U.S. Department of Education
2021 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Disney II Magnet High School
                (As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3900 N Lawndale Avenue
                (If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Chicago   State IL   Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 60618-3108

County Cook

Telephone (773) 534-5010   Fax

Web site/URL https://disneyiimagnet.org/   E-mail kespeth@cps.edu

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* Jose Torres   E-mail ceo-torres@cps.edu
                (Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name City of Chicago School District 299   Tel. (773) 553-1000

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

_____Date_____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Miguel de Valle
                (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, leave blank.

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The electronic signature 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 2021 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 must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.

4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2015 and grades participating in statewide assessments must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2019.

5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 or 2020.

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 current school year (2020-2021) unless otherwise stated.

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

1. Number of schools in the district   476 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   (per district designation):   0 Middle/Junior high schools
                                          162 High schools
                                          0 K-12 schools

                                          638 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not the district.)

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")

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

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2020 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

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	46	55	101
8	43	64	107
9	81	74	155
10	77	95	172
11	48	69	117
12 or higher	57	65	122
Total Students	352	422	774

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of   0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
    the school (if unknown, estimate): 3.5 % Asian
                                        23.2 % Black or African American
                                        52.3 % Hispanic or Latino
                                        2.9 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
                                        18.1 % White
                                        0 % 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 2019 - 2020 school year: 1%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred *to* the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	0
(2) Number of students who transferred *from* the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	10
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	10
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019	774
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1

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

    Spanish, French, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Arabic, Urdu, Polish,

    English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 4 %

                                                        32 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 59 %

        Total number students who qualify: 455

8. Students receiving special education services: 17 %

    134 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. All students receiving special education services should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

10 Autism	1 Multiple Disabilities
0 Deafness	0 Orthopedic Impairment
0 Deaf-Blindness	20 Other Health Impaired
10 Developmental Delay	77 Specific Learning Disability
5 Emotional Disturbance	6 Speech or Language Impairment
0 Hearing Impairment	0 Traumatic Brain Injury
5 Intellectual Disability	0 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. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	30
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	21
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.	19

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1   26:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
Daily student attendance	94%	94%	92%	89%	91%
High school graduation rate	96%	89%	84%	94%	0%

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

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2020.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	102
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	47%
Enrolled in a community college	31%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	21%
Joined the military or other public service	1%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.
Yes _   No X

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.

Disney II supports the development of well-rounded individuals who can live productive, intellectual lives and make positive contributions to society

16. Briefly describe how your school has been operating during the current 2020-2021 school year (e.g., open as usual, online only, a hybrid model, etc.)? If different grade levels in your building operate in different ways, include this. If the school began with one model and switched to another partially through the year, include this as well.

Disney II began the 2020/2021 school year with all students in grades seven through twelve learning remotely. In March of 2021 students in the 7th and 8th grades had the opportunity to opt into an in-person hybrid model. In order to safely accommodate students, we split the grades into sections. Section A would be in person on Monday and Tuesday and section B would be in person Thursday and Friday. All students remain at home on Wednesdays to allow for deep cleaning of the building. We had approximately half of our 7th and8th grade students opt into in-person learning with the rest choosing to stay remote. Our high school students are scheduled to return to in-person hybrid learning on April 19th. We will have 9th and 12th-grade students in the building on Monday and Tuesday and 10th and 11th-grade students in the building on Thursday and Friday. All students will continue to learn remotely on Wednesdays. Approximately one-third of our 9th-12 grade students have chosen to return to in-person learning.

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

Disney II is a magnet school and students are selected through a lottery system which is facilitated by the district. Students with siblings and those families within a 1.5 mile radius of the school are given a priority spot in the lottery. There is no testing requirement for the school.

PART III - SUMMARY

Disney II is a magnet school and students travel from over 45 zip codes in the city to attend, with 86% of the students coming from different neighborhoods throughout the Chicago area. Our diverse student community represents almost every neighborhood in the city and we are proud of our students' unique spirit and voice.

Disney II opened its high school campus in 2013 with 200 students in grades seven and nine. In the past eight years, the high school has expanded to almost 800 students in grades seven through twelve. The class of 2017, Disney II's first graduating class, had the 4th highest college persistence rate among non-selective enrollment schools in Chicago Public schools. Students in the first graduating class often described the school as "small but mighty". From the first graduating class to the current year the school has continued with its focus on student-centered learning that provides students opportunities to "create you @ Disney II".

A demonstration of our students' strong and unique voice is their input into the revision of the schools' mission, vision, values and school's "tag line". In the 2016/2017 school year, students indicated that the previous motto, "come grow with us", did not reflect the entire student body. A Culture and Climate committee was formed with students, teachers, parents, and administrators and over the course of a few months, the team conducted focus groups and surveys with the entire community. The result of the Culture and Climate team's work was the revision of the school's mission, vision, values, and a new tag line. A key element to these revisions was student voice.

The school's vision outlines Disney II's unique elements of personalized and project-based learning while also focusing on students social-emotional growth:

Mission Statement

Disney II supports the development of well-rounded individuals who can live productive, intellectual lives and make positive contributions to society

Vision Statement

*Provides a challenging curriculum through personalized and project-based learning that integrates art and technology while differentiating for

every student's needs,

*Develops students who are respectful, inclusive, and driven through a supportive environment, and

*Utilizes the involvement of students, families, and staff to create a community that contributes to society.

At Disney II we value:

*Our family of unique individuals who accept, trust, support, challenge and motivate each other.

*Grit; because we create a positive environment where each student is confident in his or her ability to succeed and has a growth mindset.

*School spirit; we are proud and supportive of our academic and extracurricular activities and actively create the school we envision Disney II to be.

In reflecting the student-centered focus of Disney II which supports students' journey in education, a student coined the phrase "Create you @ Disney II", which is now the school's tagline.

Our high school is unique in that we focus on data-informed small group instruction with teachers focusing

on student-level data to support student learning. We have created structures that support this student-centered focus. Grade level teams meet weekly at both campuses and develop learning opportunities to support student success. We have diligently worked to develop instructional practices and consistent assessment methods that focus on what students need to be successful. We firmly believe that our school's success is not the responsibility of the students, it is the responsibility of the leaders, teachers, and parents and our task is to support and challenge students every day in every way.

Disney II's model of personalized and competency-based learning requires us to focus on developing independent learning skills in all students, and an important element of this is the development of non-cognitive skills such as learner agency and engagement. Teachers have developed classroom structures and instructional models that focus on developing student agency through instruction. Disney II eschews the statement, "you should know this", and focuses on, "what do you need to be successful in college and career?" We recognize that students need explicit instruction on more than math and English and intentionally use our advisory program and class time to mentor students in organizational skills, time management, stress relief, and goal setting. We engage our entire community in these efforts with the goal of providing support for all of our students.

The school's unique, student-centered model which promotes independent learning skills has been beneficial to our community when the pandemic required that we shift to remote learning. Students had a foundation of self-advocacy and were able to navigate a remote learning environment with fewer issues than most schools. The systems and structures that had been developed to support student learning, like our robust Saturday school tutoring program, shifted to remote and are still going strong.

It is often said that schools are looking forward to "returning to normal" in the near future. At Disney II we recognize that "normal" schooling wasn't working and are looking forward to returning to our flexible, student-centered environment that values what each individual community member brings.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

Disney II's core curriculum is teacher-designed and aligns to appropriate national standards and ensures that rigorous tasks are provided to all students. Each department has established the order of the scope and sequence to support opportunities for the development of integrated units of study for students across the grade level. Elective options within each core area consist of AP courses.

Disney II's mission is to support the development of well-rounded individuals who can lead productive intellectual lives and make positive contributions to today's society. We are committed to providing a challenging curriculum through personalized and project-based learning while differentiating for every student's needs. Therefore, all core curricula are designed around end-of-unit projects which emphasizes the development of critical thinking and problem-solving competencies. Examples of competencies include: Modeling, Integration of Evidence, Contributing to Evidence-Based Discussions, and Expressions & Equations. To support this work, Disney II uses an online personalized learning platform for all core classes, with the exception of AP courses. As a result, students can access all of their coursework and assessments through the platform. Teachers use formative assessments as genuine opportunities to provide non-evaluative feedback on tasks aligned to the competencies for that unit. Students can then revise their work for new feedback. In addition, the assignments can be differentiated to meet students' various learning needs and assigned accordingly. Summative assessments that emphasize the development of competencies for each unit are worth 80% of a student's grade. The remaining 20% comes from content quizzes which students can take at their own pace throughout the school year. Students have access to a diagnostic quiz and a variety of resources in order to take notes, study, and prepare for the quizzes. Because Disney II recognizes that students learn at their pace and develop mastery at their own rates, the grading for these courses are competency-based. This means that students are given until the end of the school year to demonstrate mastery of a subject. Semester one grades are subject to change, based on the semester two grade. For example, if a student had a C at the end of the first semester and an A at the end of the second semester, the first semester grade would be changed to reflect the A.

The move to distance learning was supported through Disney II's provision of one-to-one technology for all students. In addition, because all coursework is accessible through the online personalized learning platform students are able to complete work from any location. However, teachers and teams across the school recognized that we needed to make curricular and assessment changes. Each department recognized that the curriculum needs to focus on depth instead of breadth. Therefore, they identified priority standards and evaluated learning tasks to ensure coherence amongst learning activities and relevance to students' interests and lives. Additionally, teachers recognized the importance of providing multiple methods for demonstrating mastery (e.g., students recording videos of a presentation or research, developing infographics instead of powerpoints, written papers). Meanwhile, all grade level teams noted the various challenges students face while working all day on computers from home. To assist with students' workloads while still ensuring that the projects are meaningful, teams in grades 9-12 developed integrated projects. These projects allow students to identify connections across disciplines to support true project-based learning. For example, the ninth grade team developed a Problem of Plastics unit about how single-use plastics contribute to our carbon footprint and impact the environment. Throughout the unit, students interpreted and presented multiple sources of data, designed and evaluated possible solutions, analyzed digital media, and ultimately created a presentation about their findings.

Disney II continues to provide differentiated instruction through targeted, small-group instruction in all classes. It just now happens in the virtual breakout room instead of at a table in the physical classroom. These lessons are designed based on formative assessment data gathered through teacher-designed pre-assessments and formative assessments. These formative assessments happen at least twice a week and are directly aligned to the competencies for the unit. This ensures that students are practicing, receiving feedback, and additional instruction to meet their needs. Additionally, many of our teachers offer students the choice to "opt-in" to lessons during self-directed learning time. These lessons may be workshops around skill development (i.e., writing a claim) or content (i.e., recognizing an author's point of view). An incredible benefit of using the online personalized learning platform is teachers' access to real-time data on

student performance aligned to competencies and assessment progress. This data can be used to group students for projects, design targeted lessons, or inform upcoming lesson activities. This formative and summative assessment data can be viewed by any staff member in the school which facilitates an effective afterschool tutoring program and small group mentoring conversations during advisory. For example, teachers can ask students specific questions about their work in any class to help students problem-solve next steps for addressing data that indicates they may need support and celebrate successes.

Historically, Disney II provides 1-2 honors sections for freshman and sophomore core courses. This year, we launched an earned honors credit pilot program. Fourteen teachers agreed to design course-specific criteria that any interested student could complete to earn honors credit. Teacher teams are already working on redesigning units and differentiating assessments for the next school year so students can earn honors credit for every core course in grades 9-12.

1a. For secondary schools (middle and/or high school grades):

Disney II currently offers 11 AP courses across all disciplines that any interested student in grades 9-12 can enroll in. Our core courses embed the development of independent learning skills (e.g., note-taking, organization, goal-setting, and reflection) in order to prepare students for college-level courses. In addition, we offer a variety of Career Technical Education (CTE) courses within the domain of Information Technology (i.e., Exploring Computer Science and Web Design). As juniors and seniors, students can apply for dual credit courses at the Chicago City Colleges. Additionally, through partnerships with Urban Alliance, After School Matters, and the Chicago Fire and Police Academy, juniors and seniors can engage in apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships, assistantships, and internships. These are valuable opportunities for students to explore and pursue career interests within a variety of domains (e.g., Arts, Communications and Leadership, Sports, and STEM).

Disney II also embeds service-learning projects into all social science courses to provide students in grades 7-12 with opportunities to explore and engage in community and civic responsibilities. After school clubs such as Black Lives Matter (grades 7-8), the Black Student Union (grades 9-12), Gay-Straight Alliance (grades 7-12), National Honor Society (grades 9-12), Student Voice Committee (grades 9-12), and Student Government (grades 7-12) also provide students with a variety of leadership opportunities within the school and broader school community.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

When Disney II HS first moved into its current location in 2013 it was co-located with a daycare center and another middle school. As the daycare center and middle school moved out and Disney II grew to a 7th - 12th grade building, the school's physical space began to reflect the focus on personalized and student-centered learning. Prior to the pandemic visitors to the school often commented that the environment reminded them of a college campus. As a school, we feel that learning can happen anywhere so there are flexible learning spaces in classrooms and hallways. Further, the art department and art students have been encouraged to view the school as their canvas. Our art department is now located in the former daycare center and our students have transformed the space into an art gallery. The entire space is dedicated to student art and is a marquee that displays our school's magnet focus on the arts.

In the last five years, the school has also dedicated space and funds to the development of vibrant band and choir programs. The HS building is a former Catholic girl's school and had two auditoriums. In one of the auditoriums, we removed rows of chairs and opened it up to be a band room. The band room is located on our first floor next to the office and during the pandemic, we have desperately missed the sound of music. The Disney II choir has grown tremendously and we now have three sections of choir and look forward to continued live performances when students return. Both our band and choir teacher have continued their excellent work remotely and we have had multiple remote performances.

At Disney II we are focused on developing literacy skills in multiple languages.

As we have grown, we have also developed a strong World Language program that offers Mandarin and Spanish. Disney II students begin language instruction in 7th grade which provides students an opportunity to pursue languages for six years. Prior to the pandemic, we supported our World Language and cultural education through international travel opportunities for students and we hope to continue those programs soon.

In 2012 Disney II received a grant from the James Dyson Foundation to build a Makers Space at the school and we proudly opened our Makers Space in 2017. Our parents were instrumental in additional fundraising and completed much of the demo and pre-build work themselves. We currently use the space for our 7th and 8th grade project-based learning classes as well as for integrated learning in content areas. We are looking forward to revised and reinvigorated learning opportunities in the near future.

Finally, in the last eight years, Disney II has developed a strong athletic program with over 13 sports for men and women in grades 9-12. We are incredibly proud of our men's and women's volleyball conference champions and beginning in February we joyfully welcomed back our athletes.

Create You @ Disney II is embodied in all aspects of school life at Disney II Magnet HS. We encourage students to explore as many things as possible in their high school career and tell our students, "if we don't have it, you can make it happen".

3. Academic Supports:

Disney II's commitment to providing a differentiated, personalized curriculum is supported through targeted small-group instruction in each class. Teachers utilize formative assessment data throughout each unit to group students for additional support based on their needs - whether students are performing below or above grade level. Groups for small-group instruction do not remain static as they respond to the changing mastery students demonstrate over time.

Disney II's special education program is designed to meet the individualized needs of each student. Most students receive full inclusion through co-taught classes where teachers strive to team teach all students in the class, providing increased opportunities for connection, intervention, and enrichment. Some students need core content instruction in a smaller, separate setting in order to meet their needs. In that setting, small student to teacher ratios facilitate individualized support aligned to IEP goals. However, the curriculum in the smaller, separate setting remains aligned to grade level standards. This ensures they have the opportunity to engage in rigorous work that will prepare them for post-secondary success.

Our English Language Proficiency Teacher works with grade level teams to evaluate the needs of ELL students. This includes identifying appropriate accommodations to ensure success and evaluating assignments to identify appropriate differentiated work if necessary. In addition, students who require instruction in their native language receive it weekly after school.

Grade level teams, which includes at least one special education teacher, meet weekly to review student progress in all core classes on the personalized learning platform. This allows teams to set data-informed goals for the grade level and plan "Connect and Reflect" or "Basecamp Bootcamp" sessions. These special sessions occur at least once a quarter. The teams create new schedules and organize students into intervention and enrichment groups based on their academic progress. To supplement this work, Disney II also has a robust tutoring program. This includes weekly tutoring for Humanities and STEM courses by grade level bands to ensure that sessions maintain low student-to-teacher ratios. Every other week, we also host Saturday school to provide additional

time to provide interventions for students who may be struggling with staying on-track with all of their projects and content assessments.

Every Wednesday on a 5-day school week, students have an advisory period. Each advisory has around 15 students and is organized by grade level. During this time, teachers meet with individual or small groups of students to provide mentoring. Mentoring includes forming relationships with each student, conducting social-emotional check-ins, coaching students to set goals based on their personal academic progress, and teaching executive functioning strategies.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

The effects of the pandemic and civil unrest have directly impacted students in several ways. To address this Disney II Magnet has gotten creative on how we engage students academically, socially and emotionally. Teachers provide a personalized academic approach that uses current student data to provide students with small group instruction. Through the use of breakout rooms, teachers have been able to reach students and address specific academic needs before moving them into their next academic area of focus. Instead of whole group instruction, students are motivated in their small groups with targeted strategies and corrected instruction. Students report that their confidence is boosted when they have the attention of their teacher and can ask questions and get guidance in understanding.

Communication is key when motivating. Having a constant touch point with students and families has encouraged all of us in the Disney II community to check on each other and support each other. Three times a week, our Dean of Students and student volunteers edit a Morning Announcements video that is presented in the morning to students. These videos are fun, provide important reminders of self care, and showcase the beautiful spirit of our school. Additionally, students asked for updated academic information weekly. Disney II emails students and families academic and attendance data so that they can be aware of how they are currently performing. This aligns with our classroom self-directed learning model, where students learn how to manage their time, make smart goals, follow up and reflect. Disney II Magnet encourages students to try new things, make mistakes, take risks- so that they strengthen their learning styles.

Disney II Magnet prioritizes a positive learning environment. Through a series of in-house professional development, Disney II teachers designed classroom spaces that model critical thinking, powerful questioning, and engaging discourse. Our wonderful counseling staff has developed a partnership with classrooms to be able to deliver social emotional lessons that provide a safe space for students to share their feelings and opinions, while teachers and counselors facilitate and share tools to help them navigate through this complicated world. Outside of the classroom, Disney II Magnet hosts regular opportunities for parents to engage with this learning. From book clubs, to town halls, to parent educational series, Disney II Magnet has brought together students, staff, parents, and the community so that we can all focus on providing students with the very best education possible.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

As a magnet school, Disney II brings students from all over the City of Chicago with 86% of our students coming from zip codes outside of the school. Since opening the high school campus we have faced the challenge of developing a culture that embraces all of our students, teachers, and families.

We have engaged with our parent community to develop a strong community involvement model that provides opportunities for parents to engage with their students' learning. In 2019 we hosted community engagement round tables which provided opportunities for parents to give input into school community events and voice their needs. Based on this feedback, We developed a community learning program that included training on NWEA testing, PSAT/SAT testing, our current curriculum platform, the literacy programs we use at the elementary campus, and FAFSA. We have used surveys and meetings with parent groups to engage our parent community in the school and to provide opportunities for them to come together as a learning community. We have further developed this model during the pandemic and have increased the number of town halls, parent educational opportunities, and engagement round tables. We have found that Zoom is an excellent tool for bringing even more families into the school community. During January and February, when the school was preparing to bring students back into the building we hosted weekly parent town halls to provide families the support they needed to make decisions about their students' learning. In order to ensure that parents have full access to information and learning, we also post videos on our websites and translate information into Spanish. Clear, consistent, and transparent communication has been a crucial element in building trust within our school community and this trust has allowed our community to successfully navigate the pandemic.

The school has also focused on providing engaging and meaningful opportunities for students to provide their voices. Our student government leads efforts to manage morning announcements and participate in peer mentoring. We have a Student Voice Committee and a Senior Advisory Committee which provide students an opportunity to lend their voices to school policies and initiatives. We also have a student member on the Local School Council, the school's governing body. Our weekly advisory model further supports students' voice and provides students a strong mentor for ongoing individualized support.

Disney II engages with a number of community partners to further support and enhance student learning. These partners include The Chicago Opera Theater, LEAP Innovations, The James Dyson Foundation, Urban Alliance, The Chicago Police, and Firefighters Academy, and Gallery 37. Additionally, we partner with a number of social services agencies to support students' social-emotional health. These include Lurie Children's Hospital, Lutheran Social Services, and The Kedzie Center. Our ongoing goal is to increase the number of community partners in an effort to provide our students with a wide range of academic and SEL supports and opportunities.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The key lever for sustained innovative school design is shifting instructional mindsets. Disney II has done this work by focusing on providing sustained, in-depth professional development that supports personalized and competency-based learning. As a school, we recognized that the journey to personalized learning had to be incumbent on developing and sustaining teacher practices. While teachers are interested in implementing new instructional strategies and developing increasingly student-centered practices, we recognize that teachers may not know how. Therefore, we recognize that shifting the school community's mindsets is an on-going process that can only be sustained through continuous coaching and personalized professional development.

In order to sustain a shift in instructional practices, it was necessary to adopt a continuous coaching model to support the individual needs of teachers. Disney II found that personalizing professional development provides continuous and effective teacher support. With the shift to distance learning, all weekly professional development sessions begin with community building/connection prompts. Teachers consistently state via weekly PD feedback forms that they value the opportunities to learn new resilience habits and connect in breakout spaces with colleagues. While it is not the same as being able to walk down the hall to connect, it does support a sense of community and foster strong relationships.

Each teacher is assigned either the principal, assistant principal, or instructional coach for informal coaching. Teachers have the option to schedule meetings with their assigned coach or receive virtual classroom visits. Since shifting to distance learning, most meetings or observational feedback center the social-emotional needs of our teachers. We provide a space to reflect on bite-sized goals, express fears or worries, ask questions, process emotions, and develop strategies to navigate the challenges of working remotely. The leadership team meets each month to discuss trends in teacher support and identify structures or resources we can share via newsletters, at grade level meetings, or through weekly PD sessions.

In addition, monthly all staff meetings provide opportunities to share important information, allow teachers to ask questions, and celebrate successes. Teachers have consistently noted that they value hearing strategies that others are trying in their remote classrooms regarding the use of virtual tools and supporting student engagement. Opportunities to share these strategies occur twice a month during department meetings and at weekly PD sessions.

Transparency and consistent communication are cornerstones to ensuring that teachers feel supported. Creating an organizational system to access weekly newsletters, resources shared at department meetings, and materials used during PD sessions allow teachers to reference the information they need, when they need it. This also includes resources that center on social-emotional support and physical well-being for staff.

4. School Leadership:

Disney II is proud of its collaborative leadership model. We recognize that strategic change is sustainable when all members of the community are involved in enacting the change. The collaborative leadership model at Disney II provides both time and agency for teams and provides an opportunity for clear and productive communication and teamwork.

The leadership team at Disney II consists of the principal, two assistant principals, and two instructional coaches. One of the responsibilities of the team is to focus on instructional coaching. Each member of the leadership team has a coaching load. Teachers develop yearly goals and have an end-of-the-year reflection meeting with their coaches. The coaches have weekly contact with their coaching load which includes classroom observations, reviewing unit plans, or meeting with teachers to discuss their goals. These meetings are non-evaluative and the coaches do not conduct performance evaluations. Additionally, coaching loads shift at the end of each semester.

Disney II was founded as a school that focused on personalized and small group instruction and we have continued those efforts into the upper grades. Our high school is unique in that we focus on data-informed small group instruction with teachers focusing on student-level data to support student learning. Grade level teams meet weekly at both campuses and develop learning opportunities to support student success. We have diligently worked to develop instructional practices and consistent assessment methods that focus on what students need to be successful.

Disney II has found that outside professional development has not met the needs of the teachers. With this in mind, the school has dedicated funds and staff to develop a school-based professional development model. The instructional coach at each campus creates professional development sessions based on teacher input and the instructional rounds process. At the high school teachers participate in weekly personalized professional development facilitated by the instructional coach. These sessions are revised quarterly and are focused on the three elements of the school's strategic plan. Teachers self-select the sessions they attend and the course offerings are revised each quarter. Teacher input and instructional rounds are also used to develop full-day PD which is offered during student non-attendance days. Professional learning and all team meetings at Disney II have shifted to remote during the pandemic and we continue to incorporate teacher's voice and classroom observation data into professional development and student support plans.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

As we continued to navigate remote learning and social unrest in our city and our nation Disney II recognized that we needed to further engage our community on issues of race and equity. In the Summer of 2020 the administrative team researched equity consulting firms in the Chicago area and in the fall of 2020 we embarked on a multi-year program with an equity consulting firm. We are committed to ensuring a safe and equitable environment for all of our students and feel in order to elevate the voices of others we need to educate ourselves.

Single Story, Inc. will provide yearly coaching to different cohorts. Each year, a new team of staff from within the school (not just teachers) opt-in for monthly meetings and discussions. The teams learn about other cultures, address biases, and evaluate various sources of data to recommend changes to the curriculum, instructional practices, school-wide norms, etc. They learn to facilitate challenging conversations with their peers, think critically about their own instructional practices, and advocate for students and families. This process will lead to further evaluation of curricular materials from a diversity and representation lens, shifts in instructional practices, and continue to distribute leadership.

Concurrently, Single Story, Inc. also trains a parent team to become a problem-solving and community outreach hub for the greater school community. This will diversify our parent involvement within the school and foster meaningful conversations with families that live in different parts of the city. This parent group may also brainstorm additional ways to increase parent participation at school events or alternate ways to share the school events with the parent

community (i.e., recording and posting videos on the school website). This will also amplify parent voice in our school, build support networks for families, and continue to contribute to a safe school environment.

To support the implementation of our strategic plan, teachers have the opportunity to engage in personalized PD sessions around culturally responsive teaching practices. These sessions are organized around a variety of anchor texts and center on increasing awareness of biases, supporting teachers in conversations around race, current events, and/or social movements in class, understanding culture and intersectionality, as well as implementing and reflecting upon new instructional strategies.

Disney II's discipline and behavior management structures in every class center on respect and relationships. Teachers are trained in restorative practices and have learned about trauma-informed practices. Students have a voice in co-creating classroom norms and are able to meet with the dean, assistant principal, and principal to share either concerns or ideas for further supporting students. In addition, Disney II's after school clubs offer safe spaces for students to express their unique identities and plan school-wide events (e.g., Black Lives Matter, Black Student Union, Gay-Straight Alliance).

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Disney II's commitment to personalized learning has been most instrumental to our continued ability to successfully educate and support students since school closures. Through our partnership with LEAP Innovations, we define personalized learning as learner led, learner focused, learner demonstrated, and learner connected. For the past eight years, we have utilized consistent, personalized professional development in order to provide students with agency over their learning, understand that students develop mastery at different paces, and develop learning activities that address various learning needs.

Since the opening of our high school campus in 2013, teachers have consistently focused on integrating students' interests into units of study. This includes providing students with opportunities to select research topics of their choice, freedom to select texts, and designing pre-assessments that provide a lens into students' background knowledge and/or academic skill level. However, the selection of an online personalized learning platform five years ago was crucial to support the full implementation of personalized learning in all core classes, across all grade levels.

In order to support students' demonstration of mastery at their own pace, Disney II had to shift towards competency-based grading practices. Our online personalized learning platform allows teachers to organize units around course-specific competencies and students have multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery over the course of the year. With year-long opportunities to demonstrate mastery, there is no grade penalty for students who may learn at different paces. For example, students have the flexibility to select when they are ready to take content quizzes for each course and can choose the order in which they master the content. Through the development of note-taking and study skills, students also build their independent learning skills as they prepare for their content assessments.

With the shift to online learning, teachers have prioritized the course content and reduced the number of projects to ensure that students are deeply engaged in each unit of study. This reduction supports progressing through the curriculum at a pace that supports the unique needs of students learning remotely. In addition, it allows teachers to further streamline and design targeted small-group instruction. While we already provided one-to-one chromebooks, Disney II did need to provide hotspots and support families with internet access. The effectiveness of all course-work being available online relies on students' ability to get online to engage with the learning tasks.