

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 [] Magnet [] Choice

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

Official School Name Pleasantville High School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 60 Romer Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Pleasantville State NY Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 10570-3123

County Westchester County

Telephone (914) 741-1420 Fax (914) 741-1407

Web site/URL https://hs.pleasantvilleschools.org/ E-mail palumboj@pleasantvilleschools.org

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Mrs. Mary Fox-Alter E-mail FoxM@pleasantvilleschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Pleasantville Union Free School District Tel. (914) 741-1400

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. Lawrence Boes Esq.
(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 (per district designation):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 3 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. 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”)

- 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	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	76	68	144
10	71	75	146
11	53	70	123
12 or higher	91	76	167
Total Students	291	289	580

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 5.5 % Asian
 - 2.4 % Black or African American
 - 11.2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 78.8 % White
 - 2.1 % 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 <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	3
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	5
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	8
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019	580
(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):

Albanian, Hungarian, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Telugu, Turkish

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 19 %

Total number students who qualify: 110

8. Students receiving special education services: 22 %

130 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.

<u>27</u> Autism	<u>5</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>47</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>31</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>17</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>3</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

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

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. 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	3
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	36
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	20
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	10
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	11

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 16:1

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

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	145
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	82%
Enrolled in a community college	10%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	6%
Joined the military or other public service	1%
Other	1%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 1991

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

Pleasantville High School is committed to providing a holistic education, emphasizing academic, social, aesthetic, physical, cultural, and ethical competencies. As we prepare our students for leadership in the 21st century, we challenge and encourage them to be competent, collaborative, and caring citizens. To accomplish this goal, we recognize that our students are unique individuals whose needs, abilities, interests, styles of learning and experiences must be considered to ensure their success. By recognizing that all of our students have gifts and talents, we offer them an accepting and safe environment, where they can achieve their full potential and accomplish their goals.

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.

Pleasantville High School has operated using a hybrid model for instruction during the 2020 – 2021 school year based on health/safety requirements set forth by the New York State Department of Health. Students were organized into three groups in this model and they attended school either in-person or virtually Monday through Friday. Group 1 was made up of students whose last names begins with the letters A– L and they attended school for in-person instruction on Tuesday and Thursday. Group 2 was made up of students whose last names begin with letters M – Z and they attended school for in-person instruction on Wednesday and Friday. Group 3 was made up of students who have opted to work remotely full-time and they attended school virtually throughout the week. Students who did not attend school in-person are either engaged in asynchronous work at home or used school issued technology to attend synchronous lessons that teachers are hosted online. Students in each group worked remotely on Mondays and were supplied with technology (Laptops/Wifi) to ensure that all student had access to educational services. Throughout the year, groups of students (English Language Learners & Special Education) were invited to attend school for additional in-person instruction regardless of their grouping. The Child Study Team at

Pleasantville High School also worked to expand in-person opportunities for regular education students who struggled with the hybrid model as part of our response to intervention process.

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

PART III - SUMMARY

The Pleasantville Union Free School District is in the heart of Westchester County, New York, 30 miles north of New York City. The Pleasantville Union Free School District serves 7,000 residents covering 1.8 square miles with one Elementary School called the Bedford Road School, Pleasantville Middle School and Pleasantville High School. In total, the district educates over 1,700 students, 580 of which are enrolled at Pleasantville High School. Pleasantville is a unique village, blending a small town feel with an urban appetite for restaurants, boutiques, theatre, and famed farmer's market. Due to its small size, Pleasantville is a walking school district which provides unrivaled character and charm as the student's journey to school each day. The words "Enter to Learn, Go Forth to Serve" carved in stone above the steps of Pleasantville High School are more than a motto; they are a living ethos of the history, academics, and culture of a nurturing educational environment which enables students to uncover their true potential and make great contributions in the future. Pleasantville High School is consistently one of the top schools in Westchester and is annually ranked in US News and World Report.

At the heart of Pleasantville High School (PHS) is a core mission which centers around educating the whole child and providing students with an opportunity to engage in rich, meaningful learning. Ultimately, PHS strives to have students leave PHS equipped with the tools to become confident self-sufficient learners, responsive global citizens, and leaders. Pleasantville's traditional small class sizes have helped faculty develop strong interpersonal relationships with students across the content areas. We pride ourselves on developing the three "A's" of Academics, Athletics and the Arts and encourage student's engagement according to their passions. From our halls emerge caring, responsible citizens, academically and ethically prepared for a 21st-century global society. All students who graduate from Pleasantville High School will know how to be advocates for themselves and those around them.

Academically, PHS offers a comprehensive academic and co-curricular program designed to engage all students in meaningful learning. Students are encouraged to take a course load that fits their academic interests in a challenging and engaging way. In addition to Advanced Placement classes, Dual Enrollment programs with local colleges/universities are designed to provide students with early college experiences. New electives are consistently introduced based on student interests such as Humanities Research, African American Studies, Women's & Gender Studies, Engineering, and computer science programs. PHS strives to be as inclusive as possible offering integrated co-taught classes across the core academic subjects and life skills for students with disabilities. PHS's open enrollment philosophy in Advanced Placement courses allows over 60% of students in grades 10 – 12 to engage in college level coursework. Student performance on Advanced Placement exams results in over 80% of students scoring at the mastery level and being eligible for credit at the collegiate level. Yearly, students represent PHS as National Merit Scholarship candidates and Advanced Placement Scholar Award winners. Traditionally, between 95%-98% of graduating seniors pursue higher education. Due to Covid in 2019-20, 92% of graduating seniors will attend college while several other students will be taking a gap year or pursuing employment.

The relationship between the School District and community is one of respect and true partnership to support students in the growth and mission of educating the whole child. A hallmark of this relationship is evident in the community's collaborative approach to developing a 5 Year Strategic Plan. Beginning in 2014, members of the School District, community, students, parents, faculty, and staff have worked collaboratively to shape the vision and future of the school district. These committees met regularly to discuss action items ranging from leadership, curriculum and instruction, programs, initiatives, efforts in sustainability, and student supports. Pleasantville has worked to develop strategic partnerships with local vendors and companies serving students with internship experiences, vocational training, social-emotional growth, and community service. The "Tech for All Initiative" placed 2-in-1 Dell Laptop devices in the hands of every student encouraging the development of 21st century learning skills. Additional time has been spent increasing digital literacy and citizenship skills.

Athletically, there are 22 different programs offering Varsity and Junior Varsity teams for both boys and girls. Pleasantville athletics are competitive with recent highlights of winning state championships in football, girls' soccer and boys' lacrosse. Pleasantville's athletic teams are also consistently recognized as

New York State Scholar Athlete Teams representing 75% of the student- athletes on that team have a 90 cumulative average. Pleasantville High School also maintains membership in the Pioneer League that provides students with disabilities the opportunity to compete in interscholastic athletics throughout the year.

In the Arts, the annual spring musical at PHS includes over two hundred students who participate in the cast and crew. In recent years, members of the cast and crew have received Metro Awards for their work in the Performing Arts and in 2015 Pleasantville earned the Metro Award for production of the year for *Man of La Mancha*. In the Performing Arts there are opportunities for everyone at Pleasantville High School. For example, students can participate in Artistic clubs such as Performing Arts, Razor's Edge, Jazz Band, Sea Shanty Cub, Camerata, Art History Society, Dead Poets Society. In the Fine Arts, the PHS Art Department hosts many local art shows, PHS artists have work featured at local galleries and students participate in the annual NYS Olympics of the Visual Arts competition in Saratoga, NY. There are also numerous clubs dedicated to community and cultural relations such as the Human Rights Club, Students Demand Action, ECHO, Asian American Club, and the newly formed Jewish Student Alliance.

The foundation for these experiences coincides with the dedication of Pleasantville High School to be creative and intentional in its approach to generate authentic learning experiences. Since the pandemic began and schools were forced into remote learning, Pleasantville High School embarked on a journey to transition its educational approach from passive online participants to reengaged active learners. Faculty and staff worked to integrate new technologies, and methods to allow students of all learning abilities to access the curriculum.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

Faculty and staff worked collaboratively to restructure instruction and assessment for the 2020-2021 academic year due to the Covid-19 health crisis. Educators at Pleasantville High School align instruction and assessment to the New York State Standards, the Next Generation Science Standards and Advanced Placement Standards. A technology, teaching and learning action plan was developed to aid in the transition to a hybrid learning model. A cohort of teachers were trained during the summer of 2020 and that group of teacher-leaders provided their colleagues with training to start the school year. This model provided all members of the faculty with opportunities to become familiar with Schoology, a new Learning Management System, that allows for seamless communication between staff and community, organization of material and transparency for assignments. To further facilitate this transition, both faculty and student boot camps were held to introduce and assist with the navigation of Schoology. Evening parent workshops were provided on Zoom to facilitate the changes and events were recorded and distributed for future viewing. Teachers worked collaboratively to create professional development workshops outlining potential models of instruction, curricula management, new tech tools and daily opportunities for coaching sessions. Much of this collaboration has shaped our educational program and flexibility as the school year progressed. PHS has been responsive to balance access to instruction with concerns of extended screen time for students by offering students flexibility. Teachers have leveraged Microsoft Teams to conduct online classes and have utilized Breakout Room features designed to allow students a space to communicate and work collaboratively both in and out of the classroom. To this end, many classes at PHS provide daily streaming instruction to students to ensure consistent and equitable access to the curriculum. Other classes offer daily synchronous mini- lessons and then independent guided practice. Further, classes in the humanities provide structure and flexibility to allow students to work independently, offering group work and literature circles as mediums to work collaboratively. Teachers have consistently been available to meet with students 1 on 1 or in small groups during an activity period at the end of the day that was designed to provide students with the ability to connect with teachers individually or in small groups.

The Pleasantville High School faculty/staff has also been training in scientific based reading and writing strategies known as Thinking Maps, which provides a global foundation for note- taking, brainstorming, outlining, and writing strategies across the curriculum. Students are encouraged to be mindful of their thinking processes and gain skills necessary for self- study. This has encouraged blended instruction and a consistent low- tech tool for teachers and students to utilize.

Instruction is differentiated according to learning needs and interest level. All departments utilize Bloom's Taxonomy and Universal Design for Learning when generating units of study. Staff have consistently evaluated throughout the year on how to keep students motivated and challenged. Collectively, discussions have been ongoing on providing students with differentiated instruction designed to reach all learners while restructuring their approach to balance both instruction and assessment during the Covid era. For asynchronous and remote instruction, teachers have used technological tools such as EdPuzzle, Nearpod, created self-paced videos on Screencastify among other digital platforms to deliver content in accessible way. In class, teachers have reinforced reading comprehension skills, engaged in open debate, and provided students with safe peer to peer activities designed to reengage all learners. Students utilize Microsoft 365 tools to peer edit group assignments and presentations as well as cast their devices to showcase model problem solving skills in the sciences and math.

Across the content areas, shorter and targeted formative assessments have been administered to assess student learning and plan instruction. The faculty uses Castle Learning, Schoology Assessments tools and Microsoft Forms to administer online assessments to students. These web-based assessment tools provide teachers with data that is used to inform and create targeted instructions while providing students with immediate feedback. Students have also been provided more flexibility to highlight their learning in diverse ways through various choice projects. By leveraging technology, teachers have developed a vast range of assessments allowing for students to have more choice and ownership over their creative display of learning. These range from creating podcasts, videos, Flipgrid's, infographics and project-based learning opportunities to showcase their 21st century learning skills.

Reading/ ELA

The goal of the English Department is to foster student curiosity, develop literacy skills and facilitate engaging discussion through varied multimodalities including texts, poetry, video, and audio sources. The English department works collaboratively to create vertical and horizontal alignment of curriculum according to the New York State Next Generation Reading and Writing Standards. The English Department offers a comprehensive program from English 9 Regents or Honors, English 10 Regents or Honors, English 11, AP Literature and Composition, English 12 and AP Language and Composition. The English Department prides itself on the process of brainstorming, outlining, drafting, revising, editing, and presenting authentic material. All literacy strategies are vertically and horizontally aligned and reinforced. Intensive research, papers and projects are scaffolded to support student growth and inquiry, encouraging students to find their own writers' voice, and sharing learning with their peers. Both classical and contemporary literature are fused into the curriculum to promote a balanced approach to learning. The English Department has made a conscious effort to introduce more diverse authors and works into their core curriculum in all courses offering from English 9 to AP Literature. These works help facilitate student led conversations centered around morality, ethics, and perspective through time, place, and space. Some authors of study include Sandra Cisneros, Lorraine Hansberry, Maya Angelou, Jamaica Kincaid, Zora Neale Hurston and Amy Tan. The English Department celebrates student achievement through their Writers of the Month and publication of the literary magazine Reflections.

Science

The Science Department's core mission is to create a high-quality educational experience using process orientated guided inquiry and investigative learning. The course offerings include Earth Science, Biology (Honors), Chemistry (Honors) and (Honors). However, a wide array of rigorous advanced coursework is available including AP Biology, AP Chemistry, AP Environmental Science, AP Physics, and dual accredited Science Research Program. Additionally, there are numerous electives designed to spark student curiosity in Marine Science, Astronomy, Criminalistics and Robotics. The science department approaches laboratory work with an experimental design approach targeting the process of scientific inquiry. For example, students engage in egg drop competitions, separating unknown mixtures and bacterial transformations. Technology has been leveraged using Pivot Interactive Labs and Venier probe software as well as LoggerPro and Excel to help students collect and analyze data. When formulating conclusions, all students are encouraged to use reason and evidence by applying the principles of scientific thought and problem-solving skills.

Mathematics

The Mathematics Department at Pleasantville High School base their philosophy on the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics encouraging equity in instruction and challenging curriculum. PHS offers a wide array of classes with multiple pathways for all learners. The vast majority of students at PHS take a minimum of four years of math based on the New York State Common Core Curriculum Standards, NYS Computer Science and Digital Fluency Learning Standards and AP guidelines. Students are provided with a solid background in foundational and essential math skills during Algebra, Geometry and Algebra II/ Trigonometry, and then have an opportunity to pursue higher level math through Pre-Calculus Honors, Calculus, AP Statistics and AP AB or BC Calculus. In addition to a rigorous math program, there has been significant development in the Computer Science track utilizing Java Script programming, with the addition of Python Programming, Web Design and AP Computer Science. Students engage in a wide variety of real-world project-based learning opportunities ranging from redesigning floorplans using algebraic formulas, personal budgeting, traveling across America using geometric formulas, working with Microsoft Forms, and data analysis. Additionally, there is a Mathematics Team at PHS and our "Mathletes" showcase their talents in local and regional competitions throughout the school year.

Social Studies

The Social Studies Department focuses on showcasing history and current events though a critical lens, challenging students to explore the obstacles and accomplishments throughout our history. Guided by the NBRS 2021

New York State Regents and National Council for the Social Studies, there is a wide variety of offerings in the Social Studies Department for anyone. The core courses include Global History and Geography I and II, United States History and Government and Participation in Government. Through open enrollment, students can participate in AP World History, AP US History, AP Government and Politics, AP Psychology. Electives are based on the interest level of students and include Justice in Society, Military History, Sociology, Intro to Entrepreneurship. Another cornerstone of the Social Studies Department is Humanities Research where students engage in exploratory topics, active research, work with professionals and defend their findings in front of a panel. Classes have focused on students developing historical reasoning skills, analysis of cause and effect and perspective to promote equitable opportunities. Simultaneously, the Department has revamped their instructions to include non- traditional voices that have not been part of the previously prescribed curriculum. Despite the academic challenges, students entering the 2020-21 school year were also influenced by political and social shifts that challenged traditional power structures. In all classes and levels of instruction, the Social Studies department encourages students to value varying opinions, be active listeners and agents of change in their community. The department aims to celebrate months such as Women's History Month, Black History Month and Hispanic Heritage Month through celebrations and interdisciplinary projects with the English Department that all students 9- 12 can experience.

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

One of the distinctive features of PHS is creating various opportunities that allow students to participate in college and career readiness experiences. PHS offers a plethora of dual enrollment programs by partnering with local colleges and universities in College Quantitative Reasoning, World Languages such as French and Italian and with SUNY Albany anchoring the science research program. Additionally, for the 2021-22 school year, PHS has partnered with Syracuse University Project Advance to offer a dual enrollment courses in African American and Women/Gender Studies. Other notable courses offered at PHS are Entrepreneurship, Robotics, Computer Animation, and a growing computer science pathway inclusive of Python Programming and Web Design. PHS also recognizes that students need access to alternative pathways towards graduation and careers. PHS participates with the regional Board of Cooperating Educational Services (BOCES) network to offer student career and technical education in fields such as auto mechanics, cosmetics, electrical, HVAC and other skill-based fields. PHS Honor Societies such as the National Honor Society, World Language, English, Social Studies and Science require students to become peer mentors and tutors and partner with elementary and middle schools for tutoring and support services. There are also collaborative experiences such as STEAM based endeavors and labs w/ 2nd graders on topics such as states of matter culminating on reading Bartholomew and the Oobleck. Additionally, a marine science collaboration has high school and elementary school students going on a beach trip to study. In the world languages, upper-level students author their own children's book and push into lower grades, engaging in reading and conversation to encourage excitement for a new language.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Arts

The visual arts are one of the staples of Pleasantville High School. Opportunities in the arts range from beginner level drawing and painting, ceramics to AP Studio and Art. Digital storytelling, fashion design and animation allow students to integrate technology with their 2 in 1 devices and iPads by using various programs and new styles of art. Typically, student artwork is displayed in local shows at Community Centers, universities, and libraries. However, due to Covid, the Art Department has utilized social media such as Instagram to showcase student work. Students participate in extracurriculars creating set designs for the school musical and Art Club. The performing arts are another cornerstone of PHS where traditional values of musical education, literacy and performance are fused with innovative strategies utilizing 21st technologies. Students can participate in chorus, band orchestra, Jazz- Rock Ensemble, Theater and AP

Music Theory. There is a diverse repertoire blending both traditional and modern music, jazz, rock and pop that maximizes student choice. Using technology tools such as Sound Trap and Smart Music, students can record their performances and allow the teacher to provide feedback. Students have had the ability to compose their own electronic music. Additionally, performances have been created by using Microsoft Teams to blend all students' participation. Traditionally, students participate in the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) festivals around the state showcasing student talent. Students also have participated in the All State and All National Chorus. A peer mentorship program also exists when upper older students work closely with younger students helping them improve their craft.

Physical Education, Health & Nutrition

The mission of the physical education and health departments is to promote physical well-being and social-emotional regulation. The focus is on providing students with practice tools to make healthy daily living choices. The traditional PE program is designed to increase students' knowledge and skill level in team sports, lifetime activities, co-educational games, and physical fitness. Students can alternatively choose to participate in courses such as Weight Training and Fit for Life which help support students in developing a rigorous physical program. During Covid- 19, the PE department has demonstrated flexibility by incorporating new techniques such as mindfulness, yoga, pilates, and plyometric workouts into their curriculum. Simultaneously, all students participate in health in 10th grade. Students study topics including psychological health, drugs and society, nutrition, weight management, CPR, cancer, sexually transmitted diseases, and contraception. Students will be involved in projects that encourage critical thinking and decision making.

World Languages

World Languages offers students three enriched programs in Spanish, French or Italian whose mantra can be described through Nelson Mandela's quote, "If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart." Each teacher is a native speaker and member of their respective American Association of Teachers dedicated towards promoting cultural appreciation and fully immersed program. Anchored in the New York State Learning Standards, both the Spanish and French programs offer Level I,II, (II Honors) and III (III Honors), IV/V and AP. Italian also offers level I, II (II Honors), III (III Honors), IV/V and culminates with a College Level dual enrollment program with Mercy College. The communicative approach is authentic, incorporating numerous speaking role plays and literary texts. Additional time is spent enriching students' cultural appreciation by attending plays in the target languages, raising awareness, and celebrating heritage months, visiting museums, and experiencing authentic cuisine. Guest speakers are routinely invited to present from the United Nations, local law offices, Immigration departments and actors to discuss modern issues.

Technology, Library & Media

Two engaging electives anchor the technology department which are Video Production I and II and an internship. These courses provide students with an overview of video production in relation to cinema and television. Students explore a brief history of cinema and television and expose students to the varied technologies available in video production. Students are also responsible for producing The Daily Panther, which is a news broadcast created daily providing the school with updates, news, and events. Additionally, all PHS students have access to a database designed for student research.

3. Academic Supports:

At PHS there are several programs designed specifically to support the intensive learning needs of students with disabilities, English New Learners (ENL) and students struggling to find balance during the current Covid-19 climate. Weekly meetings are held at the Child Study Team (CST) where teachers, counselors and administrators meet to discuss the progress of students. Once students are identified, a tiered approach is created to provide the student with intervention services. Evidence is routinely collected and evaluated tracking student progress and reevaluating

programming needs. The Individualized Support Program (ISP) was created to help support students with multiple disabilities including Autism, neuropsychological disorders, intellectual disabilities, comorbidities, and emotional dysregulation to have access to inclusive general education experiences with tailored instructional supports to close the achievement gaps. These support ranges from small class size, occupational therapy, manipulatives, modified assignments, and functional life skills training. Additionally, PHS has an Alternative Learning Program as well as a Therapeutic Support Program designed to help students manage their emotional and regulatory needs by providing a safe and supportive environment as well as skills training. Students receive Dialectical Behavioral Therapy and participate in group therapy. These programs rely on collaboration between the program lead teachers and general education teachers to differentiate instruction, provide choice and flexibility of time and space to complete assignments. Other local school districts partner with both ISP and TSP to provide out of district students with the academic, social and emotional programming PHS has to offer. The ENL program provides both push in and pull-out support to students who are transitioning and learning English. Assignments are implemented through creative ways to help students immerse their language skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. For example, the World Language program has collaborated with the ENL program to engage all students in both native and emerging languages. Native Spanish speaking ENL students were asked to create an African Latin Personalities project and present with Spanish Classes. The students in Spanish Class then responded in English and ENL students needed to answer in English.

To support students struggling during Covid-19, PHS has utilized an activity period daily, as well as extra office hours on Mondays to provide students with academic support. On students' asynchronous days, struggling students are provided the opportunity to work in school in an academic support room to attend their classes virtually, provide an additional potential point of contact with their teacher and a space to maintain focus. Lastly, the administration and guidance department have worked with struggling students' families to implement an After School Program during the afternoon/evening hours to provide support with executive functioning skills, academic help and counseling services to students.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

PHS is dedicated towards creating an inclusive school climate where strong interpersonal bonds and connections are created between students, faculty, and community. This culture is embedded in a shared vision of developing an atmosphere of unity and equity between all stakeholders. A positive school climate and culture begins at PHS with the Administrative approach of the Principal and Assistant Principal who consistently reinforces positive behavior among the staff and students. Each day, both greet the students with a smiling face, excited for the day. Transparency is key, and PHS is dedicated towards giving students a voice and ownership. The Administration consistently meets with the Student Council to understand the pulse of the building. Together, they plan activities, events and listen to concerns. Traditionally, the Student Council is involved in planning events such as Homecoming, Thanksgiving Assembly, lip synching contests, ice cream socials, battle of the bands, creating game rooms and advocating for student clubs. Additionally, candy grams and community sing-alongs before the holiday and winter break help to spread cheer. When Covid- 19 began, the Student Council was instrumental in planning graduation and prom, culminating in a massive car parade for the graduates. In June, when the United States was in turmoil, the students rallied with the support of administration and staff to have a March for Equity through town, equipped with students and guest speakers. The consistent communication has been paramount to the steady success of PHS.

Community Service and extracurricular activities are also paramount in creating positive school culture. Athletically, this year, a no cut policy was instituted shifting the focus from winning to participation by including as many students as possible. Intramural athletics was also another focus trying to improve student physical activity. As part of the transition to high school, a freshman orientation is held and peer high school leaders through the Sources of Strength work with incoming freshmen to tour the school, discuss routes, participate in an advisory role and hold a BBQ. During Freshman year, receive ongoing Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) training throughout the year to teach them positive coping mechanisms, distress tolerance, intrapersonal relationship skills and emotional regulation. These concepts are again reinforced through the PE and Health department as students' progress through high school. Students fill out career service inventory forms to help guide potential future interests and aspirations.

The School Counseling and Psychology Department provide consistent outreach and support for all students. PHS is one of the few select schools nationwide who has an American Psychological Association accreditation and partnership. Many doctoral level interns complete their experience at PHS supporting our students through both 1-on-1 and group counseling sessions. Virtual Microsoft Teams Meetings and Zoom meetings were also utilized during school closures and remote learning to connect with students. Activities and events were held focusing on providing students with the ability to hold meaningful discussions and build interpersonal relationships.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

At the onset of the summer, PHS developed various committees targeting Wellness, Family Engagement, Schedule and Instruction, and Health and Safety to safely reopen Pleasantville in the most effective and supportive way possible for students. These committees included numerous stakeholders of administrators, teachers, staff, parents, community members and most importantly, soliciting student feedback through meetings and councils. Ideas were generated and presented as to best practices in developing curriculum, delivering instruction and assessment. It was decided students needed to be empowered, clear expectations and communication set, and staff needed to act as both facilitators and cheerleaders. Since the beginning of the school year, PHS has engaged in a Hybrid model. All students receive full day remote instruction on Monday, and two groups rotate during the week based on their last name, A-L and M-Z adhering to social distancing guidelines. Students also had the option to a full remote experience. Additionally, students who receive special services can attend school daily. By the spring of 2021, the expectation is that all students will have the opportunity be back in the building full time with shields and barriers.

The PHS school counseling department has leveraged technology during Covid to increase communication and transparency between the school and community. Counselors belong to a variety of professional organizations such as the American School Counselors Association and the New York State School Counselor Association which help guide their methodologies and practice. A comprehensive school counseling model is utilized at PHS focusing on the three domains of academic development, career path, and social- emotional growth. Zoom webinars have been utilized to discuss course offerings, college information sessions, technology updates and reopening committees. Juniors engage in mock interviews, essay writing workshops, and boot camps on Naviance. The school counseling office has held Webinars throughout the year providing families with support with senior transitions, freshman orientations and career guidance. A weekly newsletter is also shared with updates on new events and activities happening around the school.

Various community organizations help to support student programming, school improvement and social-emotional support. Through the Friends of STEM, community-based mentors have partnered with teachers to enhance science enrichment activities and attend career fairs. Additionally, support is given to promote the Science Olympiad after school program. These partnerships in the Science Research program help to secure students working in labs such as Regeneron, Memorial Sloan, Acorda Therapeutics. Through the Friends of Performing Arts (FOPA), numerous committees have been created to support musical productions. Annually, the school's winter musical is a major draw with over 1/3 of the student body participating in some aspects of the performance. Community members have been engaged in set designs, filming, production, fund raising, and make up crew. Previously, PHS has garnered numerous awards for musicals such as Carousel and the Little Mermaid. Students can also take an active role and serve as student directors to help create the show. The Break the Hold Foundation and Pleasantville Strong are two examples of local organizations that have worked with our Sources of Strength Club to provide students with the necessary tools for social- emotional growth. These organizations have also provided workshops to engage families and provide educational resources to help guide conversations and offer support throughout the pandemic. The Friends of the Visual Arts (FOVA) is another organization of parents and community members designed to showcase the arts in Pleasantville. They help to organize the annual arts show, raise money for trips, guest speakers and other art opportunities in the future.

The Special Education department also develops transitional post-secondary plans for students in conjunction with the Work Experiences Coordinator's Association of New York. Partnerships exist with non- profit vocational training organizations such as the Center for Career Freedom and Access- VR. Major local companies such as JA Henkels, Spectrum Design and Scarborough and Tweed also provide work-based learning experiences for students. Socially, students with disabilities at PHS actively participate in the Special Olympics Pioneer Athletic sports league where students have the chance to compete against peers from other local schools.

As a culminating experience at the end of senior year, all students can participate in structured internship opportunities in the field of their choice. Local business and community members offer opportunities to serve and work in the field with supervision. Students record their experiences in journals and are required to present their findings in front of a panel. Past opportunities have had students working in hospitals, science labs, schools, bookstores, law firms, and home renovation to name a few.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

At PHS, there have always been intensive efforts dedicated towards providing an environment where all staff members feel appreciated and valued. Academically, staff have the autonomy and academic freedom to make choices about their courses. Teachers are encouraged to try new approaches, work collaboratively, introduce new elective courses, and become innovators in the classroom. Staff serve in a variety of roles on various committees contributing to the purpose and planning of professional development. These plans range from increasing staff's social- emotional capacity, technological tool training, inter- departmental discussions and pedagogical designs. Yearly book shares during the summer and faculty meetings are designed to spark engaging conversation and reflective practices. For example, some of the past books have been, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, *David and Goliath: Underdogs, Misfits, and the Art of Battling Giants*, *How to be an Anti- Racist* and *White Privilege*. Teachers have engaged in roundtable

discussions identifying key themes from these readings and practical applications into our classrooms.

In order to ensure a successful transition to remote and hybrid learning, long range plans were developed and implemented beginning in April 2020 to ensure teachers and staff had the necessary resources and support to provide for consistent instruction and support. Surveys were analyzed identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the teachers utilizing technology tools to target high needs areas and teacher leaders. A PD calendar and group were created offering daily PD offerings in technology tools, hosting online meetings, troubleshooting, and maintaining relationships with students. A summer bootcamp for teachers was developed to train staff in Schoology and turnkey their training to other staff members. A Teaching and Learning Lab emerged providing staff with coaching support every period of the day. Staff members served in this capacity from various departments to provide both Humanities and STEM support.

The PHS administration hosts barbecues, chili cook off contests, ice cream socials, Halloween costume contests, all designed to build camaraderie amongst the faculty. At the monthly faculty meeting, colleagues would be recognized for their outstanding contributions to the school and provided with gift cards in the local community. Weekly, the administrators at PHS send out an email thanking the staff for their flexibility and professionalism. During Covid, weekly walks were organized and silent gift giving events were held during Thanksgiving and the holiday season to help build a sense of community. "Name that Staff Member" member contests were also organized to highlight various people's contributions in new ways.

4. School Leadership:

The Pleasantville High School leadership team has cultivated a culture of inclusivity and shared ownership through a distributed leadership model. This model provides stakeholders with the opportunity to engage in meaningful leadership work at the building level and long-term strategic planning efforts at the district level. Pleasantville High School takes great pride in empowering all members of our school community to contribute to our ongoing learning and growth.

The leadership team at Pleasantville High School consists of a principal, an assistant principal, a curriculum coordinator, a coordinator of school counseling and departmental leaders in each discipline. The department chairs/coordinators are teachers in the building and their hybrid role allows them to serve as instructional leaders with expertise in their discipline. These departmental leaders work closely with teachers and with the instructional cabinet at Pleasantville High School. This work supports the evolution of daily instruction through data analysis and our focus on student achievement at all levels. Members of the larger school-community are also empowered to play meaningful leadership roles at Pleasantville High School. Parents, students, teachers, district leaders, and members of the community work together to develop strategic plans that guide learning at Pleasantville High School. Our strategic plans inform instruction, prioritize initiatives, foster strategic partnerships, and create a shared vision for teaching and learning at Pleasantville High School. The first iteration of our strategic plan was developed in 2014 and members of our community worked to develop the next iteration of our strategic plan in 2020. Administrators and teachers set goals for student learning/achievement annually. Goals are based on strategic planning efforts and our ongoing analysis of student achievement. These goals drive instructional practices, course offerings and programs that are introduced for students/families. Progress towards these goals is measured as part of our ongoing data analysis, the observational cycle and feedback from a variety of stakeholders. All educators at Pleasantville High School work collaboratively to support student learning, community engagement and the ongoing development of the faculty.

Teaching and learning at Pleasantville High School has evolved significantly due to the Covid health crisis. Students, families, and educators worked collaboratively to develop a model for hybrid learning that provides all students with access to an instructional program that is safe and supports learning. Members of the leadership team have worked to engage with stakeholders, modify instructional plans and collect data as part of this work. These unprecedented times have led to an increase in communication, stakeholder meetings and efforts to gather feedback to drive our instructional plans. These partnership efforts are ongoing during the Covid-19 health crisis and they have allowed Pleasantville High School to best serve students and families.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

In order to embrace culturally responsive teaching and learning, PHS has embarked on a mission to engage faculty and students to inclusive diversity and anti-bias education training through various partnerships, organizations and initiatives. The objective is to raise awareness and understanding of equity and understanding of our own inner bias's that may exist. Ultimately, PHS aims to be a place where everyone feels safe and secure in their own identities and have the comfort to share their experiences and viewpoints. Staff have been trained to be active listeners, critical thinkers, and responsive to students' social- emotional needs.

PHS has partnered with the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and Holocaust and Human Rights Center to engage staff and students in interactive training sessions designed to promote equity and inclusion. Through the NYU Metro Center, additional attention will be placed on evaluating curriculum and instruction inside of the classroom. The goal is to promote educational equity and anti-bias education. PHS has engaged two lead faculty teachers serving in the role as Co- Coordinators of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. In June 2020, the first virtual Juneteenth celebration was launched. Through a 5-year plan, their goals are to encourage new voices in literature, understand media representation and bias, evaluate discriminative practices, and encourage social justice. Yearly, the PHS Human Rights Club attends the Holocaust and Human Rights Center for a county wide workshop on a key current events issue. These student leaders then develop action plans during Upstander's Day with staff members to raise awareness, host events and fundraise for a specific cause which have previously included supports the local women's shelter, healthy nutritional options for disadvantaged students in Westchester County and food and water insecurity in Africa. Members of the faculty also advise the Students Demand Action Club dedicated to raising voter awareness and addressing socio- economic issues in the local area.

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PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

In accordance with the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders, PHS embarked on a mission to promote the academic and social-emotional well-being of all students to persevere through the Covid crisis through reengagement and reignite a passion for learning. The learning and social-emotional experience of the students is the driving force behind the direction of the school. To this end, the most important strategy utilized and stressed by the educational leadership team has been attempting to increase all levels of communication within the school community. Beginning last March, our school community faced unprecedented challenges and an uncertain future. PHS believes there is strength in unity, and the way to progress forward is to ensure all voices are heard while ensuring there are multiple overlapping touch points embedded in the framework of day-to-day operations. With a flexible, growth mindset and selfless attitude, PHS attempted to empower and reassure students that their education was the top priority, and their voices would be heard.

Daily, members of the leadership team met to question, gather feedback and be reflective of their educational practice. A framework was outlined to ensure that communication was clear from PHS to the community, administration to staff, and staff to students. Over time, this strategy has consistently been refined and adapted to be flexible to the changing student needs. Weekly and almost daily communication existed between the administration and community, keeping abreast of the changes in State guidelines, policies, and direction of the school. Meetings were held throughout the spring and summer gathering feedback about how the school and community could work collaboratively to ensure the best possible experience for students. All voices were encouraged to be heard and multiple surveys were distributed to provide all stakeholders with a voice in the educational process.

Emphasis was placed on attempting to maintain a positive school community with the students through distance learning. Teachers were encouraged to reach out to one another, and virtual meetings were held to ensure no staff members were left behind. Staff surveyed students about their academic progress, ability to engage in instruction and monitored that student learning objectives were met to ensure that academic learning loss could be met with strategic analysis and planning. Additionally, staff used ice breaker activities and displayed compassion to students to promote a sense of community and allow time for positive experiences and reengaging students. Grade level meetings were held between guidance and the staff to identify students of concern and provide a structured approach to implementing support. All departments met more frequently sharing their experiences to adapt curriculum and social-emotional strategies when working with students.

This increased level of communication has allowed for a true partnership to flourish between the school and community. In turn, Pleasantville High School will continue to communicate with the same level of transparency through the use of technology and shared vision.