

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 [X] Charter [] Magnet[X] Choice

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

Official School Name DC Preparatory Academy Benning Elementary Campus
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 100 41st St Northeast
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Washington State DC Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 20019-3308

County District Of Columbia

Telephone (202) 398-2838 Fax (202) 398-2839

Web site/URL https://www.dcrep.org E-mail development@dcrep.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* Ms. Laura Maestas E-mail lmaestas@dcrep.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name DC Preparatory Academy Tel. (202) 635-4590

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. Patrick Clowney
(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):
- 3 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 3 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 6 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	67	84	151
K	35	39	74
1	41	35	76
2	39	32	71
3	35	41	76
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	217	231	448

*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
 - 0 % Asian
 - 90.4 % Black or African American
 - 4.9 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 0 % White
 - 4.7 % 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	6
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	6
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	469
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1

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

Spanish, French

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

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

Total number students who qualify: 448

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 9 %
41 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>5</u> Autism | <u>3</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>9</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>7</u> Developmental Delay | <u>4</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>12</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</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: 1
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	5
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	30
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	5
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	13
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

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 15:1

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	81%	92%	92%	92%	92%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2021.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
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.

DC Prep's mission is to bridge the educational divide in Washington, DC by increasing the number of students from underserved communities with the academic preparation and personal character to succeed in competitive high schools and colleges. We believe in social-emotional development that supports academic engagement and pro-social interactions within a school community, and put social-emotional development at the core of our culture for students and staff.

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

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Sch49dExORrtImGS2PIRc4Yo2yg3vtTO/view>

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

DC Prep participates in My School DC, a common application for nearly all DC-based public schools.

The My School DC lottery is a computerized program designed to match students with the schools they want most and maximize the number of students who are matched.

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

DC Prep’s Benning Elementary Campus (BEC) is located in Ward 7—historically one of the city’s most underserved wards. Settled by Black residents following the Civil War, the neighborhood BEC is located in what eventually came to be known as Benning Heights, named after early landowner William Benning, who helped finance the wooden bridge across the Anacostia River. After World War II, the area became a densely populated suburb. In the 2000s-2010s, reports commissioned by both former Mayors Adrian Fenty and Vincent Gray recommended closing low-performing schools throughout DC. Those reports found that while the DC system had more than enough seats for students, there were not nearly enough seats in high-performing schools. A study called this imbalance a "service gap," and found that the gap is worst in Wards 7, 8, and 5. During this time, DC Prep operated an elementary school and a middle school in Ward 5, which served a number of Ward 7 and 8 residents. To achieve its mission of bridging the educational divide in DC, DC Prep opened BEC in 2008 and has since been one of the highest performing elementary schools in Ward 7.

Our two most important strategies are utilizing the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Framework and the Response to Intervention (RTI) Model, through a multi-tiered system of supports.

In using the UDL Framework, we consider these guidelines in supporting our students: (1) Representation: offering students multiple media from which to learn content; (2) Action and Expression: offering students various opportunities to demonstrate what they know and can do; and (3) Support and Engagement: offering options that engage students and keep their interests. This is fundamental to the way we think about and plan each lesson, including the one-on-one learning experiences we have with students in student coaching conversations. Ensuring that we know each student and their interests, their preferred methods for accessing and demonstrating learning, and that we offer various options to access information, is the work of every educator in our school. Attending to the individuality of each student and customizing the learning experience accordingly keeps the focus on students first and that emphasizes explicitly and implicitly the value we place in who they are as learners in our community. Matching our learning experiences to student interests and preferences also helps students better access the content and engage which supports their development toward strong self-regulation, comprehension, and executive functioning: the habits of students who are most independent and self-driven.

Research suggests—and we have witnessed—that students who develop strong social-emotional skills have stronger academic achievement and fewer behavioral support needs outside of a positive and productive school culture. All students and staff engage in ongoing reflection and practice of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) skills. These are taught explicitly in lessons during Advisory, as well as through independent tasks called Prep Work. Students’ development in these skills is then applied throughout the school day when teachers make explicit and implicit connections to the use of these skills while engaging in academic content learning.

Advisory, typically part of the first block of the school day, allows students to explore identity and how their identity and self-awareness impact how they show up in their school community. Prep Work gives students an opportunity to reflect on how, when and where they use their Core Prep Competencies and the impact these skills have on how they navigate school and the world. Once students have done some self-work, they have various opportunities to share and reflect with classmates. Staff engage in parallel work with their students and with their colleagues. Developing a connected classroom community by deeply knowing one another promotes inclusivity in classrooms and helps ensure that all students, regardless of special populations status or label, receive what they need both academically and socio-emotionally.

We use a multi-tiered system of supports to support all of our students. Teachers collect, input, and review data for each of their students on an ongoing basis to measure growth and identify needs. When a need is identified, the teacher begins leveraging informal in-class supports for the student and observes progress over 4-6 weeks. Team members across the grade level use designated professional development to discuss student strengths and areas for growth and generate a student support plan. If more support is needed, a group of leaders will meet to problem-solve and coordinate next steps via our Student Support Team. In rare

instances where a student does not show consistent progress as a result of interventions, the Student Support Team recommends the student for an evaluation to determine if any additional needs are present. The Special Education Coordinator manages all next steps.

In Spring 2021, teachers who opted in provided in-person, small-group enrichment on Wednesday afternoons. These enrichment offerings targeted academic or social-emotional needs at teachers' discretion and were optional for both staff and students. Teachers were empowered to shape their enrichment offering based on their students' needs and interests. This helped prepare our students for a smoother return to in-person instruction beginning in Fall 2021.

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:

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

Our Academic Program is designed to support all students and uses the Response to Intervention (RTI) model. In the RTI model, a program is designed using three Tiers such that each tier provides an additional layer of intervention and support for students driven by data. Our Tiers are aimed at preventing reading and math difficulties and supporting students to grow as readers, writers, and mathematicians.

Our Tier One program, curriculum, and classroom instruction is our core programming, and aimed at supporting all students in accessing the Early Childhood (Pre-S and Pre-K) or Common Core State Standards (Kindergarten-8th grade). Our Tier One includes benchmark assessments, summative and formative assessments, high-quality instruction using a common curriculum, and intervention daily through differentiation, scaffolding, flexible grouping, pre- and re-teaching, feedback, and instructional supports.

Our Tier Two is supplemental and strategic instruction in addition to the core time allotted to all students in reading and math. It includes programs, strategies, and approaches designed and employed to supplement, enhance, and support our Tier One. Our Tier Two typically happens in small groups, and instruction is systematic and explicit with opportunities for students to practice, engage and receive feedback in order to grow. The groups are progress-monitored so that we are able to assess student progress.

Our Tier Three programming is intensive, strategic, and supplemental instruction specifically designed and customized for homogenous small groups in reading or math extended beyond the time allocated for Tier One and Tier Two. Tier Three instruction is typically longer in duration than Tier Two small groups and typically uses evidence-based programs and strategic assessment to understand student growth and progress.

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

DC Prep Benning Elementary Campus's ELA curriculum is aligned to the Common Core State Standards and has been vetted by multiple external stakeholders to ensure the curriculum is challenging and engaging for students. DC Prep views the curriculum as the floor, not the ceiling, so that teachers can take the curriculum and make it their own and are able to respond to the needs of their students while also holding a high bar for learning. The ELA curriculum is built using rigorous text and culminating in unit assessments centered on domains of learning. Instruction is designed to build both knowledge and students' ability to make meaning and analyze the craft and structure of those texts through reading, writing, and discussion. The Scope and Sequence and units ensure that grade-level standards are covered in depth, while also ensuring that units build on one another and cover all grade level standards over the course of the year.

All students are assessed using an individual reading level assessment designed by Fountas and Pinnell (F&P) and an individual assessment of their word-solving and language skill using Dibels. The F&P assessment provides teachers with specific information about the instructional and independent reading levels for all students in order to inform flexible reading group structure and skills focus and to identify the targeted areas of needed instruction. Dibels provides teachers with targeted data and information to support students learning to read and decode words. We also use the NWEA Assessment to measure student growth in Reading from spring to spring for students in kindergarten through 2nd grade. We administer Achievement Network (ANET) ELA Interim assessments 3-4 times a year to 2nd- and 3rd-grade students. Our teachers analyze ANET data during quarterly Data Days in order to determine student strengths, gaps, and misconceptions related to specific genres and/or standards that were explicitly taught prior to ANET. Teachers use this data to inform intentional reteach and response to the data. In the spring of the academic year, all 3rd grade students take the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers

(PARCC), a tool used to measure student achievement in Reading and Math in all schools in DC. We find that students' ANET proficiency correlates with proficiency rates on the PARCC exams.

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

DC Prep Benning Elementary Campus's Math curriculum is aligned to the Common Core State Standards and has been vetted by multiple external stakeholders to ensure the curriculum is challenging and engaging for students. DC Prep allows teachers to take the curriculum and make it their own so they are able to respond to the needs of their students while also holding a high bar for learning. The Math curriculum is built around constructivist style learning and units with culminating assessments. To facilitate math computational and procedural skills, students practice routine math concepts and develop their math fluency daily. The Scope and Sequence and units ensure that grade-level standards are covered in depth, while also ensuring that units build on one another and cover all grade level standards over the course of the year.

Math interim assessments are administered to all students in kindergarten through 3rd grade to identify needs in learning to develop and implement math intervention groups. NWEA MAP Math is used to measure student growth from spring to spring. Additionally, daily assessments are built into this time and teachers can determine what students have mastered and where additional instruction is needed. We administer Achievement Network (ANET) Math Interim assessments 3-4 times a year to 2nd- and 3rd-grade students. Our teachers analyze ANET data during quarterly Data Days in order to determine student strengths, gaps, and misconceptions related to specific genres and/or standards that were explicitly taught prior to ANET. Teachers use this data to inform intentional reteach and response to the data. In each spring of the academic year, all 3rd grade students take the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), a tool used to measure student achievement in Reading and Math in all schools in DC. We find that students' ANET proficiency correlates with proficiency rates on the PARCC exams.

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

Our science curriculum, which was designed internally at a time when very few externally-developed curricula existed, is based on Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Students begin Science in kindergarten, and instruction is provided according to the Response to Intervention (RTI) model detailed above.

Our Tier One, which is our core programming, includes benchmark assessments, summative and formative assessments, high-quality instruction using a common curriculum, and intervention daily through differentiation, scaffolding, flexible grouping, pre- and re-teaching, feedback, and instructional supports. Our Tier Two is supplemental and strategic instruction in addition to the core time allotted to all students. It includes programs, strategies, and approaches designed and employed to supplement, enhance, and support our Tier One. Our Tier Two typically happens in small groups, and instruction is systematic and explicit with opportunities for students to practice, engage and receive feedback in order to grow. The groups are progress-monitored so that we are able to assess student progress. Our Tier Three programming is intensive, strategic, and supplemental instruction specifically designed and customized for homogenous small groups extended beyond the time allocated for Tier One and Tier Two.

We use NGSS summative assessments to track progress.

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

While BEC does not offer social studies as a class, a foundational aspect of students' education is understanding their identities. As a predominantly African-American school based in Ward 7 in Washington, DC, BEC leaders find it very important for students to understand their worth despite what they may see outside of the school walls. For example, texts in ELA instruction feature predominantly characters of color. During Black History Month, students researched and gave speeches on both historic and local Black leaders, and Black excellence in popular culture was celebrated through events like Wakanda Day (referencing the movie "Black Panther"). During art lessons, classes shared and discussed African art from across the African continent.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

Our Early Childhood (EC) Program uses a rigorous and inclusive curriculum derived from the DC Early Learning Standards and scaffolding backwards from the kindergarten and 1st Grade Common Core Standards. The EC Program builds core skills and strategies for language development, reading comprehension, writing composition, number sense, mathematical concepts, and operations; it also provides content in Science, Art, Music, Physical Education, and Health. Core curriculum areas include foundational literacy, small groups/centers for literacy, read aloud, writing, centers, foundational math, small groups/centers for math, and social-emotional learning (SEL).

We have strong alignment between our EC and K-3 programming. Our EC Academic Principal, who coaches our EC teachers, works with our K-2 coaches for alignment in coaching our teachers and executing our programming. We convene twice a month, visiting and observing both EC and kindergarten classrooms and collaboratively debriefing effectiveness and alignment in our programming and how to best support teachers.

We also have strong alignment in our assessment approach: for ELA, we have aligned Junior (EC's assessment tool) with Fountas & Pinnell ("F&P", our assessment for kindergarten and above) to be able to compare data. Our PK and kindergarten teachers are trained on using data and information to support students growing as readers. We use a similar model of small group/guided reading instruction across grade levels, to ensure alignment of the program and how we assess and monitor growth. We do the same for math assessments, using Test of Early Mathematics Ability (TEMA) as our assessment tool for PK and internal interim assessments for kindergarten and above.

Our Early Childhood program is essential for success. We teach the habits and mindsets for students to thrive in school, we build joy and excitement for learning and collaboration, we build strong relationships with families, and we integrate SEL skills into everything, which builds towards our approach in upper grades.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Our other curriculum areas are Physical Education/Health and Art.

Physical Education/Health is offered to all grades. This is considered a "Specials" class – students take Specials classes on a quarterly basis, taking the class daily for one quarter and then switching to a new Specials subject for the next quarter. Our curriculum is based on the DC Health and Physical Education Standards and promotes physical health literacy.

Art, also considered a "Specials" class, is offered to all grades and taken on a quarterly basis. Our curriculum is based on the DC Arts Standards and supports the development of skills in creativity, innovation, critical thinking, and teamwork.

These classes provide opportunities for students to learn curricula other than the "basics" of Reading, Writing, and Math during the school day. The Specials teachers contribute to the school's overall reading and math goals by incorporating reading and math concepts in their content area through the use of curriculum maps, bulletin boards, and word walls.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

BEC provides a program of intensive academic support for students who enter school significantly below grade level or who have special learning needs, using the Student Support Process as a problem-solving approach to support individual student needs.

The Student Support Process generates strategies for comprehensive, classroom-based, student-centered interventions and determines whether or not a child should be referred for further evaluation based on data gathered throughout the Student Support Team (SST) process. The Student Support Process is as follows: First, teachers collect, input, and review data for each of their students on an ongoing basis to measure growth and identify needs. When a need is identified, the teacher begins leveraging informal in-class supports for the student and observes progress over 4-6 weeks. Team members across the grade level use designated professional development to discuss student strengths and areas for growth, and generate a student support plan. If more support is needed, a group of leaders will meet to problem-solve and coordinate next steps via our Student Support Team. In rare instances where a student does not show consistent progress as a result of interventions, the Student Support Team recommends the student for an evaluation to determine if any additional needs are present. The Special Education Coordinator manages all next steps.

Families are invited to contact the Special Education Coordinator if they believe their child may require specialized interventions or further evaluation to determine if a disability is present.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

We consider the skills we build and strengthen in students critical to their success and opportunities beyond their time at our school. For that reason, we work to ensure each of our students have sufficient access to a variety of learning experiences and the rigorous content provided. These differentiated experiences include teacher-assigned advanced lessons on academic technology (including Dreambox and Lexia) and advanced independent or small-group practice materials.

3c. Special education:

An integral part of our mission is to promote the inclusion of students with special needs in general education classrooms and activities to provide high-quality instruction to all students. Students with special needs learn alongside their peers in general education classrooms and receive Tier One programming, including benchmark assessments, summative and formative assessments, high-quality instruction using a common curriculum, and intervention daily through differentiation, scaffolding, flexible grouping, pre- and re-teaching, feedback, and instructional supports). Based on their Individualized Education Plan (IEP), they also receive further specialized instruction conducted by a Grade-Level Special Education Teacher, and related services. This can include Tier Two small group instruction and/or Tier Three intensive, strategic, and supplemental instruction customized for homogenous small groups, extended beyond the time allocated for Tier One and Tier Two. It can also include dedicated individual time with our Academic Specialist, Behavior Specialist, and/or our Licensed Professional Clinician.

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

ELL students receive English language instruction appropriate for their level of English language proficiency on a regularly scheduled basis. Speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills are emphasized at every level. All students learn vocabulary and structures which are practiced in situations appropriate to their English proficiency and grade level. Translations of key documents and essential correspondence related to student achievement, health, and security are provided to parents who communicate best in languages other than English.

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

DC Prep Benning Elementary Campus participates in the McKinney-Vento Act's Homeless Children and Youth Program and ensures that students experiencing homelessness receive full access to educational opportunities and services which help them to attend school. We have a campus Homeless Liaison, who is

available to offer help to students and families experiencing homelessness with enrollment, school meals, school supplies, uniform and transportation needs, and referrals to health, dental, and other appropriate services.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

The Universal Design for Learning Framework allows us to deeply know our students and therefore tailor our approach to meet their individual needs. Our use of the Response to Intervention Model allows us to support all of our students through a multi-tiered system of supports.

Our consistent data collection and analysis allow us to reliably track student progress and tailor instruction accordingly.

Our Tier 1 programming includes school-wide celebrations such as Black History Month celebrations, as well as initiatives sponsored by our Parent Action Team.

Starting the school day with Advisory allows students to connect meaningfully with their community, set up their space for learning, and practice their emotional intelligence skills (e.g., self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making), which are reinforced throughout the school day when teachers make implicit and explicit connections to the use of these skills while engaging in academic content learning.

Our principal also provides quarterly awards (“Principal’s Cabinet”) for students who are high-achieving on their academics, attendance, and community expectations.

During SY20-21 virtual learning, Benning Elementary Campus (BEC) took many steps to support students. Being virtual with students as young as 3 years old, BEC had to adapt to a new way of teaching to engage students and build a positive environment across the screen. One of the most impactful steps was creating pods of 12-15 students who were together throughout the day. The small group size allowed their teacher(s) to get to know students as learners and people more deeply. In addition, students started each morning with a community time block focused on building relationships across the pod, affirming each other’s identities, and spending individual time with their teacher. Students worked on building self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship skills through Prep Work, which consisted of identity and social reflections they then shared in weekly Circles. This structure supported pods to further connect and learn about each other. Teachers also connected individually with students to develop individual learning plans (ILPs), which consisted of goal-setting for SEL and academic focus areas that students want to work on. Together, students and teachers develop action plans to meet those goals and track progress along the way.

Academically, teachers used multiple platforms (Google Meet, Google Classroom, Reflex, Seesaw, and Nearpod) and strategies (wellness checks, virtual support plans, incentives, and small groups) to build engagement in class and differentiate instruction. Teachers were able to build strong relationships with families. Consistent communication and collaborative problem-solving allowed families to partner in supporting students' academic and SEL goals.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

DC Prep values families as essential partners and has committed to building a strong home-school partnership. Family involvement is directly correlated to academic performance.

BEC families regularly participate in the following opportunities for partnership:

*Being actively involved in their children’s academics. For example, working closely with their children to ensure homework is completed, and Prep Notes are signed nightly. -Attending Family-Student-Teacher Conferences and academic-focused events at school (e.g., Back to School Night, etc.).

*Communicate their concerns and/or other information that may affect their child’s school performance to

teachers and administrators.

*Participate in community-wide events, celebrations, and performances.

DC Prep also provides multiple formal and informal opportunities for families throughout the network to be involved in the life of the school including membership in the Parent Action Team (PAT) at each campus; community and elected official engagement; assisting with classroom, enrichment, and social activities that enhance and enrich DC Prep's school culture; and serving on the school's Board of Directors. Parent Action Teams (PATs) are parent-run organizations that exist to promote parental involvement. The PAT works collaboratively with faculty members to support the mission of the school. Membership is open to any family member of a DC Prep student, and teachers and administrators are also encouraged to join the PAT. The PAT is responsible for sponsoring school activities at their respective campus to promote a stronger home and school connection.

Examples of activities DC Prep staff and families have partnered on include:

* Working with several government organizations and the Benning and Minnesota Avenue DCPD offices to hold Safe Passage meetings

* Presenting to Ward 7 and Ward 8 DC Educational Councils to show how much money is lost by the lower amount of at-risk funding

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Our professional development culture and support for teachers consists of three main components: coaching, Wednesday professional development sessions, and Data Days.

Coaching is a hallmark of our work. Every year our coaching model evolves based on feedback from our teachers and coaches, research on best practices for coaching effectiveness, and our annual school plan. Our coaching emphasizes developing the mindsets, skills, and knowledge of our coaches to leverage the individual, relationships, and the adaptive work of coaching.

Coaches kick off the coaching relationship in August with a Contracting Conversation. They then spend time observing/live coaching in the classrooms and planning/practicing based on need. Teachers have a formal Coaching Interaction with their coach at least monthly, including stepbacks in October, December, March, and June.

We also partner with external organizations, such as Noble Story to help our coaches integrate adaptive work into their coaching sessions with teachers and Lavinia Group to provide personalized, high-impact coaching and development.

Every Wednesday afternoon, students are dismissed early (2:00 PM instead of 3:45 PM), and teachers engage in professional development sessions. Our Comprehensive Professional Development Calendar is planned in advance of the school year but is subject to adjustment and tailoring based on what needs arise as the school year continues. During the SY20-21 school year, students spent Wednesdays in asynchronous learning, while teachers engaged in day-long professional development. Teachers used this time to review Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) and other data to make informed decisions for planning for the rest of the school year, as well as preparing for the following school year.

Finally, BEC holds four Data Days per year to allow teachers and leaders to step back and analyze priority data points. All teachers participate in these day-long Data Day sessions each school year to analyze a cross section of academic and behavior data. Based on the data, which can be disaggregated by subgroup, subject, grade, and homeroom, as well as by question and by standard, the faculty evaluate progress toward student mastery of grade-level content, identify underlying misconceptions behind student errors, prioritize standards for re-teaching, develop action plans for student groupings, whole-class re-teaching, small group re-teaching, academic intervention class re-teaching, and individual student support. Implementation of

these action plans is discussed and monitored during weekly data conferences between teachers and their instructional coaches, with classroom support and follow-up provided by the instructional leadership team on an ongoing basis.

4. School Leadership:

BEC's academic and character education is led by DC Prep's central Academic Team, which spearheads school planning across the DC Prep network (including Benning Elementary Campus) and works with campus principals to identify needs and priorities and problem-solve accordingly.

BEC's leadership team follows a coaching leadership philosophy called our "principles approach," rooted in understanding each other's identity and following the cultural commitments for both adults and students. BEC's leadership model is based on the following priorities: culture, fidelity of program implementation, and coaching/talent development. The Community Assistant Principal (CAP) leads on ensuring all students are making academic and social-emotional progress through implementing the leadership team's culture vision, including strategy for behavioral support structures, family partnership, and culture programming. The Academic Assistant Principal (AAP), Early Childhood Assistant Principal (ECAP), and Special Education Coordinator (SEC) lead on ensuring fidelity of program implementation in their respective areas: the AAP manages ELA and math programming and the respective department chairs; the ECAP manages Early Childhood programming; and the SEC ensures the school provides appropriate Special Education services in the least restrictive environment for all students with disabilities. The Leadership Team meets quarterly (at minimum) to analyze student data, including behavioral metrics such as attendance and disciplinary issues, as well as external assessment data, unit assessment data, and standard-based grading. Based on this information, the Leadership Team plans the professional development that reflects instructional needs across grade bands and student groups, revising as needed through the school year.

DC Prep is committed to building strong teacher pathway development and cultivating school leaders from within, which is fostered through high-quality, personalized coaching. To this end, each of our teachers is coached by one member of the leadership team. Coaching assignments are determined based on the leader's subject-matter expertise. Cognia, our accrediting agency, recently lauded our integrated coaching/evaluation structure as successful and innovative.

All campus positions are evaluated regularly. Our Principal evaluation rubric, for example, assesses effectiveness against Habits of Leadership (Communication, Inspiration, Belief, Presence, Integrity, and Evidence-Based), Content Expertise (Content Knowledge, Coaching, Professional Development, and Program Evaluation), People Development (Selection, Clarity, Feedback, and Accountability), School Culture (Investment, Student Relationships, Family Relationships, and Sustaining Culture), Strategic Planning (Objectives, Follow-Through, Priorities, and Resilience), and Stewardship (Budget, Enrollment, Accuracy, Compliance, and Resources). Leaders complete self-assessments, which they then review with their supervisor.

In addition to ongoing informal opportunities soliciting feedback, BEC also distributes family surveys and student surveys at least three times during the school year to evaluate whether these important stakeholders believe the school's programs and priorities focus on holistic student achievement. Our strong relationships with families demonstrate their belief in our prioritization of their students' success.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion lives in everything we do in our school community. Inclusion is at the core. We celebrate and honor all students, families, staff, and their unique perspectives. We recognize the role racism has played in our society, including in our schools, and we work to take an anti-racist stance in our classrooms, schools and across our network.

Our use of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Framework enables us to ensure equity, cultural awareness, and respect in our classrooms and in our school. We ensure that we know each student and their interests, their preferred methods for accessing and demonstrating learning, and offer various options to

access information. It is the work of every educator in our schools. We attend to the individuality of each student and customize learning experiences accordingly to keep the focus on students first and emphasize explicitly and implicitly, the value we place on who they are as learners in our community.

In SY19-20, students and staff from both our Benning Elementary and Middle Campus organized a “Guns Down, Hearts Up” Block Party Against Gun Violence. The event featured testimonies, speeches, and performances from the Benning community, and was attended by the DC Police Department, Office of the Student Advocate, Far Southeast Family Strengthening Collaborative, and other local organizations. This event was profiled in the Washington Informer: <https://www.washingtoninformer.com/students-teachers-call-for-stronger-response-to-gun-violence/>

Over 90 percent of Benning Elementary Campus students and many Benning Elementary Campus staff identify as African American. While we celebrate Black culture throughout the year in our curriculum and ongoing programming, it is truly a joy to spend the entire month of February going “all out” to celebrate our staff and students’ heritage with so much pride and affirmation. This year, Benning Elementary Campus dove into Black History Month celebrations with a variety of events and initiatives, including African Attire Day, Black History Month Pride Tree, daily morning discussions of Black historical figures, and a summative Black History Month program and performance.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

We consider our Data Days to be the practice that is most instrumental to our success. DC Prep holds 3 to 4 Data Days per year in order to allow teachers and leaders to step back and analyze priority data points and standards that are assessed on Achievement Network (ANET) Interim exams and Fountas & Pinnell assessments to create reteach and small groups plans for future instruction. Data Days provide teachers consistent opportunities across the school year to engage with their data to respond to student needs by intentionally planning how to respond to and close academic gaps and ensure growth based on that analysis.

All teachers participate in these day-long Data Day sessions each school year to analyze a cross section of academic and behavior data. Based on the data, which can be disaggregated by subgroup, subject, grade, and homeroom, as well as by question and by standard, the faculty evaluate progress toward student mastery of grade-level content, identify underlying misconceptions behind student errors, prioritize standards for re-teaching, develop action plans for student groupings, whole-class re-teaching, small group re-teaching, academic intervention class re-teaching, and individual student support. Implementation of these action plans is discussed and monitored during weekly data conferences between teachers and their instructional coaches, with classroom support and follow-up provided by the instructional leadership team on an on-going basis.

Our data-driven approach has led DC Prep to be considered one of the top-performing charter school networks in DC for the past eight years.