

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

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

School Mailing Address 444 Pleasantville Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Briarcliff Manor State NY Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 10510-1922

County Westchester County

Telephone (914) 488-8325 Fax (914) 432-8217

Web site/URL https://www.briarcliffschools.org/ E-mail dblank@briarcliffschools.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* Dr. James Kaishian E-mail jkaishian@briarcliffschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Briarcliff Manor Union Free School District Tel. (914) 432-8115

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. Michael Haberman
(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	75	61	136
10	72	60	132
11	82	60	142
12 or higher	73	64	137
Total Students	302	245	547

*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
 - 16 % Asian
 - 5 % Black or African American
 - 9 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 68 % White
 - 2 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 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	0
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	0
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	0
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019	0
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	<.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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 4 %

Total number students who qualify: 21

8. Students receiving special education services: 8 %

44 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>3</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>24</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>10</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>5</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>1</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 8

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.	57
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	10
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	11
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	7

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 10:1

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	98%	96%	95%	96%	97%
High school graduation rate	99%	99%	99%	98%	100%

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	137
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	94%
Enrolled in a community college	5%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	1%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

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

Yes No

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

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

Our mission is to provide students with an outstanding education with which they can actualize their aspirations. As citizens of an interdependent global environment, we endeavor to nourish the dignity of individual students and cultivate a passion to make positive contributions for the greater good. Through exposure to a comprehensive course of study, quality teaching, high standards, internships, community service, and a wide array of co-curricular activities, we hope to provide students with the knowledge, means, and opportunity to find personal satisfaction in their lives during their high school years and beyond.

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.

Briarcliff High School is operating using a hybrid instructional model during the 2020 – 2021 school year. Students were divided alphabetically into two balanced cohorts (Group A and Group B) such that in-person high school classes were reduced on average by one half. Students attend school on an alternating rotation of two days in school followed by two days engaged via remote access to instruction at home. Teachers utilize Microsoft TEAMS so that students at home may receive synchronous instruction with their in-school peers, interacting with their teachers and classmates virtually.

The school year began with a week-long student orientation in which we welcomed students in small cohorts to learn about the new health and safety protocols and routines necessitated by COVID-19. To avoid large groups of unmasked students in one space (e.g., the cafeteria), students eat lunch in classrooms immediately following their period 5 classes.

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

Briarcliff High School is the only high school in the Briarcliff Manor Union Free School District, serving students in grades 9-12. Briarcliff Manor UFSD is a small district, serving approximately 1,470 students in grades K-12. Briarcliff High School's enrollment of 547 students is comprised of students from Briarcliff Manor, Pocantico Hills, and tuition students from area school districts. Many of our tuition students have chosen to attend Briarcliff High School due to specific student-centered programmatic offerings or as a result of a social/emotional circumstance requiring a student to be offered a fresh start in a new high school environment.

Briarcliff Manor is an affluent, suburban community, located in Westchester County, New York, covering approximately 6.7 square miles, with a population of approximately 8,000. Families move to Briarcliff Manor due to the longstanding quality of its three schools in a county of many similar, high-quality schools. As a quaint community, proximate to New York City, Briarcliff Manor is seen as a very attractive place to raise and educate children.

Historically, from 1865 until 1918, Briarcliff Manor served students up to the ninth grade. Before 1918, Briarcliff students choosing to continue their high school education attended the nearby Ossining High School. After 1918, Briarcliff introduced "an advanced curriculum" for high school students. In 1923, four students were granted Briarcliff High School diplomas. Briarcliff High School experienced continued growth, necessitating the construction of a new building, opening in 1971. It became a shared campus with the newly built Briarcliff Middle School in 2003.

The introduction of the "advanced curriculum" has been the cornerstone of Briarcliff High School, commonly known as "The Briarcliff Standard". Our parent organizations partner collaboratively with school staff and administration to maintain high aspirations and excellent student results.

At the core of Briarcliff High School's academic success is 146 different course offerings, including 40 elective opportunities. This robust curriculum provides innovative and meaningful course selections to build creativity, confidence, perseverance, and problem-solving skills for each student. One example of this is our Briarcliff Manor Research Program, an open enrollment 3-year course of study for those interested in scholarly research in the social sciences as well as the hard sciences. Briarcliff Research students consistently perform outstandingly well at competitions locally and nationally. More importantly, students' dedication to their work is driven by their focus on contributing to the welfare of society as a whole.

Briarcliff High School's faculty and leadership teams recognize the potential within each student, providing all students with opportunities to succeed in their post-secondary plans. By offering 41 college accredited co-enrollment courses, students are exposed to the rigor of college level curriculum. Earning college credits may reduce the financial burden of tuition with early graduation and/or opportunities to double major without incurring additional college expenses. While advanced courses have prerequisite requirements, any student may apply through the Criteria Review Process. Students express a sincere rationale for course entry and teachers work individually to help them achieve their academic goals. Data compiled from the Criteria Review Team demonstrates that 98% of the students excel in the courses in which they have requested entry. All students graduating from Briarcliff High School have taken at least 1 college level course.

Briarcliff administration, faculty and staff engage in a continued process of data analysis to ensure students are flourishing. Faculty use the DataMate system to analyze assessment data to improve instructional alignment and achievement. Teachers and administrators have clear feedback on test questions, standards for individual students, cohorts, as well as class level analysis. The Response to Intervention Team, comprised of counselors, administrators, clinicians, and faculty meet weekly to monitor student progress and plan a course of action. Our Wellness Center is strategically located adjacent to the offices of our Social Worker and Student Assistance Counselor. Students may access the Center to enjoy a quiet respite or access the expertise of a clinician.

Our Writing and Math Labs are indispensable components of the Briarcliff High School success story. Each

period of the day, students have the ability to confer with a certified English or math teacher to receive personalized support and clarification of prior learning. The labs are open to any student on a drop-in basis or as an assigned class for students needing Academic Intervention Services (AIS).

COVID-19 has presented enormous challenges to our efforts to ensure student engagement socially, emotionally, and academically. Nonetheless, we have met these challenges head on with a one-to-one device program and a Technology Department “Help Desk” that enables student and faculty connectivity. Faculty and staff professional development began last March 2020 and has been continuous throughout the year. Our hybrid instructional model has been successful, with a solid re-opening plan and a supportive community of faculty, staff, parents, students, and administrators. We are proud to report that Briarcliff High School has required only one short “instructional pause” in late November during which we pivoted to remote learning for 2.5 days due to faculty quarantine and subsequent teacher shortage. We continue to focus on the social-emotional well-being of students, faculty, and staff, employing a strategic clinical outreach program to protect our most vulnerable students. An array of COVID-19 compliant athletic and co-curricular offerings help to maintain a sense of belonging and connectiveness to our Briarcliff High School family.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

Close to 100% of Briarcliff High School graduates attend institutions of higher learning. This is a direct result of appropriate program planning. Such planning evolves from evaluations of students' abilities and interests, coupled with careful course selection. Counselors work with the same students throughout their high school career in order to develop strong relationships and familiarity with families. The counselors provide guidance in: (1) choosing an appropriate course of study based upon a four-year educational plan, (2) monitoring progress in fulfilling graduation requirements, and (3) utilizing career information related to individual interests, aptitudes and goals. All students have the opportunity to graduate with a NYS Local Diploma, NYS Regents Diploma or a NYS Regents Diploma with Advanced Distinction.

The Briarcliff High School English Department strives to develop students' reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills well beyond the required New York State Common Core Standards. Collectively, the program focuses on the writing process and public speaking skills, while applying the latest theory in regard to reading and writing, to ensure college readiness and to prepare our students for the future. Additionally, the department strives to develop visual literacy and 21st Century media and publication skills through an elective program. The overarching goal is to foster lifelong intellectual curiosity as students cultivate a broad range of literacies as capable, discriminating readers, culminating in fluent writers, articulate speakers, active listeners, and critical thinkers. The course sequence begins with English 9 for freshmen, followed by English 10 for sophomores. Junior students have the option of selecting English 11, English 11 Honors or AP Language and Composition, all of which culminate in the June NYS English Regents Examination. Senior students have the option of taking English 12, College English 12 or AP Literature and Composition.

The Briarcliff High School Mathematics Department believes that a strong mathematical foundation is essential for opportunity and success in the 21st Century. All students must, therefore, engage in challenging and meaningful mathematics that align with the Common Core Standards. This curriculum is focused on developing deep understanding, coherence, fluency, modeling and application of multiple problem-solving approaches. This process is best supported by a home/school partnership that recognizes the crucial role of good thinking and study habits in cultivating lifelong learners. The high school sequence begins with students taking algebra followed by geometry. There are various levels of the aforementioned courses to provide a solid foundation, a high level of competency, and confidence in math to encourage success through the upper level courses. Each of these courses culminates with a NYS Regents Examination. Following the foundation courses, students may select College Pre-Calculus or College Algebra. The sequence concludes with an option of College Calculus, AP Calculus AB or AP Calculus BC, Multivariable Calculus and Differential Equations. Mathematics electives, such as College Personal Finance, Discrete Mathematics and AP Statistics provide differentiated course selections to ensure mathematics engagement for all learners.

The Briarcliff High School Science Department endeavors to inspire students by offering a wide array of interesting and relevant science courses. Faculty members have advanced degrees in science and extensive industrial and real-world experience, enabling them to enrich the curriculum far beyond what is required by state and national standards. The success of the science program is based on the focus of cross-curricular connections among science courses and other disciplines, such as data analysis, calculating rates, and making predictions. Science offerings include biology, earth science, chemistry, physics, and environmental science. The aforementioned courses may be taken at the NYS Regents, honors, or Advanced Placement levels. Often, students take two science classes a year, as the Science Department engages students in Marine Biology as well as the highly subscribed College Forensics and Science Research Program.

The Social Studies Department strives to engage all students in fostering the growth of historical knowledge, global awareness and civic responsibility in an effort to nurture highly functioning members of a diverse and democratic society in the 21st Century. Students begin their high school careers taking Global History and Geography I, followed by Global History and Geography II, AP European History or AP World History all of which conclude with a NYS Regents Examination. These courses are followed by American History or AP US History which require a NYS Regents Examination. Finally, the required social studies courses

conclude with an option of AP Macroeconomics, AP U.S. Government & Politics or Economics and Participation in Government. Social Studies elective offerings offer breadth and depth curriculum choices with College News Literacy, College Introduction to Psychology and Introduction to Sociology.

Prior to the pandemic, Briarcliff High School faculty and staff benefitted from extensive professional development with the Innovative Designs for Education (IDE) Corporation. The student-centered approach to lesson design and delivery strives to redesign classrooms and strengthen instructional practices. This partnership has helped to support students' ability to take ownership of their work. For the past several years, our teaching staff has worked to craft Learner-Active, Technology-Infused (LATIC) Classrooms. This framework has increased student engagement, academic rigor, and most importantly, student responsibility for learning. Our teachers provide students with a variety of learning activities, including small-group lessons, and activities that engage students individually, in pairs and in groups. Many of our teachers utilize breakout rooms on Microsoft Teams during lessons to enable students to partner up and brainstorm material virtually rather than working together in close proximity. Teachers use a tiered approach to differentiate instruction to meet students' needs and to ensure content mastery by means of authentic learning units.

Throughout the hybrid learning period, Briarcliff High School has utilized formative and summative assessments to monitor student learning, provide continuous feedback, and evaluate student learning as per NYS learning benchmarks. Formative assessments include discussion questions to elicit students' verbal and written responses, short quizzes, as well as group projects. In addition, virtual students contribute to class discussions by means of teacher directed questions or students volunteering thoughts using Microsoft Teams. Teacher practices related to summative assessments are designed toward motivational problem-based assignments where students are able to make real-world connections. Teachers evaluate individual student mastery via assignment rubrics, peer feedback and teacher suggestions.

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

Briarcliff High school is dedicated to the college and career readiness of every graduate. This priority is evident in a wide array of engaging courses and programs. Briarcliff High School has a long partnership with Putnam-Northern Westchester BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services), which offers a broad range of programs for students looking to develop career skills and earn college credit. Students gain a competitive edge by enrolling in one of 40 Career and Technical Education courses in the areas of the arts, humanities, business, engineering, health, human and public services, and natural and agricultural sciences. Successful graduates can attain a Career and Technical Education Certificate or a Regents Diploma with a Technical Endorsement.

The Senior Internship Program is a second semester senior option available to all seniors in good academic standing. The program empowers students to take ownership of their education by pursuing an internship in the community in a specific area of interest. The experience enables students to develop specific skills and knowledge beyond the traditional classroom while simultaneously developing relationships and providing service to community partners. Students are guided throughout the process by an on-site supervisor and a high school faculty mentor of their choosing. The Senior Internship Program has grown exponentially over the years, largely due to the collaboration of dedicated faculty mentors, supportive community sponsors, and motivated seniors.

As mentioned above, Briarcliff High School offers 41 College Accredited Courses. In partnership with SUNY Albany University in the High School Program (UHS), SUNY Westchester Community College Early College Experience Program (ECE), and Syracuse University Project Advance (SUPA), Briarcliff students are provided with the academic challenges of a college level curriculum. These courses provide a "bridging" experience to college and enable students to develop the skills and experience necessary for academic success in higher education. Enrollment in college accredited courses provide future opportunities to students, such as the ability to enroll in higher level colleges or to complete a four-year degree in less time and reduce college costs. Students enrolled in college accredited courses are eligible to receive both Briarcliff High School credits as well as college credit.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

At the heart of Briarcliff High School's program is a curriculum that is both rigorous and rich in offerings. Core content courses are complimented by an extensive array of opportunities in the visual and performing arts, world languages, computer science, and research. Courses are deliberately designed to engage and inspire our students so that they are well-prepared for life in the 21st Century.

The Briarcliff High School Visual Arts Program provides a range of offerings from core courses like Foundations of Studio Art to SUNY Albany University in the High School and Advanced Placement courses, such as AP Drawing Portfolio and AP 2D-Art and Design Portfolio. Advanced courses challenge emerging artists to utilize various technical and expressive means, developing a varied fine art portfolio along the way. Electives in sculpture, ceramics, darkroom and digital photography, and computer art and design expose students to the techniques and history of other artistic mediums. Students' accomplishments are celebrated at an annual Art Salon.

The Briarcliff High School Performing Arts Program offers a variety of learning and performing experiences, including choral, band, orchestra, and dance ensembles. Students perform a diversified repertoire from standard, popular, jazz and contemporary music with students in grades 11 and 12 having the option to earn college credit. Additional experience is provided through co-curricular enrichment activities including Jazz Band, the Chamber Music Group, and the Briarcliff Singers. Students showcase their talents in our annual winter and spring concerts, a fall drama production, a spring musical production, staged readings, and a spring dance concert.

The Briarcliff High School Physical Education and Health Programs are critical components of our commitment to promoting students' physical and social-emotional growth. Curriculum focus is on making healthy decisions and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Our College Principles of Sports Management course introduces students to the profession as well as to the tenets of sports at all levels. In health class, students learn about sexual responsibility, substance abuse, injury/disease prevention, stress management, cooking/eating, and other proactive wellness activities. Guest speakers, field trips, and hands-on activities enhance authentic learning. Our Introduction to Culinary Arts class introduces students to cooking, preparing and evaluating food with an emphasis on safety, food science, and nutrition.

The Briarcliff High School World Language Department is committed to preparing students for today's increasingly global society such that they can communicate, understand, and appreciate diverse languages and cultures. Courses focus on listening, speaking, reading and writing via authentic sources and the use of technology. Students select the study of French or Spanish beginning in 6th grade. The program continues these language sequences with a variety of courses for students of all abilities and interests, up to advanced placement. In addition, we offer a full sequence in Latin and courses in conversational Mandarin Chinese.

The Briarcliff High School Technology Program builds off of middle school learning, with our Principles of Engineering, Advanced Principles of Engineering, Introduction to Programming, AP Computer Science A, and AP Computer Science Principles courses. The curriculum is designed to promote technological and information literacy as well as critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills necessary to compete in our ever-changing global and digital economy. This year, we earned the College Board AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award for expanding access to female students and moving towards more equal gender representation.

Our Library Media Center is open throughout the day, providing a supportive atmosphere for students to study, research, and receive technology support. We house a collection of over 11,000 reference, fiction, non-fiction and e-book titles, as well as many databases to help with research. It is home to our Student and Teacher Assistance in Technology (STAT) team, talented technicians who support the school community with all-things technology. In addition to the adult staff, students can earn credit as Apple Certified Mac and/or Student Help Desk Technicians, assisting with laptop preparation, distribution, and troubleshooting solutions for students, faculty, and staff as part of our one-to-one device program.

Briarcliff High School offers students a variety of co-curricular activities designed to engage students with a wide range of interests, including the performing and visual arts, literature, math, law, politics/government, debate, human rights, leadership and culture. All clubs are student-led with the support of a faculty advisor.

3. Academic Supports:

Briarcliff High School customizes instruction to meet the needs of all students through unique, proactive measures supplied through Response to Intervention (RTI), Academic Intervention Supports (AIS), and Special Education (SPED) programs and offerings.

Our RTI team, comprised of our nurse, social worker, psychologist, counselors, teachers and administrators, meets weekly to discuss student referrals. Student performance data, including academic/attendance records, as well as clinical feedback, is used to progress-monitor and develop/assess intervention plans. Students performing below grade level are referred by members of the teaching staff, the counseling staff, or parents/guardians. They may also be referred due to social/emotional or attendance concerns. Tier 1 interventions occur in each classroom prior to referrals.

SPED students may access fully integrated co-taught (ICT) classes in all core content areas as well as consultant teacher (CT) direct and indirect support. A daily resource center is offered to all students.

Algebra I Common Core and Regents Living Environment courses are offered over two academic years, affording students a comprehensive experience at a modified pace. Each SPED student is assigned a case manager teacher who monitors their Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals and overall academic progress and ongoing needs. Student work samples are used to illustrate growth and substantiate achievement of (IEP) goals. A dedicated testing center ensures student accommodations are met. Teaching assistants support identified students in core content and elective classes. Building level resources, including our math and writing labs, offer additional support. It is common for our SPED students performing above grade level to enroll in rigorous (honors, college, and Advanced Placement) courses throughout their high school experience. Teachers recognize specific aptitudes and discuss recommendations for acceleration.

A broad range of support services are available to our special populations including individual/group speech and language services, individual/group counseling, and occupational therapy. A full-time (K-12) English Language Learner teacher provides academic and emotional support to students who have immigrated to our country as they transition to a new language and culture.

As with RTI, students may be referred to the Committee on Special Education (CSE) by members of the teaching staff, the counseling staff, or parents/guardians. Referral to the CSE may include intellectual and achievement testing, classroom and/or behavioral observations as well as any specific concerns in the area of speech/language, fine/sensory and gross motor. The school psychologist or district learning specialists can assess academic achievement in specific areas as well. After the evaluation is complete, the CSE reviews the results and makes any formal intervention recommendations; student need must meet eligibility criteria under the thirteen disability classifications provided by New York State. Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals are progress-monitored quarterly, and data is provided to the guardians/parents. IEPs are reviewed at least annually to determine continued need and to reassess goals and the level of programming. Each identified student's overall program and disability classification is reviewed every three years with a triennial evaluation, assessing all areas of development.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Motivating and providing students with a positive environment to support their learning and social-emotional growth are among our top priorities at Briarcliff High School. While many of our strategies have been longstanding, the COVID-19 pandemic has challenged us to adapt and create new means of engagement. We know our students, faculty and staff thrive in an environment of social connectedness and in-person instruction. With a reliance on science and a strong emphasis on safety, we opened the doors of BHS in September with a hybrid learning model, beginning with four days of student orientation, with each student coming to school with a smaller cohort for a full-day session. Although orientation is typically reserved for freshmen, we understood that a safe reopening would require full compliance with our protocols, beginning with extensive explanations for students regarding their new routines. Sessions included time for administrators and counselors to listen to students and carefully address their questions and concerns.

Our RTI team recognized that certain students would function best by attending in-person classes daily. We identified our highest needs students - those with SPED needs, emotional fragility, dual enrollment in BHS and our BOCES Career and Technical Education programs, as well as those with daily nutritional needs met by NYS Free and Reduced Meal Program. We reached out to parents and students with information regarding the benefit of daily attendance and registered students accordingly. We have continued to monitor attendance, academic progress, and the emotional barometer of students, reviewing referrals for daily in-person instruction as they arise while maintaining health and safety guidelines.

To ensure that students are feeling emotionally safe and ready to learn, we have been surveying all students quarterly, starting with a digital questionnaire sent out during our orientation in September. Students were asked to complete a confidential questionnaire, with assurances that only the counseling and clinical staff would see their responses. The clinicians then reviewed responses and reached out to any student who expressed a vulnerability and was not already appropriately supported either inside or outside of school. Students were given the opportunity to identify a specific faculty member with whom they wished to connect. With an appreciation for the ever-changing emotional landscape of adolescents, we have continued to survey students quarterly, monitoring student wellness and identifying students in need.

While the first year of high school can be challenging under normal circumstances, it is all the more difficult during a pandemic. Our Student Assistance Counselor has taken pro-active steps to make ninth graders feel more connected to each other and to school. In addition to the annual Newcomers Group for students new to the District, weekly virtual Positive Influencer classes are provided. Students learn about healthy relationships, coping skills, substance abuse and healthy choices. Peer leaders in the upper grades volunteer to assist with the classes to lend their perspectives, with the goal of nurturing as many Positive Influencers as possible in the BHS community.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Part of what makes Briarcliff so special is the strong partnerships we have with our parents and community partners. The Briarcliff PTA enriches the education of our students, strengthens collaboration between teachers and parents, and fosters school/community spirit. The PTA funds inspiring programs such as speakers, assemblies (including school-wide virtual programs during COVID-19), wellness initiatives, grants for Science Research, Engineering, the High School Newspaper, STEM materials, the Wellness Center and AED Trainers for CPR. For our students who qualify for NYS Free and Reduced Meal Program, the PTA subsidizes SAT/ACT preparation courses and tuition for our dual-enrollment, college-credit bearing courses, such that access is ensured for all, regardless of income.

Similarly, the Briarcliff Manor Education Foundation (BMEF) strives to enhance educational opportunities for students through the financial support of programs, resources, and professional development for teachers. One of our most recent BMEF grants funded an upgrade to the Health and Fitness Center with new

equipment to better serve physical education students, student-athletes, and coaches. Yet another funded the purchase of Vernier interfaces and sensors for the use in science labs and classrooms. The equipment has become an integral part of the Physics and Earth Science curricula. Likewise, the Briarcliff Friends of the Arts (BFA) works to promote and expand visual and performing arts opportunities for students with funding for field trips to Broadway and the NY Philharmonic, as well as our annual Art Salon.

The New York State Compact for Learning states that "members of the community help children gain maturity and responsibility by affording them opportunities for service." Our community service mandate requiring a minimum of eight service hours per year, provides opportunities for students to explore and develop career possibilities, discover relevance to school learning, and cultivate community connections and a sense of "giving back." During the pandemic, our students have continued to find creative and safe ways to volunteer, including letter writing to our local senior citizens and virtual tutoring to our elementary and middle school students.

Our guidance counselors and clinicians have continued to be critical in our efforts to engage parent participation and communication, offering the full array of parent workshops and presentations in virtual venues in light of COVID-19. We have had strong parent participation at our WebEx presentations, including "Senior Information Night," "Financial Aid Night," "Freshmen Parent Orientation Night," "Junior Parent Information Night," as well as our monthly "Conversations with Counselors," interactive workshops in which topics ranging from course selection to the transition to college are explored.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

In March 2020, it was clear that COVID-19 was a force with which to be reckoned. No one could have ever envisioned students being taught remotely for 4 months and re-opening in a hybrid environment, divided into cohorts due to a lack of space, staff, and health regulations.

Nonetheless, the Briarcliff Technology Department partnered with the Professional Development Committee to plan a thorough series of intensive professional development workshops to prepare faculty, staff, and administration to effectively "hit the ground running" without "skipping a beat" to deliver remote instruction from March 13th until June 26th, 2020 consistently and successfully.

During Summer 2020, we continued to assess technology platforms and planned for a hybrid model of in-person and remote learners. Teachers were offered a professional development program titled: 30 Days of Creativity: New Ways to Show Creativity. They were also surveyed regarding program usefulness, changes in curriculum planning, and suggestions for future professional development topics based on their experiences and expertise. Faculty input proved to be invaluable, shaping our agendas for monthly professional development days going forward. In addition, faculty members offered mini courses to colleagues to share vital teaching strategies in our "new normal". An "Assessment Think Tank" series provided teachers with methodologies to incorporate Microsoft Forms, OneNote, and Dyknow, and Garage Band into assessments to ensure academic integrity and maximize student engagement.

Incorporating the complex issues of social justice into the curriculum was paramount to our return to school as well. One example of this was our "Teaching Social Justice Through Art," a highly subscribed seminar taught by our art faculty, highlighting four artists who bridged the divisions between cultures and offered a platform for social change. Creating an awareness of these artists provided resources for teachers in a variety of content areas such that they could embed issues such as immigration and environment into their lesson designs.

Lastly, it has been imperative for the administration to maintain an active pulse on the emotional well-being of our students, faculty, and staff. The Professional Development Committee utilized our skilled clinicians to supply concrete tools to approach the stress and uncertainty in our school community. Strategies have included creating periods of screen-free and calm, engaging attention in normal daily activities, exercise, sharing laughter and humor, and, most importantly, emphasizing acceptance of what cannot be controlled at the present time. Above all, we are always looking to be responsive to the faculty's professional needs such that they feel valued professionally and personally.

4. School Leadership:

At Briarcliff High School, the immediate building level leadership team consists of one principal, two assistant principals and 11 department coordinators, representing each content area. As a result of the high athletic participation, the Athletic Director plays a significant role at the high school level, as does the Nurse. Our Director of Pupil Services and Superintendent are physically located off-campus but are extremely visible and engaged in building issues. There is much autonomy, mutual respect, and professional camaraderie among the highly experienced Briarcliff High School administrators and the District Office leaders. Our high school administrative team philosophy is built upon a sense of caring, learning by listening, and visibility, as well as an emphasis on serving as approachable, authentic, and honest role models. We strive to model these dispositions whether we are working with students, parents, or faculty.

The Briarcliff High School re-opening plan, organization, and implementation tapped every member of the administration to be ready for opening day. The Athletic Director researched and ordered necessary Covid-19 signage to be displayed throughout the school to ensure faculty, staff, and students were reminded of our collective responsibilities to abide by health and safety regulations: “Watch your distance; Wash your hands; Wear a Mask.” Department Coordinators arranged for technology training sessions for their respective departments to ensure competency in the use of available software and hardware. Orientation programs for each grade level cohort were communicated via WebEx, email and hard copy to Briarcliff families in advance of re-opening by the building level administration. Every aspect of our new normal school life was explained to all stakeholders to ensure confidence in our plan, continue to educate our students, and provide a safe environment for our students, faculty, and staff.

The administration has been determined to ensure a safe environment for our students by greeting them every morning as they arrive at school. This process takes place either as they arrive by bus or car, checking temperatures, delivering lunches to classrooms, covering classes, checking in on our fragile students, ensuring our free and reduced lunch students have their morning meals, and seeing them off at the end of the day.

There is little division of duties among the Briarcliff Administrative Team, whether living in a Covid-19 world or otherwise. It is understood that all administrative members must be able to deliver, and address planned and unplanned circumstances honestly and flexibly.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Briarcliff High School has found itself in a historic moment, one that encompasses issues of race, equity, and inclusion. In response to our current events and their intersection with individual experiences, many Briarcliff students and community members have come forward to share their perspectives with the high school administration. They have also expressed hope that the District would meet this moment by taking stock of the ways in which we, as a microcosm, reflect the broader world, and look for ways to create a school community that more deeply lives out the values of equity and diversity.

Inspired by this thoughtful challenge, a district-wide Equity and Diversity Coordinator was created and subsequently filled by two chairpersons: one of the high school assistant principals and the high school social worker. In an effort to ensure equity, cultural awareness, and retrospect in the classroom and throughout campus, we have enlisted the help of Dr. Bryant T. Marks, Founding Director and Principal Trainer for the National Training Institute on Race & Equity. This past February, Dr. Marks began Implicit (Unconscious) Bias Awareness and Mitigation Training for all faculty and staff district-wide, tailored to the unique needs of our community.

In addition, we have partnered with the University of Albany to begin offering a course in the 2021-2022 school year titled, “Classism, Racism and Sexism”. In this college-level course, students will explore the social turbulence in our country stemming from a long legacy of systemic

racism, sexism, and classism. With course planning underway for next year, we have already seen excitement from our students who are eager to delve into these critical topics in the classroom.

While students await participation in this course, they have taken time to create a presentation for our annual Martin Luther King Jr. celebration. This year's theme was "Keeping the Dream," bringing the experiences of marginalized racial and religious groups to the forefront of student thought. To create a space for conversations centered around cultural awareness, Briarcliff High School has embraced a student-governed club entitled, "Keepers of the Dream". The "Keepers of the Dream" coalition is a Westchester County organization that gives a forum for students to discuss a variety of social issues that arise within our society. Briarcliff High School students have become active participants within this group and have created their own Briarcliff chapter that focuses on issues at Briarcliff High School.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The Briarcliff School District has made significant investments in digital technologies and infrastructure and has been a fully operational 1:1 district since 2016. With this, students and staff are accustomed to digital resources and virtual platforms associated with remote learning. Although no virtual platform can fully capture the power of in-person instruction with a capable and caring teacher, Microsoft® TEAMS does provide the District with a secure, easy to use, and reliable platform for remote learning when necessary.

High School students are provided with a personalized 1:1 device, a Mac Book Pro, for use at home and while in school. All teachers have been provided with a laptop and an iPad for instructional purposes. Professional Development is provided for faculty and support staff who may be new to required technologies, digital resources, and platforms. Families who cannot afford home internet have been provided with an internet “hot spot” free of charge. Technical support is provided to students/families who have connectivity trouble or problems accessing their classes or school resources. All school classrooms, offices and shared areas have been equipped with sufficient broad band internet access for active student and faculty use.

When Briarcliff introduced the 1:1 device initiative, the District offered extensive professional development to teachers to adapt their tech-infused classrooms and cultivate innovative lesson designs. The goal was for classrooms to be more reflective of the world in which students will live and work. With our vastly digitized world, it is critical for students to become information-literate and collaborative. Teachers facilitate individual and group-based work rather than teaching exclusively through lectures. Students are able to develop executive functioning skills when the content relates to the IDE philosophy of a "felt need". Briarcliff High School teachers have developed strategies to give students more ownership over mastering the content and crafting lessons based on authentic problems which students may encounter in their lives.