

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name St Charles North High School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 255 Red Gate Road  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City St Charles State IL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 60175-6396

County Kane County

Telephone (331) 228-4400 Fax (331) 228-4401

Web site/URL https://north.d303.org E-mail shanna.lewis@d303.org

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\* Dr. Paul Gordon E-mail paul.gordon@d303.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name St Charles Community Unit School District 303 Tel. (331) 228-2000

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 Mrs. Heidi Fairgrieve  
(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**

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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

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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):
- 11 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 3 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 16 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	233	249	482
10	245	240	485
11	263	241	504
12 or higher	250	251	501
<b>Total Students</b>	991	981	1972

\*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):
- 0.3 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 7.4 % Asian
  - 1.8 % Black or African American
  - 11 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0.1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 76 % White
  - 3.4 % 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: 4%

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.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	32
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	41
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	73
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	1972
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.04
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	4

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

Spanish, Italian, Polish, German, Finnish, Pilipino (Tagalog), Arabic, Hindi, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Czech, Cantonese (Chinese), Thai, Portuguese, Swedish, Assyrian (Syriac, Aramaic), Cambodian (Khmer), Mandarin (Chinese) Ibo/Igbo, Urdu, Vietnamese, Russian, Gujarati, Slovak, Panjabi (Punjabi), Tulu, Malayalam, Indonesian, Lao, Telugu (Telegu) Akan (Fante, Asante, Twi), Amharic and Bosnian.

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 10 %

Total number students who qualify: 192

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 16 %  
316 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>52</u> Autism                  | <u>9</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                 | <u>4</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness           | <u>128</u> Other Health Impaired               |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay      | <u>143</u> Specific Learning Disability        |
| <u>66</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>11</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>7</u> Hearing Impairment       | <u>2</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>24</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: 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.

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	9
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	118
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	21
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	14
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	14

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 16:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	96%	95%	93%	93%	94%
High school graduation rate	97%	96%	97%	98%	97%

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.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	499
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	69%
Enrolled in a community college	13%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	2%
Found employment	2%
Joined the military or other public service	1%
Other	13%

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. 2010

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

A community dedicated to achievement and growth through discovery, cooperation, preparation, and inspiration.

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

[https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/?b=st\\_charles\\_303](https://www.boardpolicyonline.com/?b=st_charles_303)

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

## **PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW**

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St. Charles North High School is a school comprised of about 210 staff members and 1,943 students, with most of our students coming to us from Thompson Middle School. A smaller number of our students come to us from Wredling Middle School, and another 45 students attended a private school prior to enrolling at St. Charles North.

The school’s mission statement, “A community dedicated to achievement and growth through discovery, cooperation, preparation and inspiration” guides us with developing the whole student. The instructional expectations, standardized test performance, academic offerings and co-curricular offerings align not only with the school’s philosophy but also with their belief that all students belong and can be successful.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) have been a priority for St. Charles North High School since its early years. Each teacher belongs to a course/content PLC that allows our staff to agree to norms that guide our courses and assessments. The PLCs meet at least once a week to define essential learnings as the foundation of lesson development and create assessments and interventions. Teachers, whether general education or special education, are intentional about working collaboratively to group students to meet their individualized learning and social-emotional needs. Prior to Spring 2020, students were able to access support during the school day through in-school and out-of-school tutorials, study groups and test preparation. Additionally, some students were able to receive mentoring support through a guided study hall, Applied Studies. Outside the school day, students were able to access weekly peer tutoring and SAT preparation. This changed during the Spring of 2020 and the teachers readjusted, providing scheduled small group or individualized breakout sessions to provide additional support as needed. The staff also implemented virtual peer tutoring and writing assistance to students. Once the school year returned to in-person for the Fall of 2021, most supports were able to resume their traditional function, with slight modifications due to social distancing guidelines and educating students who had not previously experienced these opportunities in the high school setting. This continues to be an area we are revitalizing to aid in supporting our students’ academic achievement.

Our students can access a comprehensive collection of courses that offer a clear sequence in each content area, allow for industry credentials, and for challenge by choice. If a student has a desire and interest to take a course, even if they have never taken a course at the honors or AP (Advanced Placement) level (or in a specific content area), they are encouraged to explore and experience these opportunities. For example, St. Charles North High School offers a unique program called Project Synergy. It is through this program that students can take engineering courses, leading to a 150-hour internship experience in their desired field. Beyond this program, students can also participate in business internships, dual credit opportunities, pre-apprenticeship opportunities (at an off-campus site), and business ownership through courses such as InCubator.

Beyond the classroom, students can enhance their high school experience through co-curricular activities. Our student-initiated clubs and organizations focus on personal interest, community service, leadership, content enrichment, and athletics. The visual and performing arts, along with the applied arts, have clubs that can expand their knowledge in automotive technology, engineering, art, and family and consumer science. Special Interest clubs allow students to explore and experience activities that are unique to them, such as Chess Club, Team Polaris, and Mock Trial. Community Service and Leadership are two primary areas of focus for most of our student body through organizations such as Key Club, National Honor Society and Student Council. Each year students seek out new opportunities that adjust with student interest. Finally, our athletic program is quite extensive and includes multiple traditional sports, along with the unusual, such as Bass Fishing. Regardless of a student’s interest, St. Charles North High School has a wide range of opportunities for students to be involved and explore their interests and talents.

Over the course of the past twenty-four months, the St. Charles North High School Community has banded together to meet the academic and social emotional needs of all its students. Not only were adjustments made instructionally by addressing essential standards, but teachers were creative in how to instruct students in art, culinary, autos and woods classes. Parents and students were consistently stopping by to pick up



materials for their students at home. The staff pivoted when the master schedule was adjusted multiple times to accommodate for personalized teaching spaces or to try and find ways to support students with tutorial needs. New technology was purchased to provide teachers with the tools to teach remotely and even though they were not familiar with many of the tools, they adapted. Flexibility and the ability to pivot on a dime were always key to the success of the teachers and students at St. Charles North, before and during the pandemic, and it will continue to be who we are as a community.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.**

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

There are three components to our school’s academic success: its programming philosophy, its commitment to following curricular standards, and its frequent use of formative and summative assessments to determine the need for instructional changes. St. Charles North subscribes to the practice of “Challenge by Choice” in regards to academic programming. Each student, with guidance from teachers, counselors, and data, are allowed the opportunity to choose their own learning pathways. This philosophical belief drives our programming.

Areas of study, by department, when determined by the district, come together as Curriculum Development Teams (CDT’s) to audit and realign course standards within their departments. Starting from AP or capstone level courses, staff vertically articulate standards and skills to ensure that instructional programming follows a linear and fluid sequence. Outcomes from this work are then used, across the district, as the template for all instruction in that area of study. From there, course PLCs use these learning standards to design common units of study and assessments. Tools, like Schoology, give teachers the ability to enter data on their common assessments to track trends in student responses. This summative data, along with common formative data points, are used at the building PLC level to analyze instructional effectiveness and student learning.

Assessment data is used regularly by PLCs, along with qualitative student data, to determine the value of their instructional practices and curricular resources. As a team, teacher members of PLCs work together to identify problems, research and enact solutions and determine that solution’s level of success to continually push the envelope of their instructional effectiveness. They also celebrate successes, and when appropriate, take calculated risks. Although each area of study has its own set of tasks to accomplish, their plans are all developed in the same way and all align to our school’s mission. Below are specific explanations of each learning area’s curricular approach.

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

The English Department offers a comprehensive curriculum. It allows for a wide range of offerings, from differentiating reading skills, to furthering writing skills, to challenging students with AP and Dual Credit courses. In the classroom, whether a special education, team-taught or honors level class, the teachers integrate reading, writing, and speaking skills to further build upon their students’ prior knowledge, rather than compartmentalizing the skills. Currently we are in a curriculum revision process and based upon student data from the SAT Suite, the focus for the first phase is on comprehension of complex texts and grammar and syntax. This process allows for inter-rater reliability, and utilizes an instructional decision-making process geared toward evidence of student learning. Through implicit instruction, along with grouping strategies, formatively, the teachers review student work samples, provide feedback, and reteach, assess for evidence of skill mastery through summative assessments, and utilize proficiency levels from the fall and spring SAT Suite of assessments. This approach allows teachers and students to connect learning from the current to upcoming year. During the pandemic, the teachers refocused their instruction and assessments on the essential standards.

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

Recently the Mathematics Department adopted two new resources, one for the standard level and the other for the honors level that focus on problem-based learning for 21st century learners. After one year of use, the department is focused on adjusting the scope and sequence for the honors level, aligned with enVision Integrated Mathematics, and Illustrative Mathematics for the standard level. Both levels integrate the use of ALEKS, an online learning platform that helps teachers assess students’ knowledge and provide

individualized support to aid in student skill mastery. The instructional practices are rooted in collaborative and cooperative learning, allowing students to explore and solve problems. The teachers challenge the students to communicate their reasoning and critical thinking while serving in a coaching role. The special education, as well as team-taught courses, follow the same instructional model. The honors and AP level courses provide opportunities for students to regularly engage with enriched assignments that extend student learning from previously mastered concepts into application of abstract situations. We encourage our students to take either Math 102: Statistics, a dual credit course aligned with the local community college or an AP Computer Science, Statistics, Calculus AB, or BC course. For students who have completed AP Calculus BC prior to their senior year, they are encouraged to continue their study of mathematics by taking the dual enrolled online math courses through the University of Illinois' NetMath program. With the SAT Suite, all course level teachers can identify the subtest areas that need to be addressed and subsequently, implement SAT questions regularly into their instruction, allowing students to build their stamina with more complex questions. Should multiple traditional math interventions not meet individual needs, teachers can assign students to the Math Lab in lieu of a study hall. The Math Lab teachers will provide the students with individualized assistance with the math concepts or strengthening pre-requisite skills. Since spring of 2020, the assessments administered in math have changed from traditional free response questions to more open-ended questions that require the students to demonstrate their understanding and critical thinking skills.

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

The Science Department will be undertaking curriculum development work within the next school year and has continued to adjust their instructional practices to meet the needs of their students. Students currently need two years of science to meet graduation requirements, done by taking Biology and a physical science related course. Upon completion of this coursework, students can take a plethora of elective courses such as Astronomy, Forensics, Oceanography, Anatomy and Physiology. In the classroom, whether a special education, team-taught or honors level class, the teachers integrate reading, graph analysis, and critical thinking to build upon basic skills or concepts. Rather than compartmentalizing these skills, teachers weave the teaching of multiple standards together, and use lecture, small group activities, and lab practicals as a way for students to learn and practice. The biology teachers have implemented several of the story lining fundamentals, along with NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards), into their teaching so students can experience productive struggle. Based on phenomena, the teachers adjust their instruction, generating student engagement. This framework allows students to work in groups to make connections between concepts through stories or phenomena, rather than learning concepts in isolation. The honors level courses go deeper with NGSS standards and apply their learning with more abstract scenarios and labs while the teacher 'coaches' them. As a result of the pandemic, whether an AP, elective or graduation required course, the type of formative and summative assessments utilized shifted to students applying their learning in a variety of ways – lab, scenario, or application of skill.

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

Four years ago, the Social Studies Department went through the curriculum revision process and adopted the C3 Framework, aligned with the social studies standards, geared toward providing higher standards for student learning. Inquiry is at the heart of the instructional practices the teachers implement to deepen understanding of skills and concepts from the discipline. Through questioning and guided instruction, along with group exploration, students can apply their knowledge in real world situations, promoting engagement, critical thinking, and enduring understanding. This framework ties with the work the English Department is focused on with literacy and analyzing complex texts, enabling the students to become active citizens, and prepared for college and career. Students analyze a variety of primary resources such as speeches, video clips, documents, and other artifacts to deepen their understanding and critical thinking skills. These resources, along with document-based questions (DBQs), teachers can assess student learning formatively and summatively. The honors level courses provide opportunities for all students to regularly engage with the C3 Framework through enriched assignments that extend student learning, and the AP level courses allow students to apply their learning of abstract situations. Prior to the spring of 2020, the students were already familiar with and using the Inquiry Arc as part of their assessments and thus, the teachers did not need to make any adjustments to their curriculums during the pandemic.

## **1f. For secondary schools:**

Whether pursuing a college degree, enlisting in the armed services, earning a technical certification, or headed straight to a career, all our students can explore a variety of curricular areas in early high school that lead to capstone courses and programs during their later years at North. We offer 31 different AP courses for students to potentially earn college credit. All students taking an AP course are expected to take the associated exam. Each year we administer over 1200 exams to over 700 students. We are seeing an increase in the number of students pursuing dual credit, especially through our partnership with Elgin Community College. Students can take part in one of three programs. There is a full-time program where they can earn their associates degree at the same time as their high school diploma. This option is gaining popularity each year. Students can also choose a part time pathway taking general education courses in a CTE program that may lead to certification in their chosen field. Finally, the most popular option is the in-high school dual credit course offerings taught by North staff on our campus that earn students' college credit. Students also have the option of taking courses through the Fox Valley Career Center where they can choose from a variety of different fields. At the high school we offer capstone courses in culinary arts, business, fashion, education, and autos. Students can experience internships through the business department or with their Project Synergy cohort.

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

### **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

**Arts (visual and/or performing):** Our philosophy is to provide all students with many opportunities to participate in the arts. There are four different levels across four strands of visual arts and four courses in performing arts, providing students with varied opportunities. Within the past two years, the visual arts curriculum went through curriculum development and revision, to align with the National Core Art Standards. The students build and expand on foundational skills through hands-on learning and are assessed through a common rubric, allowing them to see progression with their learning. In addition, St. Charles North has seen the number of students receiving honors at state and national art competitions increase, with two students being in the top 1% of all submissions. During the 2021 school year, the teachers adjusted their class projects because students may not have had the necessary equipment at home; however, the teachers worked with remote students and families to pick up necessary art materials to complete projects outside of the building. With students in-person for 2022, the arts have resumed their normal practices and all students have access to the necessary materials.

**Physical education/Health/Nutrition:** Four years ago, the physical education department went through curriculum changes and shifted from traditional junior-senior PE courses to targeted areas of focus. The junior and senior level students can now choose an offering that best meets their personal choice, such as individual activities, team activities, adventure education, strength and conditioning, and creative movement. Regardless of the strand chosen, all five courses assess the same standards. For 9th and 10th grade students, the offerings include driver education, health, and PE (emphasizing swimming). Upper class students can also enroll in a PE leaders' course, earning certification in life and water rescue, CPR and AED, while also taking a leadership role in the underclassmen courses. Our elective offerings in wellness emphasize sports medicine and health careers, all resulting in the students earning CPR and AED certifications.

**Foreign Language:** Four different languages with five to six levels are offered for student enrollment at St. Charles North. The number of sections for each language and level fluctuates depending upon the number of students enrolled at the middle school level. If students take world language in middle school and the subsequent course in high school, they receive retroactive transcript credit. While we are in the third year of implementing AP Spanish Literature and Spanish for Heritage Speakers, enrollment has been low. Because we see the value in these offerings for students, the school continues to find ways to promote them. Six years ago, the school implemented the Seal of Biliteracy and on average, we have 100 – 130 participating in testing each year (from levels III and upward). As reported to the state, last school year we had 76

graduating seniors earn either the Commendation or the Seal of Biliteracy, up from 59 students the previous year. In addition to the implementation of the Seal of Biliteracy, the World Language Department has adjusted their curriculum to align with the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL).

Other Curricular Programs: With more students drawn to the CTE pathway, the school has seen an increase in the number of students desiring to take Automotive and Woodworking classes. For the last four years, the teachers of these curricular areas have taught additional sections to allow students the opportunity to participate in these fields. Both pathways are scheduled to begin curriculum revision during the 2022-2023 school year. Six years ago, Project Lead the Way (PLTW) was implemented with honors weight and was made available to all students, expanding the offerings to seven courses, one of which is the capstone for PLTW.

### **3. Academic Supports**

#### **3a. Students performing below grade level:**

On a weekly basis, individual data teams consisting of school counselors, dean of students, and school social workers meet to discuss individual student needs. These discussions focus on diverse ways to support the student both academically and/or social-emotionally. This includes meeting individually with the student, consulting with the student's teachers, contacting the student's parents, and/or providing additional academic support throughout the day. Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention groups are available to students that require additional support in executive functioning and social skills. Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions are currently being reviewed at the district level, with input from the high school, to enhance the intervention options beyond the executive function and social skills groups being implemented.

Applied Study: Students are assigned to a smaller, structured study hall in which the classroom teacher works with the student on various executive functioning skills. This could include organization of academic assignments, creating a timeline to complete academics, documenting when assignments are due, monitoring grades, and communicating with classroom teachers and parents. The goal of the applied study hall is for students to develop their executive functioning skills, so they can be more self-sufficient.

Literacy Block: Students who are identified as being below grade level in reading are assigned to grade 9 or 10 Literacy Block. This course is a supplement to the student's English course to improve literacy skills. The course utilizes class time to deepen a student's learning on concepts taught in the English course and instruction is differentiated based on the needs of each individual student to maximize learning.

Writing Center: This is an academic support available to all students who would like to receive assistance on writing assignments in all curricular areas from students who have been trained to be consultants. The student tutors attend summer training on how to effectively work with peers and provide thoughtful and effective feedback. Students can schedule an appointment to receive assistance and the staff supervisors assign peers based upon the requestor's need. During remote learning, students were still able to receive support from the Writing Center tutors, either digitally or through virtual conferences in breakout rooms.

Math Lab: The Math Lab provides support for all students building-wide through two different avenues. There are specified days that students could drop in as their schedule allows and receive support from teachers pertaining to the current material being learned. The second avenue assigns students to the Math Lab daily. These students were identified through our data teams or teacher recommendation. While the students worked on current material, they also worked on strengthening pre-requisite skills.

Extended Math: Students are assigned to extended math based upon standardized testing data, grades from the previous school year, and teacher recommendations. The course spans 1.5 class periods allowing students to learn the same curricular material and standards as the traditional math course at a slower pace to aid in comprehending concepts.

Edmentum Plato: For students who are behind in academic credits, SCN also offers online credit recovery

classes through the Edmentum Plato platform. The courses, already aligned to the school's curriculum, allow the students to work at an individualized pace with the support of a content specialized teacher. In unique situations, students who transfer to the school and may be deficient in graduation requirements will be scheduled into one of the credit recovery courses.

### **3b. Students performing above grade level:**

Students who exhibit strong academic skills and score above grade level based on test scores and mastery of standards, have the option to enroll in more challenging courses. These courses continue to challenge and engage students in more complex, rigorous learning. At St. Charles North, students can participate in the following courses to expand their learning:

**Honors:** Our honors level courses address the Common Core state standards and beyond, allowing the students to go deeper and wider with their learning.

**AP:** St. Charles North's philosophy is "challenge by choice;" thus, any student who has a desire to take an advanced placement course can enroll. Currently students have 31 different AP courses to choose from, all aligned with the College Board guidelines and expectations. Through common PLC time and opportunities to attend professional learning, test scores have shown stability or growth over the years, the one exception being the 2021 school year when many students were learning remotely. However, the school was above or in-line with the national average of AP scores.

**Blended:** Blended Learning is a recent addition to the curricular opportunities for the students and we continue to educate our students and community about what blended learning means. Currently we offer 15 elective courses and 10 core courses via the blended learning format. The courses have a diverse blend of learner needs and through innovative instructional strategies and practices, the instructors can provide a blend of online and face-to face learning that is engaging, personalized, authentic, responsive, and competency-based.

**Dual Credit:** Dual Credit is an area St. Charles North continues to grow, and students can take dual credit courses either at school or at a remote location in conjunction with Waubensee Community College, Elgin Community College, or College of DuPage. Five of the dual credit opportunities are taught by the St. Charles North staff on campus and span elective and graduation requirement offerings. The enrollment in the dual credit math and English courses have grown over the past school year with two sections of Math 102: Statistics and three sections of English 101-102. One math course we offer is not dual credit, but rather, it is a dual enrollment course through the University of Illinois. Advanced Math Topics covers the Calculus III curriculum and students must earn a 4 or 5 on the AP Calculus BC exam to enroll in the course, facilitating the need to teach one section of this course.

### **3c. Special education:**

At St. Charles North High School, students who have an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) have a continuum of support available to them to meet both their academic and their social-emotional needs. The IEP team determines, each year, the educational setting that would best meet the needs of the students. Students can participate in regular education classes, inclusion level courses, instructional level courses, and intensive level courses. Placement of students is dependent upon teacher recommendation, standardized test scores, achievement testing, cognitive testing, etc. In addition, accommodations are identified through the IEP process to assist students. This could include providing students with additional time on assignments/assessments, a quiet working environment, regular checks for understanding, etc.

Students also have access to school psychologists, school social workers, speech/language therapists, occupational therapists, and physical therapists to meet the social-emotional needs of each student.

**Inclusion level of support-** In an Inclusion setting, a general education teacher (content specialist) and a special education teacher (learning-behavior specialist) work collaboratively with one another by responding to student needs by using different means to deliver information and provide specific accommodations. This

inclusion model allows the special education teacher to participate in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) with their general education peers and thus, maintain the rigor of the general education curriculum by continuing at the same pace, teaching the same concepts, and using the same assessments as non-inclusion courses.

Instructional level of support- Students enrolled in instructional level courses are placed in a smaller setting (13 students or less) and are instructed by a special education teacher. These courses are modeled after the general education curriculum, but the course content is delivered to meet the needs of the students' academic abilities. Instruction may include providing the course content at a slower pace, the inclusion of additional resources, and modified assessments.

Intensive level of support-Students enrolled in the Reaching Independence through Support and Education (RISE) program receive a balanced focus on academics, communication, and self-advocacy to promote student independence. RISE is a learning environment where students with intellectual disabilities or multiple disabilities are provided individualized instruction and support at their instructional level within a special education setting. Students also have the flexibility to take courses at different levels when determined appropriate by the IEP team. The RISE program is integrated and valued as a part of the larger school and district community.

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

St. Charles North values the cultural diversity among our students and is committed to meet the needs of our English Learners (EL). Our school currently serves 36 English Learners with over 13 different native languages and the school has seen an increase in the EL population due to elementary boundary restructuring several years ago. For the past two years, most of our EL students have been assigned to general education classrooms, where an EL resource teacher provides differentiated instruction and interventions. Also, to meet individual needs, Native Spanish Tutors are on staff to assist EL students with limited English proficiency skills. As the EL population continues to grow at St. Charles North, an official EL program will be implemented beginning the fall of 2022. Our services and program structure will be aligned with World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment's (WIDA) English language proficiency levels are: 1-Entering, 2-Emerging, 3-Developing, 4-Expanding, and 5-Bridging. With this model, EL students will be assigned to English courses depending on their English proficiency level. We will continue to utilize WIDA screening assessments and learning standards to improve our EL's language development and academic achievement, along with assessing the EL program by using the WIDA ACCESS test to determine student progress toward English proficiency.

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

Homeless: If a student is deemed homeless, SCN will ensure that the student has all the essential supplies that they need for school. This would include school supplies, access to free/reduced lunch program, a PE uniform, etc. Our related service personnel (school social workers, counselors, etc.) also reach out to families, when appropriate, to ensure that they have access to community resources. A comprehensive list of community resources is available and able to be shared with families when needed.

Students with a 504 Plan: Through Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, students who have a physical or mental impairment which limits one or more major life activity, and which adversely affects his/her education or functioning within the educational setting, may be eligible for specific supports and/or accommodations. Students who qualify for a 504 Plan may have specific accommodations and/or supports that are written into their plans to assist them with accessing an appropriate education. This could include a deduction in required work, additional time to complete assignments/assessments, utilizing a smaller setting to take assessments, etc.

## **PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE**

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### **1. Engaging Students:**

St. Charles North has 60 different clubs and activities in which its students can participate. Divided into three distinct types (service and honors, competitive, and interest-based), students are encouraged to select extracurricular activities that allow them to explore their passions and curiosities. Large groups, like Student Council, focus on leadership development and student government. Service-based organizations, like Key Club, focus on providing students with opportunities to interact with members of our community. Interest-based clubs, like Autos Club, give students the chance to pursue their interests and build specific skills. Competitive clubs, like Scholastic Bowl, provide opportunities to go head-to-head with students from other schools across the state and country. North's theater program produces five different events each year and has opportunities for students to participate at every level of production. From technical crew to student-directed performances, students have the chance to grow their skills that will benefit them at the next level. St. Charles North also has ten academic honor societies that give more students the chance to be a part of content-specific organizations that focus on service, character development, and scholarship. These groups provide peer tutoring to students at all levels, and further support the academic growth and success of every student at North.

St. Charles North offers 31 different sports programs, with 79 different levels of play. With a student body just below 2,000, North's athletic program works hard to ensure that all students who want to play in high school can do so at a level that is right for them. We have several state-ranked varsity programs, including Girls and Boys Swimming, Girls Soccer, and Boys Baseball.

During the pandemic, all but two of our clubs transitioned to a virtual setting, allowing students to continue to meet and stay connected with one another. Competitive clubs modified their events to allow for remote participation, and live events, like theater, were moved to streaming services. The Student Council created outdoor events, including a Homecoming dance on the stadium grounds, and gave students opportunities to come together while still maintaining social distancing guidelines. Athletics moved sports seasons around to give teams the chance to compete. This year, even with limitations on gatherings, we had over a 70% participation rate with our school's activities, sports, and musical programs.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

St. Charles North High School and St. Charles District 303 have a strong partnership with our school community. We strategically and regularly collaborate with St. Charles East High school to ensure common curricular goals and similar learning experiences for all students. In addition, we work collaboratively with our middle schools, Wredling and Thompson, to create positive transitions for students entering high school.

St. Charles North benefits from dedicated support from our parent community. We meet monthly with our Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) to provide insight into school progress, successes, and plans. The SCN Boosters are a constant source of support to not only our athletes but all students when they provide resources to update our facilities shared with our Wellness Department.

Outside of the school community, St. Charles North partners with Elgin Community College (ECC), Fox Valley Career Center (FVCC), and local businesses to provide students with choice and opportunity. Through our partnership with ECC, students can earn dual credit to support post-secondary education plans. Students have the choice to pursue vocational and technical skills at FVCC. FVCC provides students the opportunity to learn skills for those directly entering a variety of occupations, as well as for students wishing to continue their education at community colleges, technical schools, and four-year colleges/universities to further their professional and technical training. Classes at FVCC provide skills for those directly entering a variety of occupations, as well as for students wishing to continue their education at community colleges, technical schools, and four-year colleges/universities. Students who participate in project SYNERGY create partnerships with local businesses. During their internships with local businesses, students gain knowledge in the fields of engineering, aerospace, mechanical engineering, and civil engineering. As part of their



experiences, students can share their ideas and solutions with community members.

Various school clubs and organizations partner with the community for celebratory events. One example is the annual SCN musical performance to honor our Veterans. Also, the school's homecoming parade highlights the staunch support of our community each year as hundreds of community members come to support our students and marching band.

The staff at St. Charles North works with professional organizations to support the social emotional needs of our students. SCN partners with its district personnel to provide students with resources. In addition, we align our efforts with community based Big Hearts to provide resources for students in need. Our connections with Kane County Human Services afford us the opportunity to link families with community help to locate items and services of need. Our school's social workers work with families to ensure that they have access to necessary resources. This year, the district partnered with an outside mental health organization to provide our school with a professional mental health expert to provide consultation and to support students through the challenges of the past two years.

### **3. Creating Professional Culture:**

St. Charles North is committed to developing strong and effective PLCs where teachers can continue to find ways to increase their self-efficacy. We have adopted the resources of PLC+ to intentionally integrate equity into our conversations.

Through the creation of our master schedule, one of our priorities is creating professional time for PLCs. Each certified faculty member belongs to a course/content PLC and is given time within their daily schedule to meet with our members who teach the same course. In addition, twice monthly, St. Charles North High School meets with our "cross-river" colleagues at St. Charles East to reflect on instructional practices, data, and student outcomes.

Cross River leadership meets monthly to plan for Cross-River Leadership meetings. The purpose of these conversations is to plan for staff development, clarify goals and outcomes, create consistent expectations for student learning and to seek innovative ways to support all students. Intentionally creating opportunities for teachers to reflect on students reminds them of their value and of their direct impact on student success.

Formal staff development days are planned throughout the year at both the district and building levels to align with school improvement goals and plans. Monthly all-staff meetings are scheduled to provide all faculty with ongoing information to monitor our progress and to consistently communicate a common message. Through weekly collaboration with our three Instructional Coaches and monthly SCN Staff Council, we identify trends among staff and brainstorm ways to provide resources, create solutions and celebrate our successes.

This year it was important to allow teachers the time to revisit their craft in the form of instructional practices- this was the focus of our professional development. Transitioning back to a "normal school year" did not turn out the way many of us thought it might. With all students and staff in the building and most sports and activities returning, there were some unanticipated challenges to be met. Teachers had been transitioning back and forth between in-person, remote and hybrid learning environments. They had two years where the primary resource for instruction relied on technology. Teachers had lost some of their abilities to form consistent relationships with all students, something the teachers at St. Charles North High School have always been excellent at cultivating. At the start of the school year, we gave teachers "permission" to set aside the curriculum and focus on building classroom cultures that valued both teacher and student.

Daily announcements are a shared responsibility between students and staff. Through these announcements we look for ways to celebrate students and recognize those who are making positive contributions to our building. Student Council representatives met with our Building Leadership Team to share their ideas on how to celebrate teachers and students through recognition.

#### **4. School Leadership:**

The organization of St. Charles North is like most high schools in terms of the overall structure. We have a principal, four assistant principals, an athletic director and three Deans of Students. This core of building level administrators forms our “North Star 9,” and it is the foundation of our building leadership team. In addition to the administrative team, we have Lead Teachers who oversee one or more departments, Instructional Coaches, and a Technology Instructional Support Coach. The collective group of administrators and leaders forms the Building Instructional Leadership Team (BILT) which uses trends and data for continuous improvement, sets school improvement plan goals, and monitor data for progress.

Each member of the Leadership team has a role in supporting students and student progress. Each Assistant Principal oversees a strategic area of focus, and we work collaboratively to align “what” we do to our “why,” and our “why” is always students. The Assistant Principal of Student Life works closely with our deans, activities, and clubs; focusing on providing opportunities to participate to all students. The Assistant Principal of College and Career Readiness works with counselors to help students set themselves up for success with support and an academic path that aligns with their interests. The Assistant Principal of Student Services works with our Special Education Department and social workers to provide all students with the necessary support to follow a path of their choosing. The Assistant Principal of Instructional Programming works with staff and Lead Teachers to implement curriculum with integrity and provide the necessary resources to each department. Each Dean of Students meets with support staff as members of the Student Support Teams (SST). These SST teams meet weekly to analyze student progress data to identify students who need support beyond Tier 1. The Athletic Director works with our coaches and Wellness Department to create a positive environment for students engaged in physical education and sports.

The Instructional Support coaches work closely with teachers and departments in whatever capacity is needed. This might include visiting PLCs to identify trends, partnering with Lead Teachers to create agendas to support instruction or meeting with individual teachers looking for ways to improve their instructional practices. The ISCs play an impactful role in designing professional development to support building wide instructional needs.

The Staff Council is our group of teachers (one representative from each department) that meets once a month to focus on continuous improvement for the staff. This team looks for ways to improve the culture and climate in the building. For example, this year they advocated for more ways to make the physical environment of the building more welcoming and promote more school spirit. As a result of their input, we created a School Beautification Committee that redesigned the school’s busiest hallway. The school also had a building wide send-off for a former student heading to the Olympics.

The Student Council is the foundation of our student leadership at St. Charles North. Our student leaders have a tradition of excellence. Student leaders have consistently looked for ways to improve the climate and culture at St. Charles North with the goal of providing opportunities for all students to get involved and be heard. North’s Student Council brings awareness to issues impacting our students and the world around us. They organize and promote clothing drives, letter writing campaigns, and community events for children that financially benefit local outreach groups and homeless shelters. Our HOPE Club hosts two different awareness weeks a year: one centered on drug prevention and the other around awareness of teen mental health. The SCN Peer Leadership program offers students the opportunity to meet daily during their lunch to develop social and leadership skills through the mentorship of students new to the high school setting. We began the tradition this year of having our Student Council president kick-off our welcome back for teachers as a way of acknowledging the importance of our partnership with students.

#### **5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:**

This is an area of growth we continue to work on at St. Charles North High School. As a district, we are in the process of completing an equity audit to identify gaps in our access and opportunity for all students. We recognize that finding ways to increase success for marginalized groups will improve learning for all students.

The equity audit has been designed to capture the voices of all stakeholders in our school community. Focus groups of randomly selected parents and students are being created to solicit feedback on their perceptions to the extent we meet the needs of all students. In addition, all faculty and administrators have been given the option of participating in focus groups.

While we await the outcome of the audit, we continue to look for ways in which we can ensure access as well as belonging for all students. Twice a year, we survey students to determine their level of engagement in their classes. Students can provide feedback to each teacher indicating their level of engagement in the classroom. Teachers are encouraged to use this data for their own instruction as well as within their PLCs to identify trends in student perception data.

St. Charles North has a variety of student-initiated clubs that promote cultural awareness at our school. Four of these groups include: SAGA (Sexuality and Gender Awareness), Feminist Club, Project Peace, and Theology Club. The goal of SAGA is to provide students with a caring and positive environment to understand the issues and challenges related to sexual orientation and gender identity. The Feminist Club was created to educate, empower and contribute positive change related to inclusiveness within the school community. Project Peace focuses on cultural diversity, education, and activism. The Theology Club was created for students to take a deep look at religions within the school community and larger global community. Through these clubs and others, St. Charles North provides education and awareness to groups of students who face obstacles with their sense of belonging and inclusion.

## **PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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There are many factors that have contributed to the successes at St. Charles North, many of which have been highlighted in the previous sections: the support of our community, the character of our students, the expertise and commitment of our staff and our shared sense of school community.

Twice each year we gather data on students' sense of belonging using a perceptions survey. The fall data we collected indicated that nationally, compared to other high schools, St. Charles North was in the 95th national percentile in terms of student sense of belonging. With over ninety percent of students participating in the survey, this was considered a celebration. During one of our Building Instructional Leadership Team (BILT) meetings, we examined the data and determined that although we were doing very well comparatively, approximately fifty percent of our students indicated a strong sense of belonging. We wanted to do better. Increasing student sense of belonging became our SEL (Social Emotional Learning) SIP goal.

During a School Improvement Day, we collected staff perception data on our students to identify the level of connectedness our staff saw with our students. We challenged our beliefs to identify the ways in which students perceived their belonging in school and the higher level of connectedness staff perceived. Instructional Coaches met with Lead Teachers and Departments to provide strategies on creating belonging in the classroom. Creating belonging became the lens through which we looked at our practices and our interactions.

Members of the Administrative Team and other leaders engaged in reading the book *Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity: The Keys to Successful Equity Implementation* by Floyd Cobb and John Krownapple. The book challenged school traditions that unintentionally marginalized groups of students. In addition, it focused our discussion on ways to not only ensure access to all but belonging to all students. The book uses Maslow's hierarchy to suggest that instead of student belonging leading to achievement, schools, instead, created belonging through student achievement- which resulted in the exclusion of groups of students. We began looking at our practices and ways in which we should change them to increase belonging. For example, we restructured our scheduling process for students with an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) to be placed in their requested classes first, to ensure all students had access to all course offerings aligned with their ability. We have committed ourselves to creating belonging for all students and staff.