression. As mentioned previously, the Literacy is Essential to Adolescent Development and Success (LEADS) structure connects the social studies and language arts classes through the study of historical novels, stories, and other literary works.

The middle school social studies curriculum is rooted in the LEADS structure, in which students have language arts and social studies for a combined three periods per day, with two content-certified teachers guiding them in their learning in a single classroom. Interdisciplinary units allow for students to strengthen their literacy skills by reading texts that are directly related to the social studies content. Students investigate World History in sixth grade and U.S. history in seventh and eighth grade, using primary and secondary sources, as well as historical literature, to master both language arts and social studies New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS).

The instructional approach includes teacher-directed analysis of content, small group learning activities led by students and teachers in the LEADS framework, and individually-directed and differentiated student work.

Assessment is fully integrated into the student learning experience, as they self-assess progress during their independent work according to individual goals. Teacher-created assessments of writing, research, and project-based learning provide evidence of student growth and district-created benchmark assessments show progress according to the NJSLS.

1e. For secondary schools:

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

The core curriculum areas provided in Terence C. Reilly School No. 7 pre-K classes include literacy, math, science, writing, social/emotional, health and safety, and an appreciation for visual arts. All of these elements are developed through positive and intentional adult-child interactions. Through the implementation of the High/Scope Approach, children are encouraged to demonstrate a sense of self-confidence, direction, and an eagerness to learn through play.

The New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards provide skills and strategies for teachers to utilize in the classroom. With the assistance of myriad curriculum resources, teachers have direct access to examples that relate to math, science, literacy, and social skills. Children are engaged in math and science topics and concepts, including numbers, geometry, measurement, observations, and investigations. Language and literacy are also key elements which involve having a knowledge of books, speaking, listening, writing, and print awareness. Children learn to problem solve and think critically through peer discussion and higher order thinking questions.

Our approach to teaching and learning in the pre-K classroom and the lessons provided are essential school readiness and success in the primary grades. In the pre-K classroom, children are exposed to opportunities to follow directions, take risks, make decisions, learn from mistakes, work individually, and work in groups. All these skills foster independence and a willingness to succeed. The predictable routines and classroom environment promote active learning. The teacher plays a significant role in providing guidance and in developing caring and respectful relationships. Preschool is the foundation to producing life-long learners and if the pre-K learner leaves the class feeling valued and aware of their potential to learn and grow, they are significantly more likely to succeed throughout their educational career.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Terence C. Reilly School No. 7 provides students with rigorous curriculum in the four components of academics, fine arts, performing arts, and physical education, which are the foundation of our success. Using the Renzulli schoolwide enrichment model, students have an opportunity to discover a wider range of strengths and talents, while learning about a variety of subject material. We have discovered that not only do enrichment-based classes promote academic achievement, but also they foster positive behavior, supportive peer-to-peer interactions, and valuable student-teacher relationships. Students build strong bonds with classmates, thus building character and communication skills.

Students in grades two through eight play an active role in determining their elective area of focus and are actively engaged in a variety of enrichment classes related to the four components. The student experience includes performing and visual arts instruction, multiple periods of physical education and health, world languages, and computer literacy. Students in upper elementary and middle school grades are given the opportunity for more advanced specialization in the performing arts, visual arts, and physical education by choosing from over 20 electives related to the component structure of our schedule. Students in grades 4 and 5 have an additional 80 minutes of instruction within the component chosen, while students in grades six through eight have 120 minutes of additional instruction time in the chosen component.

Performing arts class offerings include concert and jazz bands, chorus, dance, drama/theater, forensics/debate, and orchestra. All performing arts groups perform in front of schoolwide and community audiences at least twice throughout the school year and compete in a number of performance-based competitions. Visual arts class offerings include mosaic, 3D digital design, sculpting, art history, fashion design, and photography. Student work is showcased throughout the building and is often submitted for district and county competitions. Physical education electives include both specialized sports clinics and "Project Adventure" course offerings. Activities such as rock climbing, weight training, dance, and fitness along with our school-wide Wellness Committee serve to improve the physical well-being of students. Students in grades three through five are scheduled for computer literacy and coding for 40 minutes per week. Our after-school enrichment program is also utilized to strengthen our program component structure and is available to all students in grades two through eight after school throughout the work week, and on Saturdays.

Students in grades three through seven receive world language instruction weekly at the basic, intermediate, and advanced level, engaging in language study through reading literature, exploring arts and culture, and consistent practice in listening, speaking, reading and writing. Through our world language program students enter high school prepared for advanced language study and enter their adult lives with a wider understanding of their place in the world.

Cross-curricular lessons and activities promote student interest and excitement. The skills and techniques that students acquire in enrichment courses are used in their academic classes. Students engage in Challenge Based Learning (CBL) projects and then turn them into real-world community action such as fundraisers and performances. Project and challenge-based learning frameworks encourage teachers to serve as facilitators, allowing students to take on strong leadership roles within their classrooms. Serving in a leadership role excites and challenges students to seek further depth of knowledge. These instructional frameworks allow students to take learning into their own hands by asking questions and engaging in hands-on learning tasks. It is our ultimate goal to prepare our students academically, socially, and emotionally for all their future endeavors.

3. Special Populations:

The mission of Terence C. Reilly School No. 7 to provide an "innovative and personalized learning environment that ensures that every child achieves excellence" is realized through our enrichment and intervention models for instruction. Tutoring services throughout the day (grades 2-8) and after school (grades 2-5) are utilized. Based on previous year performance, students are enrolled in small group tutoring classes in areas of need at the start of the academic year. Student performance is reevaluated mid-quarter to determine continued need for tutoring intervention. We also provide regularly scheduled elective classes for students in grades five through eight, with a base elective offering in grades two through four to determine elective focus, as well as after-school enrichment classes, and an after-school and Saturday STEM program to assist our struggling learners with math conceptualization.

We employ a Transitional Bilingual Model for our bilingual Spanish-speaking students, for which bilingual learners in grade two receive native language instruction. This series is based on the initial presentation of phonics through a syllabic approach to teach Spanish reading, which is the foundation to develop phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, reading fluency, and reading comprehension. Once a bilingual learner reaches all three of the following criteria, he, or she, is ready to begin learning alphabetic principle in

English, while continuing Spanish literacy instruction. Bilingual learners need to demonstrate native language reading proficiency as measured by Evaluación del desarrollo de la lectura (EDL2), 90% accuracy on a Spanish dictation, and meeting an intermediate level in English proficiency based on the Comparative Oral Language Proficiency Chart.

Bilingual learners continue to receive Spanish literacy instruction to build native language vocabulary and build upon literacy skills by a bilingual teacher. They are assessed at least three times per year to determine readiness for the addition of alphabetic principle in English. The English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher supports reading instruction through small group, differentiated instruction that focuses on the transfer of known Spanish sound-letter relationships to English, and the introduction of non-transferable phonemes. As bilingual learners continue to progress academically in both languages by applying the native language skills acquired to English, progress monitoring continues. Once they have completed the addition of alphabetic principle in English, otherwise known as the transfer curriculum, bilingual learners are assessed to ensure readiness to move into an Advanced Bilingual Language (ABL) setting, where English instruction will be delivered through the sheltered instruction approach.

The ABL program in grade 3 is the bridge from a bilingual setting to an English monolingual setting for English language learners. This program addresses the students moving from a full day of bilingual instruction as well as those students who speak languages other than Spanish as their native language. Sheltered instruction strategies are incorporated into content area instruction to address the needs of the English language learners in this setting.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

From confidants, to mentors, to guidance, the staff at Terence C. Reilly School No. 7 uses specific approaches that help build a sense of community in our school. Our school motto states, "Together we can." This is expressed and demonstrated by our school community working together to achieve goals and overcome challenges. There are many approaches that the School No. 7 community has adopted in order to make our school united in their approach to character education. The first approach is to actively cultivate a respectful and supportive relationship among all community members. Having this supportive relationship is the heart of our community.

As an integrated community, we promote various core values and respect. We celebrate the "Week of Respect" and "School Violence Awareness Week." During these weeks, the character education committee coaches students, staff, and parents on how to create a positive school culture and how to be proactive in creating an anti-bullying school community. Workshops on bullying and cyber-bullying are offered to students and parents. Students attend a "Week of Respect" assembly on respect, a "Power Harmony" assembly on the "Power of One," and a "WE Day" presentation on social justice and how to give back through daily choices.

In addition, we display a "Random Acts of Kindness Brick Wall," on which teachers identify students and their thoughtful deeds and write them on a "brick." Another major event is our breast cancer awareness walk and fundraiser. Staff, students, community public figures, and parents unite to show support for this cause and recognize any cancer survivors within our school community. During the year, our school community has many other fundraisers that promote compassion and generosity. We collect monies for charitable causes such as raising awareness for Alzheimer's disease and "Warriors Bags," which provides toiletry items for cancer patients. As a staff, we encourage children and their families to take active roles in their education and in the community. Teachers gather together weekly to discuss students' progress and needs for academic achievement, perseverance, and responsibility. They reflect on how to embed character education within the curriculum and how to improve our social and emotional curriculum. Achievements in academics are essential in any school, but what makes School No. 7 distinguished is the capacity of joining forces with the community, parents, students, and teachers in continuing to develop good character and citizenship.

School No. 7 uses a comprehensive, intensive, and proactive approach to character development. We provide a nurturing environment for students with the hope that they will develop good character and become upstanding citizens. During "Teacher Appreciation Week," students show their appreciation to the faculty and staff of our school. They send cards to teachers, secretaries, lunch assistants, the custodial staff, etc. to show gratitude for the jobs they perform day in and day out. Teachers involve students in establishing clear classroom rules and expectations and also include them in other decision-making components of the classroom. Staff feel valued and continue to showcase their organizational worth by leading instructional and event committees as well as working within quasi-administrative teams like our Instructional Leadership and Apple Vanguard teams that develop and support instructional models promoted at School No. 7.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Terence C. Reilly School No. 7 effectively engages families and community members as partners in our school improvement efforts. Our school reaches out to welcome parents and make them aware of our core values and the initiatives that are taking place. Back to School Night serves as an overall orientation for parents and families. We host Parent Advisory Committee meetings, and we regularly communicate with parents and guardians through digital platforms and face-to-face meetings conducted by staff and administrative members. These meetings help provide suggestions and activities that can reinforce the core values of our program. Student achievements and challenges are initially communicated through our student information system (PowerSchool), but is then followed up with one or more of the following:

student-led parent conferences, meetings with staff in our parent conference room, guidance meetings, and administrative meetings. In addition, our character education committee works to create and schedule parent workshops on bullying laws, cyber-bullying, character education, and parenting skills. Parents are surveyed to identify desirable workshops and the team hosts and schedules them. We distribute a monthly calendar that reflects all of our character-building activities. Our Facebook page is updated regularly, and we send out automated phone calls to keep families up-to-date on our events and fundraisers.

Connecting with the wider community is at the heart of what we do at School No. 7 to build character among our students, staff, and parents. Our music and performing arts students participate in community outreach concerts throughout the year. Students have performed at Jardine Academy in Cranford, New Jersey, Newark International Airport, Elizabeth Public Schools early childhood centers, Elizabeth Public Library, Trinitas Regional Medical Center, and Second Home Adult Day Care Center. Additionally, one of our language arts teachers hosts an annual "Tribute Day" for which students write compelling essays about the person they feel was most influential in their lives and invite that person to school to be honored in a small ceremony.

During Health and Wellness month, we participate in a "Health Bee" through the YMCA and United Health Care. We also are involved in the Heart of Healthy Cooking contest with the Elizabeth YMCA. At School No. 7, we are very fortunate to have community members that want to come participate during special events and volunteer their time. Our high school alumni come back to volunteer during after-school programs and at evening concerts, musicals, and special events. Parents also serve as chaperones on school sponsored field trips and volunteer during our shows, book fairs, and field day events. Elizabeth Board of Education members attend various events and take the time to encourage our staff and students to continue in our character education initiatives and community service.

All of the aforementioned efforts and involvement of all stakeholders ensure that our students receive the supports necessary to achieve at high levels.

3. Professional Development:

At Terence C. Reilly School No. 7 and the Elizabeth Public Schools, student data is the driving force behind all our professional development decisions. Teachers and administrators examine and reflect on data through structured and informal opportunities that include monthly faculty meetings, Crisis/School Safety team meetings, weekly leadership team meetings, and biweekly grade level meetings. Examples of faculty-led agenda items at these meetings include challenge-based learning, analysis/disaggregation of student standardized test scores, enrichment/intervention opportunities for students, progress monitoring, school climate, Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) training and updates, crisis planning, behavioral trends, attendance, and suspension rates.

School No. 7 uses the "Turning Data into Actionable Information Protocol." The monitoring cycle is as follows: "Get It," "Read It," "Talk It," "Use It," "Review It." During the "Get It" phase, we select the data to be analyzed. For example, the climate survey results. Next, we "Read It" to identify any patterns or trends. During the "Talk It" phase, we interpret the data and its implications and brainstorm ideas to address the findings. In the "Use It" phase, we identify SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound) goals to address any areas of concern. During this phase, we also create actionable steps that include selecting people responsible for implementation, developing a timeline, identifying required resources, and monitoring methods. As the end date of the timeline approaches, we schedule meetings to review whether the implementation of our instructional initiatives have been successful.

Our school improvement panel, made up of both teacher leaders and administration, use observational trend data to determine our professional development focus and usually facilitate these sessions to strengthen teacher performance as it relates to Danielson's Framework for Teaching and Learning. All staff are encouraged to showcase pedagogical concepts via our "Pineapple Chart." It is an online schedule that staff use to list lessons they would like to showcase to team members throughout the building. In addition, our staff-led Apple Vanguard Team (AVT) members provide one-on-one training on iWork and iLife application usage in the classroom. The AVT also facilitates staff trainings during faculty/team meetings

throughout the school year. This approach has resulted in our school attaining two Apple Distinguished School recognitions in 2015 and 2017, as well as staff members being recognized as Apple Distinguished Educators.

Educators are encouraged to participate in professional development opportunities outside the school. For example, every year a cadre of teachers attend the University of Connecticut Gifted and Talented Summer Institute and the Rutgers Reading and Writing Conference. Several teachers are engaged in graduate studies at local universities and more than 66.2% of teachers have attained a master's or doctoral degree.

4. School Leadership:

Terence C. Reilly School No. 7 leaders believe in the empowerment of all stakeholders. It is our belief that we can attain success by working collectively and collaboratively to achieve the high standards and goals set for students and ourselves. It is the collective energy and talents of our community that sustains our achievement. Our school leaders have put into action various initiatives that have improved our school climate and academic outcomes. These initiatives inspire faculty, staff, parents/guardians, and students to unite and participate in altruistic endeavors.

One of the main initiatives this year was creating a character education committee consisting of administration, teachers, the school counselor, school social worker, staff members, PTO members, and parents. The committee works together to manage school safety and character education activities through training staff and students in character education and discussing ways to implement social and emotional learning in our current rigorous curriculum. Among the important contributions to the learning community by the committee is the school character calendar, which consists of pillars of influential traits designated for each month. Activities and lessons are designed to engage students with the respective character education theme/trait for that given month. An example of those activities is selecting character education quotes that are shared daily during morning announcements along with providing correlating reflection questions that help students contemplate and relate to the quotes meanings.

Another initiative was strengthening peer-to-peer support in order to enhance instruction, which has been achieved through our Instructional Leadership Team. This team meets regularly for members to promote cooperative teaching styles, character education initiatives, and unity among faculty members. This team engages in distributed leadership and decision-making and ensure that teachers return to classrooms confident, equipped with techniques, and prepared to be leaders for their students.

Lastly, the PTO organizes many annual events that bring the school community together, fostering a healthy relationship between home and school. Students, faculty, and PTO members work together as a community in fundraising to raise awareness for ALS, Pediatric Cancer, Heart Disease, and Alzheimer's disease among several charitable causes. In participating in these various activities, our principal and other administrators have shared their responsibilities with members of the staff, not only for support, but also to become teacher leaders, which in turn becomes a ripple effect for students to become leaders as well. We further extend ourselves by developing long-range campaigns and continuous growth in character education initiatives to achieve our goals of building trust with students, teachers, parents, and community members, as well as our core ethical values of citizenship, respect, justice and civic virtue. These traits ultimately lead to student confidence and appreciation for their school community.

We establish a foundation for students to understand the value of moral action that will carry them throughout their lives. Many activities are available to the entire student body, staff, and community members. Students participate in community service hours, which include helping to plant, care for, and harvest a fruits and vegetables in the school garden, a portion of which are donated to area food pantries. The School No. 7 Senate offers students of all grade levels a chance to participate in a leadership group. There are 30 senate leaders and 36 homeroom representatives. The Senate created a mentoring group where students tutor and mentor other students. The National Junior Honor Society has helped organize the school recycling program to raise environmental awareness as well as a variety of school activities and events. Students participate in student/teacher basketball, football, and volleyball tournaments, which provide an opportunity for students to witness good sportsmanship and the importance of character during competitive

activities. Eighth grade students and parents sign an "Academic Integrity Pledge" in which students commit to doing original work, citing sources appropriately, and asking for assistance when needed.

Students also joined the WE Schools movement, a global organization that challenges young people to identify causes and empowers them to take action. Students organized a school supplies drive for local families resettled from Syria and collected over 1,000 items and \$200. Students attended WE Day in New York City where they listened to politicians and activists who encouraged them to be leaders. Students participated in a workshop with WE officials and began organizing a toy drive, a park clean up, and social media awareness activities.

Over 65 eighth grade students annually participate in a "Human Rights at Risk" project in U.S. History. All students create a project of their choice to demonstrate their understanding of the curriculum to an audience. A required component of every project is to empower their audience to take action to help human rights victims. One student created a project in which she organized schoolwide presentations. She focused on the dangers faced by children in Syria. Her project included a t-shirt sale, which benefitted the "Save the Children" foundation. Other students presented to a women's group in Elizabeth, NJ, in which they focused on the current situation in Syria. Another student joined a UNICEF program promoting individual healthy habits and support for nutrition programs and got more than 200 students to participate in the fitness program, "Kid Power."

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

While Terence C. Reilly School No. 7 students are selected based on their observed potential for academic, artistic, musical, and athletic achievements, it is our mission to cultivate that potential with a multi-faceted strategy that acknowledges the individual student and maximizes our school community's resources. Our students face challenges in many aspects of their daily lives, and we give them a safe and stimulating environment which enhances their personal and academic development. Through the Renzulli Schoolwide Enrichment Model, student strengths are identified and supported in the students' daily schedule. This has led to creating highly differentiated, individualized learning experiences and opportunities for our students that makes our school not only a model for schools with similar demographics, but also for schools of all demographic permutations.

This strategy uses the foundation of components identified by the district (academic, visual arts, performing arts, and physical education) to build the curriculum that all students study, regardless of the talents we have identified. As students explore all areas of our curriculum during their years at School No. 7, guided by our specialized teachers in highly-focused programs, they may discover an interest or ability that might have gone unnoticed in a more typical environment. Many students who enter our school because of their academic achievement in mathematics or literacy find and develop a talent in other areas such as playing the violin or coding to develop applications as a result of their experiences in their enriched schedules. Teachers lead students to independently explore interests in environmental science or social justice, through activities such as working in our school garden or implementing school-wide events that raise funds and awareness for global concerns. Our student population, through this approach, is served in a format tailored to their individual needs and in a way not available to them at other schools.

Supported by our advanced use of technology with one-to-one devices in all grade levels, our students are provided access to tools and information which might not be available to them outside of school. Because our younger students are equipped with technology devices early, their technological skills are routinely advanced, allowing for a much more personalized and integrated use of technology in their learning and independent work as they further explore and develop their talents.

This "strategy" is, as such, a tapestry of components woven together using all available resources to support and guide our students. We recognize the collective opportunities we have as dedicated teachers, professionals, parents, and volunteer community members to nurture the strengths and inspire the improvement of highly motivated and talented students in a unique learning environment. Through this awareness and our commitment to living our school's motto, "together we can" continue to successfully lead our students to future prosperity in college, in their careers, and in their lives.