

U.S. Department of Education
2022 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 151 T Street Northeast
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Washington State DC Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 20002-1519

County District Of Columbia

Telephone (202) 281-3950 Fax _____

Web site/URL https://www.mckinleytech.org E-mail kortni.stafford@k12.dc.gov

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Dr Lewis Ferebee E-mail lewis.ferebee@k12.dc.gov
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Columbia Public School District Tel. (202) 442-5885

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

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 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 2016 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 or 2021.
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. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s nomination and/or rescind a school’s award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

12. 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.

The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the current school year (2021-2022) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools. For charter schools: If a charter school is part of the public school system, information should be provided for the public school district. If a charter school is considered its own district or part of a charter district, the information provided should reflect that.)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 63 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 14 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 15 High schools
 - 25 K-12 schools
- 117 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. **Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not for 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 in the school as of October 1, 2021 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	111	92	203
10	78	87	165
11	67	95	162
12 or higher	66	88	154
Total Students	322	362	684

*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):
- 0.1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0.1 % Asian
 - 85 % Black or African American
 - 12 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0.1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 2 % White
 - 0.7 % 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 2020 - 2021 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, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	0
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	1
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	1
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	704
(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):

Amharic, Spanish, French, Mandarin

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 100 %

Total number students who qualify: 684

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 8 %
53 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 with an IEP or 504 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>1</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>5</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>8</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 9
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	4
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	51
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	2
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	0
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	16

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 22:1

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

Required Information	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	89%	93%	95%	91%	91%
High school graduation rate	98%	98%	95%	96%	96%

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 2021.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	155
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	80%
Enrolled in a community college	7%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	3%
Found employment	2%
Joined the military or other public service	2%
Other	6%

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

Yes X No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2012

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

McKinley Technology High School's vision is to redefine STEM education by creating life-long learners who are leaders in the ever-changing and connected world. Our mission is to be a premier STEM high school that provides a nurturing environment where school and community stakeholders empower all students to graduate as ethical, global citizens prepared for college and careers.

16. Provide a URL link to or text of the school’s nondiscrimination policy.

https://www.mckinleytech.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=417339&type=d&termREC_ID=&pREC_ID=983092

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

McKinley Technology High School is an application public STEM based high school in Washington, DC. Students can apply to attend McKinley Technology High School through the DCPS lottery. There are, however, specific requirements for students to be considered for enrollment at our school. Our goal with our application process is to attract students who have a vested interest in STEM, the robust curricula, and the comprehensive extracurricular offerings of McKinley Tech. For the 2022-2023 school year, the admissions guidelines request students who apply to hold a recommended 3.0 GPA and demonstrate strong performance in math, English, and science. Additionally, students must obtain three recommendations from an administrator or counselor and their English and math teachers, complete a student interest survey, and construct short essay responses on the application. The top applicants are then invited to a group interview and to complete an in-person writing sample. After completing this portion, students are either marked eligible or invited for a final interview. Once a final list is compiled students are notified via the MySchoolDC Lottery regarding eligibility for enrollment.

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

McKinley Technology High School is a community built on developing well-rounded STEM leaders. It is an honor and a joy that our school community comprises ninety-eight percent Black and Brown students who will be prepared to thrive in the workforce and STEM careers where people of color have been historically excluded.

As a selective magnet school, our community is comprised of families from across the district who come to McKinley not only for our rigorous, college-preparatory curriculum but also for our robust extracurricular experiences and opportunities. We pride ourselves on creating a school community that fosters not only STEM leaders but one that offers a comprehensive school experience. Here, our curricula and experiences spark creativity and holistic growth as students explore their many talents and interests. Our students can not only earn industry certification in biotechnology, but they can also become scholars of Advanced Placement (AP) Art, compete as district champions of the basketball team, and catch up with the Manga club during lunch. Our athletes compete as members of one of twenty-two different sports teams. Our student clubs lead the school news, build, and maintain school gardens, are the reigning champions of regional electric vehicle competitions, read and discuss books with award-winning authors, serve as both mentors and mentees through various social and mental health-empowerment groups, compete in chess matches, build rockets, as well as hang out to share a common love of video games. Our school is made of top-notch scholars who can foster their many interests at McKinley Tech.

Our three wall-to-wall National Academy Foundation (NAF) Academies, introduced by Principal Dr. Louise Jones, provide students with highly specialized experience in Information Technology, Engineering, Digital Media, Computer Science, or Biotechnology that comes to life outside of school the classroom through vast internship opportunities. All three academies have earned the highest distinction designations from NAF – a testament to their success and value. One of the core experiences of McKinley Tech students is that they are required to complete an internship that yields real-world work experience related to their STEM interests. Students have had internship opportunities at renowned companies and institutions such as National Children’s Hospital, SiriusXM, the Smithsonian, Accenture, and the American Biotechnology Association. This is a keystone component of our educational experience: here is where our curricula are made accurate and relevant to students’ lives. In this way, we are not only building successful high school scholars but creating permanent pipelines to successful STEM careers. Partnerships, such as those with Howard University, Georgetown University, and George Washington University, ensure that our most talented students continue to be challenged with college-level coursework and accreditation.

An exceptionally talented group of educators leads McKinley. We have staff who are deeply committed to the mission and values of McKinley. As a result, we have a primarily veteran team who are innovative, driven, and dedicated to helping students realize their potential. Many faculty have received terminal degrees in their disciplines. Each department at our school has a teacher who has served as a district course chair, leading curriculum, and professional development across the district. Further, our teachers are professionals, consistently receiving national certifications and recognition. Our social studies department is home to the 2019 Gilder Lehrman National History Teacher of the Year.

We see our students as growing people and use frequent community circles in all classrooms and among the staff members to establish trust and camaraderie and implement the principles of Restorative Justice to guide students back into our community when necessary. Our students explicitly investigate and discuss issues of racial injustice and inequity. Every class starts with a unit specifically designed to address racial inequality through the lens of that content area. Through book studies and discussion groups, staff discuss the impacts of systemic injustices and implicit biases. We were collectively challenged to examine and revise our practices and policies considering this work.

Our 2012 National Blue-Ribbon designation validated our school’s achievement and helped us continue to recruit top students from across the district. As we continued to attract top talent, we did not maintain our academic standards: we raised them. Our diploma requirements changed to include requiring all students to take at least two Advanced Placements courses and five math courses to complement the demands of our

STEM focus.

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged us to become nimbler as a school community: self-guided engineering kits went home, virtual band tutorials, robotics instruction went online, but ultimately, the demands of virtual education meant that now, technology is a tool for creation, rather than simply a mode of submission. 1:1 device for all students means that data is collected and responded to in real-time through platforms such as Nearpod and Formative.

Our scholars succeed at the high school level and beyond. Even during the global pandemic, we maintained over a 95% graduation rate which we have held for the past five years. Four students received scholarships from the POSSE Foundation in the past three years, and from the class of 2020 alone, 60 students were offered full-tuition scholarships. Our alumna is pharmacists, lawyers, electrical engineers, chief digital officers, computer scientists, entrepreneurs, politicians, and are leaders in communities across the country.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas:

Our staff profoundly believes in the potential of each student at McKinley Technology High School. That profound belief in the limitless potential of each student guides the rigorous, rich academic experience in each classroom at McKinley Tech. The heartbeat of our school community is our STEM NAF Academies: Biotechnology, Information Technology, and Engineering. Students self-select their STEM area of interest and engage in robust, project-based learning, culminating with a capstone student-led project and industry certification exams.

Guided by the Essential Practices of Effective Instruction in DCPS, McKinley fosters authentic, deep engagement in a challenging student-centered environment. We value experiences that center on student inquiry and discussion as a learning community. In daily instruction, the learning experience is designed to maximize time for students to grapple with content rather than passively absorb material through teacher-led education. Multiple disciplines, such as the science and social studies departments, use the 5E inquiry-based lesson template to drive the student-driven investigation.

For the past five years, we have centered our standard instructional practices around two key areas: developing sound writers and using Robert Marzano’s levels of questioning. Our Writing Across the Curriculum initiative tasks students with constructing extended written responses in all courses multiple times per quarter using standard writing templates. The year after implementing this school-wide initiative, our PARCC scores rose from 41% to 69% in ELA and 19% to 22% of students achieving advanced or proficient. During professional development sessions and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), teachers norm grading these assessments and determine ways to cater to instruction to meet students’ demonstrated needs.

Our assessment initiative requires all teachers to offer formative assessments using all tiers of Marzano’s levels of questioning. Professional development was provided at the Learning Science Marzano’s Institute to enhance teachers’ questioning techniques. This way, instructional strategies would better mirror the challenging ways we assess students’ understanding and provide the teacher with continuous feedback on student progress.

1b. Reading/English language arts curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The English department uses a thematic approach to foster engagement with varied voices in literary and informational texts. The overarching aim is for students to grapple with the significant questions about the human experience embedded within all texts. Also, teachers at McKinley empower students with the lifelong skills of approaching all texts with a critical lens, conducting initial analysis, and drawing conclusions about texts, using critical analysis and interpretation.

While DCPS provides a curriculum framework, teachers enhance the prescribed curriculum and intentionally select culturally relevant works representing diverse perspectives. Our course offerings reflect the values of rigor and diverse authorship: From African, Asian, and Native American, to Latinx writers, our teachers address cultural diversity equitably by providing access to the remake of the literary canon. AP Language and AP Literature and Composition serve as the guideposts for the department— skills are vertically aligned to these course requirements across all levels of the department. Our students have access to the Multicultural Literature elective course, a space to celebrate culturally relevant texts. All courses offer a high level of rigor but with appropriate scaffolds so that students have the necessary tools to access these college-level skills effectively.

The English department recognizes that students must find their literary voice to write effectively. This

instructional approach ranges from small, collaborative group work that is a component of every lesson to larger Paideia or Socratic Seminars. The common thread is that our English instruction remains grounded in soliciting and cultivating students' voices both orally and in writing.

Over the past five years, our English team has engaged in a deep study of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), unpacking the skills and sub-skills embedded in each standard. Critical skills emphasized across grade levels include the ability to draw inferences, cite solid textual evidence, analyze the development of a central theme or characters, and evaluate the authors' craft. The tenth-grade team utilized released PARCC items and relevant questions stemming from designing classroom formative assessments. These teachers analyzed released students' responses to norm grading expectations and mastered the requirements of each type of PARCC essay. After the teachers started this targeted work and our Writing Across the School Initiative began, we saw a 28% increase in our English-Language Arts PARCC scores. These successes continued in our upper grades: the AP Language scores went from 51% in 2017, 59% in 2018, to 65% in 2019—the last year of in-person instruction. Similarly, the AP Literature scores increased from 18% in 2017 and 2018 to 73% in 2019.

Teachers continually assess the students' mastery and adjust their instruction based on analysis of benchmark ANet (Achievement Network) assessments and "Required Curricular Tasks" from the district. Reading Inventory (RI) is offered to students at multiple points in the school year to assess and respond to student needs. Notably, our most recent RI scores show that 86% of our students are reading at grade level, which is especially impressive since this is the first full year of in-person instruction in two years.

1c. Mathematics curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Our math team follows the DCPS curriculum expectations utilizing the Eureka math curriculum and the Common Core Standards. This curriculum spirals specific mathematical year over year, introduces multiple methodologies for problem-solving, and, most importantly, challenges students to apply mathematical principles to real-world scenarios following the Common Core State Standards. This real-world application is reinforced with our in-school Marzano's assessment initiative, which challenges students to rigorous cognitive tasks. Writing Across the Curriculum Initiative is also rooted in real-world problem-solving. Mathematical pedagogy supports success on these assessments by placing a strong emphasis on student-led explanations and "math discourse." Because teachers consistently ask students to justify their responses orally and in writing, our students are comfortable explaining their answers utilizing proper mathematical terminology.

Our math team regularly assesses the efficacy of their work through data dives of our teacher-created formative assessments and district and national benchmark assessments, namely the ANet assessment. In their professional learning community (PLC), teachers analyze these benchmark assessments to inform reteaching opportunities and respond to student needs. Our district-mandated estimates, known as Required Curricular Tasks (RCTs), are often based on previously released PARCC problems. The ANet assessments are particularly informative as these are "cold" assessments -- they have not been reviewed by students or the teacher—thus serving as a rigorous, authentic assessment of student mastery.

One of the foundational components of the academic experience at McKinley Tech is that all students are required to take five math courses, thus providing a solid mathematical foundation for a future STEM career. All students will complete Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Pre-calculus, and either Calculus or Statistics during their high school years. The decision to exceed the DCPS requirement of four math credits came about because our talented students needed a challenge at all levels of their high school experience, especially those who enter high school with Algebra I credit. Additionally, calculus is a prerequisite expectation for the top-engineering schools to which many of our students apply.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, our teachers and scholars mastered online platforms, such as Delta Math and Nearpod, that continue to inform instruction with real-time data. Further, many math instructions have adopted a "flipped classroom" model where students watch short video tutorials in advance of new lessons so that class time is spent tackling more rigorous application problems.

1d. Science curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

McKinley Tech science teachers take the familiar and make it strange. The lessons, rooted in Next Generation Science Standards, are designed to generate student curiosity about the world around them. In short, we start with phenomena and work backward. For example, instead of explaining phenomena and tasking students with a lab to validate them, students in McKinley Tech physics work the other way around. This sparks interest and encourages the students to explain the phenomena and construct models to describe them. Afterward, teachers debrief the students and help consolidate their understanding.

The biology team, for example, restructured the district's curriculum so that students examine biological phenomena through thematic storylines. Rather than sequentially marching through, for example, units of organelles and cellular respiration, teams start with a big idea, such as melanin, to spark students' curiosity. Students then explore this topic from the many lenses of biology, such as genetics and biochemistry, revisiting interconnected ideas throughout the year.

The science team's pedagogy is based on having students engage in scientists' messy, complex work: examining data from which trends are not immediately apparent, conducting experiments, drawing conclusions, and defending those assertions with sound evidence. Often labs culminate in writing assignments, known as Claim-Evidence-Reasoning (CER) responses, where students formalize their findings, make claims, and support them with evidence from their gathered data, which is then explained with reasoning based on scientific principles.

Keeping phenomena and scientific practice at the forefront is the heart of the McKinley Science curriculum. Teachers use blended learning, Marzano levels of questioning, phenomena-motivated assessment and activities, and constructivist approaches where students are agents in building their understanding and rigorously analyzing their models. The chemistry team, for example, encourages students to express their experiences in mathematical or theoretical format to promote and support all learners

1e. Social studies/history/civic learning curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

McKinley's social studies department builds critical thinkers, readers, and writers who see themselves as active and empowered global citizens. McKinley uses the DCPS curriculum as the basis of our work, but not the ceiling. Five of our six teachers have created DCPS curriculum based on the Common Core Standards and the NCSS (National Council for the Social Studies) College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Social Students Framework. Both sets of standards emphasize students' critical thinking, evaluation of evidence, and encouraging students to take informed action in their communities. This means that students do not simply march through history chronologically, memorizing key facts. Instead, they are presented with essential questions about timeless historical debates that they are tasked to answer.

The social studies curriculum develops sound analytical and argumentative writing skills. The team has been instrumental in developing and implementing our writing across the curriculum initiatives. While the team does use districtwide Required Curricular Tasks (RCTs) to assess student learning, common unit assessments and our more rigorous writing assignments are the primary way the team analyzes progress and informs instruction.

Students are not passive recipients of social studies education; they are active historians and social scientists. They wrestle with primary sources, hearing directly from and interpreting voices from the past. They analyze data sets, evaluate biases, and are called to defend their conclusions using valid, credible sources, often through extended research assignments. Rich, meaningful discussions allow student voice to drive analysis and carry out the cognitive work. Students are encouraged to see history as a debate and one they can participate in through their analysis and interpretation. In the words of a McKinley alum, students leave their social studies experience with the ability to ask probing questions, interpret, and evaluate media, and create independent arguments.

Social studies classes are safe spaces for students; areas where their opinions are actively solicited and encouraged; spaces where they feel safe to ask questions; spaces where identities and cultures are vigorously

celebrated; and spaces where students see themselves reflected in the discussions because historical explorations move beyond standards to include the perspectives of many voices and disenfranchised people. This team leads celebrations of Black History Month, Hispanic History Month, and International Week, specifically to appreciate and uplift all identities within and beyond our community.

The department is comprised of an exceptionally talented group of educators: we are home to the 2018 Rubenstein Highly Effective Teacher recipient, the 2019 National History Teacher of the Year, as awarded by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, and one teacher is currently serving on the College Board committee to create the AP African American History course.

1f. For secondary schools:

To ensure our students are college and career-ready, McKinley Tech provides a rigorous academic program that teaches advanced STEM skills and research in Information Technology, Engineering, and Biotechnology. Teachers and staff alike also work to strengthen our scholars' problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills, and advanced communication skills. McKinley Tech continues to examine and adjust our curriculum and classes to best support and prepare our students for the next part of their academic careers. For example, our NAF Academy Biotechnology program was added in the last two years. Our Dual Enrollment program partners with local colleges and universities in Washington, DC, to allow our students to earn college credit in tandem with earning their high school diploma. Students also work closely with McKinley Tech counselors and the College & Career Manager to focus on college research, internship preparation, and life skills post-high school.

In addition to college and career opportunities, McKinley Tech exposes students to different career opportunities by incorporating an internship component into our school curriculum. With On-Ramps to Careers, McKinley Tech collaborates with this organization to prepare, interview, and place students in various internships throughout the district and DMV with Accenture, AT&T, The U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Microsoft, Georgetown University, and Environmental Defense Fund, etc.

A top priority at McKinley Tech is to prepare all scholars for college and their careers with a goal of one-hundred percent college acceptance and a high college retention rate. We are also committed to promoting self-respect and social responsibility daily with each of our scholars. McKinley Tech prides itself on providing students with as many options as possible. The staff ensures our scholars become critical thinkers that can learn, apply said skills, and be the next generation of highly respected leaders and doers.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Students must complete one music and one arts course to receive a McKinley diploma. These courses are available to all students. McKinley students may choose between visual and performing arts with courses including General Music, Beginning and Advanced Band, Art, AP 2-D Art and Design, and AP Drawing.

As a STEM school, our art instructor works hard to show students how artistic thinking and skills reflect the same kind of creativity required by scientists or engineers tackling new projects and problems. Students build a solid technical foundation across many different artistic mediums and are frequently invited to create art that expresses personal interests or beliefs. We hope to show students that their art can be a means of self-expression that can build connections and spark change.

Students do not simply play or consume music in our music department: they are creators and performers. Our music teacher designed the curriculum of General Music specifically so that students go beyond the fundamental components of music and can create and perform their original music, such as creating their own musical scores for a movie scene.

Seven years ago, there were seven students in the Advanced Band. Just before the quarantine began in March 2020, there were thirty-four students. This growth is attributed to the work of our band director and her commitment to building a student-centered band. She willingly works through her lunchtime so that she can provide sectionals to provide personalized time for instrumental families to work on individualized skills. After nearly two years when playing music as a group was not possible, the primary goal of our music department is for students to enjoy making music together.

Once an after-school club and now a course offering for all grades, our theatre program has a particularly enthusiastic and devoted group of participants. Superficially, the theater program builds college and career readiness by carefully cultivating public speaking and presentation skills. More importantly, theater students develop creative thinking through performances, presentations, and analyses. This creativity reinforces and expands their analytical skills to consider and even assume other perspectives, just as they do when they take the role of a particular character. The theater program has had a tremendous social-emotional impact on our student body, providing, as described by a student, a safe space for more introverted students to express themselves and forge connections with like-minded peers.

McKinley students must complete one credit of physical education and one credit of health education. Health Education, Physical Education, and Body Conditioning courses are available to all students. The goal of these courses is to help students hone healthy habits to support their lifelong physical, sexual, and mental health.

In physical education, students participate in team sports, but the instructional emphasis is placed on fitness activities, such as Zumba or step-aerobics. These activities minimize barriers to entry and better equip students to make fitness a lifelong routine. During the pandemic, this long-term focus was amplified: virtual exercise sessions became family affairs for many, with parents and siblings joining the activities. Health courses similarly empower students to understand lifelong nutritional, mental, safe sexual habits. Students receive a comprehensive, inclusive sexual education, which promotes sexual health for all, regardless of sexual or gender identity. During this pandemic, mental health concerns have exponentially increased, and the need to support our students has made this a vital component of the health curriculum. Students learn about mental health, coping skills, warning signs in themselves and others, and, importantly, how to get help.

McKinley students must earn three foreign language credits from the same language. Students from all grade levels may choose between Spanish and Mandarin. Interested students can also take on the challenge of AP Spanish Language and Culture. Students gain reading, writing, and oral proficiency in a language as well as build cultural empathy and appreciation. Instructional time is spent celebrating the diversity within, for example, the Hispanic culture, helping students understand that all cultures are not monolithic. Our students leave their language experience with not only language proficiency, but a stronger sense of their place in the global community.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Before it became a district-wide mandate, McKinley Tech engaged in a deep study of the Multi-Tiered Student Support system to implement these principles at all grade levels. The Instructional Coach and the administration researched best practices and developed a school-specific system to implement MTSS practice through each grade level team, supervised by an MTSS coordinator. Our goal was to create specific protocols to identify students in need- be it academic, attendance, or social-emotional needs - and systematically provide tailored support for those students. The team created a manual of research-based interventions that can be implemented to support students, depending on their needs.

In preparation for the weekly grade-level meeting, the MTSS coordinator aggregates all relevant data on student performance and identifies students in need. Teachers, social workers, counselors, and administrators collaboratively discuss needs and interventions for the student, tracked in our Panorama data system. Students are also assigned an adult “champion,” who serves as a designated support person for this

student. After a set period, these interventions are revisited and reviewed with students and families. Our mental health and student support team are critical components of this process, reflecting our belief that academic performance can be the product of many different factors. In addition to these procedures, if any student is in danger of failing a course, teachers and students collaboratively create a Student-Success plan that details specific steps they need to take to raise their grade. Parents receive a copy of this plan to ensure we are working in close collaboration with our families.

We also utilize our Reading Inventory data to target students performing below grade level in reading comprehension. Classroom teachers use this information for classroom-level differentiation, but we also have, when necessary, offered a Read 180 course to students who need a higher level of support.

McKinley has also utilized our ESSR funds to create several high-impact tutoring opportunities for students who need support. Four days a week, students can attend “Power Hour,” where they receive content-specific support from teachers across content areas. We have partnered with several tutoring organizations to provide students with online tutoring opportunities.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

We need to offer experiences that challenge all students at all grade levels with our particularly motivated student body. It is important to note that opportunities often reserved for high-performing students are open and accessible to all students at McKinley Tech. Our norm is to offer above-grade-level opportunities to any student willing to take on the challenge.

We offer thirteen Advanced Placement (AP) courses available to students from 9-12th grade as a school. Additionally, we offer honors courses in the sciences, math, and English departments. For our most motivated scholars, students can enroll in the Early College Program and take classes at local universities, such as Georgetown, Howard, Trinity, American, and George Washington University.

3c. Special education:

One point of pride at our school is that students receiving 504 and IEP accommodations are offered all the same opportunities, held to the exact expectations, and, with their accommodations met, find success at all levels, including in our most challenging AP and STEM courses. This success is the triumphant, consistent collaboration between our special education teachers and the general education staff. Time is dedicated weekly in grade-level meetings to discuss the evolving needs of students receiving 504 and IEP accommodations, and teachers advocate quickly when a student needs additional support. By centering these students’ capacities and needs in weekly meetings, the staff collectively ensures we are upholding 504 and IEP accommodations with fidelity. Collaboration between teachers and the special education department means that pull-out time is minimized because content teachers are empowered to provide the necessary support. When services are effectively offered within the classroom, students can stay with content teachers for more extended periods, thus maximizing instructional experience and time with peers.

Empowered to create their schedules, Special Education (SpEd) teachers have flexibility, which means support is better catered to individual student needs and can be modified throughout the semester. Teachers, for example, can be strategic about when to meet with students when pull-out services are necessary, rather than the common practice of always pulling students consistently from electives – classes in which students may excel or enjoy. Here, students can receive services at varying times with a schedule that can be quickly revised to suit the student’s needs.

The uniform nature of our Writing Across the Curriculum Initiative has been particularly beneficial for our IEP and 504 students. With standard writing templates, the structure and organization remain consistent across grade levels and content areas. This allows the special education team to concentrate on interventions and support in targeted ways, using everyday language and expectations to build stronger writers.

3d. English Language Learners, if a special program or intervention is offered:

Our ELL students are directly supported by a dedicated ELL teacher who collaborates with each grade-level team. The ELL teacher has a standalone class specifically designed to help early students in their language acquisition process. The ELL teacher organizes specific language goals based on their proficiency scores and demonstrated classroom needs in this dedicated space. The WIDA assessment helps inform some of the baseline instructional needs, but the teacher builds a plan specific to each student's need, targeting literacy skills and vocabulary acquisition. Before launching the course, the ELL teacher engaged in a deep study of the Common Core Literacy Standards Instruction to target specific subskills and align content to grade-level standards. The teacher builds the curriculum from the classroom assignments so that support is relevant and practical for students.

Outside of offering needed academic support, the ELL teacher has worked to create a classroom community that serves as a safe, supportive space for some of our most vulnerable students. They do not have legal documentation or that they are newly arrived in this country. Further, the ELL teacher works hard to create strong connections with our students' families, emphasizing that they should consider her a point of contact for all student needs. All DCPS employees access a language hotline, creating three-way calls for families and translators. The ELL teacher has been a strong advocate for this resource, recognizing that the quality of communication with our families exponentially increases when we work to engage families in a language that they understand and can communicate in comfortably. The ELL teacher is actively working to deepen these connections by translating the weekly newsletter into the two primary languages spoken by our students' families.

The number of students who exit ELL services each year has increased, primarily attributed to the high-level collaboration between classroom teachers and the ELL teacher. Support does not depend exclusively on the standalone ELL class or pull-out services. Fundamental Tier 1 supports, such as sentence frames, small intentional groupings, and targeted vocabulary instruction, are components of many teachers' classrooms, which, in turn, support our ELL students' goals.

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

At McKinley, we have a social worker designated as the Families and Youth in Transition Liaison, responsible for supporting students and their families in housing transition. This individual works with the Office of the State Superintendent of Education to provide a wide variety of support services for students experiencing homelessness or whose housing situations are unstable. The liaison provides discreet support in uniform assistance, food resources, eyeglasses, school supplies, and other support as it becomes available. Families are eligible for help until the end of the school year they have secured stable housing. Our liaison has expanded the scope of her role to include visiting these families, soliciting, and personally delivering outside food donations, and even starting an in-school Thanksgiving drive to provide families with a Thanksgiving meal.

These students and families are initially identified through our enrollment process and requests/referrals at any time during the school year or summer. All social work team members attend grade-level meetings specifically to help identify students needing such support.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Student engagement and satisfaction are at the heart of everything we do. We love our students and embed mechanisms in and out of school to facilitate their physical, mental, and emotional health.

Our school actively engages in Restorative Practices and community-building circles to develop students' ability to self-manage and empathize with others. This initiative promotes a loving and focused school culture. Post-pandemic, we saw a need for additional student support. Our Climate and Culture team implemented the "Phoenix Hotline," where students can request permission related to safety, conflicts, bullying, basic needs, academics, social-emotional support, etc. When a student's actions have harmed a community member, we use the principles and practices of Restorative Justice Circles to ensure our focus is positive and forward-thinking rather than strictly punitive. Through structured and inclusive conversations, parties collectively determine the necessary steps to repair the harm and resolve the issue.

We routinely celebrate our highly motivated students for a wide range of academic achievements and demonstrations of character. Our quarterly honor roll assemblies celebrate academic achievements and impressive demonstrations of nature, such as the "Perseverance Award." Through a partnership with the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association (AFECEA) DC Chapter and Mark Zelinger Family, nominated McKinley students are honored with semi-annual cash awards for strong character and academic commitment demonstrations. We are enthusiastic participants in College Signing Day, where we joyfully celebrate each of our scholars and their college enrollment in an exciting celebration with our families. Our weekly newsletters recognize the importance of small, personalized affirmations, including "shoutouts" for each grade level, to recognize and appreciate the daily accomplishments of our scholars.

Student leadership and voice must drive our wider school community. At McKinley, our student government serves as key advocates, organizers of events, and liaisons to administration. A developing project is to empower Student Advisory Ambassadors to deepen communication channels between students and administration and to continue our priority of elevating the student voice in our shared leadership model.

Our robust extra-curricular activities support students' interests and needs, expanding our positive community outside the classrooms. Robotics, Global Kids, Chess Club, Art Club, Garden Club, and Book Club are just a small sample of ways our students build connections with one another. Through a recent fellowship with City Bridge Education, a team of staff members received and distributed small grants to several clubs and groups specifically to bolster students' sense of belonging and leadership. Students also have access to many organizations specifically designed to meet their social, emotional, and developmental needs, such as the Best Friends Foundation, which supports the physical and emotional well-being of adolescents, and the MOST (Men of Strength) Club, which supports explicitly young men in the development of healthy identities and relationships.

With over a third of our student population involved in sports, our athletic program is central to our wider school environment. We hope to build overall leaders through our athletic programs that exemplify McKinley's values on and off the field. Unlike many magnet schools, our sports program is competitive and successful, with loyal fans from within and outside of our school community. These athletic achievements are all met by students who have some of the highest GPAs in the city. Our increasing athletic success and camaraderie among our teams have led to increased participation in athletics and, in turn, a greater sense of pride in our school community.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Engaging our families and community represents an essential component of our students' success. Trusted, consistent communication is at the core of building strong relationships with our families. Each grade-level team sends out a weekly newsletter to families providing critical classroom updates, opportunities, and celebrations for our students. These emails serve as a window into the daily life of our students and school

community. We use multiple social media platforms to provide real-time updates and reminders to our families. We work to ensure that families feel connected and well informed. Our families have constant access to their students' instructional experience and performance through our schoolwide use of digital platforms such as Canvas and ASPEN.

During the pandemic and virtual learning, our staff was assigned a group of students to connect via phone, email, and through home visits. Remaining connected to our students and families in the initial stages of the learning from home transition aided our students' ability to adapt to the many changes and allowed parents to be reassured that their students' needs were continually met.

We have had multiple cohorts of faculty members participate in fellowships with the Flamboyant Foundation, which seeks to build authentic relationships with families, mainly through home visits. This work expanded to a phone bank outreach campaign for families who do not speak English as the primary language at home to address equity and engagement better. This initiative increased family participation in many school-wide events. During the pandemic, we shifted to virtual parent-teacher conferences. This year, we offer it to families based on positive feedback, leading to our highest number of parent-teacher meetings.

Our Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) works together with our school to support the school's academic progress and build our school community. Families can further their engagement through the Local School Advisory Team (LSAT), a team of parents, teachers, non-instructional staff, and community members who advise the administration directly on essential school matters. The PTO and LSAT collectively provide critical input for school improvement plans, budgeting, and fundraising. Our active alumni organization offers scholarships, holds fundraisers, and even sponsors events throughout the school year – a testament to their long-term sense of community. Our non-profit and business partnerships keep McKinley Tech connected to the city and across the DMV. Our internship requirement for student graduation has created a long-standing pipeline for McKinley Tech to build a strong network of business-to-business partnerships for our students.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Teachers are the backbone of our school. Recognizing this, McKinley has created a collaborative, professional culture where teachers feel valued and supported.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, transitioning to distance learning required teachers to hone new skills and master new technological platforms. Our instructional coach held weekly professional learning sessions to introduce teachers to new platforms and supplemented these sessions with individualized support. Expert teachers trained others in applications such as Canvas, Teams, and Nearpod. We recorded and reviewed one another's virtual lessons in weekly meetings, specifically celebrating ways different teachers solicited student engagement. While challenging, virtual learning did make peer observations significantly more feasible. In this way, an unexpected consequence of our virtual experience was that many colleagues got to see and learn from one another, often, outside of one's own content area. Overall, the pandemic taught us that we can thrive in a hybrid professional learning community and have permanently adopted new tools and methods for sharing knowledge.

Providing opportunities for teachers to shine during professional development creates a culture of collaboration and value. We have received the most positive feedback from our staff when our days are comprised of choice sessions led by our staff members themselves. We, too, appreciate the value of learning from national experts and providing content-specific learning opportunities. For example, our entire English department was sent to the 2019 national conference of National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE) to stay abreast of best instructional practices and to learn from their colleagues. Our health and physical education teachers will be attending the 2022 National Society for Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE) Conference. We have also hosted sessions with nationally recognized organizations, such as the Learning Science Marzano's Center and International Institute of Restorative Justice. Experiences with these professional organizations can continue to challenge our more veteran teachers who are vocal about their desires to grow and develop in their practice. Moreover, paying for and offering support for these experiences helps validate our teachers as professionals in their fields.

All DCPS schools have embraced the Learning together to Advance our Practice (LEAP) professional development model. Within this model, teachers and other professional staff are supported through one-to-one coaching, content partner and grade level professional learning communities. Our school model is aligned with the DCPS charge to educate the whole-child through a lens of anti-racism. During this school year, we collaborated with admin, teachers, support staff and district content experts to create a professional development plan with the aim of increasing academic achievement, shared leadership, student and family engagement, and improving our school culture.

Our robust professional learning community consists of an iterative cycle of improvement. Teachers serve as leaders and learners in our weekly collaborative meetings. Teachers bring a problem of practice or lessons for peer feedback, and we utilized research-based tools like Lesson Tuning Protocol to support growth in our practice. There is deep analysis within and across teams to ensure units and lessons are not only aligned to Common Core Standards, but our STEM and NAF priorities.

On a daily level, our administration also provides opportunities for our instructional coach to offer 1:1 and small group instruction regarding teacher-selected self-identified areas of need, ensuring teacher needs are met.

Finally, our teachers sit on elected committees, such as School Chapter Advisory Committee (SCAC) and the Personnel Committee, where they collaborate directly with administration to solve school concerns and make direct recommendations for hiring new staff.

4. School Leadership:

The McKinley High School leadership is comprised of one Principal and two Assistant Principals. Our philosophy of leadership is centered on a symbiotic relationship built on trust, learning, and growth amongst colleagues. We believe “the nature of relationships among the adults within a school has a greater influence on the character and quality of that school and on student accomplishment than anything else” (Barth, 2006, p. 8). In essence, we believe that if teachers, coaches, support staff and administrators collaborate and support the growth of one another, both the rigor of instruction and the learning of our students will improve. Each member of the leadership team believes our students will have better opportunities when the adults are communicating together and operating as a community and not as separate islands. Knowing the rigorous work of a school leader, the principal often seeks ways to include all stakeholders in the decision-making for the school. For example, the Academic Leadership Team (ALT) supports the making of the Comprehensive School Plan for the upcoming school year. There are four domains that make up this document and must include guiding data points to support the school-wide initiatives (Shared Leadership, Engagement, Culture of Achievement, and Academics). This work is divided amongst stakeholders to create shared ownership, vision, and goals for our school. The Local School Advisory Team (LSAT) provides input and feedback to the principal. During the creation of the school budget, the LSAT collaborates with the principal to address the school needs to create a budget that is inclusive of all students’ and staffing needs. Through these two groups, students, parents, teachers, and staff are well versed in the values of the school, as well as the academic goals and are key decision makers.

The roles of the leadership team remain fluid as there are many unforeseen responsibilities that may arise throughout the school year. However, over the past few years our focus has shifted from academics to developing the whole child. For example, we have focused our work on the social emotional well-being of students and staff through community building circles, using our advisory class to build relationships with students and helping them to feel connected, teachers incorporating Unit 0, which supports socio-emotional learning at the beginning of each semester. We take ownership as the leaders of the building and espouse the goals and aspirations of the mission and vision.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

McKinley has long been committed to recognizing, appreciating, and celebrating one of its key strengths: the diversity of our students, families, and staff. We are the third-ranked application school in DCPS and we

are particularly attuned to and serve the needs of our majority Black and Brown student population. As a school community, we work to ensure that all parts of our community are welcoming and affirming for all students in ways that extend beyond even DCPS' required policies. This work is evident in all our practices. It affects everything we do: from the authors we read, the language we use, the policies we make, the professional development we hold, to the pictures we display. All our students must see themselves represented and celebrated in our work. The entirety of this response is captured across our application because culturally responsive teaching and learning live within the day-to-day work of every part of our building.

Much of our collective diversity, equity, and inclusion work is grounded in Restorative Practices through the International Institute for Restorative Practices. Introduced by an assistant principal five years ago, staff received training on the principles of restorative dialogues and the power of building community both amongst staff and students using structured community circles. We have not shied away from discussing challenging or unsettling current events, providing structured forums for student discussion in all homerooms. Through the community circles held within each class every quarter, we provide spaces for students to engage in rich conversations, often rooted in cultural awareness and equity themes. The circles also serve as an opportunity for students to respond to current events and social movements. We prioritized social-emotional well-being for students and staff well before the pandemic made this necessary.

As a staff, we are reflective of our own experiences and perspectives as they relate to work as culturally responsive educators. Staff members have participated in robust implicit bias training through the National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity. Our Wednesday morning staff development time is entirely dedicated to our socio-emotional and equity goals. We completed a school-wide book study of *We Want to Do More Than Survive* by acclaimed author Dr. Benita Love to increase awareness of our implicit biases and share tools for overcoming these challenges. This book study made our staff more comfortable having critical conversations about racism and our Black and Brown students' challenges living in America. Much as we do for academic data, we examine social-emotional survey data from our students, specifically looking at differences in the responses for different sub-groups and addressing potential inequities in their school experience.

Our student body itself is invested in this work. We have an active Gay-Straight Alliance led by the 2015 GLSEN 2015 Educator of the Year, personally responsible for writing the district-wide policy for LGBTQ inclusion and embedded inclusive curriculum.

Students and families need to be seen, recognized, and appreciated at all levels of their school experience, and we are committed to making this a daily reality for our community.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

At McKinley Tech, our NAF Academies take the abstraction of much of the classroom curriculum and make it relevant and authentic. Their learning becomes genuine and applicable through their STEM courses and their corresponding real-world experience in their internships. That tangible, authentic experience drives our students' success in high school, college, and careers.

We do not simply expose students to STEM content: we empower students to do it. The entire biotechnology curriculum is designed to precisely mimic the experience of a research lab, complete with the same equipment used by the professionals in the field. Biotechnology capstone projects are akin to a college-level dissertation. Students pose their research questions, then present their findings in a journal article format. Projects included work with aquaponics, designing PCR primers, and even testing mask efficiency – a project of immediate relevance and interest. This year, some students are even seeking to publish their work in academic journals. When students learned about the engineering design process, they created and made physical cubic puzzles using state-of-the-art multi-jet fusion 3D printing. Senior engineering students must independently identify a problem and craft a solution from concept to prototype. McKinley students have created fire suppression systems to minimize fires in electrical outlets. They have created mechanisms to utilize residual energy in batteries before they are discarded. We have a multi-year project that will orbit a satellite created in-house by McKinley Tech students. This activity is not hypothetical learning: these are real solutions to real problems.

Our partnerships provide invaluable depth to our in-school curriculum. All academies regularly host guest speakers. These professionals inform students about career pathways that may be unfamiliar to them and build personal connections with our students. Through the required internships, students are empowered to experience a career. Our IT students created a website and a phone application for Verizon to help bridge the gap between customers and their ability to communicate and collaborate on networks. Biotech students have shadowed medical professionals through our work with Children's National Hospital. Through the NAF Academies, McKinley students can take credentialing exams to get immediate industry validation, thus making them more competitive for campus work-study jobs and future careers. The Biotechnician Assistant Credentialing Exam (BACE) for biotechnology, for example, includes a practical section where students must perform skills in front of an evaluator, validating their expertise and job readiness. Our instruction must prepare students for this level of mastery. These internships and industry certifications have laid the foundation for permanent career paths for our students.

Through these experiences, we are changing how our students receive education and how they learn; they will not settle for a passive, rote education. When they graduate from McKinley, they, as leaders, will seek relevant and authentic experiences that enable them to impact the world around them.