

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Ms. Susan Felder

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

Official School Name P.S. 40 Augustus Saint-Gaudens Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 320 E 20th Street

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

New York NY 10003-2898
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County New York

Telephone (212) 475-5500

Fax (212) 533-5388

Web site/URL http://www.ps40.org/

E-mail sfelder@schools.nyc.gov

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Ms. Donalda Chumney

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail dchumney@schools.nyc.gov

District Name New York City Geographic District #2 Tel. (212) 356-3739

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 n/a n/a n/a None

(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

- Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
 - 930 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 279 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 523 High schools
 - 67 K-12 schools

1799 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

- Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
 - Urban or large central city
 - Suburban
 - Rural or small city/town
- Number of students as of October 1, 2018 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	13	22	35
K	70	55	125
1	72	65	137
2	59	67	126
3	49	47	96
4	39	54	93
5	49	47	96
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	351	357	708

*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
 - 12 % Asian
 - 2 % Black or African American
 - 14 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 62 % White
 - 10 % 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: 2%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	11
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	0
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	11
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	673
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.02
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 3%
21 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Albanian, American Sign Language, Arabic, Bengali, Bosnian, Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin), Dutch, French, Georgian, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Korean, Swedish, Spanish, Serb-Croatian, Japanese, Russian, and .

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 10%
Total number students who qualify: 74

8. Students receiving special education services: 15 %
108 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>1</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>46</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>23</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>36</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>2</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 15
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.	32
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	9
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	5
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	6

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 22:1

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%	96%
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.

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

PS 40 is a neighborhood school dedicated to the three inter-related concepts of academic excellence, social responsibility, and student self-esteem.

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

PART III – SUMMARY

PS 40 is an elementary school: an oasis of learning and fun in the bustling borough of Manhattan. It is a reflection of the vibrant and diverse city in which we all live. The main building was designed and constructed in late 19th century Gothic style, complete with gargoyles and turrets, almost like a medieval castle.

The imposing edifice on east 20th Street has been through many iterations since the late 1800s from private grammar school, to boys-only junior high school. Finally settling in as an elementary school grades PK – 5 serving the families in the surrounding area since the 1950s. Some famous Americans have travelled PS 40 hallways in various eras, including renowned sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens (PS 40's namesake), David Axelrod, advisor to President Barack Obama, and Drew Nieporent, famed New York City restaurateur.

The school is surrounded by a dense residential area: less upscale restaurants and shiny boutiques, and more cozy diners, pizza parlors and playgrounds. Key to the PS 40 population are Peter Cooper Village and Stuyvesant Town, post WW II residential developments nestled on the East River. The complex was created to address a shortage of housing for returning veterans as well as those in-service professions such as police officers, firefighters, teachers and nurses.

Today these complexes are home to many families of various cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Some families have grown up right here in the neighborhood. Some families have come from across the United States, and the world. Many move here particularly to join the PS 40 community.

The idea of community is central to the PS 40 experience. The children find community in the classroom with their teachers and classmates while learning to be responsible and compassionate classroom citizens. The parents discover a welcoming group of collaborators who support the teachers and the interests of the children tirelessly. It's a little like a village, and all the players work together to ensure that each child experiences the best that a New York City public education can offer.

When prospective parents come to tour just prior to their child's kindergarten year, the Principal shares the PS 40 mission statement. The mission is to nurture the whole child: academically, socially, emotionally and physically. This insight into the principles that guide instruction helps focus what to look for in classrooms so that when they leave they have a mental snapshot of the PS 40 philosophy in action.

Rigorous academics are the foundation of the daily work at PS 40. The goal is to grow powerful readers and writers: life-long learners who display confidence and independent thinking. The comprehensive curriculum gives students a strong platform for future learning and schooling. The balanced literacy approach helps children learn to read and write through explicit instruction of strategies and independent practice.

There is a special emphasis on authorship. Children begin writing and publishing original works from the first day of kindergarten through their last project in fifth grade. Publishing parties throughout the year enable each child to share his or her work with the classroom community. The bulletin boards throughout the building are brimming with children's work in all disciplines: science, math, writing, social studies and the arts.

PS 40's team of teachers are focused, creative and hard-working. Regular professional development offers them opportunities to continuing their own education. Teachers who are also learners are a mighty inspiration for their students. Grade-wide and cross-grade collaborations support expert instruction in all classrooms.

Each grade participates in an art residency program. The students learn to express themselves through dance, creative movement and theater, sometimes stepping outside of their comfort zone. The idea is to engage students in the artistic process: to develop creative abilities through new skills, including communication, problem solving and team work. Similarly, the school-wide music program, which progresses to the fourth and fifth grade band, hones ability to focus, follow direction, and persist, while learning to play an

instrument.

Persistence, flexibility, resilience, optimism and empathy are the five mindset for learning stances: habits of mind that children are encouraged to cultivate for success in school and life. Guided by "A Mindset for Learning," authored by Kristi Mraz and Christine Hertz, the PS 40 community has incorporated the stances as daily practice: addressing and guiding social and emotional growth is a focal point of all instruction. This work developed from a school-wide study of Carol Dweck's "Growth Mindset." It informs the way in which children, and adults alike, interact as a community. These concepts are a shared language that encourage self-regulation, independence and kindness.

From the classroom to the rooftop playground, there is an opportunity for every child to shine at PS 40. Guidance, support, and constructive challenges encourage self-esteem, self-respect, and confidence in their abilities and their place in the world.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

PS 40 has been steeped in Balanced Literacy for more than twenty years. The reading and writing workshop is the heart of our school. Our progress in literacy can be traced to three phases of change: building capacity around the explicit teaching of reading and writing genres and strategies; questioning to promote critical thinking; and shifting from a teacher-directed classroom to a student-centered classroom with many opportunities for students to take charge of their learning through student-led experiences.

Our partnership with Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) has been instrumental to our growth.

Dedicated K-2 and 3-5 staff developers have provided high-level professional development to promote teacher and student growth. Implementing the units of study helped us improve the level of instruction and student learning across the school. Student achievement in volume, stamina, and critical thinking work increased and students began to articulate their goals more clearly.

Through the “Architecture of a Mini-Lesson” and Inquiry-Based instructional practices, daily teaching points are clear and streamlined across all of the Balanced Literacy components like read aloud, shared reading, guided reading and independent reading; the use of demonstration/mentor texts, shared writing, interactive writing, small groups, and independent writing. The writing process is taught from K-5: collecting ideas, developing ideas, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. Strong partner work reinforces the idea of feedback, support, and discussion amongst students during “turn and talks” and work times.

We use various forms of assessment in reading and writing, both formal and informal. In reading, we use the Teachers College Running Records to track students' independent reading levels from K-5. This provides valuable long-term data from year to year to pinpoint times when interventions may be necessary, both for struggling and proficient students. Looking at our school-wide reading data has helped teachers set goals for students in whole class, small group, and individualized instruction.

Teachers refer to learning progressions in narrative and informational texts to see skills and strategies on a continuum. Reading conferences and classroom observations are also used to assess students. In writing, pre-assessments (“on-demands”) and post-assessments are used to identify structure, development, craft, and language conventions of students' writing in narrative, opinion, and informational writing. Students are able to self-assess their writing in these categories using writing checklists. Students also receive feedback from partners and teachers.

Today, we are proud to host visitors to our PreK-5 classrooms from all over the country.

1b. Mathematics:

PS 40's mathematics program is characterized by a focus on student reasoning and sense-making. We believe children build number sense while developing conceptual understanding and procedural fluency through inquiry-based tasks.

PS 40's core curriculum in mathematics is A Story of Units, from EngageNY/Eureka Mathematics. We chose this curriculum based on its rigor and close alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards. The coherent progression of topics across grade levels is clearly illustrated throughout the curriculum as students build on what they already know through engagement in four components: fluency practice, applied practice, new concept development, and discussion.

We use several different instructional approaches to meet the needs of our students. Small groups are formed

for teaching based on assessment. Student partnerships are created for accountability. Problem-based learning is embedded in daily lessons of inquiry. Students work together and communicate their mathematical understanding, which aids in developing skills for future practice. Our teachers use both direct instruction and center-based activities which allows for students have opportunities to practice skills in many different ways.

Teachers use varied assessment data to analyze and improve student and school performance. Included in these are examples of formative and summative assessment. Pre-assessments and post assessments are given at the beginning and end of modules. Teachers use this information to help guide their instruction and make informed decisions about groupings. Exit tickets are used to assess daily lessons which help teachers to modify and differentiate their instruction. Teachers confer with students daily and take anecdotal notes in order to give one on one direct instruction. Written feedback is given on exit tickets, unit assessments and homework while oral feedback is given in small groups and while conferring one-on-one with students. We also use our state testing data to evaluate our student learning from year to year and compare it to the major emphasis standards from each grade level.

We are proud of both the rigor and sense of exploration inherent in our math curriculum at PS 40, and have hosted inter-visitations with other schools who have inquired about our math program.

1c. Science:

Science at PS 40 is centered around investigating meaningful phenomena where students collaboratively develop evidence based models or explanations to arrive at solutions to real-world problems. Our approach engages students with multiple modalities of learning to make sense of the three-dimensions of science learning: the science and engineering practices, disciplinary core ideas, and crosscutting concepts

The Amplify Science curriculum we've adopted is strongly aligned to the NGSS and the PK-12 NYS Science Learning Standards. In each unit students take on the role of scientists and engineers to investigate phenomena centered around real-world problems. They engage in hands-on activities, non-fiction texts, data-supported print materials, and powerful digital simulations to collect information from multiple perspectives. Not only do the multiple-modalities for collecting information allow for many entry points for student engagement, they also allow students to return to a variety of evidence sources to deepen their understanding of the phenomena and develop models and explanations to solve the problem.

Our fourth graders grow into expert systems engineers as they investigate the story of Ergstown, a fictional city experiencing frequent blackouts. Their job as Engineers tasks them with finding the problems in Ergstown's electrical grid and finding solutions to upgrade the system. They develop an understanding of electrical systems through hands-on work with electricity materials, engage in simulations that yield numerical data on the efficiency of systems, look in-depth at non-fiction texts that document how electrical systems fail in the real world, and collect data about what was actually happening in Ergstown around the time of the blackouts. As a culmination, after developing a holistic, multi-faceted understanding of how a city's entire electrical system works or fails, they publish comprehensive reports on what Ergstown should do to fix and prevent future blackouts.

Formative assessment is a key driver of instruction within the science curriculum in a multitude of ways. Student comprehension of content, practices, and crosscutting concepts are assessed through written and verbal aspects of communicating scientific information, modeling using hands-on materials, diagramming complex ideas, successfully representing their thinking using digital simulations and modeling tools, and basing their models, arguments, and explanations on non-fiction texts.

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

Social Studies instruction provides an opportunity to foster a student's curiosity and desire for knowledge. At PS 40, we provide a multitude of opportunities for students to understand themselves, their school, city, and the world in which they live. We follow the Passport for Social Studies curriculum provided by the Department of Education of New York City as a guide. Additionally, we supplement the NBRS 2019

curriculum in order to best meet the needs of our students and create meaningful activities to broaden their understanding of the subject matter.

We promote historical thinking skills to develop a strong understanding of the past. Quality informational texts, primary sources and rich picture books, for example, provide visual context and introduce key vocabulary. Our fourth grade teachers facilitate debates in which students become loyalists or patriots, supporting their ideas with evidence collected from these various sources.

Throughout the grades we visit historical sights and museums in order to bring concepts to life. Our kindergarteners visit the Jewish Museum where they become historians digging for artifacts. Our third graders ride the Metro North along the Hudson River to see our state's natural and man-made features. New York Historical Society's teaching artists visit our classrooms. Students examine, analyze, and discuss replicas of artifacts, works of art, maps, and documents, getting to know the work of historians, building critical thinking skills and deepening their content knowledge.

PS 40 students learn about social studies through an interdisciplinary lens. Our writing curriculum is intertwined with social studies content. We encourage role-play and dramatization to support student understanding of major concepts. We believe in the deep connection between play and learning. First graders create and role-play their own neighborhoods, becoming firefighters and doctors, understanding the many components and importance of a well-functioning community and all its members. Our fourth graders create a "wax museum" of important trades throughout the Colonial Era, creating props, designing costumes and writing monologues for the museum's visitors. Our students demonstrate their knowledge in ways such as creating videos, dioramas, and/or slide shows.

Furthermore, PS 40 strives to prepare our students for the global community. We believe that global education is essential for students of the twenty first century. Our educators nurture open-minded students who understand their own culture but also those of others; instilling compassion for each other, our city, our nation and the world.

1e. For secondary schools:

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

In our Pre-K classrooms, teachers use elements of student-centered and experiential learning, engaging children in active, play-based opportunities that are aligned with the curriculum areas provided by the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core (PKFCC). Our Pre-K program follows Creative Curriculum, a developmentally appropriate curriculum that builds early literacy and math skills through inquiry and play. Students' developmental skills are assessed using class observations and the Teaching Strategies Gold Authentic Assessment System. PS 40's Pre-K educators and their K-5 colleagues meet weekly for professional development sessions to collaborate on best practices that align with academic standards across the grades. Through the use of developmentally appropriate strategies that prepare our students for elementary school, teachers provide a nurturing environment where our students feel secure, supported and valued.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

One great strength of PS 40 is that the same level of rigor and student-driven inquiry that characterizes instruction in core subjects is also evident in curriculum areas like the arts, physical education, and technology. We strive to educate the complete child and create opportunities for all students to become creative artists, confident athletes, and tech-savvy critical thinkers.

PS 40's visual arts program is a medium-based program, covering five core units of study: Drawing, Painting, Collage, 3D, and Clay. These units repeat each year, giving students the opportunity to build upon past learning and also add new approaches, such as artist studies, abstract painting, and connections to

classroom study or current events. Additionally, over their six years students will cycle through a number of other units such as: Photography, Printmaking, Fabric and Architecture.

Through our visual arts program, children discover new ways of expressing and organizing their ideas, using their imagination and becoming careful observers. The Studio Art teacher collaborates with classroom teachers to develop lessons that reflect each grade's curriculum and to design other projects that the classroom teachers can execute with the children in the classroom. Students in grades K-5 have art class once per week.

PS 40's music program includes vocal and instrumental exploration, improvisation, composition, and music literacy. All students have music class once per week. Beginning in third grade, children learn to play the recorder, and in fourth grade they are introduced to band instruments. Fourth- and fifth-grade students have the opportunity to learn to play a woodwind, brass, or percussion instrument and perform in the school band. All students perform in concerts, for which they learn songs based on a chosen theme.

PS 40 students also engage in the performing arts through our involvement with several community-based organizations that provide residencies here each year. Fifth grade students participate in Dancing Classrooms, a social development program that utilizes ballroom dancing to explore issues of communication, cooperation and, self-confidence and socialization. Fourth graders participate weekly in the nationally acclaimed, year-long National Dance Institute (NDI) program. Second grade students dance with Dancewave's Hip-Hop Program, and first graders participate in the Circus Arts and Clown Theater program through Marquis Studios. Third and fifth grade students are also involved with Inside Broadway to write and star in their very own productions.

The physical education program at PS 40 features two full-time physical education teachers. This staffing allows many students to have P.E. two and sometimes three times per week from kindergarten through fifth grade. Our philosophy of physical education centers around self-esteem. We want children to develop an appreciation of fitness while finding something that they enjoy and can see themselves continuing with as a lifetime activity. Whether it be running, jumping rope, a Fitnessgram component or doing something aerobic in nature, we encourage children to find an activity to embrace. Our P.E. Program stresses active engagement, enjoyment and learning while meeting the state and national standards in the process.

Students are physically busy throughout their P.E. class. Innovative use of "stations" ensures that small-groups of students can move from one activity to another with minimal waiting time. Our goal is for the children to develop an appreciation for physical fitness and to continue this active trend throughout their lives. We are proud that this program was highlighted in Clara Hemphill's book, *New York City's Best Public Elementary Schools: A Parent's Guide*.

Students in grades 1-5 visit the computer lab to receive one period of media literacy instruction per week. In media literacy, students develop the ability to "read" and "write" in a variety of media, genre, and forms. Newspapers, magazines, television, film, websites, advertisements, signs, and pictures are explored as types of texts that require comprehension, analysis and evaluation skills, just like written texts do. Students are encouraged to become active rather than passive consumers of media messages, as well as creative and savvy producers of their media content. In the process, they develop familiarity with a variety of computer applications.

PS 40 classes visit the school library to search for, read, and check out books. Our library offers students a well-organized, inviting space where they can enjoy reading books and periodicals that are constantly updated by the school's librarian. Several computers for research and online resources are available. When students visit the library, they are also accompanied by their classroom teachers, who know them best as readers. In addition, PS 40 features a yearly Visiting Authors Series, during which published children's book authors visit with students in the school library to participate in readings and book discussions.

3. Special Populations:

The teachers and staff at PS 40 work closely to tailor and meet the needs of each child whether at, above, or below grade level. Our classes are heterogeneously grouped. Having a wide range of learners in each class benefits every child.

To address the needs of students above grade level, we make sure students are reading “just right” books suited to their reading level as assessed by Teachers College Running Records. Additionally, we have “expert” students lead reading and math groups, run book clubs, and pursue individual interests through participation in student groups and electives such as Eco-Team, Tech Squad, Chess, Math Enrichment, Yearbook, and Student Council.

For students requiring additional support, PS 40 offers a range of services to help children succeed in school. We believe early intervention is critical to ensure student success. PS 40 has a Pupil Personnel Team consisting of teachers, administrators, service providers, and the school based support team. At-risk students are discussed at weekly meetings and intervention plans are implemented and monitored. If significant delays persist, an academic evaluation by the Committee on Special Education may be indicated. PS 40 has an IEP Team consisting of a School Social Worker and School Psychologist who can help initiate a psycho-educational evaluation. This team works closely with teachers and parents to determine what resources may be needed to support a child’s academic and emotional growth. An individualized education plan is then developed and services are initiated in consultation between teachers and parents

Classroom teachers are working with the school-based support team to assess and address the needs of each special education student in order to address the achievement gap that exists between our students with disabilities and the rest of our student population. Our goal is to ensure that each student is receiving the appropriate services in the least-restrictive environment possible. Through monitoring and analyzing each student’s academic and social-emotional history, we evaluate which services to provide. Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classes are team taught by both a general education teacher and a special education teacher. Up to forty percent of students in an ICT class have an IEP which may include academic accommodations and modifications. Students at all levels benefit from the differentiated instruction and individualized attention made possible by this collaborative approach. PS 40 offers both mandated and at risk Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS). Additional educational support services at PS 40 are Speech Therapy, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Counseling.

Lower grade students who are identified as below grade level in reading, work with a teacher 1:1 or in a small group utilizing the Reading Recovery and Reading Rescue approaches. In addition, we have a team of teachers trained in research based intervention programs such as Foundations, Wilson, Leveled Literacy Intervention, and Specialized Program Individualizing Reading Excellent (SPIRE). The academic intervention programs are delivered and monitored to assess growth. Groups are formed throughout the school year depending on need.

English Language Learners receive mandated instructional periods each week in the area of English as a New Language based on their demonstrated level of proficiency. Instruction is delivered by a certified ENL teacher on staff. We are currently placing a stronger emphasis on push-in instruction over pull-out instruction for our English Language Learners to address an achievement gap between our ELLs and the rest of the student population. Our goal is to more closely intertwine ENL instruction with grade-level content, standards, and curricula.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

The culture at PS 40 is characterized by a shared sense of community, personalized support for both students and staff members, and a warmly demanding educational climate that encourages academic rigor alongside social and emotional growth.

Each morning the students are greeted by the principal, assistant, principal, guidance counselor and parent coordinator. The children are always eager to read and share the daily message and photo of the day, which are posted in the main lobby. The photos highlight students engaged in learning activities as they go about their day. Each snapshot of "life at 40" graduates to the wall on the main staircase, and as they accumulate through the year, we see a colorful history of daily activities and highlights unfold.

Each day students are reminded of their value both as individuals and community members through birthday announcements from the principal's office, to participation in school-wide community building activities such as Spirit Week, Joke Week and Estimation Week (a big favorite). Families are invited for end-of-unit celebrations, publishing parties, Read Across America Day, Grandparent's Day, and numerous other occasions where children can proudly share their published work.

Using the book, "A Mindset for Learning" by Kristine Mraz and Christine Hertz as a framework, teachers encourage students to be active participants in their own education while developing critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. Student leadership is valued. Students create and manage daily routines and design their learning space, helping organize and label their classroom libraries. Students at PS 40 take responsibility for personal growth and embrace their role as contributors to the community rather than mere participants.

Like the students at PS 40, our teachers work in an environment wherein they receive ongoing professional and social-emotional support. They meet weekly, if not daily, with their grade level colleagues to share, reflect, plan and problem solve. When they have students with unique needs, the weekly Pupil Personnel Team (PPT) meeting gives them targeted guidance and strategies offered up with humor, warmth and a full jar of sweets.

Teachers are provided with learning opportunities to hone their craft and bring new ideas and approaches back to their colleagues. The Mindfulness Committee, started by one of our third-grade teachers, gives all staff the opportunity to practice meditation and other mindfulness techniques to manage stress and connect with one another. Alongside students, staff members enthusiastically participate in Estimation and Joke Week, and they, too, are warmly saluted when they win an estimation challenge or share an especially funny joke.

The sense of community is at the core of our school. We work as a team with a purpose. All of the constituents contribute to the mission at hand: the children. From the school nurse, to the school aides, to the main office, we work together to provide the best possible climate for learning. Most importantly, the principal's door is always open for the children, teachers, and staff members. Her office is a hub of activity, dialogue and shared ideas.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

From Teddy Bear Day (kindergarten orientation with actual teddy bears) to fifth grade graduation, parents are integral partners in the education process at PS 40. We strive to build a deep connection with families from the very first time they walk through the big red doors on 20th Street, so that they have the tools to engage in their child's education: to support and encourage academic success.

Communication is a key ingredient in successful engagement with families. Each family receives a PS 40 Parent Handbook on their child's first day. Teachers regularly send home classroom newsletters to outline current curriculum points, as well as upcoming events and field trips. The parent coordinator emails

updates every week. The principal presents a Principal's Report at each PTA meeting, and also in the quarterly school-wide newsletter. Parent participation on the School Leadership Team (SLT), for instance, ensures that the parent body is heard in important decisions in teaching and learning

Frequent parent workshops are scheduled each year, from discussions around best practices for parenting, to the learning strategies for reading and math that children tackle in the classroom. They are most often led by our own teachers and staff developers; for instance, PS 40 literacy staff developer leads a parent book club for second grade parents to discuss chapter books. At other times special guests may present on topics of particular interest to our families, such as a recent presentation on Defining & Demystifying Bullying for parents of all grades.

The school is intrinsically connected to the surrounding area. The social studies curriculum takes first and second graders into the neighborhood to study what makes a community. Over the years we have forged relationships with local businesses and services. The first graders visit restaurants, and even the local fire station.

Our valued community relationships include the local crossing-guards, Ruth and Florence, who keep our families safe in the heavy traffic area and are our eyes on the street. They really know the families and vice versa. We also partner with the local police precinct and enjoy open communication and support when needed.

We have created relationships with our elected officials from City Council to the local Community Board. These partnerships have provided opportunities such as the CASA (Cultural After School Adventures) NDI program for kindergarten and first grade, a partnership with Inside Broadway for third and fifth graders; and to spearhead capital improvements.

Our partners in the community, from parents and families, to local businesses to local government, are engaged in the PS 40 mission of student achievement and social-emotional growth.

3. Professional Development:

PS 40 approaches professional development as a data-driven and collaborative effort to increase students' academic achievement and social-emotional development by engaging staff members in high-leverage learning. We draw upon a variety of resources to provide personnel with research-based strategies to improve instruction and school culture, and are driven by the belief that substantive monitoring, follow-up is critical to the successful implementation of professional development.

We have two in-house staff developers, one for English Language Arts and one for mathematics, who make substantial impact on the capacity of teachers and administrators. Our staff developers receive cutting-edge professional learning from outside organizations and turnkey it to teachers. They lead grade meetings, model, observe, co-plan, co-teach lessons, and provide teachers with actionable feedback so they can provide rigorous, standards-based instruction. Our staff developers also coordinate with personnel from Teachers College Reading and Writing Project and Math Collective to bring high-level, research-based professional learning to our school.

Our partnership with Teachers College has been ongoing for seven years, during which dedicated K-2 and 3-5 staff developers from TC have made regular visits to provide professional development to promote teacher growth. Our teachers participate in collaborative lab sites and attend intensive summer institutes, year-long study groups, and workshops at TC further their practice.

Through the Math Collective, PS 40 teachers and administrators have attended workshops, participated in lesson studies and inter-visitations, and engaged in inquiry-driven work on best practices in Mathematics instruction.

Staff members engage in professional development across academic areas as well as on topics like classroom management and social and emotional learning. The principal and assistant principal attend

monthly district-level meetings to participate in relevant professional learning with peers. Our science teacher participates in a Science Leadership Team to develop inquiry-based curricula, while our physical education teacher conducts a monthly professional learning community with other District 2 PE teachers. All of our specialty teachers currently participate in a series of “tri-school PD” sessions, during which they meet with colleagues from two other schools in the neighborhood to ensure instruction meets the rigor of the standards associated with their content areas.

Staff members have participated in professional development on cultivating Growth Mindsets and promoting anti-bullying. Teachers have recently dedicated PD cycles on initiatives such as developing opportunities for student-driven learning and articulating instructional goals and school-wide behavioral and cultural expectations. We meet for 80 minutes as a staff every Monday afternoon to engage in professional learning together. These meetings are planned and scheduled by our Professional Development Committee, a group composed of PS 40 teachers, administrators, and staff developers.

4. School Leadership:

Trust and collaboration are hallmarks of the PS 40 leadership philosophy. As a school, we hold high expectations of ourselves and our students. Our belief is that all constituents in the building are leaders as well as learners. We empower our teachers and students to feel ownership of their craft and work.

Our school has a principal and one assistant principal who serve as instruction leaders, advising, guiding, supporting and continuously shaping the vision of the school. We also have various committees such as a School Leadership Team where parents, teachers and administrators collaborate on school-wide goals. Our hiring committee, comprised of administrators and teachers, utilizes a comprehensive approach to ensure we enlist teachers who are highly qualified and committed to our school's philosophy.

The principal and assistant principal are visible in the school throughout the day. From the time students enter the big red doors in the morning, the building leaders welcome them and their parents with smiles and greetings. During the school day, the principal and assistant principal visit classrooms and provide teachers feedback, both positive and constructive. Teachers are open to refining their already strong practice and sharing with others to assure a strong, rich experience for all students. Several teachers participate in leadership groups outside of the school. For example, the science teacher and a second-grade teacher are helping to write curriculum for New York City science and social studies departments or attending specialty groups as part of the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project.

At PS 40, developing cohesiveness in curriculum across classrooms is one of our strengths. While we have a unified curriculum and approach in balanced literacy and math, teachers make adjustments based upon the Teaching-Learning Cycle, a framework that we use to assess, evaluate and teach for optimum learning to occur. Teachers are given the freedom to make decisions about curriculum implementation to suit the needs of their class and grade. Additionally, they arrange their own classroom schedules; they are thoughtful about what works best for them and their class. As a result of careful planning and exemplary pedagogy, students at PS 40 reach high levels of achievement on classroom and state assessments.

Fourth and fifth graders take on leadership roles including student council, mediators, monitors and eco-team members. Each year, they submit applications to serve in these roles. Staff members lead each leadership group and students help direct the work. Eco-team members, for example, gave presentations in the school to inform others about recycling and composting. Using a student-created poster, they walked us through the dos and don'ts of recycling and informed us of the importance of it for the environment.

The mission and philosophy of the school's leadership is to lead the implementation of academic excellence, self-esteem and social responsibility. As a team of administrators, teachers and parents, we strive to illustrate this philosophy every day.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

One practice that has been instrumental to our school’s success is developing a culture of learning where each and every person, student and adult, feels valued. We truly care about each child, and we live this value, across each day and each year.

Our mission statement begins, “PS 40 is a neighborhood school dedicated to the three inter-related concepts of academic excellence, social responsibility and student self-esteem.” At the core of our approach to these three pillars of learning is our belief that every individual in our community has value.

To support academic excellence while keeping the value of each individual at the fore, we help each child to progress along his or her unique trajectory of growth. Our workshop-based curriculum naturally supports independence and student autonomy. Within that curriculum, we give students crystal-clear feedback, so that they know what their next steps are. We also set crystal-clear goals, so that students know what they are striving towards. Above all, we value students’ varied processes and approaches, not their end products.

The second commitment in our mission, supporting social responsibility, is also deeply connected to our belief that every individual has value. We enlist students’ help in caring for our environment and our community in myriad ways: choosing work they’re proud of to feature on school-wide displays or teaming up with a student in another grade for programs such as reading buddies and monitors. In teaching students to care for each other, we teach them that everyone has special, important value.

As value of the individual permeates our school culture, our third commitment, fostering student self-esteem is naturally supported. Our students know that we care enough about them to support them in doing their very best academically, in being the best friend and community member they can be. In short, we support them in becoming their best version of themselves.

Additionally, we value each and every staff member and parent in our community. We provide ongoing professional development for our teachers. We give our teachers clear feedback, and with clear goals and next steps, just as we do our students. We provide ongoing parent education for our families, and we remain in close touch with individual families about ways they can support their children’s unique approaches to learning and goals.

At orientations for new parents, we share an Elizabeth Stone quote, “The decision to have a child is a momentous one. It’s to decide forever to have your heart walking outside your body.” We understand what a precious, important task it is to be entrusted with the children we are honored to teach at PS 40, and we strive to treat each child as the unique, invaluable person they are, each with their own developing potential.