

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Kirkwood Sr. High School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 801 West Essex Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Kirkwood State MO Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 63122-3608

County St. Louis County

Telephone (314) 213-6110 Fax (314) 984-4412

Web site/URL https://www.kirkwoodschoools.org/khs E-mail michael.havener@kirkwoodschoools.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.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Dr. David Ulrich E-mail david.ulrich@kirkwoodschoools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Kirkwood School District R-VII Tel. (314) 213-6100

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.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board President/Chairperson Mrs. Jean Marie Andrews
(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.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

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):
- 5 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 8 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	1	2	3
9	241	217	458
10	226	223	449
11	232	213	445
12 or higher	234	224	458
Total Students	934	879	1813

*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):
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 10 % Black or African American
 - 5 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 78 % White
 - 5 % 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: 2%

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	14
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	17
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	31
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	1819
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.02
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

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

Spanish, Arabic, Somali

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 9 %

Total number students who qualify: 159

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 22 %
404 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>59</u> Autism | <u>7</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>64</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>76</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>23</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>14</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>2</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>17</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: 11
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	8
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	120
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	41
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.	19

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	98%	97%	97%	97%	96%
High school graduation rate	97%	97%	97%	97%	98%

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	458
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	70%
Enrolled in a community college	12%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	3%
Found employment	9%
Joined the military or other public service	1%
Other	5%

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.

Pioneers value the importance of Community and have Confidence in their Ability to Contribute to a global society.

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

The Kirkwood R-7 School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, religion, age, national origin, handicap, or disability in admissions to, or treatment or employment in its programs and activities. Any person having inquiries concerning the District’s compliance with Title IX, Section 504 for student issues should contact Dr. Matt Bailey, Assistant Superintendent of Data, Intervention and Supports, at (314) 213-6106 and for employee issues, should contact Dr. Howard Fields, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, by calling (314) 213-6103.

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

Kirkwood High School (KHS) represents the diverse, inclusive community it serves and promotes excellence for all our students as they craft their own “Portraits of a Pioneer” during their four-year learning journeys. As students arrive in August to walk their schedules, take school pictures, and gather school resources, it’s common to see and hear families and extended family members walking down the senior hallway locating their senior class pictures and telling stories of their KHS experiences.

KHS has a long, rich history and list of traditions that date back to the founding of the Kirkwood School District in 1865. In 1896, Kirkwood offered the first four-year high school program in St. Louis County. The present school building on West Essex Avenue was built in 1955 on a 47-acre, college-style campus, and Kirkwood High School welcomed both white and African-American students to attend school together. Through community supported propositions and private funding, there have been several additions to the 1955 building over the years that represent the advocacy of curricular and extra-curricular interests, research, and best practices in education: Thomas N. Keating Performance Center, a fine arts complex including theater, band, art and vocal music classrooms, Science and Engineering Center, a regulation-size gymnasium and renovated athletic facility, track and turf field, redesigned journalism workspace for the award-winning Kirkwood Call, Pioneer Yearbook, and KHTV, Walker Natatorium, the Pioneer Pride Center, and Pioneer Pathways alternative learning centers. Thanks to community support of a recently passed proposition, construction will soon include a new Family and Consumer Arts center inclusive of a culinary arts program, as well as a renovated Engineering Center. The physical growth in the campus itself is representative of the growth in our student population, academic offerings for students (in-person, virtual, and blended), expansion in athletic programs, and continually growing activities and clubs (over 60) available for students.

The whole-school community shares a proud heritage and respect for tradition as well as a progressive attitude toward education for all. Dedicated to the principle of supporting the academic and social growth of all children at KHS, we actively seek opportunities to expand our capacity to narrow the gaps that exist for our learners. Evidence of such is our recent participation in the Taylor Community Consulting Program, during which we sought to utilize the skills/expertise of students involved in the Olin Business School’s Center for Experiential Learning at Washington University. We embraced this opportunity to tap into the unique lenses of student consultants from all over the world with diverse educational experiences. This process included research through a competitive industry analysis/market research (local, state, national, and global schools of excellence) and the development of recommendations for improvement. Our desire was for the team to: determine key themes and trends that commonly weave through the models and programs of highly effective schools when addressing gaps, highlight strengths and areas for potential growth that are impacting the achievement/opportunity gaps that exist in the KHS learning community, determine how perception/pride/branding reduces or promotes these gaps that exist within the KHS learning community; and identify target areas and recommendations for more effective practices and strategies to reduce the achievement/opportunity gap.

The student consultants gathered data, interviewed other students, educators, and community members, and made suggestions on how we might improve our practices. The consultants found that strengths were in the culture of KHS. They noted, “This strong culture is a by-product of the strong academic and extracurricular programs KHS offers.”

Areas for potential growth revealed through this process were approaches to discipline and attendance policies, school environment, and effective teaching and learning practices. While these areas for growth are common in most schools, KHS does not settle for the “status quo.” KHS has deconstructed the attendance and discipline policies and revised them to create a more restorative/responsive approach. We added social emotional learning resources inclusive of additional social workers, an alternative learning counselor, and educational resource counselor to our programming. To reduce academic and social pressures that are within our control, we implemented quarterly no homework/assessments/project weekends (Friday through Monday) and we designed, implemented, and publicized alternative learning opportunities such as the Pride Center, Pioneer Pathways, South County Technical School, Center for Advanced Professional Studies

Programs, early college/dual credit, and the Pioneer e-Learning Academy. Furthermore, the Kirkwood High School whole-school learning community, with greater intentionality, focuses on: universal design, culturally responsive teaching and learning, equitable multi-tiered systems of support, first best instruction, and purposeful/intentional differentiation in relation to academic, physical, and social needs. Ongoing professional development, all school experiences, book studies, and student panels/think tanks are dedicated to ongoing improvement for students.

It is our goal to continue our long standing history of excellence and provide every student at KHS the opportunity and encouragement to pursue their passions, be involved in the school and community, and to create new legacies for Kirkwood's posterity.

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:

Kirkwood High School’s philosophy of learning centers on the idea that students will be prepared to engage in formidable journeys, display a strong affinity for equity, culture, and community, and blaze new trails that grow their impact. As a result, Kirkwood High School curricula, learning experiences, and assessments are collaboratively designed, implemented and continually evaluated with students’ future readiness in mind. KHS acts as an interconnected learning community working to ensure all students master and utilize cross-curricular disciplinary literacy skills and habits of mind (course priority standards referred to as KHS Big Ideas) that prepare them for life. This is accomplished by cultivating student efficacy throughout the learning (across curricula/disciplines) as students become agents of their own learning: engaging in effective teaching and learning practices, ongoing feedback loops, and metacognition practices. KHS learners create their own learning, while KHS teachers create the experiences in which they learn. As common practice, KHS teachers implement opportunities within the learning for students to continually reflect on “where they are going,” “where they are now,” and “how they will close the gap.” Students act as resources for themselves and others in learning while charting their own pathways for progress and success.

The whole-school learning community believes and collaborates to ensure, as modern learners, Kirkwood High School Pioneers will: create and experience cognitively demanding learning, practice learning literacy (learning, unlearning, relearning), apply disciplinary literacy skills and habits of mind (thinking, questioning, communicating, and collaborating), experience technology-rich learning (including face-to-face, blended, and virtual), explore and appreciate multiple perspectives/voices, cultures, backgrounds, and unique abilities, solve real-world problems, engage in advocacy, and practice global citizenship. KHS Pioneers embrace their passions while mapping out personalized pathways to their future.

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

The English department builds curriculum around Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe’s Understanding by Design framework. This rigorous concept begins with the umbrella of Big Ideas that focus on literacy, essential questions, and formative and summative assignments that link to these ideas and to state standards. These assessments serve as ways for students to set goals and for teachers to build on students’ understanding. Pioneer Learning Communities then collaborate to examine student data and best practices. Teachers learn from each other and modify assessments and instruction per this process. The literary events include student and teacher choice with reading classic and contemporary novels; writing experiences with a variety of genres; and speaking and listening with Socratic seminars, small group discussions, and individual Book Talks that center around the standards with delineated skills. Sharroky Hollie’s Rings of Culture guides our diversified choices for texts and learning experiences, so students can see themselves in the curriculum.

Teachers incorporate a variety of pedagogical methods that include whole class, small groups, and individual work with a “Gradual Release of Responsibility.” Students and teachers collaborate together and see the learning process as dynamic and relevant. The online platform Schoology with the one-to-one computer access allows all students to have equal opportunities to communicate with their teachers and review teacher and library resources.

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

Kirkwood mathematics teachers work to promote students’ confidence and self-advocacy to become proficient problem solvers prepared to face real-world challenges. Directed by state priority standards, classroom experiences encourage development of mathematical skill as a foundation to supply tools which encourage collaboration-based problem solving, modeling of applications and multiple representations of

mathematical processes. Curriculum balances learning outcomes aligned with Missouri Learning Standards and national standardized tests offered in a sequence afford a variety of options to support college or career readiness.

Instruction incorporates modeling, exploration, conceptual understanding, and practice, all supported by technology where students evaluate expressions through mathematical procedure, translate information from single to multiple representations, justify through reasoning, and appreciate mathematical notation as a form of language. Consistent formative and summative assessment are aligned in every course providing equitable learning experiences where student work drives collaborative teacher discussion. Data analysis ensures essential questions, enduring understanding, and academic vocabulary are proficient and supports decisions to spiral opportunities for further mastery or differentiate instruction to meet students performing at, above, and below grade-level expectations. Data assists teachers to make informed decisions for appropriate intervention to guide students at all levels. This ranges from putting supports in place for students performing below basic levels of foundational mastery up to offering opportunity to expand upon advanced understanding to create high level thinking experiences.

Online course opportunities have been developed where resources provided are at the foundation of online course offerings and integral to in-person experiences as learning options used in synchronous or asynchronous ways. This evolution has been possible due to technology for teachers. Although resources created by teachers have been consistent instructional practice for years, these options have been enhanced and extended to all mathematics courses since May and April 2020. This has provided students variety and independence to choose options to support individual learning needs.

Assessments have also evolved. Students experience a balance between paper and pencil and online assessment created by teachers. Online assessments are directly attached to learning standards providing more immediate feedback to develop instruction.

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

Kirkwood is a Physics First school because physics lays the foundation for chemical concepts which are critical to understanding complex biological systems. By presenting the coursework in this order, these integrated concepts can be reinforced as they are applied in each new discipline. For example, in physics, students learn about energy in terms of Newton's laws of motion; in chemistry, they apply these laws to the basic understanding of chemical reactions; in biology, students synthesize these topics in their exploration of energetics in all living things, from the single-celled organism to entire ecosystems.

Kirkwood's science curriculum was developed to incorporate the Missouri Learning Expectations, and empowers students to: (1) Collect and analyze data on complex real-world problems using tools and technologies to make valid and reliable scientific claims. (2) Use mathematical models and computer simulations to explain natural phenomena and identify relationships between systems. (3) Apply scientific principles and supply evidence to solve design problems, taking into account possible unanticipated effects. (4) Construct, evaluate, and refine the scientific reasoning behind currently-accepted theories, media reports or student-driven solutions to determine the merits of arguments. (5) Communicate technical information and ideas in multiple formats (oral, graphical, mathematical, textual). (6) Use inquiry to design and conduct investigations with particular emphasis placed upon the types, quantities, and validities of data needed to establish accurate and reliable evidence for their claims. At Kirkwood, we have incorporated these principles into innovative, student-lead projects in each scientific discipline.

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

KHS's social studies curriculum focuses on developing the skills used by historians and social scientists. It encourages students to think critically about the world, respect all cultures, and take an active role in improving their community. In each social studies course, students develop and are assessed on four shared "Big Ideas," which include performing academic research, deconstructing sources of evidence, developing and supporting reasoned arguments, and taking informed action to improve their community. Social studies teachers work in PLCs, to analyze student work and summative assessment data compared to baseline scores

in order to improve teaching methods and develop aligned formative assessments. We also work with teachers in our “sister discipline” of English to coordinate teaching of disciplinary literacy skills.

KHS students must complete three required social studies courses in order to graduate. Ninth graders study world history from 1450 to the present, where students learn to interpret and analyze historical events and apply their understanding to propose solutions to the problems facing the world today. Tenth graders study United States history post-Civil War, and are challenged to think critically about whether the United States has upheld American values throughout its history. Eleventh graders study American government in comparison to other systems, and complete a semester-long service project where they research ways to improve their community, make a plan of action, and then follow that plan by volunteering in their community, all while recording their experiences to share.

Students also have a variety of elective options, including year-long Advanced Placement offerings in human geography, psychology, United States history, United States government & politics, and modern world history, in addition to semester offerings covering the black experience in America, economics, psychology, sociology, and a project-based historical inquiry course where students complete a semester-long independent research project of their choosing.

1f. For secondary schools:

KHS currently offers 123 hours of dual credit via in-person and online classes. We offer dual credit classes throughout the fall, spring, and summer school. Such dual credit courses are offered in the fields of business, education, computer science, teaching/education, public speaking, mathematics, social studies, English, engineering, performing arts, and life sciences. We offer 21 Advanced Placement courses that have been certified by the College Board, and we also offer 17 honors courses in our core areas of study.

Our students that are seeking career technical training (CTE) options can apply and become accepted as students to attend South Technical High School, which has 24 areas of technical and/or trade training. KHS also offers CTE classes in the areas of business, family and consumer science, engineering and technology. Through these classes, KHS students have the opportunity to interact with and receive feedback from industry professionals in each of these departments. Students have the opportunity to engage in real world student-led experiences in the areas of Journalism, Technical Theater, Advanced Marketing, Child Development, Band, Peer tutoring, and various other student organizations.

Additionally, students that apply and are accepted to the St Louis for Professional Studies (STL CAPS) program have the opportunity to become immersed in a professional culture within four different industry strands that produce learning experiences to educate the future workforce of tomorrow, especially in high skill, high demand jobs. Students in KHS CTE classes all have the opportunity to interact with industry professionals in all of these areas.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Kirkwood High School is committed to helping students find and develop their passions. Our elective departments play a crucial role as we promote student exploration of their whole selves. Students need to earn 24 credits with 13 of those credits coming from core content areas, thus our students are empowered to refine their interests and academic pursuits within our elective departments for 11 credits (22 classes) during their high school career. Nine Departments (Fine Art, Business, Engineering, Family and Consumer Science, PE/Health, Journalism, Performing Arts, World Language, and Library) with nearly 45 full time teachers engage our students in nearly 100 different classes. Our Band, Orchestra, Journalism, Family and Consumer Science, Engineering and Business Programs are consistently ranked as top performing, and our students garner local, state, and national awards.

Twelve Fine Arts courses are offered at Kirkwood High School. Each student is required to take two of these classes and many of these courses are available for dual credit. Students are often challenged with a pedagogy that bridges the art studio to the local community, from our annual AP Art Exhibit to graphic design students addressing community design needs to Ceramics II students giving back to the community by donating wheel thrown pottery to The Empty Bowl Project. The goal of the Art Department is to develop students who engage in art-making processes, appreciate and analyze visual content in an ever-changing world, and strive to make a positive impact.

Thirteen Business courses are offered at Kirkwood High School. The Pioneer School of Business engages students by delivering innovative curriculum, fostering relationships and teaching problem solving skills. Students develop these skills through our curriculum, coupled with the multiple business partnerships our business department has developed in our Kirkwood community. These partnerships give our students hands-on, real world experiences that prepare them for the next stages of life. These experiences extend our students' learning outside the classroom and give our business partners a chance to engage with students.

Seven Engineering and Technology courses are offered at Kirkwood High School. Students develop problem-solving skills through project-based learning, preparing them to take on real-world challenges. Students will use industry-based technology and software to produce feasible design solutions. Through this process, students explore STEM-related career fields.

Family and Consumer Science students are the future members and leaders of tomorrow's families, work-places, & communities. Students find their passions, develop essential life skills and practice healthy decision making. Courses fall within the following pathways; Culinary, Fashion & Interior Design and Child Development/Teaching. Within each pathway there are two or three courses from introductory to advanced levels. Students engage in culinary challenges with student and adult judges, design competitions for the next greatest fashion and interior designer, and teach authentic lessons in our local elementary classrooms.

Seven Journalism courses are offered at Kirkwood High School. The core of the KHS journalism program is to engage students in 21st Century English by teaching transferable skills. The ability to communicate, collaborate, and critically think are essential skills taught and encouraged in a supportive learning environment emphasizing risk taking and repetition. Students engage in participatory learning by producing authentic products for a wide audience using different storytelling formats, technology, and mediums. The academic atmosphere is one of high expectations, high energy, and support.

With use of our state-of-the-art facilities, students choose from twelve live and virtual PE/Health classes. Under the guidance of SHAPE America's National Standards and Grade Level Expectations, each course plays an important role in preparing students' brains for learning and focuses on individual growth, understanding of health-related fitness concepts, and skill-based learning. Students also take a semester of Health and Wellness. Following the National Standards and Health Grade Level Expectations, our health curriculum focuses on empowering students with knowledge needed to make their own positive choices regarding their social, mental, emotional, and physical health.

The Performing Arts at Kirkwood High School offers students opportunities to be part of a larger community, while also encouraging individual successes. Students in the band and orchestra continue building musicianship and literacy that began in elementary school. Vocal musicians increase their ability to use their changing voices and apply it to a variety of styles and literature. Drama students learn performance techniques, technical theatre, and theatre history, all while continuing to improve their confidence and speaking abilities. Students have opportunities in class as well as after school to explore their passions.

The library program invites all students to become lifelong readers and researchers. Students become critical thinkers and problem solvers through research lessons and access to databases, citation tools, online digital citizenship lessons, video tutorials and plagiarism guides. Readers develop their skills through print, audiobook, and eBook collections, supported by librarian book talks and suggestions. Struggling and high achieving students are paired weekly through an after school and homeroom peer tutoring program.

The World Language Department provides French, German, Spanish, and Chinese instruction. A four-year program is offered in all languages with a fifth-year Advanced Placement level in French, German, and Spanish. Our curriculum creates globally aware, culturally curious, and linguistically competent individuals through authentic language resources and community engagement. In addition, each language offers unique field trips, exchange student programs, honor societies, volunteer opportunities, service projects, and mentorships with native speakers. Students who have attained a high level of proficiency in one or more languages in addition to English receive the nationally recognized Seal of Biliteracy on their diploma and transcript.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

KHS employs unique strategies with our students who are performing below grade level, which includes addressing the achievement gap that exists with our African American student population. We believe all students should have similar academic expectations while we educators provide the supports necessary to help them achieve the desired goals. We offer tiered levels of academic support. Examples of tier one interventions include our Pride Center which is a tutoring center staffed by current teachers throughout the school day. The Pride Center is also utilized for testing when students need an alternative testing site. We also offer weekly after school tutoring twice per week in the KHS library. Student tutors and building staff are available to assist. Within our classrooms, we offer lowered class sizes for specific courses that serve our lower-performing students. We know that more individualized instruction in these situations is the best practice.

For our students who have more involved academic needs, we offer more intensive academic programming. Pioneer Pathways is the umbrella which includes all alternative education programming. Participation is determined through a problem-solving team process. There are two main programs which are aimed at our students who have academic concerns. Our Innovation Center is a tier two intervention that includes core content classes with smaller class sizes coupled with more individualized instruction. Students are able to access classes based on personal academic needs. Discovery Center is our tier three intervention. This is a half day program that offers instruction in the four main content areas utilizing small class sizes, hybrid delivery models, and individualized curriculum. We also offer our MO Options programming to students who will benefit from this program. Building relationships is a major factor in the success we see with our students in both of these programs and has helped lessen the gap.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

It is our desire to offer a rigorous and challenging curriculum for all our high school students. KHS offers multiple opportunities for our students who are performing above grade level. These opportunities include both on campus and off campus programs. Across our curricular departments, we offer Honors leveled and Advanced Placement leveled courses. Students are encouraged to expose themselves to one or more of our upper-level classes based on their academic interests. As a part of our efforts to lessen the achievement gap with our African American students, identified students are actively recruited by core teachers and other academic staff to participate in the higher-level courses. We have seen a steady increase of student representation from that demographic.

Additionally, KHS offers courses within the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) program. Our students are able to have rigorous experiences during high school in the areas of engineering, computer science and biomedical science. This program has also given us the ability to increase exposure to these STEM careers to our underrepresented groups, specifically female and African American students. Our students have different off campus opportunities that allow them to explore career interests while receiving relevant curriculum. Through our partnership with the St Louis Centers for Advanced Professional Studies program, KHS students have the ability to be fully immersed in various career fields during a half day experience. Engineering, medicine/healthcare, technology and education are the current focus areas. The experience is concluded with a capstone presentation. We also have an innovative Gifted Education program that works to meet the academic as well as the social-emotional needs of our gifted student population. As with other

areas, we have reviewed practices and procedures to increase the representation of underrepresented populations.

3c. Special education:

KHS is an inclusive school community. At the same time we recognize some students require specially designed instruction through special education services and/or accommodations and modifications through an IEP, or accommodations through a 504 Plan. In partnership with the Special School District of St. Louis County, KHS provides a wide continuum of services to meet the diverse needs of students who meet the eligibility criteria for an educational disability. The continuum includes both co-teaching and special education replacement class models for courses required for graduation. Project Achieve is a specialized education program for students identified with a social-emotional educational disability. Intensive instruction and social work services using research-based curricula and approaches connected to the tenets of CASEL (the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) are implemented to support students' social emotional learning. Learning Strategies is available to students struggling with executive functioning or social-cognition deficits. These courses utilize research-based curriculum to help students learn the skills necessary to be an effective learner, or the socio-communication skills to promote success in the general education curriculum and to support the student's academic, social, and lifelong success. KHS offers a range of essential skills classes focused on academic and life skills for students taking alternative state assessments. A comprehensive program of community-based vocational support is available for students who require extensive instruction in order to get and keep a job and whose primary post-secondary outcomes are focused on employment. We are one of only a few high schools in the area that has adopted PAES Lab, an extensive onsite jobs curriculum where students explore jobs across industries, both to explore interests and hone their job skills. We also provide the opportunity for students to continue their growth and development in an 18-21 year old transition program, incorporating in-vivo skills training in the classroom and community, either on campus or in a vocational setting.

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

ELL services include push in and pull out direct services. In addition, we focus on job development skills, interpersonal communication, and family support.

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

Kirkwood High School works continuously to make sure that we are meeting the needs of our entire student population. This includes developing new curriculum and providing diverse academic experiences for our students regardless of the academic levels. We have also created an Intentional Coordinator position at KHS which connects students who may need extra support in connecting with school and home life situations. The Intentional Coordinator connects with students and families in their homes to continue supporting learning.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

At KHS, the balance of academic, social, and emotional well being of every student is of the utmost importance to everything we do. We employ a strength-based and solution-focused approach when interacting with students and families. This ranges from supporting AP and honors students with a variety of academic rigor to helping our students that need an alternative educational setting that will provide smaller classes and a supportive environment for at-risk students. We offer a variety of platforms to meet the unique needs of each individual student, and guide them as they find their niche within Kirkwood High School. From traditional to virtual, dual enrollment to dual credit, to vocational studies and life skill classes, we have over 300 course options.

Having a dynamic and diverse staff whose mission is to engage and motivate students each day allows for an environment that fosters academic and social wellness. Twice a year we present curriculum in the areas of college and career planning and course selection emphasizing personal choice based on post-secondary individual goals. From career assessments, to four year individual planning and goal setting, to personal analyses that hope to capture student interest and personality traits, we urge students to make connections with a post-secondary plan unique to them and their passions. We aim to engage and collaborate with all the stakeholders to support students in their growth and development.

Students work with the same counselor throughout high school, which nurtures a strong relationship. Information nights are offered to families about college and career readiness, academic opportunities, and social/emotional support. The Mental Health Awareness Committee is a student-led group that uses a variety of messages of hope. They host events at school to promote social engagement while providing a safe and positive environment.

During the pandemic, we strived to maintain student engagement in multiple ways. We conducted home visits and hired an intentional connector to additionally support at-risk students. School counselors ran virtual groups to add an additional level of support for students that were feeling overwhelmed, lonely, and were struggling to become motivated during virtual learning. Through the Schoology platform, school counselors posted regularly about various ways to meditate and relax, breathing techniques, virtual college and career fairs, and ways to try to stay connected while planning for the future. When we resumed in person learning, after school sessions were offered to help students complete course work for graduation requirements.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Engaging the community and families begins with the oldest rivalry west of the Mississippi in the annual Turkey Day festivities with our neighboring school district. Beginning in 1907, the Turkey Day football game brings alumni, current students, and community members together with not only a football game on Thanksgiving Day, but also a Kirkwood School District Foundation sponsored chili cook off, a community bonfire, and multiple pep assemblies throughout the week.

We also engage families and communities, including business and industry partners/mentors through our Kirkwood Pioneer School of Business, which is an innovative entrepreneurial approach to education. It was developed to provide Kirkwood students with real world, problem solving experiences to develop life long skills for the ever-changing global markets/economy.

Our program is designed to give students an opportunity to develop the soft skills every industry in the world is asking our schools to develop right now. Students develop the ability to adapt, communicate professionally, think creatively, be empathic, collaborative with others, and problem solve.

Students develop these skills through our curriculum, coupled with the multiple business partnerships our business department has developed in our Kirkwood community. These partnerships give our students

hands-on, real world experiences that prepare them for the next stages of life. These experiences extend our students' learning outside the classroom and give our business partners a chance to engage with their local high school.

The capstone of our Kirkwood Pioneer School of Business is our Advanced Marketing class known as Collab. This class is designed for students to be marketing interns for the school year. We have a partnership with Moosylvania - an advertising agency in St. Louis. They mentor our students to start the year by teaching them and guiding them through the process of designing an integrated marketing campaign. After the Moosylvania project/mentorship is done we take on small business clients in the Kirkwood community to develop marketing plans, campaigns, or marketing materials for these clients.

Additionally, students are able to achieve college credit in most of our classes through our dual credit partnership with Missouri State University. Upon completion of business courses, students start their post-secondary education with many college credit hours. Students have the opportunity to develop soft skills in a real world setting giving them a foundation to build upon as they continue to develop and master these skill sets.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Kirkwood High School utilizes the PLC model in the form of our Pioneer Learning Communities model to create a responsive approach to teacher growth and student support. Each academic department has created a handful of Big Ideas /Essential Skills that all courses within the discipline teach, develop and assess over a semester or year. PLCs then crafted common formative and summative assessments/rubrics allowing individuals and teams of teachers to review and analyze student progress and outcomes to determine the next best instructional steps for individuals and groups of students. This individualized, teacher-led model empowers and supports educators to create solutions which leverage their expertise and knowledge of their students and content.

After KHS teachers and PLC leaders expressed a desire for greater time and focus upon developing/deepening their repertoire of instructional techniques, norming/auditing grading practices, and connecting/collaborating with colleagues beyond their department, KHS adjusted our PD focus for 2021-2022. Accordingly, this year our PLCs have focused upon these three topics during PLC time and early release days in order to honor our staff's voice and professional opinions.

Our PLCs started this year examining student work from last year to norm grading practices, tweak rubrics and identify areas of student misunderstanding/strength to proactively craft lessons and revise assessments/rubrics based upon last year's outcomes. During the 2nd and 3rd quarter, while PLCs were writing and tracking their PLC goals, we intentionally embedded time and exposure to a collection of various high impact instructional strategies that PLCs might review and then select a few to practice/hone while tracking their student growth to identify those with the most impactfulness. Finally, during the second half of this year our school's PD/PLC focus has been upon building teacher connections beyond their PLC and Department, while also strengthening students' interdisciplinary skills by providing time for departments to work together to identify and articulate crosscutting concepts shared by sister disciplines. With these understandings, our PLCs are making explicit connections for students to highlight the interconnectivity of skills and understandings across content areas promoting student achievement and engagement. For example, Fine Art has partnered with Family and Consumer Science to focus upon the similarity of the creative and reflective practices used in both disciplines; and World Language has partnered with English, Social Studies, and Library to focus upon the research process used by all disciplines. Our approach highlighted above has valued teacher voice, choice and individualized PD based upon the unique needs of each of our 27 PLCs.

During the pandemic when the Kirkwood School District pivoted to virtual/zoom learning, we also adjusted our instructional schedule by adding almost 50 minutes of common PLC time three times per week to provide teachers with the time and structure to collaborate, reduce learning outcomes to essential understandings, and standardize virtual/zoom lessons and assessments which abbreviated and distance learning necessitated.

4. School Leadership:

Leaders of learning at Kirkwood High School challenge the “status quo” of learning (administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community members). As catalysts of change, they engage in the process of continuous improvement, through the collaborative development of shared ideals and beliefs about learning. All leadership teams at KHS exhibit behaviors, actions, and mindsets that are directed toward progress in the best interest of students. Every action, every day, begins with students being at the forefront.

The Kirkwood High School learning community concertedly develops, articulates, implements, and stewards a vision of learning while providing the necessary resources, processes, structures, and time to ensure the KHS motto of “every student, every day” becomes a reality. School leadership at KHS includes interconnected teams focused on student-centered building wide goals, systems thinking, effective communication, trust, and supportive relationships. KHS teams include: administrative team (head principal, assistant principals, alternative learning assistant principal, and special education area coordinator), learning team leaders (department chairs and Pioneer Learning Community leaders), parent organization (Pioneer Parent Organization) and student class officers/leaders.

A building level learning system in which a human component and relationships come first as well as problem-solving being the norm is in place. The building improvement goals align with district goals/initiatives (modeled after the five pillars of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education continuous improvement system - leadership, collaborative climate and culture, effective teaching and learning, data based decision making, and alignment of standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment). KHS teams meet together regularly to “map the journey” for student success. Long term and short term goals are established with action steps and check points put into place to monitor and adjust as needed. The paths are collaboratively paved and a learning culture is sustained through the leadership of the head principal who has an innate ability to model and cultivate an environment where taking risks, asking questions, voicing possible solutions, and learning together is held in high regard. An inclusive, instructional leadership approach allows for continuous improvement to be achieved at Kirkwood High School.

This culture of learning, in which the ecosystem focuses on student efficacy/agency as well as collective teacher efficacy, is the vehicle that allows for students at KHS to recognize, own, and drive their own success in learning. While the whole school learning community is instrumental in ensuring this occurs, the rubber hits the road with the work of the Pioneer Learning Communities (teacher teams) who meet, at a minimum, weekly to increase their collective teaching capacity through data based decision making in order to enhance student learning capacity. They collaboratively plan with explicit academic, physical, and emotional needs in mind as they teach and assess the intended curriculum.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

As a district, Kirkwood educators engaged in professional development with Dr. Sharroky Hollie around his pedagogy on Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning. As a building, it was the expectation for KHS staff to apply the methods and practices that they received in this training within their academic spaces. Curriculum and practices have been reviewed and refined to be more equitable and inclusive. A major part of this is creating a sense of belonging for our diverse groups within the Kirkwood High School community. Affinity groups are a part of our school. These groups include focuses on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and social justice. Our affinity groups allow our students to have safe spaces to share common experiences while also sharing with the greater school community. These groups also provide a resource for high school administration to gauge areas of concern within our diverse groups. Affinity groups have presented at faculty meetings over the years to broaden awareness for our staff. We are currently in the planning phase of creating affinity groups for our parents so that we can duplicate the relationships that we have with our students. We work to make sure that all groups are represented within our school but we are aware a group such as this will strengthen the connection. We have a similar group for our educators, Kirkwood Teachers of Color (KTOC). This group consists of all teachers within the district that identify as a person of color or BIPOC. Within this group, educators are provided support and professional development that is geared for their unique needs. This is an important step in the retention of diverse staff. This group is important because there is an understanding that the students of KHS need to see educators who represent all groups in

our building. KHS KTOC has partnered with KSD central office administrators to present minority networking events to increase diversity within our staff. These events have been instrumental in gaining more teachers of color within the KHS staff.

Kirkwood High School encourages our students to be empowered to speak out about current events. We give them the voices to share their stances. Our students have presented forums and presentations in addition to editorials in our publications. We feel that we are charged with preparing socially conscious young adults and we must give them the platform to do so.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The implementation of Pioneer Learning Communities (with fidelity) has afforded KHS teachers and students resources to meet their optimal learning potential and transfer their knowledge to new levels through challenging, engaging, and authentic experiences. KHS teachers “keep the end in mind,” future readiness, as they map out learning intentions for kids. They create experiences in which pathways are uncovered as they work collaboratively with those creating and taking the journeys to ease any anxieties that might develop moving into one’s zone of proximal learning. Highly effective teaching and learning occurs as they put the necessary tools in place.

Students and their learning are the “why” of what we do at KHS; however, universal teacher learning and growing is “how” we get there - it’s Kirkwood High School’s strategy for academic success. In the age of future readiness initiatives, global citizenship advocacy, and pandemic learning, KHS teachers facilitate learning by knowing students’ readiness level, learning style, social-emotional needs, and background experiences. They are prepared to accelerate/compact learning due to gaps resulting from learning in the age of COVID-19. KHS teachers act as pioneer guides: student well-being is their focus, progress in learning is non-negotiable, and building student agency for life is their end goal. KHS pioneers develop resilience, determination, and perseverance as they cultivate the necessary resources, skills, and hardiness to tackle life’s journeys.

Using priority standards, road maps are created for students to navigate their own learning while uncovering/discovering their next steps by setting advantageous goals, initiating action toward those goals, reflecting on and revising past steps, and embracing internal locus of control. Students engage in ongoing, open dialogue and analyze from all angles the directions they have followed/future steps they will take. Paths are research-based and strategies needed to successfully make their climbs are readily available for all participating in the adventure (both teachers and students).

Collective teacher efficacy at KHS provides for cooperative reflection on the journeys that are being taken. This reflection is an analysis of challenges that exist, and acts as a means of celebrating successes using data based decisions related to formative and/or summative assessments. Teachers and students embrace the opportunity to change routes, gather new resources, or speed up their adventure when deemed essential to do so. No matter the length of the journey, each student engaged in effective teaching and learning at KHS reaches the destination they personally map out. Teachers utilize their own best practices, as well as those shared by their colleagues, to enhance academic success. As pioneer guides, teachers walk and learn side by side with each other and their students on their learning journeys - Pioneers at KHS are ready for their future destinations. This is the goal of our Pioneer Learning Communities.