

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mrs. Amy Dockter-Rozar
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name West Career and Technical Academy
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 11945 West Charleston Boulevard
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Las Vegas State NV Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 89135-1511

County Clark

Telephone (702) 799-4340 Fax (702) 799-4355

Web site/URL https://www.wctawranglers.com E-mail docktac@nv.ccsd.net

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. Jesus Jara E-mail jarajf@nv.ccsd.net
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Clark County School District Tel. (702) 799-2273

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Ms. Lola Brooks
(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)

- Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
 - 226 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 59 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 49 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools

334 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

- 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
- Rural

- 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	163	248	411
10	170	203	373
11	138	182	320
12 or higher	139	170	309
Total Students	610	803	1413

*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
 - 25 % Asian
 - 5 % Black or African American
 - 18 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 45 % White
 - 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 <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	1
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	19
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	20
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	1384
(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, Chinese Mandarin, Tagalog, Armenian

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1 %
13 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 24 %

Total number students who qualify: 333

8. Students receiving special education services: 1 %

17 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>6</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>0</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>5</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>3</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 7

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

	Number of Staff
Administrators	4
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	55
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	6
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	4
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	5

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 26:1

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	94%	96%	97%	97%	96%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	99%	99%	98%

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

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2019.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	296
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	83%
Enrolled in a community college	7%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	1%
Found employment	2%
Joined the military or other public service	2%
Other	5%

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.

Inspire students to compete successfully in the 21st Century by providing a college preparatory education utilizing project-based learning and innovative technology in a positive, collaborative culture.

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

West Career and Technical Academy (West Tech) is an all-magnet, career and technical academy high school offering nine distinct programs of study. Students entering grades 9-10 may apply. Seven of our nine distinct programs have qualifications to be included in a blind lottery selection (Biomedical Science, Biotechnology, Cybersecurity, Engineering, Environmental Science, Nursing, and Sports Medicine), while two programs (Business Management and Digital Media) have no qualification requirement.

Approximately 85% of applicants are deemed qualified in a blind review of academics, attendance, and citizenship as reported on the first semester report card. There are three preference priority groups in the blind lottery, which is conducted by the Clark County School District Magnet Office: sibling (25%), geographic zone (25%), and magnet middle school continuity (25%). In addition to meeting the preference goals, the lottery is conducted to ensure that selected students represent the District’s ethnic diversity as closely as possible. If more students are qualified than seats available, an alternate pool is created in the event a seat is vacated.

Students are recruited by physically visiting District middle schools, community education fairs, and by holding weekly “411” events to give site tours and answer questions. Recruiting is predominantly conducted by Student Ambassadors, who are hand selected to best represent their programs and to reflect the diversity of our student body.

PART III - SUMMARY

West Career and Technical Academy (West Tech) is an award-winning magnet academy focused on project-based learning, college-career preparation, and building a collaborative community. Established in 2010 and located in northwest Las Vegas, Nevada, West Tech is celebrating “A Decade of Excellence.” West Tech is a multi-year US News and World Report “Best High School,” the #2 high school in Nevada, the #538 high school nationally, and the #105 magnet high school nationally. West Tech is a seven-time Magnet Schools of America (MSA) “School of Distinction,” reflecting quality programs and reducing achievement and equity gaps. The student body of 1413 is more ethnically diverse than the surrounding community as students from across the valley attend. Applications increased this year by 20%, attributed to the school’s reputation for excellent instruction, excellent teachers, and positive culture.

West Tech creates an exemplary learning environment by prioritizing instruction. An 8-period A/B blocked schedule of 80-minute classes ensures sufficient time for labs, differentiation, and maximum teacher-student contact. Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses based on industry standards predominate offerings as the programs of study. Program quality is validated by state CTE completion testing, for which West Tech’s pass rates far exceed state averages. Seniors present capstone projects encompassing four years of learning. Students present to peers, District personnel, and community partners, with top-scoring presentations winning scholarships.

More than 85% of students take Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) level core classes and electives. The expansive AP program exceeds 900 exams each year. All students are encouraged to challenge themselves. West Tech offers extension courses to provide additional time and support for non-traditional or first-time AP students. AP, dual-credit, and CTE courses allow students to obtain college credits upon graduation.

West Tech engages in school-wide Project-Based Learning (PBL) that focus on student-identified problems, which often inform curriculum and school plan-of-operation decisions.

The West Tech faculty is selected for expertise, relation ability, content passion, and collaborative willingness. Many staff members come from industry. West Tech is a National Board Demonstration School, with nearly 30% of the faculty certified. Academic counselors oversee students in specific programs all four years, creating long-term relationships and understanding of students' needs. A College Advisor engages students in weekly sessions and parents in monthly sessions, providing information and assistance with essay writing, college selection, and financial assistance resources. Since West Tech students are high-achievers and prone to stress, counselors conduct monthly classroom lessons as well as assisting individual students experiencing family changes, gender identity issues, addiction, and eating disorders. In response to student stress, the PBL topic for 2019-2020 was “The Year of Well-Being.” Bimonthly, students met with staff “wellness “coaches” to work on goals, stress-reduction strategies, and a rotation of activities to enhance well-being, including stress management, yoga, sleep study, journaling, art therapy, and outdoor activities.

While curriculum and magnet programs are the backbone of the West Tech, activities are the heart. West Tech offers a full complement of student activities, including intramural sports and leadership clubs like Student Council, Key Club, National Honor Society; and competitive clubs like CyberPatriot, Speech and Debate, and Career and Technical Student Organizations like DECA, FBLA, HOSA, and FFA. Student service clubs like Jewish Student Union, Black Student Union, Gay-Straight Alliance, and St. Baldricks create a sense of belonging, while student-interest clubs such as Anime, Mountain Biking, Art, and CrossFit engage students’ non-academic interests.

West Tech’s success occurs with the support of community partners like UNLV, Howard Hughes Corporation, City National Bank, Downtown Summerlin, the National Park Service, and others. Community and industry partners participate in advisory boards, critique Capstone projects, provide internships and shadowing experiences, and mentor students. In response to parent input, West Tech founded the Family Collaboration Group (FCG) in 2017. It is a parent-run group that provides guidance for families new to West Tech, conducts fundraising, and acts as a sounding board for the community. The FCG communicates issues to the principal in a solution-based format and is a positive conduit to the community.

The School Organizational Team (SOT) is a state-mandated body consisting of parents, staff, and student representatives. The SOT assists the principal in developing priorities for the school plan of operation and aligning resources to achieve those priorities.

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

West Tech’s approach to instruction is to create a supportive learning environment that maximizes opportunities for students to be college and career ready by prioritizing instructional rigor, application of skills, remediation and exam preparation.

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) magnet programs that students apply for are: Biomedical Sciences, Biotechnology, Business Management, Cybersecurity, Digital Media, Engineering, Environmental Sciences, Nursing, and Sports Medicine. Far from mere “electives,” these programs provide college and industry-level coursework, certifications, and potential college credit. The minimum number of credit hours for graduation is 22.5, but with their program courses, West Tech students graduate with 32 or more.

The core curriculum is based on Nevada Academic Content Standards (NVACS), the College Board Advanced Placement standards, and the College of Southern Nevada (CSN) English and History standards for dual credit courses. Emphasis is placed on deep understanding of standards, applying skills to new situations or content areas, presentation and communication, and the ability to work independently and collaboratively. Preparation for standardized and high-stakes exams is conducted weekly, including multiple practice exams with remediation opportunities throughout the year. Instruction is enhanced with nearly one-to-one technology. Much content can be accessed digitally and collaboration is increased with online shared documents, meets, and other tools. Students are expected to take high stakes exams and financial assistance is provided for AP exams. West Tech has a nearly 70% pass rate on AP exams, with focus on having the college course experience as well as mastery.

The academic programs and structures at West Tech are clearly succeeding, with 90% of students attending college, 3% attending certification or professional training, 2% entering the military, and 2% entering the workforce. Three percent are pursuing faith and service-based missions or are engaging in entrepreneurship.

1b. Reading/English language arts

West Tech’s English/Language Arts program of study includes grade-level, Honors, Advanced Placement, and dual-credit college English 101 and 102 through CSN. West Tech students are encouraged to take the most rigorous course they can handle, including AP English Literature and Composition, AP Language and Composition, and AP Seminar for the AP Capstone program. Teachers utilize formative assessments and writing conferences to monitor mastery of standards. They incorporate Socratic seminar, debate, PBL, podcasting, video production, and group learning to enhance instruction and learning. Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings focus on articulation, assessment development, and data analysis to adjust instruction. English teachers utilize common conventions and formatting in alignment with college and industry expectations.

1c. Mathematics

West Tech’s mathematics program of study begins at Algebra I and extends to AP Calculus AB, BC, and Statistics. College Preparatory Math and Topics in Modern Math are offered for students who are not on the AP path but who have completed Algebra 2 and Pre-Calculus. Students are required to take a math class each year, beyond the 3 years required for graduation. Some courses are double-blocked, with Fundamentals sections supporting students in lower level courses and Extension sections for AP courses to support new or non-traditional students. Critical thinking and problem-solving processes are emphasized, with frequent course-based PBL’s engaging students in real-world math applications. The use of technology in the form of TIInspire calculators and online data tools enhances instruction. PLC’s are used to articulate and align instruction and to engage in professional development. Assessments are also developed in PLC’s to reflect the current mastery of students rather than an arbitrary moment in time from a pacing guide. Students

prepare for the ACT exam school-wide, utilizing an online preparation program to quiz, test, remediate, and re-test throughout the year. Teachers utilize the data to adjust instruction and address gaps identified by the assessments. Students participate and excel in state and national mathematics exams like the American Mathematics Contest (AMC), American Invitational Mathematics Exam (AIME), and Trig-Star mathematics exam.

1d. Science

West Tech's science program of study includes grade-level, Honors and AP level courses. In addition to the state-required three courses for graduation, West requires all students to take a science course all four years. This is easily attainable as six of the nine magnet programs are science-based. In addition to the traditional Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Anatomy and Physiology, West Tech offers CTE and magnet electives that include Plant Science, Marine Science, Robotics, three Biomedical courses, three Biotechnology courses, three Nursing Assistant courses, three Sports Medicine courses, three Engineering courses, three Environmental Science courses, three Greenhouse Management courses, and extension lab courses for all magnet programs. Emphasis on applying the scientific method, critical thinking, problem and project-based learning, and independent research enhance the learning experience for students. All students have culminating Senior Capstone projects and/or certifications as requirements for program completion. PLC's are conducted by course strand and prioritize a deep understanding of scientific processes, and for assessment development, cross-curricular project based learning planning, and course articulation. Students prepare for the ACT exam school-wide, utilizing an online preparation program to quiz, test, remediate, and re-test throughout the year. Teachers utilize the data to adjust instruction and address gaps identified by the assessments. AP practice exams are administered quarterly to inform instruction and refine student understanding of material. West Tech students consistently win or place in competitions like Science Olympiad, Science Bowl, Cox Stars of Science, and the UNLV Science Fair.

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

West Tech's Social Studies program of study includes Regular, Honors, Advanced Placement, and dual credit college-level courses. In addition to the state-required courses (World History, US History, US Government), West Tech offers AP Human Geography, AP Psychology, Principles of Leadership, and "We The People," a course based on a deep understanding of the Constitution that culminates in district, state, and national competitions. Students participate in a simulated Congressional Hearing comprised of an analysis of assigned Constitutional questions and cross-examination of teams by sitting judges, legal experts and community professionals. West Tech has competed at the state level five years running and has placed first in Southern Nevada numerous times. Emphasis on evidence-based writing and analysis of primary and original documents is the foundation of learning in the program and teachers incorporate document-based questions and free response questions throughout the year into their curriculum. PLC's are focused on integrating core curriculum as a vehicle for expanded learning, as well as articulation, common planning, and assessment development. Students prepare for the ACT exam school-wide, utilizing an online preparation program to quiz, test, remediate, and re-test throughout the year. Teachers utilize the data to adjust instruction and address gaps identified by the assessments. Social Studies courses directly support reading and writing practice for this exam. The Social Studies Program has helped make history come alive for their students by participating in National History Day and have had students and teachers travel to Washington, DC almost every summer to participate in the National Contest. Additionally, every West Tech senior student passed the Nevada State Civics exam required for graduation.

1f. For secondary schools:

West Tech ensures that all students are college and career ready by maintaining a rigorous yet supportive instructional program. All students are expected to take the most challenging courses they can handle, with supports in the form of Foundation and Extension courses. This rigor is balanced with students taking courses they are passionate about, predominantly in their magnet/CTE program. Core, magnet and CTE courses are standards-based and structured to prepare students for success in college and industry careers. End-of-Course, End-of-Program, and mandatory AP exams measure student success, with program and industry certifications providing evidence of student preparation to employers and higher education entities.

West Tech students score 20-50% higher than state averages on AP and CTE exams, and students attain certifications in Accounting, IC3, National Association of Sports Medicine (NASM) Personal Trainer, Certified Nursing Assistant, and VITA Tax preparation. Additionally, most students leave West Tech with nearly a year's worth of college credits, attained by passing AP exams and CTE program exams, and by passing dual credit college courses. Paid and unpaid internships with our community partners, clinicals, and shadowing experiences in industry round out the school experience with external practical work experiences. The college consultant West Tech hired has brought structure and processes to the community to research schools and financial aid, to assist with applications, and to fine-tune interview skills for career and college entrance.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

West Tech's 8-period A/B block schedule provides opportunities for students to not just meet core graduation requirements, but to fully engage in their education. West Tech has a strong focus on developing students' ability to balance school and life as well as requirements and passions, as evidenced by this year's school-wide PBL, "Year of Well-Being." Unlike many CTE magnet schools, West Tech offers performing arts, including Theater, Orchestra, and Dance. The fine arts like drawing, painting, creative writing, film study, and photography align with and support our Digital Media program. The Photography program is robust and the teacher leads District and state AP PLC's as well as assists in writing curriculum. Theater is an elective and the Tech Theater program is a CTE course. Spanish is offered as a world language, including AP Spanish Language and AP Spanish Literature and Culture. In addition to graduation-required physical education courses, West Tech offers outlets for students in dance, functional fitness in the form of CrossFit, and a weight-training course. All freshmen take Health and Freshman studies for a semester. As previously mentioned, multiple electives in the nine magnet programs of study are required to complete the program and students graduate with 10 additional credits than required.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

West Tech has less than 2% special populations, as students generally enter on grade level and must qualify for 7 of the 9 programs to be eligible for the lottery. Students performing below grade level are offered weekly tutoring, Fundamentals courses that are blocked with core classes when possible, and access to online resources as appropriate. An instructional aide is present in most of the regular-level courses to assist teachers and students. However, 23% of students qualify for Free or Reduced Lunch assistance (FRL) and disproportionately represent achievement gaps. These students are offered technology, waived course fees, and additional support in the community as needed. Students do enter with a wide variety of academic abilities as 30% come from private and charter schools who may have different academic programs than the Clark County School District. Students are given pretests to determine academic mastery so that teachers may plan to "begin where they are." Formative assessments are given frequently and data is analyzed in PLC's so that curriculum can be adjusted and instruction differentiated.

3b. Students performing above grade level

Students performing above grade level are encouraged to take advanced level core and elective courses (Honors, AP, dual credit college courses) and to participate in competitive programs and contests. High-performing students may also choose Student Tutor as an elective and work with peers who are struggling.

3c. Special education

West Tech has less than 2% special populations, as students generally enter on grade level and must qualify for 7 of the 9 programs to be eligible for the lottery. Due to the qualifications and the generally affluent geographic zone, West Tech has a small percentage of students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP's). Special Education Students comprise 1% of West Tech's population, but do represent achievement gaps. While most gaps are less than 10%, additional tutoring and accommodations are provided, including

extended deadlines, additional remediation opportunities, and smaller settings for assessment. Multi-tiered interventions are put in place according to student need with the goal of students becoming independent by senior year.

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

Due to the qualifications and the generally affluent geographic zone, West Tech has a small percentage of English Language Learners (ELL's). ELL students are provided 2 hours per week of tutoring from ELL-endorsed teachers. They are closely monitored by their counselors and teachers for progress.

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

West Tech has two programs for postgraduate (18 years old-22 years old) special education students, Program Approach to Career Education (PACE) and Post-Secondary Opportunities for Students in Transition (POST). While these students did not graduate from West Tech, they are able to fully engage in the high school experience (assemblies, PBL's, dances) and make our high school students' richer for being on our campus. The PACE and POST students work in our greenhouse alongside our students, do Community-Based-Instruction in various businesses and organizations, and enhance the family environment of West Tech.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

West Tech has been successful creating a positive school climate by recruiting diverse students and providing opportunities and support for them. Teachers, academic structures, and the school environment are student-centered with most students having the same counselor and program teacher for four years. They attend many classes with their program cohort and form close relationships. Students are steeped in Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) beginning with our Core Values, which are taught and reinforced in the mandatory Freshman Studies course. The Core Values guide all decision-making, behavior expectations and reward structures for students and adults. The Project/Problem Based Learning (PBL) focus for this year was “The Year of Well-Being,” created to address student-generated concerns with school-life balance. PBL’s allow students to engage with the faculty and administration to improve the culture on a continual basis.

Students are encouraged to participate in the many leadership and service opportunities offered by our diverse clubs. In addition to Student Council and National Honor Society, West Tech students participate in Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSO’s) like DECA, FBLA, HOSA, FFA, and Cyber Patriot. These clubs integrate the skills learned in the students’ magnet programs and provide competition and leadership opportunities at the chapter, district, state, and national level. West Tech students serve in state level leadership positions each year. Students join clubs according to interest and culture, including the Jewish Student Union, the Black Student Union, Orchestra Club, Gay-Straight Alliance, Bible Club, Jesters Comedy club, Mountain Biking club, Cross Fit club, Anime club, Dance Company, Speech and Debate, and many more.

Student recognition is frequent, with student of the month, Core Values recognition in the form of Wrangler Bucks, and academic, conduct, and attendance recognition quarterly. Annual program banquets and award ceremonies highlight the many contributions students have made to the programs, school, and community.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

West Tech recognizes the genuine desire for parents and community members to participate in and help guide students’ experiences. The creation of the previously mentioned Family Collaboration Group (FCG) has enhanced the ability of the principal to encourage honest feedback and solutions-based problem solving for families on a less formal level than the state-mandated School Organizational Team (SOT), although the SOT meetings have been highly attended. The Parent Advisory Corps (PAC) is another informational monthly meeting that also highlights student and staff achievements, as well as calendar and event information. Community partners attend monthly Advisory Board meetings and work one-on-one with teachers to enhance the educational experience. One of many examples is the “Boss Project.” West Tech’s Business Management students were assigned to business owners in Downtown Summerlin to assist with marketing, social media, and other tasks. This was accomplished through a community partnership and involved more than 100 students. The Community Outreach and Service Club (COAST) tutors students at neighboring elementary schools, works with community charities to assist in distributing resources, and develops student leadership skills. When academic dishonesty became an issue, all community members were invited to participate in a focus group to develop consequences as well as to align integrity with personal values and the school’s core values.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

With stellar instructors, a committed support staff, and a caring and cohesive administrative team, West Tech works hard to ensure that all staff members feel valued and heard. Professional development must be as diverse as the staff receiving it. As a National Board Demonstration School, West Tech focuses on “what teachers should know and be able to do.” Nearly 25% of the teaching staff is certified and more candidates begin the process yearly. Support for these teachers is provided by paying for NBCT facilitators to run bi-weekly learning and work sessions, two sub days per year to work on certification, and recognition when it

is achieved. Similarly, teachers who teach AP courses are given two sub days per year to work on planning, assessment, and to ensure student success. Teachers who have four or more courses to teach are also given the two sub days per year to plan. Professional development funding is allocated for teachers to attend associated seminars, conventions, and conferences. Weekly site-based collaboration time is used to provide assistance with technology, PLC's, and for whole-staff problem solving. Support staff are invited to learn technology alongside teachers and are encouraged to attend professional development to increase their skills. West Tech is above all a family committed to the WEST FAMILY Core Values, and each month, staff members pass an award based on each core value to a colleague. This and other consistent cultural traditions makes West Tech a wonderful place to work.

4. School Leadership:

Leadership at West Tech is participatory and shared. The principal's philosophy is that all staff are responsible for providing quality opportunities for students, teachers are the experts and should lead from their expertise, and that administration should provide support, resources, and remove obstacles. Families are expected to engage in the students' learning experience by being present, volunteering, and by communicating in monthly Parent Advisory Council (PAC) meetings. The three assistant principals and the principal meet weekly to review supervisory data, to plan feedback conferences and professional development, and to identify agenda items for the larger leadership teams as noted below. The administrative team primarily support teachers, facilitating weekly PLC's and providing space and time for collaboration and planning. The nine magnet Program Leaders and six Department Chairpersons make up the PL-DC team, which meets monthly to review and provide solutions and ideas for school improvement, curricular decisions, PBL planning, and budget decisions. The four counselors, the partnership coordinator, and the magnet assistant principal meet weekly to develop the support systems and internship opportunities vital to provide students with clear and relevant programs of study and industry experiences and skills. West Tech further utilizes input from monthly meetings with support staff leaders, the School Performance Planning team, and the School Organizational Team (SOT) to assist in developing the school's yearly plan of operation, instructional program, and aligned budgets. The SOT in particular provides input from parents, students, support staff, and teachers that is invaluable. Academic data and yearly surveys provide additional information to drive continual improvement for each leadership team. The Family Collaboration Group takes the lead in providing a sounding board for concerns as well as opportunities for families new to West Tech to learn "the ropes" from families familiar with the culture and structure of the school.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

West Tech is the #2 ranked high school in Nevada by US News and World report for multiple years for many reasons. A gifted teacher team, strong support staff and supportive administration, consistent practices, a talented and diverse student body - the list goes on! However, it is the prioritization of quality, student-centered instruction that is the basis for West Tech's continued success. Quality instruction begins with quality teachers, so recruitment and retention is critical. Attracting and keeping the best instructors is a priority and is achieved by giving teachers voice and power over their content and by recognizing excellence. Similarly, quality instruction must be supported by appropriate and diverse course offerings and a cohesive master schedule that provides opportunities for students to access not just the most rigorous but the most appropriate educational program. All academic, environment, and culture decisions are made with the keeping the integrity of the instructional program as a priority.