

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 [] Magnet [] Choice

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

Official School Name Clayton A. Bouton High School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 432 New Salem Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Voorheesville State NY Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 12186-0527

County Albany County

Telephone (518) 765-3314 Fax (518) 765-5547

Web site/URL https://www.voorheesville.org/Domain/10 E-mail lschmitz@voorheesville.org

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

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Mr. Frank Macri E-mail fmacri@voorheesville.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Voorheesville Central School District Tel. (518) 765-3313

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.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Ms. Cynthia Monaghan
(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.

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

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 (per district designation):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 3 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
 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	50	51	101
10	47	41	88
11	43	34	77
12 or higher	41	52	93
Total Students	181	178	359

*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
 - 3 % Asian
 - 0.5 % Black or African American
 - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0.5 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 91 % White
 - 2 % 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	3
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	2
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	5
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	360
(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):

Chinese

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %

1 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 11 %

Total number students who qualify: 40

8. Students receiving special education services: 9 %

32 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>1</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>12</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>19</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5

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	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	24
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.	6
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 15:1

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	97%	96%	95%	95%	96%
High school graduation rate	99%	98%	98%	95%	97%

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	96
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	72%
Enrolled in a community college	18%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	1%
Found employment	9%
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. 1991

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

Voorheesville's mission includes high quality instruction and increased academic achievement for all students, improved district communications with all stakeholders, and effective stewardship of community resources.

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

Even though Clayton A. Bouton High School, in the Voorheesville Central School District (VCSD), was last recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School in the the 1990-1991 school year, many community members still treasure the memory of the honor bestowed on the district three decades ago. Many of the parents of students in our high school today were in high school when Clayton A. Bouton was first awarded the distinction. Although Voorheesville does not have a very diverse student population, it does, indeed, celebrate all races, religions, languages, ethnicities, sexuality, family make-up, and socio-economic situations. The Voorheesville Central School District is a suburban community lying entirely in the County of Albany; it is eight miles from the capital city of Albany and ten miles from the city of Schenectady. The Albany area, known as the Capital District, offers diverse cultural, recreational, and educational opportunities. Our high school has been identified by the New York State Education Department as a Reward School and a School of Recognition. Consistently ranked at the top of area school districts, Voorheesville is also recognized by Newsweek magazine.

At the time of its initial Blue Ribbon recognition, Voorheesville was primarily an upper middle class bedroom community for professionals working in the Albany, Schenectady, Troy, and Saratoga Region of upstate New York. The district's educational and cultural values were reflective of the community that it served. Voorheesville was widely recognized by local media outlets and business reviews as a top performing school for its excellence in academics, athletics, and the arts, as well as the broad range of opportunities offered in a small school environment. Voorheesville's standardized test scores were typically in the top three in our region for grades K-12 and acknowledged statewide. VCSD also had very strong programs in all aspects of student life and was known for its holistic approach to education.

In subsequent years, Voorheesville experienced an increase in the percentage of families moving to the school district. Clayton A. Bouton became a sought-after academic institution for families of students wishing to find a "fresh start" or an environment where their child could benefit from smaller class sizes and opportunities to connect to school through athletics, the arts, or cultural opportunities not available in another district. Another factor in the increase of high school age transfers was large scale residential development within the district's boundaries.

Although the population has changed, the culture remains the same. Clayton A. Bouton High School offers a broad range of co-curricular activities to support the engagement of its student body. Approximately sixty-five percent of our high school students participate in interscholastic athletics which are a very large part of the culture of the community and the school district. An overwhelming majority of our students in the high school participate in athletics, clubs, and activities while challenging themselves with a rigorous course load of advanced placement and honors level courses. Our students populate ten different athletic teams in the fall season alone and contribute to more than two dozen different high school clubs and organizations within the school community. Academic teams at Clayton A. Bouton excel throughout the region; the Science Olympiad Team has won best small school in the region for the last two years; the Model United Nations team wins honors at national and international competitions alike; and our Mock Trial Team advanced to the semifinals before the coronavirus closure. Our clubs reflect a broad range of interests from leadership-driven groups such as class councils to civic and socially focused groups such as Sources of Strength and Sexuality And Gender Alliance (SAGA). Our students' musical and theatrical achievement is unparalleled in a school this small.

Voorheesville also has some non-traditional graduation requirements; high school students are required to pass a career and financial management course and to complete a minimum of fifteen hours of volunteer service in the senior year. Many of our graduates are able to start college as sophomores due to the college coursework in which they have engaged throughout high school. Furthermore, Voorheesville has a newly-established partnership with Siena College whereby, if students follow a certain course of study at the high school level, they gain automatic acceptance in the business program at Siena College.

Students at Clayton A. Bouton High School are empowered to discern our areas for improvement and to be a part of the change. They propose and create clubs; they design social-emotional initiatives; they propose adaptations of our learning spaces; they make a difference!

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

Clayton A. Bouton High School uses formative and summative assessment data to analyze student achievement and to improve student performance. As a main focus of our school-wide professional development for the entirety of two Superintendent's Conference Days and several departmental follow-up workshops, "authentic assessment" work has improved teachers' planning and use of data. Students are not placed into Academic Intervention Services (AIS) classes without at least two benchmark assessments that manifest a need for more than Tier 1 classroom intervention. At the high school, we also offer Apex Learning, a technology-based support, for supplementation and/or credit recovery. Tier 2 supports are offered via AIS in three departments: English, mathematics, and social studies. Those who are at-risk of failing also can be placed in structured study halls, known as Boost, for a smaller, more supported setting that lends itself toward differentiated, tailored instruction and re-teaching/reinforcement. Most departments employ quarterly assessments in addition to much more frequent, standards-based formative assessments.

Regardless of students' performance level, we strive to make the students better, more well-rounded, well-adjusted, confident, and contributory members of society who feel prepared to face the world and all it has to offer.

1b. Reading/English language arts

The English department at Clayton A. Bouton High School is devoted to developing all students as readers, writers, speakers, and critical thinkers. It is our belief that all students can succeed, but only if they are given the guided practice necessary and timely feedback required to achieve mastery. In their four years of English study, students learn and practice all modes of writing, whether it be expository, descriptive, argumentative, or narrative, and practice literary analysis via written and spoken tasks, as all courses also have a public speaking component. This, we feel, makes our graduates both well-rounded and well prepared for the rigors of college level study, the workplace, or military service.

English classes at Clayton A. Bouton range from the heterogeneously grouped English 9, 10, 11, and 12, to the more rigorous English 10 Honors, English 11 Honors, Advanced Placement Language and Composition, and Advanced Placement Literature and Composition. The ninth and tenth grade courses are taught through the lens of World Literature, while the eleventh grade pairs nicely with US History as it looks primarily at American Literature. Along with a strong focus on literary analysis, each grade level English course incorporates research and writing into the study of literature by having students prepare a traditional research paper or research project as a requirement for advancement. Advanced Placement Language and Composition is offered to juniors as part of a dynamic team-taught course that brings together both English and Advanced Placement US History; furthermore, Advanced Placement Literature and Composition is offered during senior year. Senior English classes study contemporary literature, but have a strong focus on rhetoric, as seniors must complete a semester-long senior thesis, a college-level research paper, and present their findings to their teachers and peers in a timed thesis defense. But, regardless of level, each course has as an objective the development of each student's competency in literary analysis and writing.

Within our program, we prepare students for their lives beyond high school. One measure of our program's success is the outstanding ninety-five percent average passing rate on the New York State English Regents over the last twenty years, which consistently places us among the top schools in New York's Capital Region. As for our AP courses, over the years, we have exceeded the national average for AP Literature scores, and over the last three years, Advanced Placement Language and Composition scores have exceeded the national average. But success on standardized tests is not the only measure of our students' success beyond high school. We also look to provide students the opportunities to earn college credit while still in high school. Besides the traditional route of earning credit through success on Advanced Placement exams, all students have the option during their senior year to take English 12 or AP Literature as a College-in-the-

High-School class through SUNY Schenectady, which affords them the possibility of six total college credits. By providing students with a firm grounding in the principles of analysis and rhetoric, we make it possible for them to succeed on whatever path they choose.

1c. Mathematics

The mathematics department strives to provide our students with the support needed to help all achieve success, the opportunities to advance in mathematical studies, and the experiences that can help them to become career-ready and college-ready as they apply what they have learned.

Our math program is currently aligned to the New York State (NYS) Common Core Standards and we are in the process of realigning our curriculum to New York's Next Generation Standards. We offer classes in Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2 (each culminating with a NYS Regents Exam). We challenge many of our students with College-in-the-High School Pre-Calculus and Advanced Placement classes in both Statistics and Calculus AB; in our Class of 2019, sixty-one percent of students took at least one of these college level classes. We also offer students with different learning styles the option of taking some courses over a two year period through classes that cover the material at a slower pace with special attention to reading comprehension and carefully followed problem solving strategies. Our curriculum is teacher designed, vertically aligned, and based on the NYS standards. Our teachers incorporate materials from the state provided modules, the curriculum provided through the eMATHinstruction website, and examples from multiple texts and past NYS Regents exams. The programs are designed with a focus on depth of instruction.

Our collaborative approach views educating the whole student as a priority. Many teachers network and collaborate with other schools to bring diverse experiences and methodology into the classroom and to best serve students. We incorporate a variety of teaching methods such as cooperative learning, small and large group direct instruction, differentiated classwork that provides students the opportunity to complete activities geared to their ability level, and problem-based learning in which students are introduced to new topics by being asked to solve a related problem they have not seen before. Students are expected to explain their work and use mathematical models. We also use many well established routines such as “think-pair-share”, bell ringers and exit tickets. Courses spiral learning so students are introduced to new components of a concept while reviewing and reinforcing prior learning. Past topics are also reinforced with weekly review assignments. Instruction is blended with the use of online resources like Schoology, Google Classroom, Castle Learning, Khan Academy and Desmos.

Our school's culture is one in which students are made to feel safe, able to take risks and willing to share mistakes in the classroom so all can learn. Students are held to high standards, as we expect mastery, but we value growth and encourage students to build their skills and leave our rooms better than when they entered. We have intervention classes in place to support students identified as having difficulty meeting course goals, and our teachers use data from daily assignments, classwork, teacher made assessments, and state assessments to monitor student learning and adjust instruction accordingly.

1d. Science

Our small high school offers a wide range of diverse science classes, including Regents-level Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. At least twenty percent of eighth grade students from our middle school take Regents Earth Science and receive high school credit. We also offer several science electives to fit the broad interests of our students, including Environmental Science and Meteorology, which can be taken for college credit, along with Forensics and Anatomy & Physiology. Finally, we offer several Advanced Placement (AP) science classes, including AP Biology, AP Chemistry and AP Physics. Our science classes include inquiry based projects that require the students to write proposals, secure funding, purchase supplies, build scientific equipment, and conduct experiments. One example is Project Icarus, in which the students sent an instrument-laden weather balloon into the upper atmosphere and photographed the curvature of the earth. Other projects included the construction of an augmented reality sandbox and the manufacture of a snow making machine. Our physics classes design cardboard boats that are set afloat in our pool as a buoyancy competition (with human occupants). They also build trebuchet catapults and compete in the “fall

fling.” Both of these activities highlight our emphasis on hands-on, inquiry-based learning. The value we place on hands-on learning is demonstrated by our far exceeding New York State's minimum requirement for laboratory time for our Regents courses. We also expose students to science careers, via our outreach program with The University at Albany’s PhD meteorology students as well as the police forensic investigators and PhD chemists who guest lecture in our classrooms. Overall, classroom experiences are designed to meet a diverse learning population using phenomena, inquiry, hands-on investigations and group work. We also regularly use data and look at trends in our exam and laboratory results and discuss methods to improve student performance. Our Regents curricula are carefully aligned with New York State's core curricula and our department is actively engaged in professional development to prepare our teachers and students for the new, soon to be adopted, Next Generation Science Standards.

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

Clayton A. Bouton High School has a robust and highly successful Social Studies department. Our program is anchored by a veteran faculty of five members, who have a combined eighty years of teaching experience and at least one graduate degree per teacher. Utilizing a wide variety of pedagogical strategies, student engagement and inquiry are central to our core mission. Subsequently, lessons are structured around student/teacher collaboration, critical thinking and independent analysis, and ultimately the demonstration of learning through doing. It is not uncommon to see students share findings via oral presentations and simulations, display a student researched and created mini-documentary film, craft an interactive website, or write a work of fiction based on historical scholarship.

Our diverse Advanced Placement (AP) courses provide each student with ample opportunities for college and career readiness. Many Clayton A. Bouton graduates enter their freshman year of college with fifteen credits. This feat is accomplished through our offerings of AP US History, AP World History, AP Psychology, AP Microeconomics, and AP Macroeconomics, all of which have class results that regularly score above the national average.

However, developing young historians and social scientists is not our only focus; our students experience the world around them, and thus, become civic-minded young adults through an impressive array of field trips and extra-curricular experiences. Our department oversees annual events such as historic character day (at Halloween) and an annual trip to Salem, MA by our eleventh-grade Advanced Placement and Honors students. Additional examples include our award-winning Clayton A. Bouton High School Model United Nations Club and mock trial team, Junior Model UN Club, Amnesty International, National Honor Society, and yearbook club. The fact that all of these groups are advised by Social Studies department members is no accident. As educators responsible for civic learning and engagement, it is important that we lead our students by example. As a result, we are proud to have responsible and caring young adults emerging into the world as future community leaders that will make a lasting, positive impression on the lives they touch.

1f. For secondary schools:

Because our district is small, our counseling staff plans together, kindergarten through twelfth grade, so interest inventories and career and lifestyle investigations are not duplicated; rather, they are enhanced each year. At the high school, counselors deliver a curriculum, starting in ninth grade, through which students take online career inventory surveys and are introduced to internship investigations. Through Naviance, students create accounts and design personalized resumes and activity sheets which are visited, enhanced, and modified many times throughout students' high school careers.

We encourage students to pursue their passions through a breadth of coursework that is rarely found in high schools many times our size. In addition to all of the coursework mentioned above, we offer career and technical education, through the Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) of Albany, Schenectady, and Schoharie counties, in the following areas in students' junior and senior years: auto body repair; automotive trades technology preparation; small engine repair; medium/heavy duty truck repair; commercial construction/heavy equipment; residential construction/heavy equipment; internet applications/design; retail and office services; global fashion studies; 3-D printing and green construction technology; building trades; carpentry services; electrical trades; Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning

Refrigeration (HVAC/R) and plumbing; welding and metal fabrication; nurse assistant; patient care services; pre-medical; floral design; cosmetology; culinary arts and hospitality; culinary arts technology preparation; food services; computer and network technology; manufacturing/machining technology; gaming, multimedia, and web design; entertainment technology; criminal justice; sterile medical processing; and network cabling technology/smart home technology.

Several times each year, students participate in career cafes at Clayton A. Bouton High School. Organized by the Parent Teachers Association, our career cafes foster exposure to careers while students dine with professionals in specific areas of interest. We host career cafes for medical professions, mathematical/accounting pursuits, business interests, international experiences, engineering opportunities, education-related fields, counseling careers, et cetera. Through these cafes, students make personal connections with practitioners in the field. It starts mentorship relationships that can last a lifetime.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Clayton A. Bouton High School offers students a rich curriculum in both the visual and performing arts. In both disciplines, students build upon their artistic experiences through the processes of creating, performing or presenting, responding, and connecting in the arts. Students who take classes in the arts are prepared to be career and college ready through a sequential course of study. In visual art, students begin their foundational course of study with Studio in Art. After completing this full-year course, students may expand upon their artistic experiences by selecting from a variety of visual art electives including Ceramics, Sculpture, Drawing and Painting, and Digital Photography. Students in visual art classes benefit each year from guest artist visits and field trips to museums and local colleges. Students who are preparing to study visual art at the collegiate level may elect to take Portfolio Preparation. After building a portfolio, students in this class attend regional college portfolio visual art days where they present their work and receive critical feedback from college professors. Additionally, several students submit and are selected to exhibit their work at regional juried art shows and competitions annually.

The music department offers a variety of experiences for students interested in continuing to develop and refine their musicianship skills and knowledge. Incoming ninth grade students may elect to enroll in Concert Band, Chorus, Music in our Lives, or Music Theory to fulfill their required arts unit of study. Beginning in tenth grade, students are eligible to be considered for the advanced performing groups Wind Ensemble and Select Chorus. All students enrolled in a high school performing ensemble receive a small group lesson once every six school days. Each year, students participate in the New York State School Music Association's solo adjudication where they receive an independent evaluation on a prepared solo performance. Many of our students are selected to perform in regional and county honor performing ensembles each year. The spring musical is a highlight of the school's performing arts program, and the drama club has been honored with awards in several categories at the regional High School Musical Theatre Awards over the past three years.

In the physical education program at Clayton A. Bouton High School, students have the option to choose between two different tracks both of which align to New York State Learning standards for physical education. The "sports" track is the more traditional of the two. In each unit, students participate in a series of competitive activities such as contests, and tournaments. The focus is on skill development, cooperation, and problem solving in a team centered environment. In the "sports" track, the instructors serve as facilitators of activities that a student driven by nature. In this atmosphere, students thrive in the opportunity to demonstrate leadership and to show initiative. The "wellness" track of physical education is more focused on lifelong, healthy pursuits. Students are given choice on the activities conducted and the skills learned. Classes are more instructive in nature, focusing on skills connected to lifetime sports, such as a golf swing or a tennis serve as well as the rules of the games or sports. Another important aspect of the "wellness" track is educating students as to what community resources are available in the area of health and physical fitness. Part of this track is conducted in conjunction with our high school social worker to incorporate mental health and mindfulness.

The high school health program at Voorheesville supplements the physical education program, offering units of study and activity-based learning in the areas of nutrition, substance abuse, and mental health related topics. Several health units are also covered in consultation with our school social worker and involve field trips throughout the region.

Due to fiscal constraints, our district began to phase out French language instruction in the 2018-2019 school year, starting at the middle school level, but French and Spanish II, III, IV, and independent level V study are still offered at the high school through 2020-2021. Curricula include both receptive and expressive skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking). Sign Language also has been offered via distance learning the last three years.

Clayton A. Bouton's technology offerings build on Voorheesville Middle School's introductory technology and Science Technology Engineering Arts and Math (STEAM) classes. The high school's courses include a project-based, three-course series in engineering, as well as courses in communication systems, media production, and digital graphics. Students design, build, and program robotic machines; script and produce video presentations; and apply computational techniques for truss and circuit design. While these skills are, themselves, valuable to student career-readiness, greater value still is derived from the students' exposure to functioning in cohesive, productive work groups that develop the ability to work independently. They learn to self-evaluate their designs, and, subsequently, to identify design improvements. Students and parents are provided maximum flexibility for exposure to Voorheesville's technology offerings by structuring curricula so that science and math courses such as physics, calculus, and statistics can serve as additional preparation for engineering. The engineering series (Introduction to Engineering Design, Principles of Engineering, and Digital Electronics) is comprised of Project Lead the Way (PLTW) courses which enable students to receive college-level credit from schools like the Rochester Institute of Technology; furthermore, the PLTW coursework positions Voorheesville students for various scholarship opportunities.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

Those who perform below grade level are both referred to our Instructional Services Team (IST) and assessed for Academic Intervention Services (AIS), especially if they have underperformed on two benchmark assessments. The IST at Clayton A. Bouton High School, a team that consists of our Dean of Students, school nurse, social worker, school psychologist, counselors, and principal meets weekly. Students are referred by any member of the teaching staff: teachers, consultant teachers, and/or teaching assistants. Our school offers AIS classes in English, mathematics, and social studies.

Ninth grade coursework also involves smaller classes for those at most academic risk, including a co-taught humanities class of English and social studies as well as a two-year algebra class.

For the last four years, students who are falling behind in coursework have had the option to attend Boost (a small, structured study hall) rather than their previously assigned study hall; in this venue, students improve their organizational skills and study habits.

3b. Students performing above grade level

Students performing above grade level in our (attached) middle school have the opportunity to accelerate in both mathematics and in science; at least one third of our current eighth grade students are enrolled in algebra and will take geometry as ninth grade students in high school. At least fifteen percent of the science students in eighth grade come to the high school for both earth science class and earth science lab. That acceleration continues in high school when they study biology as ninth grade students, chemistry as sophomores, physics as juniors, and often enroll in two science classes as juniors and seniors, including Anatomy and Physiology, Forensics, Environmental Science, Meteorology (a college course through the University at Albany), and three Advanced Placement (AP) sciences: AP Biology, AP Chemistry, and AP Physics.

There are honors coursework opportunities in sophomore English and then two AP opportunities in that discipline for juniors and seniors: AP Language and AP Literature respectively.

In Social Studies, students may challenge themselves in AP World History as sophomores, AP US History in the junior year, AP Economics (including both Macroeconomics and Microeconomics) in the senior year, and AP Psychology in either eleventh or twelfth grade.

In mathematics at the high school, students performing above grade level may study Honors Geometry; they also may study Pre-Calculus (a college in the high school course), AP Calculus, and AP Statistics.

Students who excel in the fine and performing arts may study Music Theory I and II, do independent studies, and choose from more than one dozen course offerings. Furthermore, our art students are showcased at various symposia and in regional galleries. Professional artists volunteer in our portfolio art class to adjudicate students' work. Student musicians audition for all-county and all-state performance opportunities as well; members of the music department not only accompany our students to these enrichment weekends, but they are sometimes asked to direct as the guest conductor as well.

In Languages Other than English, students may dual enroll in both French and Spanish classes. We also offer Sign Language via distance learning for those who yearn to add to their linguistic repertoire. College credit is offered for level 4 of both French and Spanish. Our students may engage in independent study classes with language teachers to pursue French V and Spanish V as well.

For students interested in studying technology/engineering, we offer a series of Project Lead the Way coursework, including Introduction to Engineering Design, Principles of Engineering, and Digital Electronics.

3c. Special education

Students can be referred to the Instructional Services Team (IST) by members of the teaching staff, the counseling staff, or parents/guardians due to concerns regarding learning, behavioral manifestations, or social/emotional concerns. Furthermore, students can be referred to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) by the IST, guardians or parents, and physicians. Tier 1 interventions occur in each classroom. All four grades have consultant taught classes in English and social studies. Teaching assistants support identified students in math, science, and business classes as well. Other building level interventions include reading/literacy class and Academic Intervention Services (AIS) in English, math, and social studies. Referral to the CSE may include intellectual and achievement testing, classroom and/or behavioral observations as well as any specific concerns in the area of speech/language, fine/sensory and gross motor. The school psychologist or district reading specialists can assess academic achievement in specific areas as well. After the evaluation is complete, the CSE reviews the results and makes any formal intervention recommendations; student need must meet eligibility criteria under the thirteen disability classifications provided by New York State. Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals are progress-monitored quarterly, and data is provided to the guardians/parents. IEPs are reviewed at least annually to determine continued need and to reassess goals and level of programming. Each identified student's overall program and disability classification is reviewed every three years with a triennial evaluation, assessing all areas of development. Many of our identified students elect to include Career and Technical Education in their program throughout the junior and senior years. Our students may choose among CTE opportunities in a three county area, and district transportation is provided to and from these programs in Albany, Schenectady, and Schoharie Counties.

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

In the 2018-2019 school year, Clayton A. Bouton had one English Language Learner (ELL) who graduated on-time, having received the support of an English as a New Language (ENL) teacher whose services were contracted through our Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES). The student not only graduated in four years but had studied advanced coursework, including physics and pre-calculus. Our teachers worked with the ENL teacher to provide differentiated instruction and support.

Currently, there are no ELLs in the high school.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Academically, our school provides many positive learning opportunities, some of which include students' families: whether it is the "fall fling" and the "winter wave" in physics class or one of the many functions that showcase our students around the capital region (art galleries, performance venues, and competitions), the entire school and the community want to be there to cheer on the participants.

The two dozen clubs and activities at Clayton A. Bouton foster social and emotional growth. Our Sexuality and Gender Alliance (SAGA) chapter, for example, not only hosts school-wide events, but the group lobbies our lawmakers, engages in weekend-long leadership workshops, and trains both our staff and other schools' staff members. Our Key Club, sponsored by Kiwanis International, is asked annually to present at statewide events because the chapter is so active here in Voorheesville and throughout the region.

Students take the initiative to start new clubs almost every year. Our three year old chapter of Amnesty International takes the macrocosm to the microcosm by working with the Albany-area immigrant population. Clayton A. Bouton's Dungeons and Dragons club was initiated by seniors two years ago, but ninth and tenth grade class members now comprise the majority of the club, inspired by the legacy that graduating students left for them.

The Voorheesville Model United Nations team competes throughout the Northeastern United States and in Canada. Both our Science Olympiad and our Mock Trial teams train and compete throughout the school year. The dance club and the art club include our middle school students in all of their meetings, providing informal mentorship via shared passions.

More formal mentorship of middle school students happens through our counseling team that connects high school volunteers with at-risk sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. Our students also volunteer to help middle school Odyssey of the Mind teams, and they started a math club run entirely by high school students, supervised by volunteers in the community.

By far, our greatest participation and involvement after school lies in the area of our athletics and drama club. Students are active in the building from 7 a.m. until 9 p.m., engaged in activities that enrich their and our community members' lives.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Students, parents, community members, teaching assistants, teachers, and the principal collaborate on the Site-Based Team (as outlined in "School Leadership" below). Counselors, the dean of students, the school nurse, the secondary school social worker, the secondary school psychologist, the principal, and often the district's Director of Pupil Personnel Services come together weekly as an Instructional Services Team as well (as highlighted in "Academic Supports," 3a, above) to plan interventions.

The counseling team hosts parent meetings for families of students entering 9th and 10th grades as well as in individualized 11th grade meetings, at the beginning of the college search and a 12th grade application/financial aid night. The team also reaches out to the community via a Remind account and both counseling and wellness newsletters.

Daily announcements are posted each day on the high school website, School News Notifiers are sent weekly, and families receive a letter from the principal with each report card and progress report. The principal is invited into classrooms and into club meetings where students share their ideas, many of which have been implemented, such as increased locker distance to minimize stress, student-created murals, and picnic tables outside.

The Voorheesville Community and School Foundation (VCSF) awards tens of thousands of dollars of grants

to support initiatives throughout the district and the community at large. Furthermore, the extraordinarily active and supportive Voorheesville Public Library pushes into our school to host book clubs and provides dozens of supplemental learning opportunities for our teenagers each year; the library board of directors even invites our clubs into the library to host their activities, presentations, and discussions. In Voorheesville, the active Kiwanis Club supports our high school Key Club, its activities, its workshops, and its scholarships; in turn, our Key Club high school students host a Halloween party and other events for hundreds of elementary school students and their families.

At Clayton A. Bouton, athletic booster club parents are extraordinarily active, raising funds at almost every contest, so they can sponsor events for our student athletes. Homecoming is a great example of community engagement and pride in that, for a full week, the community, from preschoolers to college graduates support our athletic teams, culminating with four soccer games, a full day of volleyball, and a football game, all in one weekend. Primary-age soccer players walk their mentor high school students onto the field. Middle School students support their neighbors and relatives on the court and the field. And graduates cheer almost as loudly as extended family members who travel from great distances to be a part of the rich tradition.

The Voorheesville Friends of Music sponsors concerts, performances, summer music workshops, instrument purchases, and enrichment opportunities such as field trips and guest artists. Another Voorheesville civic group, the Community Alliance for Healthy Choices, is a group comprised of members of local government, the school district, law enforcement, parents, students, and community members, including the local public librarian. The group provides resources, organizes speakers, and hosts programs to reduce destructive decisions students might make.

Each Memorial Day Weekend, the high school band marches in the parade and plays national anthem for the entire community; Key Club has a "Fill a truck" fundraiser for our veterans; and fireworks are provided by Jim Nichols Memorial Fund, a non-profit organization with the goal of "Enthusiastically celebrating our community with commitment, friendship, creativity, and joy." That generous fund, the PTA, the VCSF, Dollars for Scholars, and more than a dozen other community members and local organizations award tens of thousands of dollars of scholarships in honor and memory of former students and teachers in our district. At Voorheesville, we are all valued blackbirds (our school mascot), and we bleed purple and gold (our school colors).

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The greatest strength of our professional development is that teachers have several seats at the table, both in planning and in execution. Teachers, K-12, are active, integral participants in the district-wide professional development committee, and they often serve as turnkey trainers. At the high school, our teacher leaders and chairs deliver professional development on our three to four Superintendent's Conference Days each year as well as in departmental meetings, often guiding work in data driven instruction and curricular alignment.

Teachers, themselves, pursue professional development throughout the school year and over the summer. Teaching assistants also engage in enrichment and opportunities to foster their growth mindset. We host student teachers and visiting teachers each year, a mutually beneficial relationship with the many colleges in the area. Furthermore, PhD students, researchers, and professors volunteer their time to enrich our classrooms. We are also fortunate to have community volunteers, experts in their fields, enhance our classes: members of the NYS Police and the Albany County Sheriff's Department collaborate with our Forensics teacher; chemists, physicists, and engineers (and college students) share experiences with our science and technology teachers; artists, producers, and experienced professionals volunteer in our fine and performing arts department; etc.

The very active PTA supports the entire staff, whether it is through t-shirts for all teachers and staff members with our last names on the back and Voorheesville High School (VHS) Pride on the front or via meals or snacks when we most need it; we feel valued and supported financially as well when the PTA and the Voorheesville Community and School Foundation (VCSF) collaborate to fund initiatives that enhance students' academic and co-curricular pursuits.

4. School Leadership:

Our school is fortunate to have departmental leaders in the areas of: music and art, K-12; physical education, K-12; social studies and business, 6-12; English and LOTE, 6-12; math, 6-12; and science and technology, 6-12. With the exception of the Athletic Director, who also serves as the Dean of Students, 6-12, and the high school Dignity for All Students Act Coordinator, each of these supervisors is also a practicing educator and member of the teachers' union; they are in the trenches with their fellow teachers. Our district-wide Director of Pupil Personnel Services and Director of Curriculum spend at least two days each week on-site.

Clayton A. Bouton's Site-Based Team (SBT), comprised of students, parents, teachers, teaching assistants, community members, and the high school principal, meets monthly to consider overarching topics as well as to produce one positive manifestation of culture and climate at each meeting. For example, at one meeting, we discussed the merits of a later start of the school day, debating the research (homework in preparation for our session) while cutting out four hundred paper mascots of our Voorheesville blackbird and writing messages of inspiration, later affixed to lockers in every hallway, inducing smiles among students and staff members alike. At another, we wrote thank-you cards to students and staff who were "caught making a positive difference" while planning the addition of an advisory period into our master schedule.

Our dean of students also serves as the president of the Community Alliance for Healthy Choices. Spearheaded by the Voorheesville Risk Behavior Task Force, this collaborative coalition strives to foster experiences that deter and dissuade destructive decisions. The coalition includes representatives from local government, the high school student body, the public library, law enforcement, parents, community members, and the high school principal.

Each day, the principal and the dean of students spend the first hour connecting with students, before school, as they enter the building and prepare for the day. After school, both devote several hours, supporting club advisors and coaches in the enrichment of the whole learner. That visible, active leadership manifests our concern and our promise to the community to give our all to our students, their families, and our staff.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The greatest social-emotional growth experience and the most positive, powerful change at Clayton A. Bouton in the last few years has been the addition of Sources of Strength (SOS), a "best practice youth suicide prevention project designed to harness the power of peer social networks to change unhealthy norms and culture, ultimately preventing suicide, bullying, and substance abuse. The mission of Sources of Strength is to prevent suicide by increasing help seeking behaviors and promoting connections between peers and caring adults. Sources of Strength moves beyond a singular focus on risk factors by utilizing an upstream approach for youth suicide prevention. This upstream model strengthens multiple sources of support (protective factors) around young individuals so that when times get hard they have strengths to rely on."

The school-wide incorporation of SOS has increased students' advocacy for each other and for themselves. We have moved beyond awareness and into active help-seeking. Students can self-select as leaders, and staff members (secretaries, teaching assistants, counselors, and teacher alike) serve as mentors. Every person in the building works on identifying and enhancing our seven strengths: generosity, healthy activities, spirituality, mental health, family support, positive friends, and mentors.

SOS shapes our morning announcements, with students and staff members sharing about why their trusted adult is such a role model and trusted advocate: for whom we are thankful and why. Thanks to SOS, every classroom and office door is adorned with "favorites," so we all learn about each other's most inspirational quotations, our favorite healthy foods, and pictures of our family members engaged in treasured activities. Student leaders go into physical education classes to host "feel good" fun. Sticky notes line the glass walls outside of the main office, from ceiling to floor with a banner that reads: Who Is Your Trusted Adult? Every student has put a note on that wall. Teachers and paraprofessionals invite students to have lunch with them in their classrooms. We host dress down days in which our clothes reveal something positive and personal about ourselves. Students and staff members form teams that play dodgeball or other, sillier games during our lunch periods. Staff members pose with funny props for photos in an SOS-designed frame. "Be Generous With Your Words" banners, where students wrote uplifting statements, hang in the hallway, and student-designed, student-created murals stand in our cafeteria and our offices as lasting images of these seven strengths. Together we conduct fundraisers that align with the mission to increase the positive perception of adult support, encourage help-seeking behavior, and enhance protective factors associated with reducing risk. The most recent beneficiaries of these collaborative fundraisers have been children in foster care as well as Maddie's Mark, a "charity that provides 'best days ever' for children suffering from major illness; provides support for their families; and actively encourages child enrichment, through financial grants to improve public and private entertainment, educational and athletic facilities for children - including schools, parks, playgrounds, and theaters."

We host pajama movie nights at which students, staff members, and their families come together to enjoy movies in their pajamas while bonding over popcorn and hot chocolate; play 3x3 basketball (with teams of mixed students and staff) and combined kickball tournaments; and practice yoga together.

Students' and staff members' involvement and advocacy has extended far beyond the scripted and suggested activities of the SOS organization. We have been inspired to host a, "My Teachers' Other Lives" day in which students learned about staff members' passions and talents that are normally relegated to outside the school walls: home improvement skills, self-defense, aeronautics, musicianship, etc. Our counseling team now posts wellness newsletters to share their message with a wider audience. We have created a calm room, a space to which a student comes when s/he needs time to regroup, focus, distance from the pressures of the day, read positive affirmations, journal, play with therapy putty, or color a mandala before returning to class.

At Clayton A. Bouton, we know that, in the four short years we have with them, students must identify and strengthen their sources of fortitude and support, so they can internalize and can practice them for a lifetime.