

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

Official School Name Williamsburg High School For Architecture and Design
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 257 North 6th Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Brooklyn State NY Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 11211-3324

County Kings

Telephone (718) 388-1260 Fax (718) 486-2580

Web site/URL http://www.whsad.org E-mail gcornel@schools.nyc.gov

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Ms. Janice Ross E-mail jross11@schools.nyc.gov
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name New York City Geographic District #14 Tel. (718) 455-4635

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 Gill Cornell
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

Date _____

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

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

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

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2020 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2014 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, or 2019.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2019-2020) unless otherwise stated.

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

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 954 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 285 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 526 High schools
 - 64 K-12 schools
- 1829 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	125	29	154
10	99	51	150
11	119	36	155
12 or higher	110	21	131
Total Students	453	137	590

*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):
- 1.2 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1.7 % Asian
 - 28.5 % Black or African American
 - 60 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0.2 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 7.6 % White
 - 0.8 % 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: 3%

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	5
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	10
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	15
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	580
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.03
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

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

Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French Haitian-Creole, Georgian, Haitian-Creole, Italian, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 3 %
16 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 75 %

Total number students who qualify: 445

8. Students receiving special education services: 23 %

135 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>4</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>13</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>77</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>38</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 10

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.	35
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	14
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	2
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 17:1

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	93%	92%	91%	90%	92%
High school graduation rate	98%	98%	95%	94%	93%

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	120
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	61%
Enrolled in a community college	27%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	3%
Found employment	5%
Joined the military or other public service	1%
Other	3%

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.

Williamsburg High School for Architecture and Design offers students a unique and engaging four-year course sequence with a focus on architectural drafting, design principles, and historic preservation. Our inter-disciplinary and hands-on approach to architecture, design, and the visual arts integrates internship experiences and skills training throughout core academic content areas with the goal of sending off our graduates with the ability to navigate college and the workforce autonomously.

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

We designed WHSAD to serve all students in New York City who express interest in our Architecture program, regardless of whether they are below, at or above grade level. Being an unscreened program, we welcome students solely by their interest rather than their academic prowess and generally attract students who register below grade level in both English Language Arts and Mathematics. 75.4% of our students qualify for free lunch and a quarter of our students classify as Special Education. 97% percent of our students are African American or LatinX, and 75% are boys. When reviewed comprehensively and demographically, WHSAD reflects a student body mostly made up of young adults who fall into the so-called “achievement gap”. In spite of this, our school has proven that all students can succeed no matter who they are or where they come from: We have achieved four-year graduation rates of over 90% for close to a decade, including a graduation rate of 98% in both 2018 and 2019. Our four-year sequence ensures every student receives an educational experience that is challenging, equitable and, most importantly, affords the same opportunities as schools of renown to service high performing students. We expect all our graduates to enter college and begin adulthood with the advantage of having learned, and to continue learning how, to lead independent, self-sustaining lives. Not only is this vision reflected in WHSAD’s Career and Technical Education (CTE) curricula but is also embedded in all academic classes. Put simply, the ultimate goal for every student is that they graduate from WHSAD with the ability to live an autonomous life.

Differentiated interventions are needed to ensure this level of student autonomy and critical thinking. We achieve differentiation through a series of regularly implemented classroom inter-visitations designed to collect and track progressive data on student autonomy, using a rubric designed by lead teachers and lead students. These teams, comprised of both staff and students, evaluate the level of student autonomy in classroom visits, then make recommendations for ways to modify and differentiate instruction. A team of teacher leaders called the Professional Learning Team Facilitators (PLTF) supports student autonomy on a more global scale. They organize weekly professional development centered on individual student interventions identified at grade team meetings. PLTF and school administration meet weekly, designing interventions that incorporate student autonomy on a more school-wide level.

WHSAD’s Architecture curriculum is at the heart of the school, and much of what our students gain in terms of personal autonomy results from their experiences in the program. The experiential nature of our Architecture program benefits all of our students, particularly those most at-risk and marginalized. Our Architecture classes bridge the gap between theoretical classroom learning and its applications in the workforce by making the learning relevant through concrete examples and projects. Our students often engage in projects with private sector partners working on development projects in New York City. One such example is a yearly design competition held for our seniors. In the June 2019 competition, five teams of seniors presented their concept designs to Heritage Equity and Northside Development, for the lobby of one of their projects, the Bushwick Hotel. The teams visited the offices of the Architecture firm overseeing this project for guidance. Afterward, they presented their concepts to a panel of private sector partners, all of whom were architects, to receive professional feedback on their proposals.

WHSAD also makes classroom learning relevant through our Work Based Learning (WBL) Program, which promotes academic achievement by marrying classroom learning with a student’s career interests. WBL connects students to paid internships with private and public sector partners as a way to teach students leadership skills and adaptability to the ever-changing school and work environment. The ability to navigate and adapt to obstacles happens to be a particular struggle for many at-risk students. With that in mind, we allocate funds for emotional intelligence training, deploying a method called RULER, for students, teachers and guidance counselors. The ability to understand and exert control over their own emotions empowers students to make rational, productive decisions when facing academic or personal obstacles. Understanding students’ emotional intelligence has helped teachers make better choices about how to approach student impediments to learning.

WHSAD has also partnered with Creative Connections to help students establish long-term goals. This organization provides both in-class and one-on-one coaching sessions to empower, motivate, inspire, and support our students to achieve their college and career dreams. WHSAD is a NYC Community School, and as such we implement the Creative Connections curricula helps students realize postsecondary goals and to leave high school capable of sustaining their enrollment at a college and success in their careers.

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

WHSAD expects all students, regardless of ability, are challenged to demonstrate autonomy in all subject areas. We expect their work to be at or above grade level, and instruction differentiated to assist students who struggle with this work. We also expect classroom instruction to demonstrate and nurture student autonomy in every lesson (in alignment with Common Core Reading and Writing Standard 10, and Math Standards requiring proofs, such as Trigonometric Function Standard 9). In order to ensure this happens across all lessons and across different subject areas, as well as a means to streamline classroom mandates, WHSAD teachers and administration designed two guiding classroom structures.

The first guiding structure is the student autonomy rubric, which is used to guide all unit, lesson and assessment planning at WHSAD. This is a comprehensive rubric (aligned with State and Federal Common Core Standards) used by school administrators, teachers and students to gauge the level of student autonomy in all classrooms. The second guiding structure is the interim assessment implemented in every subject area at regular intervals throughout the school year. These interim assessments are formative assessments given at the end of each marking period (six times a year) and are designed to test our students' abilities to autonomously demonstrate new skills and content learned during the marking period. After teachers grade the interim assessments, all students engage in a differentiated self-assessment activity called ACE (and acronym for Analyze, Correct, Elevate) in order identify areas of personal weakness. Student use information gathered during the ACE to set their own goals for improvement for the next marking period. At the end of each term, students take a summative assessment, following the same structure as a given subject area's formative assessments, to determine a given student's improvement based upon goals set throughout the entire term.

1b. Reading/English language arts

The English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum, in alignment with WHSAD's guiding philosophy of student autonomy, is focused on student growth in the four areas of language development as defined by the Common Core Curriculum (reading, writing, listening and speaking). While the majority of our students come to WHSAD below grade level in ELA, the ELA course sequence is designed, in alignment with Common Core College Readiness Standard 6 (requiring student autonomy at or above grade level), to challenge our students with works of literature that are at, or above grade level.

For example, while Shakespeare's Hamlet is traditionally classified as a 12th grade work, our students study it in the 10th grade, and while Orwell's 1984 is typically deemed a 11th grade work, our 9th graders study this novel. We challenge 12th graders with a college level World Literature course, which includes the study of The Epic of Gilgamesh, Beowulf, Wuthering Heights and Don Quixote, regardless whether or not the student classifies as Special Education or English Language Learner (ELL).

We do not differentiate texts according to student reading levels because we feel this practice promotes inequity. Instead we differentiate our lesson and assessment designs to serve our students' varied learning needs while maintaining the same level of rigor for all students. For example, our 11th graders study Shakespeare's Macbeth by reading the original text of the play, to be followed with a reading of a graphic novel version that uses the original text rather than adapted text. Viewings of select scenes from different film versions of the play further enhance and render the material more accessible. We then challenge our students to create their own productions of select scenes from the play, where they rewrite dialogue and/or choose alternate settings. For example, a group of students in a previous year rewrote Act IV, Scene II, in which Lady Macduff and her son are murdered. The scene was rewritten using modern vernacular and having the action take place as the characters were driving along a freeway, the Brooklyn Queens Expressway (BQE).

Formative assessments during this project rate student improvement in reading, writing, listening and speaking through the natural process of theater production. Teachers assess reading and writing as students draft scenes. They assess reading by measuring the accuracy of a student's interpretation to the source material. They assess student writing through their scripts. Teachers measure listening and speaking at rehearsals leading up to a final performance. During this process, WHSAD has established interventions for when teacher observation or formative assessments identify student experiencing difficulty. It is important to note that these interventions are not just for the sake of compliance. Guidance counselors set up interventions deemed most appropriate for each student (such as after school tutoring, classroom push-ins/pull-outs or peer tutoring) and monitor student progress both daily and at weekly grade team meetings. If an intervention does not result in improvement, the intervention is modified. Finally, as the summative assessment, students bring all their work together to produce a final script and stage a performance of the completed scene.

1c. Mathematics

While processes and formulae are necessary foundations to learning Mathematics (much like the alphabet and phonics are to ELA), students will not achieve autonomy in Math unless they can understand why a given process or formula works. WHSAD believes in students developing an independent application of a said process/formula to a given problem found outside the controlled environment of the classroom; we believe this demonstrates evidence of student autonomy in Math. Students should then be able to validate their result and clearly articulate this result (this is in alignment with the Common Core Basic Modeling Cycle for Mathematics). In order to validate and concretize learning in their classes, Math teachers at WHSAD are encouraged to create problem-based mini-units focused on challenges that may arise in the field of Architecture.

For example, one of our mini-units in Geometry challenges students to design a mosaic for a New York City subway station. This problem is tangible for our students because all of them have ridden the NYC subways at some point and have an immediate connection with the product the client provides (the client is the MTA, which operates NYC subways). Students are told that the MTA will only produce two custom tiles and are challenged to come up with unique designs based on certain criteria. Modeling industry standards, student mosaics are graded on three categories. The first, tile measurements (Common Core Standard G-CO), is a standard in Geometry and industry that requires that a design be functional. The second, design (Common Core Standard G-SRT), challenges students to create aesthetically pleasing designs that fit form to function. The third, which is an artist's statement, grades students on their ability to describe, in their own words, a design plotted by a specific Geometric process called rigid motion transformations (this covers the three Common Core Basic Modeling Steps: validate, interpret and report). This particular assessment is a formative assessment. The skills tested here will appear again on both the interim assessment at the end of the marking period and the final, summative exam at the end of the term. Because the majority of students enter WHSAD behind in Math, many of them struggle with new concepts in high school Mathematics. As with placement in ELA, students who struggle in Math are not assigned to a low-level class as a form of remediation, but instead are held to the same classes and standards as their higher-performing peers.

WHSAD students take the same sequence in Mathematics from grades 9 through 11, and in their Senior year they have a choice of AP Calculus, Pre-Calculus or Probability and Statistics). The guidance-based interventions as described under the ELA section in this report also apply to students struggling in Mathematics classes. Our students are given access to an online learning tool called Aleks, which helps teachers collect data to help differentiate lesson planning. Also, it's important to note that many of the challenges that students face in Math classes are typically remedied by reiterative lessons, concepts, and supports delivered in their Architecture drafting classes.

1d. Science

Science at WHSAD requires students to use the content of a given Science (Biology, for example) to independently apply the scientific method and determine objective results (this is in alignment with Common Core Science Standards 8, 9). This mode of instruction is in keeping with the school's mission to impart student autonomy in all subject areas.

WHSAD students take four years of Science at grade level or higher, regardless of skill or ability, as we believe student autonomy cannot be achieved without a mastery of the scientific method. In order to concretize the study of Science WHSAD teachers connect the Science they teach with modern and current events. An example of a typical unit of study is the senior Environmental Science course, which not only addresses modern concerns about the environment but also makes a clear connection to the senior Architecture class. This unit focuses on green infrastructure, particularly in Architecture and building, and the effectiveness of the different technologies made available. The students learn how the EPA analyzes and collects data on pollutants in the water, air and soil. On field trips to the school's surrounding area, the students conduct the same experiments as the EPA (as formative assessments for this unit). This unit also focused on modern building codes regarding green technology, which allows for a bridge to the Architecture class.

The summative assessment for this unit is conducted in tandem with the students' Architecture class. The students are required to design a building with green infrastructure in AutoCAD in a given neighborhood. They are also required to write a proposal for their design which takes into account cost and effectiveness, but also considers city and state environmental regulations. While our standard guidance intervention and oversight is in place for students who struggle, the Science and Architecture teachers both keep their studio and computer labs open after school and during off hours as an additional resource. Our standard guidance oversight/intervention policy and use of assessment data for this subject area is covered in detail under Section 3.

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

Social Studies at WHSAD through the lens of student autonomy means that our instruction cannot be limited to student memorization of historical facts and dates. Students must also understand how to use factual information, in connection with prior learning and outside knowledge, to make judgments about given topics. Our Social Studies teachers are encouraged to create entry points to make history tangible to our students and to help them make judgments based on their own investigatory work (this is in alignment with Common Core Social Studies Standards 7, 8, 9, 10).

For example, all of our students, regardless of skill level or ability, are assigned the AP Human Geography course in their Junior year. This Social Studies elective focuses on geographic influences on human civilizations. Students in this class spend significant time studying demographics, collecting data and making judgments about the needs of a society in a given time and locale. A unit of study from Human Geography that illustrates our approach requires students to conduct a demographic investigation of the neighborhood (Williamsburg and Greenpoint) to determine the effects the last two decades of gentrification have had on residents. Students research and collect demographic data and determine population trends. The data and preliminary reports on trends serve as their formative assessments for this unit.

As a summative assessment, students use this demographic data to project future housing needs for the neighborhood and write proposals for the construction of new housing, which requires a discussion of demographics and geography. Then they design their proposals in AutoCAD during Architecture class. As this is a large project, we provide supports after hours in the CAD lab, which remains open late and during the day to facilitate interventions for students struggling with the complexity of this project. Our standard guidance oversight/intervention policy and use of assessment data for this subject area is covered in detail under Section 3.

1f. For secondary schools:

In 2012, the New York State Board of Education credentialed WHSAD a Career & Technical Education (CTE) high school. This grants us the honor to confer graduates a high school diploma with a CTE endorsement in Architecture. To earn this endorsement, students must complete an industry-approved, four-year course sequence in Architecture and Design, and must pass an examination that is an industry standard: the Certiport Autodesk / AutoCAD Certification exam. Students who wish to practice architectural drafting professionally are required to have at least passed this exam. This in turn means students graduating with a

CTE endorsement can assume entry-level work at Architectural firms and other related fields that have a need for computer-based drafting.

As covered in more detail in Part III and Part IV, Section 3b of this report, our Work Based Learning (WBL) Program supplies our students with experiences that require they apply classroom learning to real world projects. These experiences come in many different forms: paid internships, site visits, classroom guest speakers from industry partners, long-term projects in Architecture classes facilitated by professionals of the field, to name a few. Because our students develop the ability to solve problems autonomously and face true workforce challenges, they often have an advantage over peers who enter college and the workforce without these experiences.

Furthermore, our articulation agreement with the City University of New York (CUNY) helps ensure students are college-ready regarding academics. This includes weekend classes offering college credit in core subject areas as well as interventions deemed necessary to help our students meet college standards. While the average student enrolling at WHSAD comes to us below grade level in English and Math, our college and career readiness ratings upon graduation have been well above average. For example, in 2019, our graduating class was 84% college ready and 96% career ready, as per metrics put in place by the New York City Department of Education.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

WHSAD's theme, Architecture, threads the academic core of our program. It's most evident in our Art program, which curates studio-based skills required of all college Architecture departments. WHSAD students are required to complete a full-year Visual Arts class as a part of their four-year Architecture sequence. This class covers core Visual Arts skills needed for Architecture and its related fields, such as 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional art, modeling, perspective, proportion, gradation of tone, etc. The art studio is structured to replicate the type of makerspace one finds in a standard Architecture firm.

We challenge our students with creative projects replicating those found in the field of Architecture. We test student autonomy by gauging how students work collaboratively and apply their talents to devise solutions to challenges as they would occur in the workforce. For example, in collaboration with the School of Visual Arts and community mentors, students in Art class spend time in what is called the Incubator Project. This project guides student teams in developing innovative products of their choice. Throughout the course of the Incubator Project, students learn how to plan, pitch, and execute their ideas. Student then learn how to modify their work based on feedback from teachers and mentors. Students are even required to conduct demographic studies for these products in their Human Geography course (which is taken the same year as their Art classes). At the end of the year, student teams present their products to a panel of professionals and are judged "Shark Tank" style.

Physical Education is a required subject for all students in grades K-12 in NY State. At WHSAD, we follow the NY State Standards established by NYSED along with the learning standards set by the Society of Health and Physical Educators. Students take a mandatory 4 years of Physical Education, including a mandatory health class where we cover topics mandated by New York State (such as the HIV/AIDS curriculum). All of our students take an annual Fitnessgram, which measures various levels of a child's fitness, including body mass index (BMI), muscular strength and endurance, flexibility and aerobic capacity.

WHSAD students are required to take Spanish as a foreign language. Most of our students (who live in New York City) will either begin or spend the majority of their professional lives in New York City. Because Spanish is the primary language for many New Yorkers, it makes sense that if one is to conduct business in New York, then one should be able to communicate in Spanish. Spanish classes also address underlying challenges to literacy that some students who speak Spanish as a first language may face. Students who struggle in their native language of Spanish will struggle similarly when learning English. At WHSAD we attempt to mitigate these challenges by first addressing literacy in their native language. We also offer AP Spanish for students who excel in the language, whether they are native speakers or not.

WHSAD has equipped each classroom with a cart of Chromebooks as a resource for students. An Educational Technology coach has been contracted to support teachers “one-on-one” in the utilization of this and other technology for instruction and as tools to improve student engagement. In addition, WHSAD has three state of the art Architecture labs/makerspaces (this is in addition to the Art makerspace discussed earlier). We've equipped them with state-of-the-art computers capable of running professional-grade software tools used in actual Architecture firms (including AutoCAD). These labs/makerspaces feature 3D Printers, Plotters, Smart Boards and other equipment typically found in a professional Architecture studio.

We want to encourage student autonomy after graduation and have implemented the Creative Connections curriculum to help us achieve this. This curriculum contributes both in-class and one-on-one coaching sessions to empower, motivate, inspire, and support our students in attaining their aspirations of college and career. As a Community School, we applied the Creative Connections Teen Entrepreneurship, College Connections, and Career Connections curricula to select classes to not only help our students achieve their postsecondary goals, but to leave high school capable of sustaining their enrollment at a college and/or their career.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

Students are assigned to one Guidance Counselor and remain with that counselor for their four years at WHSAD. This creates the personalized relationship necessary to effectively differentiate program modifications, necessary interventions, or any other decision that may affect student class programming or post-secondary choices. Guidance Counselors are expected to track their students’ progress throughout their four years at WHSAD and create updated Cohort reports at the beginning and end of each school term. Cohort reports spark, amend, and inform conversations between Guidance Counselors and their students’ teachers at weekly Cohort meetings, which each Counselor directs and oversees for each of their Cohort teams. During these meetings, the Counselors discuss concerns about students who are not meeting standards and identify potential academic and/or social emotional obstacles confronting students. Conversations also address appropriate interventions for each student's set of obstacles. Interventions go in effect immediately and the Counselors follow up weekly on their status and effectiveness at future Cohort meetings.

Guidance Counselors also identify students who do not perform up to standard within skill sets as tested in interim and ACE assessments (which take place three times per school term as described in Section 1a). Based on these assessments, students are then grouped as follows: red (below standard/grade level), yellow (approaching standard/grade level) and green (at or above standard/grade level). Students in the red and yellow groups are programmed to individualized and targeted after-school tutoring sessions scheduled on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and held during Saturday School. These sessions support them with additional instruction based on benchmarks they did not meet. Content area teachers, Special Education teachers and student peers who excel in the given subject conduct the tutoring sessions. More details on the structures that are in place to support Special Education and ELL students can be found in Sections 3c and 3d.

3b. Students performing above grade level

WHSAD’s Cohort meetings (see Section 3a for details) not only focus on students performing below standard. Equal focus is paid to those performing at or above standard. Teachers, with the help of Guidance Counselors and administration, make decisions about how to best enhance a student’s education when he or she already performs well. They strive to retain engagement with students who are already meeting standards so to ensure they stay on target.

As a team, we recognize it is our duty as educators to offer opportunities for those who have the time and ability to enhance their education. WHSAD offers AP classes in the 10th, 11th and 12th grade, as well as college bearing classes in Math and English. Through unique partnerships with companies in Architecture and Design fields, WHSAD offers a rich resource of after school programs which both interest our student

body and connect them directly with their field of study. This very successful extra-curricular program caters to students of all levels and ensures those who meet or exceed standards do not become bored or lose interest with their education.

Specifically, we program student groups who excel to after-school enrichment activities (such as our Career-Ready Work-Learn-Grow courses where they can earn college credit), to participate in career readiness workshops, and to work up to 200 hours in paid work-based experiences. There are also offsite architecture-related activities with partners such as Architectural Grille and Bushwick Generator, who invite our students weekly to their worksites and involve them with projects that are ongoing at their firm. The tangible nature of these workforce connections fosters engagement, even if our students are already meeting academic standards.

3c. Special education

WHSAD assigns two guidance counselors to students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and who are placed in Special Education classes. The first, an Academic Guidance Counselor, oversees student performance in the classroom and on interim assessments. They have the primary responsibility of ensuring that our Special Education students make the same progress towards graduation as General Education students. The second counselor, a licensed Social Worker, monitors the social-emotional needs of our Special Education population. The Social Worker conducts weekly sessions with her students, in groups or individually (depending on the needs of the students) and visits their classes to monitor their progress. She participates in all Cohort meetings and works with grade teams to tailor interventions that address each students' unique academic and/or socioemotional challenges.

WHSAD's Special Education program is a 100% inclusion model, meaning that all Special Education students are placed in classes implementing instructional co-teaching (ICT). ICT is an inclusion model in which Special Education and General Education students attend the same classes. Each ICT class features a content teacher and a licensed Special Education teacher who work together to differentiate lesson plans. In order to aid lesson-planning for ICT classes, WHSAD developed and utilizes a Special Education lesson plan template which articulates the Special Education teacher's role in the classroom as one who (1) explains to students the task they are about to complete in the classroom and (2) models the task for students so that they may address the element(s) of the lesson which may cause students to struggle. As ICT students are mainstreamed into General Education classes, they are also programmed for targeted after school tutoring in Regents subject areas. Special Education teachers use their knowledge of students and information from both Cohort Meetings and ACE assessments (see Section 3A) to design interventions for their caseloads. These interventions scaffold learning for content area lessons and after-school tutoring sessions without loss of academic rigor and are individualized for each student to address a given student's challenge(s).

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

WHSAD students classified as English Language Learners (ELL) take the NYSESLAT, the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, and afterward are grouped into levels according to their tested proficiency (as either Entering, Emerging, Transitioning, Expanding or Commanding). Our school then programs ELL students to classes and services according to their level. Students at each level are supplied program modifications determined by that level, until their yearly NYSESLAT results place them into a higher classification of proficiency.

Students flagged as "Entering" typically represent newly arrived immigrants and/or those who have very little to no experience with the English language. For this reason, they are programmed three periods of English instruction a day: Two periods in a stand-alone ELL class with a certified ELL teacher who focuses on core English language skills (such as vocabulary, grammar and phonics), and the last period is in a mainstreamed ELA class in which ELL teachers co-teach with General Education ELA instructors. "Emerging" and "Transitioning" students receive a daily schedule: one period of a stand-alone ELL class and one period of a co-taught ELA class a day. "Expanding" students attend only the co-taught ELA class, as these students no longer require the stand-alone ELL class and its focus on language mechanics.

“Commanding” students are considered “tested out” of ELL and may take stand-alone ELA classes, many of which happen to be advanced English courses.

Cohort Meetings discuss ELL students and assign them after-school tutoring or even pull-out sessions with ELL teachers during the school day as needed. These meetings and discussions still include Students flagged “Commanding” and assigns them tutoring if deemed necessary. The 90-100% pass rate for ELL students in statewide ELA Regents exams and in four-year graduation rates overall indicates that our structure and support for ELLs has been a success over the years.

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

The absence of appropriate documentation severely limits higher education and workforce opportunities for our undocumented students. The absence of a social security number prevents them from applying for financial aid and/or student loans to attend college, on top of an array of academic, social-emotional and/or basic financial challenges that so many of our students face. Nearly 100% of all undocumented students who attend WHSAD graduate on time and are accepted into esteemed college programs. It is a priority that we work with these students to find alternate means of financing their higher education. WHSAD’s Guidance Counselors work with undocumented seniors to apply to alternative scholarships such as The Dream Scholarship and Ascend Educational Fund. Disqualified from receiving federal and state financial aid, our undocumented students unfortunately don’t qualify for internships paid through the school either. In order to create meaningful work experiences for these students in lieu of internship employment, our Work Based Learning (WBL) coordinator establishes alternative work-based experiences with several industry partners. These onsite programs grant undocumented students the same level of resume-building experiences and create the same benefits upon graduation as paid internships. Many partners agree to issue stipends for these students so to cover expenses accrued for their participation (such as travel to onsite projects).

WHSAD also sets aside a portion of its budget as a means to provide some aid and comfort to students living in homeless shelters. In addition to the free breakfast and lunch offered to all public-school students in New York City we purchase school supplies, needed clothing, hygiene supplies and other essential items, as permitted by guidelines. Offering this aid, support, and guidance helps our homeless students focus on school considerably.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

WHSAD believes in addressing students' social-emotional struggles as a means to foster their academic success. In addition to the aforementioned ACE protocol (see Sections 3a, 3b and 3c) and our Work Based Learning program (See Section 2, 3b and 3e), both structures which encourage student ownership as well as autonomy, we offer over 200 paid internships with industry partners yearly. These internships procure pivotal work experiences and industry connections that help build our students' futures. They extend relief to students whose academic performance may face adverse economic conditions at home (85% of our students are economically disadvantaged).

WHSAD also recognizes that the student body needs to feel both emotionally and socially safe in order to excel academically, and for that reason the school environment actively addresses concerns affecting student safety and well-being. WHSAD's guidance and discipline ladder-of-referral and organization attempt, whenever possible, to avoid punitive consequences for school infractions. Our Deans practice Restorative Justice, a disciplinary philosophy which strives to establish positive connections between fellow students and staff, and grants students the opportunity to redeem themselves without imposing punitive measures. With the exception of extreme infractions, students who would otherwise face suspensions are offered alternatives that range from after-school tutoring, to offsite community programs through one of our partners (for example, our students have worked at local community gardens with school partner H.E.A.L.T.H for Youths), to onsite architecture projects headed by school industry partners (such as the development firm Heritage Equity Partners).

In most cases, students engage in negative or antisocial behavior because they feel disconnected from other students and/or school faculty. When they reconnect with their peers and staff through after school programs, these students typically demonstrate an improved academic focus. Guidance Counselors monitor their progress and, where needed, the Social Worker is brought in to provide counseling. Guidance staff implement stronger interventions when negative or antisocial behaviors do not improve, such as scheduled counseling sessions and group sessions with a student's family. There are times when a student becomes disconnected because of highly personal social-emotional issues. When identified, the Guidance Counselors and Social Worker administer counseling and attempt to reincorporate the effected students with other students and faculty through after-school programs. The end goal of all our interventions is singular and dedicated; our students' social-emotional burdens are not to impede them from pursuing academic success and a quality life.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Our Guidance Department hosts several after-school workshops a year to inform families and keep them updated regarding their children's progress. At these workshops, Guidance Counselors walk families through an analysis of their children's updated transcripts and track their progress towards graduation. They, in collaboration with families, draft intervention plans or student program modifications to proactively address potential pitfalls. The Guidance Counselors work with families to research and propose enriching opportunities to further enhance students' education while a WHSAD, most notably for students demonstrating accelerated learning. There are several options, including weekend study at a credit bearing college program called College Now, participation at an offsite co-op work program, and even a part-time employment at the school itself.

WHSAD also features a network of community partners as support systems that engage and connect students with the school and with various communities, local and/or professional, outside of the school day. For example, NYC Together, a longtime partner of WHSAD, fosters an integrative relationship between police officers and at-risk/court-involved students. This program has left a lasting, positive impact on participating students. Another program we consider highly successful is our partnership with Y-Plan (a community service-based organization from Berkeley College). This program has been instrumental in connecting the study of Architecture with community service.

Each year, a team of our seniors works with members of Y-Plan to identify local public spaces in need of improvement. Y-Plan takes our students through the steps of identifying a need, coming up with a working solution and presenting this solution to local politicians for funding. We've been awarded funding for several proposed projects across the years. For example, students honored local Firefighter Carl Bedigian, who lost his life on September 11, 2001, as part of a larger effort to clean Fidelity Triangle, a memorial to World War I veterans located adjacent to a street named after him: Carl Bedigian Way. Our students procured funding and supplies from both an organization called New Yorkers for Parks and The NYC Parks Department. They planted flowers, removed trash, put down mulch, painted the benches in the triangle, raked up leaves and replaced the American Flag. This project taught our students a great deal about Landscape Architecture and how to work with local government.

Once a month a School Leadership Team, composed of the Principal, students, teachers and parents/guardians, meets to discuss school progress, propose new ideas, and identify areas of the school in need of improvement.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

WHSAD employs a distributive leadership model, which means that teachers, alongside school leadership, are considered stakeholders in the success of our students. Our school leaders and teachers share a vision of what student autonomy means and how it is actualized. Teachers are given a voice in instructional decision-making through a special lead teacher role called the Professional Learning Team Facilitator (PTLF). In this structured approach, Assistant Principals (APs) meet weekly with lead teachers from every instructional department. During the meeting, the APs and PLTFs review professional development needs, choose topics for upcoming professional development sessions and agree on an overall approach. Topics range from recent classroom observations conducted by the Principal and Assistant Principals to requests teachers make at department meetings. PLTFs then work as a team to draft professional development sessions that tackle these topics, with the APs offering suggestions and making amendments. Logistically, our school programs PLTFs to common planning periods so they can meet and draft necessary professional development materials. PLTFs are also programmed to accommodate common planning periods with teachers in their respective departments so that they may co-plan with colleagues struggling with enhancing the levels of student autonomy in their classrooms.

WHSAD's philosophy incorporates and highlights social-emotional well-being of both students and staff as a necessity for a healthy and thriving school community. For this reason, we have implemented the RULER program from Yale University (RULER is an acronym for recognizing, understanding, labeling and regulating), a program that trains school leaders and teachers the integration of social and emotional learning in their classrooms. The RULER program teaches staff and students skills that exercise emotional intelligence through a system of checks in which school leaders, teachers and students identify, understand and cope with their emotions at given moments throughout the school day. This program helps school leaders create an emotional safe space for teachers and students to learn, grow and even experiment in the classroom confidently. Through RULER, school leaders and teachers develop the poise and incisiveness to cope with conflicts as they arise. This allows school leaders and teachers to keep in check strong emotions that may inhibit student growth and learning and to continue to work collaboratively in the best interest of our students.

4. School Leadership:

We believe leadership should employ and model the same skill sets as staff in order to effectively supervise their work. As noted in part 3, WHSAD employs a distributive leadership model. In order to encourage student autonomy, WHSAD leadership supervises staff through the lens of staff autonomy. This means that while staff members are expected to realize the school vision and meet specific benchmarks throughout the year, we do not mandate the method by which a staff member accomplishes his/her work. In other words, staff at WHSAD are rated based on product, not process.

also known as the Cabinet. The Principal has years of experience as a teacher and an Assistant Principal, which he references to effectively gauge the work of the other cabinet members and teachers. The Principal and Assistant Principals each have extensive experience teaching one of the four core content areas (English, Math, Social Studies, & Science), making the school Cabinet instructionally well rounded. The Business Manager shares the same skill sets as his staff (in the areas of budget, payroll and procurement) and he supervises the operations and logistical foundation of the school so to support autonomy in the leadership and classroom environment.

It is important school leadership, at some level, carries out the duties of those they oversee in order to supervise constructively. However, given the many structures and departments within our school, it is not possible for our cabinet to carry out all duties or even plan for all eventualities. For this reason, each department has its own leadership that answers to the Cabinet. The PLTF, which was covered more extensively under Part 3, is an example. Lead teachers from each instructional department plan and run crucial aspects of instruction within their departments. It has proven more fruitful and inclusive to have these leads take ownership of the work and organize at the ground level, than for the Principal and Assistant Principals to do this work directly. Not only does distributed leadership help gather more talent and vision in decision-making roles but also duplicates ability so to ensure consistency of message and mission, which for WHSAD is that students learn autonomously. To that end, it is equally important that staff model autonomy for students in the work they do for their supervisors, their Assistant Principals and PLTF members. Just as teachers supervise students and recommend interventions as necessary, so too does school leadership assign interventions and supports for teachers when needed.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The work we do emphasizes academic achievement (as defined by standardized testing and in-school interim assessments) and student autonomy, but it is our social-emotional structure, specifically the practice of empathy, that drives our school. While our professed outcomes (achievement and autonomy) are concrete and set in stone, the needs of our students are not. Our student body is made up of 590 individuals, each a unique portrait of family structures, cultures, dreams, fears, ambitions and ability. When we design instruction, guidance and discipline, we incorporate empathy into everything we do, and express flexibility in accordance with our students' individual needs. Showing empathy for our students, particularly those who do not meet or struggle to meet standards, is crucial if all students are to succeed. We strongly feel many students would fail to meet their goals of academic achievement and autonomy if we, instead of addressing them with empathy, insisted they comply with fixed processes and behaviors to meet cold targets. The best example of empathy in practice is our approach to student discipline (see Part V, Section 1). Unarguably there should be consequences for negative behavior, especially when it is destructive and/or harmful to others. What is debatable is the extent to which zero-tolerance policies are productive in a school environment. At WHSAD, we approach student infractions and consequences in consideration of a student's social-emotional needs, potential family hardships, possible health issues or any other obstacle students may face outside of their time at school. Our Deans collaborate with Guidance Counselors, Teachers and families to determine the best course of action to correct the behavior at hand without affecting student performance. Empathy in practice also applies to academics. Our Teachers do not fail students outright. When a student is in danger of failing, Teachers work with their grade teams at Cohort Meetings (see Part IV, Section 3a) to tailor interventions that will help the student meet the standards and passes. It must be stressed that students are never given a "free pass" in academics. All students must earn their grade by meeting the same standards. At WHSAD, we simply do so with an understanding of our students' individual needs, and of what best supports each student so they can to meet these standards.