U.S. Department of Education
2020 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Dr. Christopher Clark
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)
Official School Name PSRC Early College at RCC
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 5170 Fayetteville Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Lumberton   State NC   Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 28360-2158

County Robeson

Telephone (910) 737-5232   Fax (910) 737-5231
Web site/URL
https://www.robeson.k12.nc.us/o/early-college   E-mail christopher.clark@robeson.k12.nc.us

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

Date
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*_Dr. Shanita Wooten   E-mail_shanita.wooten@robeson.k12.nc.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Public Schools of Robeson County   Tel. (910) 671-6000

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

Date
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Craig Lowry
(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 2020 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 2014 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: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, or 2019.

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 (2019-2020) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district   <u>19</u> Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   (per district designation):   <u>10</u> Middle/Junior high schools
                                            <u>6</u> High schools
                                            <u>0</u> K-12 schools

                                            <u>35</u> TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/ (Find your school and check "Locale")

   [ ] Urban (city or town)
   [ ] Suburban
   [X] Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2019 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	25	29	54
10	21	28	49
11	18	30	48
12 or higher	25	56	81
Total Students	89	143	232

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of   32.3 % American Indian or Alaska Native
   the school (if unknown, estimate):   0.9 % Asian
                                         11.6 % Black or African American
                                         24.6 % Hispanic or Latino
                                         0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
                                         25.9 % White
                                         4.7 % 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 2018 - 2019 school year: 1%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred *to* the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	0
(2) Number of students who transferred *from* the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	3
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	3
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	235
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1

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

   Spanish

   English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 2 %

                                                     4 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 100 %

                   Total number students who qualify: 232

8. Students receiving special education services: 0 %

      0 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.

0 Autism	0 Multiple Disabilities
0 Deafness	0 Orthopedic Impairment
0 Deaf-Blindness	0 Other Health Impaired
0 Developmental Delay	0 Specific Learning Disability
0 Emotional Disturbance	0 Speech or Language Impairment
0 Hearing Impairment	0 Traumatic Brain Injury
0 Intellectual Disability	0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9.   Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 2

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	12
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	0
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	0
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

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	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	99%	99%	99%	99%	98%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

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 2019.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	42
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	95%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	5%
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 <u>X</u>   No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.   <u>2012</u>

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

The mission of the Public Schools of Robeson County is "To educate all students by building a foundation for learning in an ever-changing global society" (PSRC 2017). The mission of Robeson Early College High School is to "Identify and incorporate 21st Century and High Schools That Work practices and skills while fostering positive mentorships among students, staff, parents, and community stakeholders."

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

Students apply and are awarded up to 70 points on their applications. We are looking to fulfill the Early College purpose, i.e., first generation college students. However, we do accept students whose parents may have more than a high school education, usually due to other factors such as attendance, recommendations, interview process, etc. Students who garner up to 50 points on their application are then invited to the interview session. The staff pair up and use the same rubric and questions during the interview. Afterwards, the top 55 candidates in points are offered the opportunity to attend PSRC Early College at RCC.

PART III - SUMMARY

Students who attend PSRC Early College at RCC are selected from applicants across our county. Robeson County is identified as among the 10% of US counties that are majority minority, having a combined population of American Indian, Black, and Hispanic residents that constitute 68% of the total. Members of the state recognized Lumbee Tribe make up approximately 38% of those that identify as American Indian.

A little more than 23% of Robeson County residents live below the poverty line, which is 1.5 times the rate of North Carolina, while 77.3% of residents have attained graduation from high school or higher. Finally, the per capita income of Robeson County residents is $17,801.00 as compared to $30,737.00 for the state of North Carolina. One hundred percent of our students eat free lunch.

One key strategy we believe makes a huge difference is that we have a shared learning environment. Teachers regularly get together and discuss what works, what has not, reasons why it has or has not worked, and what the data is telling them regarding next instructional steps. Our teachers are reflective practitioners who share with each other and are genuinely concerned for their students' performance in all their classes. As it relates to students' well-roundedness, we require all our students to sign up for at least two clubs (excluding academic ones). The focus is to meet with their advisors twice monthly and discuss topics that interest them (math club, Christian club, art club, etc.). Membership in these areas help our students develop socially and in other ways as well. Our school plays a vital role in that we offer the educational attainment needed for individuals to garner positions in: institutions of higher education, the military or successful employment. Many of our students come from backgrounds identified as disadvantaged by a number of factors (poverty, educational attainment, English language learner, or other barriers).

If anyone in Robeson County were asked about Early College, they would share about our Robotics Team. Our team, although only four years in the making, has received numerous awards. For instance, just this year before the Covid-19 pandemic, our team received the Engineering Inspiration Award, which was the second most prestigious award given during the competition at UNC-Pembroke. This award celebrates outstanding success in advancing respect and appreciation for engineering within a team's school or organization and throughout the community. The robotics students have made themselves known on other Public Schools of Robeson County campuses by introducing engineering to elementary and middle school students through presentations, career days, and summer camps. These activities serve not only to build interest in other students but also to help our students develop their skills when presenting.

PSRC Early College at RCC was honored to receive recognition as a Blue Ribbon School during the 2012 school year. This recognition served to support the idea of excellence among our staff, our students, and our Robeson County stakeholders. One of the most important by-products of this recognition was the fact that our teachers began to be seen as leaders in their respective fields. For instance, many have been asked to serve on planning committees at the district level. These committees have focused on developing benchmarks, creating pacing guides, and providing guidance as it relates to staff development needs in our district.

The business community really began to support our school after this recognition, confirming our school's value to student success. PSRC Early College enjoys the support of business leaders not only in the town where we are located but all over the county. Many leaders reach out to us looking for ways to help us support students. For instance, the Electric Cooperative, located in a neighboring town, always supports the Robotics team with generous contributions each year. So this recognition has helped our teachers build their capacity by being invited to serve on district- level committees but has also gotten the public to see us as being successful and worthy of their investments.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment**.

1a. Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas

Our overall approach is centered around the concept of providing opportunities for growth to all students. This approach is unique because each teacher makes a concerted effort to maintain the mindset of individuality throughout our student body. When the teachers look at their classroom full of students, they don't see a class of students but, rather, individual learners and thinkers who have multiple perspectives that deserve to be voiced and valued. The teachers believe that this can be accomplished through collaboration and presentation. PSRC Early College teachers serve as catalysts for developing confident, articulate young people through this approach. Though there may be moments "teaching" and lecture, the teachers mostly serve as facilitators and encouragers in a structured environment. Units are strategically planned, and groups are strategically created to ensure that each individual student has the chance to reach their potential. The teachers have chosen this classroom approach because future workplace collaboration and communication are inevitable for each student. If the teachers can make the students confident and independent learners, student success is inevitable.

Just as student individuality is important, so is teacher individuality. Administration at PSRC Early College trusts their teachers to implement effective learning strategies in order to achieve the learning standards. Those learning strategies range from explicit instruction to tiered learning. But regardless of the strategy, all teachers base their strategies on the learning standard of life application. Each teacher makes it their mission to make the subject and curriculum they teach relevant to the life their students live now and will live later. One philosophy common among all the teachers is to prepare the students for the next step; the best way to do that is for students to leave high school with a clear connection between the learned material and life outside the classroom walls.

1b. Reading/English language arts

The learning standards in English are addressed through the facilitated classroom activities. The teachers are aware of college/career expectations and aim to grow and nurture the skills required to succeed on those levels. Students are encouraged to be independent learners and thinkers, which produces a classroom culture of class discussions and debates. This approach is two-fold: student-initiated engagement makes the students stakeholders in their learning, and it reassures the students of their abilities. Making a concept meaningful to high school students begins by choosing a topic that can be applied to the students personally, locally, nationally, and/or globally. Regardless of the chosen literature, theme-based units quickly get them invested because they are relatable and applicable. Early College often attracts students who don't meet their full potential in a large class setting because they are often inadvertently overlooked due to students with larger personalities. The students come to realize that they are more than just a quiet kid who independently does his work, remaining unrecognized by their peers and teachers.

A tiered approach is common in English, specifically in the area of literature analysis. As early as grade five, students learn the foundational literary terms. One goal in high school is to use those terms to critically analyze the literature. For example, students are motivated to move beyond the basic concept of determining the protagonist to determining what is occurring in the piece that makes that character the protagonist, how their actions will impact other characters and the text as a whole, and what lessons can be learned from this protagonist. Students dissect the archetype concept of literature by recognizing literary patterns. Follow-up discussions and activities always prompt the students to see those same archetypes in their own lives and in society. Modeling is a major approach used in writing. Since students may not know what a well-developed paragraph looks like, it's important that one be written and dissected to further student understanding. The importance of writing beyond high school is consistently emphasized, as what one writes often serves as a first impression. Since writing so often intimidates students, peer reviews are facilitated for writing workshop purposes. Students learn that words are powerful and, when appropriately applied, can serve the students' ultimate purposes.

Debates/discussions are regular formative and summative assessments used. Students are assigned roles and given a planning structure to follow prior to debating/discussing. Though the teacher assesses solely based on what is seen and heard during their presentation, the students also take part in the grading process through peer grading. Students rate their group in various areas and disclose/describe any student who should receive a thumbs up or a thumbs down. From that information, the teacher can have conversations to ensure that students understand the material. This approach teaches students the value of accountability on a personal and group level. They begin to understand that their decisions affect others. This approach, specifically the actual debate preparation, strengthens their skills in the art of rhetoric.

1c. Mathematics

The learning standards in math are addressed by helping students reach the next rung on a ladder. Through continued professional development, the teachers are well-versed, in the standards both vertically and horizontally to provide continued learning from Math 1 to Advanced Functions & Modeling (AFM).

The instructional approaches used in math consist of many unique learning opportunities. The teachers provide investigatory lessons that allow the students to discover the learning rather than learning through lecture. Although lecture and teacher direction is required to some extent, learning is not centered around the teacher but rather around the student. Through these investigations, students make connections to the standards while also getting that hands-on experience that helps them learn the standard more deeply. The students collaborate in groups on a daily basis to foster learning from peers as well as to help them become better listeners. In Math 1 and 2, the students are required to keep an interactive notebook with right- side, teacher-driven information and left-side, student-driven mastery, which connect to the "I can" statements that are based on the standards. Students experience many ways to demonstrate their mastery of learning, such as foldables, task cards, sorting, mind maps, error task analysis, to name a few.

One of the benefits to having a smaller population is the closeness, which happens organically, between the teachers and students. Students have the same teacher for Math 1 and 2 then same for Math 3 and AFM. This continuity and relationship is key when it comes to assessing student understanding, as the teachers know the students well. Some of our favorite formative assessments range from watching body language, exit slips, Google Forms, reflection summaries, popsicle sticks, think-pair-share, my favorite no, predicting and essential questions. Summative assessments, on the other hand, include not only state standardized tests but also cumulative tests, unit tests, and projects.

The data from our summative assessments is used to analyze student improvement by addressing or readdressing areas of low performance. For example, one area of identified weakness for our student population on the WorkKeys tests is locating and interpreting data on graphs and charts. To help students improve, a "Graph of the Week" (GoW) was implemented in Math 3 and AFM. The GoW handout contains 2 graphs/charts on a related topic. The topics come from real-world data. Examples include most widely used social platforms, sleep vs. grades, and cost of Super Bowl commercials. The students locate key points and write a paragraph of what they interpreted.

Our students are dual enrolled in the community college beginning in their 10th grade. Our faculty has a close working relationship with faculty/staff at the community college, with part of our staff working as adjunct faculty. The math teachers have met with the college instructors to assure that appropriate alignment from high school math classes into the college math classes is taking place.

1d. Science

The science department teaches four subjects: biology, earth and environmental science, chemistry, and physical science. The biology curriculum continues students' investigations and deepens the understanding of the cells, molecular basis of heredity, biological evolution, interdependence of organisms, matter, energy and organization in living systems, and adaptive responses of organisms. Environmental and earth science emphasizes the functions of earth's systems with a focus on matter, energy, plate tectonics, origin and evolution of the earth and solar systems, environmental awareness, materials availability, and the cycles that

circulate energy and material through the earth system. Chemistry continues the exploration of the structure of matter along with chemical reactions and the conservation of energy. Physical Science engages students' understanding of concepts related to motion and their relationship to force, the properties, structures and changes in the states of matter, and the conservation and transfer of energy. The instructional approaches used in science are project-based instruction, flipped classrooms with the use of an interactive notebook, the use of technology in classrooms including Chromebooks, Vernier Scientific probes, iPads, Google Classroom, student presentations, school-wide rubrics.

Our students participate in all North Carolina assessments including the End-of-Course Biology exam and NC Finals for Physical Science, Chemistry and Earth/Environmental Science. In addition our district has developed benchmarks that are administered periodically throughout the semester. Our school uses this benchmark data for our mid-course corrections that are often necessary. These mid-course corrections help us identify gaps in student learning before the final end of semester exams. The central office scores these benchmarks and provides the data broken down by objective, sex and by ethnic group. We are better able to create tutoring and Saturday Academy supports for our students when utilizing this data.

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

The social studies department's learning standards are addressed by ensuring that their core curriculum is aligned with North Carolina's Social Studies Standards, which include Unpacked documents in LiveBinder and pacing guides for each sub-subject area. Engagement is key in relation to instructional approaches. Students are engaged through simulations that depict real-world situations. One simulation conducted in class is exploring the United States Federal Executive Departments. Each student is assigned an Executive department, and students explore the different roles of the United States--leaders and their responsibilities. As a class, each department reports back to the president (teacher) in a mock department meeting.

Current Events are used as well to connect history with real-world events. Online educational resources include news outlets, online research engines, historical films, and primary and secondary resources. Student collaboration is incorporated through regular group work as well as through individual work, presentations (partners and individual), and peer evaluations. The types of assignments used are close reading, hands-on reading strategies, group projects, and individual projects. The Cafe Meeting is an example of an in-class, collaborative assignment. Groups of four have an excerpt and posterboard. Each group analyzes their document, leaving comments on their posterboard. When time expires, each group rotates to the next group. The process continues. By chunking material such as primary sources, students are collaborating without getting exhausted from reading large pieces of material. This allows an engaging learning experience.

Students are assessed formatively through authentic assessments such as observations, quick writes, essays, and performance tasks as well as through alternative assessments such as projects and presentations. Data collected through authentic assessment gives the teacher knowledge of what to review. For instance,the teacher may instruct the students to provide supporting evidence based on a document. Lack of evidence gives the teacher assessment direction.

1f. For secondary schools:

All students take all classes that are offered at PSRC Early College, and, if applicable, those classes are honors level classes. As soon as the first semester of their freshman year begins, students are front-loaded with core high school classes in order to prepare them for their college classes. For example, students complete all four of their high school math classes during their sophomore year so that they can begin their college math classes during their junior year. Career and Technical Education (CTE) high school classes provide opportunities for student exposure to various careers through guest speakers, job shadowing, jobsite visits, and internships. Students visit the local courthouse, prison, and tax administration office as well as the Microsoft corporate office in Raleigh. Career-readiness is explored in the CTE classes through the assimilated workplace. The classroom is recreated to mirror an actual office, and students are assigned jobs such as office setting class manager, human resources manager, and IT manager. They are assessed on how well they perform at their "job." Internships provided by the CTE department give students a realistic perspective of a prospective career choice. These internships are 135 hours (paid or unpaid) of work-based

learning where the student is assigned a jobsite mentor and expected to complete designated duties. Besides a life-changing experience and a potential job opportunity, the experience ends with a portfolio and presentation where students dress as they would on that jobsite and share their overall experience. Yet another facet of the CTE classes is the certification the students receive in Microsoft Word and Powerpoint, which will be an asset to them throughout the duration of their lives.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

PSRC Early College requires all ninth graders to take Physical Education during the first semester of their freshman year. The ultimate objective is for all students to gain a lifelong understanding and appreciation for healthful living, which will assist in making Robeson County a Health Community. Student's health-related components of fitness are assessed in the beginning of the course in order to improve in all fitness metrics by the end of the semester. Additionally, students are introduced to life-long activities designed to increase their likelihood of exercising in the future. The health portion of this course is designed to give students the ability to make wise choices as it pertains to a variety of topics such as reproductive health, nutrition, mental health, and physical health. During the semester, students are required to complete a seven-day meal plan in order to recognize, assess, and, possibly, alter, any nutritional decisions they are making.

Students at either the senior or advanced senior levels take Spanish I and Spanish II. The main goal for Spanish I is for the students to be able to communicate with the Hispanic community on a comprehensive level. The five basic skills of listening, understanding, speaking, reading, and writing are introduced and practiced rigorously in order to assure that the language is acquired on a meaningful level. Skills are learned by exposure to a variety of basic thematic lessons. In Spanish II, students build on the prior knowledge and skills acquired in level one. Advanced vocabulary is introduced, which will include the culture and detailed information relative to the culture. Art, history, and geography are integrated into the curriculum. The Spanish classes provide "survival skills" that allow the students to communicate in real-world situations. Eighty percent of the Spanish students have jobs, which exposes them to the Hispanic population in Robeson County. Students attest that their Spanish classes help them connect with Spanish-speaking customers. "A few lines in Spanish go a long way," is what one student once admitted. Spanish speakers are more apt to approach people who speak their language, and PSRC Early College students learn all the Spanish they can so they will be approachable. The intensive grammar and thematic lessons prepare students for college-level Spanish classes and beyond.

Students from various grade levels take Microsoft Word and Powerpoint during one semester of high school. Ultimately, students are expected to use what they have learned to tackle real-world challenges in the classroom environment. Initially students will learn to use the newest version of Microsoft Word interface, commands, and features to create, enhance, customize, share, and publish complex documents. Next students will learn to use the newest version of Microsoft PowerPoint interface, commands, and features to create, enhance, customize, and deliver presentations. The reinforcement of English/language arts is embedded into the curriculum. Work-based learning strategies appropriate for this course include cooperative education, internship, service learning, and job shadowing.

All ninth graders are required to take freshman seminar during the second semester of their freshman year. This class offers students a chance to see how various subjects relate to them and to their place in the world, as it is academically based with the purpose of career guidance and self-discovery. The materials used in freshman seminar are based on the idea that everyone has strengths and should be given a chance to use them to succeed. These materials encourage group input and hands-on learning to foster relationships within the class. The curriculum promotes a high level of self-reflection, which is critical to the successful transition from child to adult, student to worker. In an effort to promote goal-setting and career planning, students are required to complete a curriculum plan. This gives the student a concrete goal that outlines their time in high school. By using this fluid plan as a guiding force, the students learn throughout high school that change and flexibility are staples of everyday life.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

The school's testing data shows that females, specifically Native American females, score lower in math and science than their counterparts. Analysis of the data shows only 22 percent of Native American females perform at or above proficiency. In an attempt to address this deficiency, the staff adopted two key interventions. The primary goal of the Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) is to identify students early and intervene quickly. Targeted instructional supports were put in place to address the academic growth and achievement of the struggling students. Both numerical and observational data were used to identify interventions to address the whole child. In addition to the students' academic achievements, their social, emotional and physical needs were surveyed. Staff development was provided for the teachers. A math assembly entitled "Math. . . The Key that Opens Many Opportunities" was held. Native American community leaders working in various occupations were invited to speak to students about how they use math in their careers. Each teacher also demonstrates or teaches in a method that aligns with the students' understanding of a concept, applies differentiated instruction, facilitates peer tutoring and inclusive grouping, connects student learning to other curriculum concepts, modifies instruction as necessary, and allows students to manipulate prescribed strategies to fit their individual learning styles.

3b. Students performing above grade level

In order to surface the potential of students performing above grade level, teachers incorporate students' prior knowledge, real-life experiences, and interests. Teachers demonstrate the same concept using multiple methods and encourage students to demonstrate their understanding of the standards and objectives, using any method they would like (presentation, paper, etc.). The school houses a Special Populations Coordinator (SPC) who meets with the students individually to discuss extra help that is available. The SPC offers any additional resources that are useful for the students' specific needs. In addition we begin having discussions with students as early as second semester 9th grade about what they see themselves doing in the very near future. We bring in college side speakers to spark their interests in prospective fields. In addition we encourage our students to be active on the college side by joining the Student Government Association, often providing its leadership, and by joining the Honors College, where our students often outnumber the traditional college students. Another example of how we work with students who are excelling is that we expect them to visit middle schools in the area and help create interest in attending PSRC Early College High School. This is accomplished in a myriad of ways for example: our students participate in Read Across America activities, our Robotics team mentors middle school engineering groups in an effort to peek interest in STEM fields and our students serve as tutors for their high school peers and their college level peers. Many instructors on the college side tell us over and over how supportive and engaging our students are.

3c. Special education

While PSRC Early College has a small population of special education students, the students are still considered by teachers when planning and facilitating lessons. Lessons are created around multiple learning styles. The use of real materials and real-life situations allows all students to make connections with the material. Large print assessment, read aloud, separate setting, and extended time are implemented according to the Individualized Education Plans. Intervention techniques and assessments are used when the student is in a special population, has a medically-related 504 plan, and/or has an at-risk or unresolved issue(s).

Some interventions that have proved successful are: teachers working together in an effort to construct lessons, along with activities and assessments that support struggling students. In conjunction with the guidance department these supports build structures that follow the student from class to class. In addition we strive to include the college side instructors in building these supports. This is necessary so that the student feels supported when they matriculate. In assessing these students we rely on our Testing Director who helps classroom teams develop formative assessments that are in alignment with state and federal summative expectations.

3d. ELLs, if a special program or intervention is offered

3e. Other populations (e.g., migrant), if a special program or intervention is offered

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Our school engages students socially and emotionally by providing many opportunities through clubs and advisement.

At the beginning of each academic year, a club day is hosted to highlight the various established clubs. Students have the option of starting new clubs if they can't find one that relates to their interests. Students don't get to experience the arts as they would in a traditional setting since we are an Early College. Clubs offer them the opportunity to explore and express themselves through the arts, science, technology, and/or ethnicity. We offer these clubs: Art, Science, Math, Christian, American Indian Student Association, National Beta, Student Government Association, Battle of the Books, Robotics, Drama, and SAVE (Students Against Violence Everywhere). Several clubs also support our students academically. The Math club provides peer tutoring as one of the requirements of membership. The students tutor our students as well as students in nearby elementary schools. During Read Across America week, students dress up and travel to various schools to read to elementary students. Our Beta club requires community service and actively participates in the state National Beta Convention. Students competed at the 2020 NC State Beta Convention in February. Forty students (out of 60 in attendance) qualified for nationals. The skills they learn in Beta reach far beyond the classroom. For instance, the robotics team learned how to construct and code a robot to complete a task geared towards the challenge of "Examine, Expand, Extend." Students had to design a robot, plan and layout where the robot would demonstrate how to identify the need for solar energy, and apply solar panels to buildings. Students collaborated with each other to code, program, and design the robot. During the judging phase, students were interviewed. Part of the feedback from judging our robotics team was that they were impressed with the level of understanding regarding the coding process. Our robot ran completely autonomously and performed flawlessly. Clubs offer the students a sense of belonging and the social development that aren't offered elsewhere.

When students enter in their freshmen year, they are assigned an advisor that will follow them throughout their academic career. Our teachers (advisors) are able to forge an additional bond unlike that of a regular teacher/student bond. Advisors/Advisees meet on a regular basis to address academic scheduling, to discuss social/personal issues, and to help them build communication and study skills.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Advisory Council is a group of individuals that effectively add to the schools skills and help guide our school towards its mission. The council consists of the principal, one teacher, one student and several parents/guardians. The Advisory Council advises staff, gives input on how budgets should be spent, advises on extracurricular activities, participates in decisions that directly affect the school.

Our Parent Teacher Student Organization works together to supplement the educational experience. PTSO meets 4 times a year but sponsors other events throughout the school year that promote and celebrate student success. One such event is held the week before exams as a way to help students unwind. PTSO acquires donations and volunteers within the community to provide this fun-filled event. Each time PTSO meets, the school provides a meal so that families who attend don't have to worry about supper and are able to engage with other families.

Another method of connecting with our school family is by recognizing students for their hard work, growth/improvement, community involvement, college acceptance, etc. Some of these events include grade-level awards night, College Signing Day, and parent information nights.

Communication is key to sustained student support. Our school offers notifications and updates through Robocall system, Remind, email, school social media account, and webpage.

Our Student Government Association started hosting Homecoming last year. Our school does not have

sports, but SGA felt having Homecoming would add to student morale while continuing to connect with the community. Members of a local bank volunteered and donations were made in the form of food for concessions. The local traditional high school offered their stadium for our students to have a powder puff game, with advanced seniors battling seniors, and the junior class served as cheerleaders. The event was a huge success and brought back former alumni as well as various community members.

Our students are mostly first generation college graduates and are from low-income families. In order to allow our students to experience learning and culture outside our county, a team of teachers organized and planned a school-wide trip to Washington D.C. Most students did not have the funds to participate, so our school rallied together to raise the funds to give all students a chance to attend. Students and staff who were not attending the trip participated in raising the funds as well through sales, donations, and raffles.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Leadership at PSRC Early College allows and encourages staff to participate in local, state, and national conferences and professional development. This atmosphere of encouragement and broadening our horizons has enhanced the learning for teachers and students.

The professional development that our staff participates in encompasses content area information, new pathways, student achievement, enhanced technology, and bringing together common ideals. But, most of all, it prepares our students to become 21st Century ready. We have always strived for students' academic excellence and student growth. Our mission/goal is to graduate 100% with a high school diploma and an associate degree diploma. With that in mind, continued staff development makes sure the staff stays abreast of new knowledge and enables our staff to face challenges as we progress toward that goal. One of the main professional development offerings that our school participates in consists of teachers sharing their own strategies. We recognize that oftentimes teachers are the best teachers; therefore, they are the best resources. Great strategies are happening in each classroom, and this professional development gives time to share those great ideas. The teachers present and model activities and strategies that they use in their own classroom and then discuss implementation methods.

Our math teachers are also part of a district-wide pacing guide implementation team. The team consists of 3 people (district wide) for Math 1 and 3 people for Math 3. Both of our math teachers serve on the separate teams. The collective team has created pacing guides and resources that are used throughout the district, as both of these subjects are EOCs.

4. School Leadership:

The principal's leadership philosophy includes respect for individual differences, treating teachers as practitioners in their field, showing empathy with parents who are facing multiple challenges with their children, and helping young learners develop a desire to grow into competent, successful contributing members of the American society. In accomplishing this, the principal develops an understanding of each teachers' strengths and makes sure they understand and value their expertise by giving them leadership tasks that complement their strengths and build on their identified areas for improvement. The principal also serves as the core instructional leader who ensures that the state and national curriculum is being implemented properly and is data driven.

Our school relies not only on teachers who promote student success but on parents and other community members as well. We strive to empower our parents with the knowledge they need to assist us with educating their student. We do this by engaging them in grade-level meetings and department-specific meetings where we illustrate exactly what our students should know and be able to do. In addition, we provide parents with resources to help them help us. Finally, we celebrate with our students and parents periodically throughout the year with several club induction ceremonies and ceremonies celebrating diversity of cultures.

Our students are the most important members of our school community. We believe, given the proper circumstances, all students can and will learn. Their learning experiences should be exemplary, employing

critical and creative thinking while honing their analyzing skills. Our role is not only to teach them how to learn but how to apply that learning to new and novel situations. Through constant support and guidance with not only their learning but regarding their welfare as well, they will see that we value and respect them. This will ensure they develop both academically and socially.

The leadership team, in conjunction with the principal, understands that PSRC Early College should function as part of a collaborative community. For instance, the greater community is involved and they assist us with securing much-needed funding so our students may travel and participate in Robotics competitions and Beta club events (state and national level). This community has members who serve on our School Improvement Team and who advise the principal as members of his Advisory Council. We work together to ensure that a safe, orderly, and caring environment, in which our students excel, is created.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

One single practice that has been most influential in the school's success has been the teachers looping with their "advisement" classes. In lieu of the traditional homeroom setting, PSRC Early College implements advisement classes that serve multiple purposes. When students arrive on the campus as freshmen, they have chosen to leave their friends and their communities behind for an entirely new world; this often leaves the students anxious. Advisement provides a "homebase" for the students. The teachers ensure that the students feel comfortable and safe in advisement and provide assurance that they are not alone in their feelings as a freshman. This approach alleviates their fears of not initially fitting in and makes them feel grounded in a new setting.

Advisement classes meet twice a semester, with the students touching base with the teacher between those meeting times. Character building activities and strategies for success have been implemented through advisement over the years. Throughout the duration of the five years, the students' high school classes decrease and their college classes increase, making the advisement time and relationships even more meaningful and purposeful. Students consistently contact their advisement teacher for support, resources, and class scheduling. This relationship fosters a confidence and demeanor in the students that translate into academic success. This approach consistently cultivates the relationships between the students and the teachers, which translates into long-term, post-high school support, resources and outlets for the students.