

***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 Mr. Robert Griffiths III  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

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

School Mailing Address 675 Lewis Center Road  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Lewis Center State OH Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 43035-9049

County Delaware County

Telephone (740) 657-4100 Fax (740) 657-4199

Web site/URL https://ohs.olentangy.k12.oh.us E-mail Robert\_Griffiths@olsd.us

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\* Mr. Mark Raiff E-mail Mark\_Raiff@olsd.us  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Olentangy Local School District Tel. (740) 657-4050

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson Mr. Kevin O'Brien  
(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):
- 16 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 5 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 4 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 25 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	247	179	426
10	184	218	402
11	216	207	423
12 or higher	216	198	414
<b>Total Students</b>	863	802	1665

\*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 15 % Asian
  - 4.4 % Black or African American
  - 3.5 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0.2 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 72 % White
  - 4.9 % 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.

<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	15
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	10
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	25
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	1665
(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):
- Akan, Amharic, Arabic, Bengali, Cantonese, Chinese, Filipino, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Malayalam, Mandarin, Marathi, Panjabi, Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tamil, Telugu, Thai, TUR, Twi, Urdu, Uzbek, Vietnamese

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

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

Total number students who qualify: 119

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 11 %  
180 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>8</u> Autism                  | <u>30</u> Multiple Disabilities                |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>2</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>70</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>5</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>50</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>9</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>5</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: 5
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	5
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	92
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	10
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	15
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	10

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 24:1

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

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	414
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	91%
Enrolled in a community college	3%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	1%
Found employment	2%
Joined the military or other public service	1%
Other	2%

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. 2000

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

Olentangy High School's mission is to uphold the district mission to facilitate maximum learning for all students. We strive to provide opportunities for our students to find their passion and demonstrate the BRAVE character traits. Maintaining Balance in their lives, being Resilient in overcoming setbacks, maintaining a positive Attitude, Valuing themselves and others, and demonstrating Empathy for others.

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

<https://go.boarddocs.com/oh/olenoh/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#>

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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Olentangy High School (OHS) will be celebrating its sixty-eighth graduating class this year. Not only has Olentangy stood the test of time, but staff have battled through the growing pains from a one school town to a four high school district. Olentangy High School opened in 1990 becoming the first separate building from the original K-12 building that still houses a middle school. The district continued to grow and added multiple elementary schools and the second middle school; and, then in 2003 the second-high school opened. The students did not want to be split from friends, but a rivalry was soon built as the dust settled from the split, and the river became the division in the district. In the 2008 school year, the district became a three high school district. Again, Olentangy High School was greatly affected by the redistricting and lost a large number of students. There was a change though, it was now kind of cool to go to a new high school and leave the old one behind. The year 2018 brought the most recent change in which Olentangy was split for the third time sending a great number of students to the new school up North. In January, 2017 the students came back from winter break and they enjoyed showing off the new clothes that they got. Knowing that the split was coming, spirit wear from the new school was what all of the students were wearing. This caused a division that had happened twice before, not only in the school with the students, but with parents as well. Through all of the growth and turmoil created by dividing up lifelong friends and splitting neighborhoods, stood Olentangy High School. Now self-nicknamed, Main Campus, or The Original, Olentangy continues to thrive.

The school continued to be successful in academics, and athletics, and Olentangy rose to the occasion. The community rallied around the students that stayed at Main Campus. They loved their Braves and supported them at every event. Other schools that have that small-town feel, where everyone supports the school and athletic teams. Olentangy does not have a town square for everyone to rally around, but that does not matter. This community has showed the grit and determination that they will pull together and support the students that attend Olentangy High School. OHS continues to grow because farms are being sold to developers, because people are still moving here for the schools, and because they want the best education for their children and know they will get that at Olentangy High School.

In school, the staff continued to rally around the students that were remaining on at The Original. They were not getting the shiny new school building, but they were going to get the best education that everyone here has to offer. The one thing that those shiny new schools could not give their students is the history that the Olentangy High School has to offer. Walk through Alumni hallway where every composite since the graduating class of 1954 is hung, and see pictures of what our famous Alumni looked like when they were here. Famous athletes, performers, and successful business people once walked these hallways, and the future famous alumni are walking them today. OHS started the tradition of the marching band parading through the hallways on home football Friday nights, and then the students pack the stadium for the games. Yes, Olentangy has changed, now having four high schools, five middle schools, and sixteen elementary schools, but the Olentangy High School still strives to be the best in every way every day.

## **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:**

The staff at Olentangy High School works collaboratively to develop the best possible lessons and outcomes for students as you will see across many of the departments. They work together to create top notch lessons to help our students learn. They care deeply about the success of the students and are willing to share their work with each other, and analyze the success or need for improvement of lessons to share within departments and across the building and district. The staff works hard to create real experiences within the classroom so that the students will take more than the knowledge of the lesson, but the ability to apply that knowledge in a new situations that they encounter. The grades of students are important, and they reflect knowledge of the content rather than just the ability to do well in school. Our professional development focuses on social emotional learning and student agency have been valuable over the past few years. We focus on the whole child. Teachers have worked to encourage the students not only to be responsible for their own learning, but to make decisions on how they learn the content. We have scaffolded our professional development over the past four or five years, so that our staff can look back and see where we have come from. We have focused our attention on the district’s portrait of a learner and the character traits of who we want our students to be when they graduate. The portrait of a learner starts with being purposeful. Learners know what matters to them and have a clear sense of who they are and their actions are intentional. Our learners are resilient. The students can bounce back from adversity and understand that failure is a part of the process. We want our learners to be curious, too seek solutions to problems, ask questions, and to think critically and creatively to solve problems. Finally, we want our learners to be kind. While working collaboratively they bring out the best in others and respect different points of view. These characteristics of a graduate from Olentangy High School drive our philosophies in the classroom.

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

The English department at OHS has addressed the new reality of school through a shift in classroom procedures to focus on the mental health of our students and a focus on summative assessments that reflect learning and work over time. In contrast to previous practices prior to the pandemic, the department has incorporated standards-based grading in an effort to develop competency in the skills we value, with the option for students to continually grow rather than tests and quizzes that are a snapshot of a moment in their learning. In an effort to meet students where they are, the school has also implemented different classroom procedures to help students regain some proficiency in skills in which they have been out of practice. For example, many of our students showed a lack of stamina in their ability to sustain reading for an extended period of time, so we have implemented 10-minute periods of reading during the week. The students can choose what they read on during some periods, and during others they spend time doing assigned reading. Through student choice, we hope to encourage reading outside of school while still providing opportunities for intentional time with rigorous texts. OHS approach to writing is tied up in a similar student-centered approach. The focus on the writing process has yielded partnership with students in their writing. Through conferencing and the focus on standards rather than scores and grades, we have seen more student buy-in to writing. Whether it be narrative or rhetorical analysis, students care more about what they write because they are tracking their own growth along with the teachers. One shift that makes so much of this possible came out of adjustments made during the pandemic. Through remote learning and hybrid instruction, the school’s proficiency with Schoology improved, and we now have shifted most of the assignments online. We are doing the assignments in class, but if a student misses a day, everything is already online, so the catch-up period and process is streamlined for students and their families. Online assignments, and reading also creates more transparency for parents who can always check what their students are learning and contact us if they have any questions. The changes that the pandemic brought to school have, with time, shown staff different and needed ways to reach our students. Slowing down and partnering with students to persist for mastery rather than rushing through units crammed into a school year has shown staff what learning and mastery is possible. Partnering with students to focus on their growth has helped staff be more

in tune with students' mental health. The ways the pandemic interrupted students' lives impacted all of them differently, and this slowing down also showed staff the different ways they need to be there for students.

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

In the mathematics department, the learning standards are addressed by teachers collaboratively to determine the best pedagogy and instructional materials that should be implemented to ensure maximum student learning. OHS follows Ohio learning standards and the mathematical practices within our curriculum maps. Essential questions, enduring understandings, and non-routine problem solving are a focus of the standards for high level, rigorous expectations. OHS offers a wide range of courses, including the traditional math courses, but also elective and advanced placement courses, such as Discrete Math, Data Science Foundations, Advanced Placement (AP) Calculus, and AP Statistics. OHS also offers varied levels of courses through the use of double block and honors distinction, as well as intermediate courses, such as intro to algebra 2 and algebra 3, to best meet students where they are in their learning and provide a rich learning experience for all students.

Teachers have had to differentiate more in the last two years during the pandemic than ever before. Teachers have met their students where they are in their learning and supported them through individualized instruction, assignments, and the use of technology. Students feel supported and know that while everyone may not have the same gaps or deficiencies; however, all of the school is focused on learning. Teachers use computer software programs to individually assign tasks for students to fill their gaps in knowledge and strengthen their deficiencies. Teachers have adapted to include instructional and planning opportunities that were learned during the pandemic. Video lessons offer inclusive opportunities for students to be part of the lesson, if absent, and offer a resource for students to hear instruction again and refine notes. Teachers implement resources that provide immediate feedback.

Teachers use formative assessments to help students realize what they understand and what they still need to learn. Students are taught to self-assess and to advocate for their learning. Learning continues throughout the school year, so students have opportunities to show they have mastered the course content throughout the school year. Teachers use classroom assessments, as well as curriculum based assessments to drive instruction. Results are analyzed for strength and weakness patterns to improve and focus instruction.

Students are required to think in the mathematics curriculum where the complexity of problem solving continues to build throughout the school year and throughout the students' high school experiences. Teachers are there to be facilitators as students question, collaborate, and explore tasks that require them to use their mathematical skills as well as thinking skills to solve. Students are given problems that have multiple points of entry and multiple ways to solve to encourage them to be able to see the same content from many different perspectives. Students are expected to justify their work and support it with written explanations and symbolic/graphical representations.

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

All science instruction starts with collaboratively written, frequently revised learning objectives based on state and national standards. Students perform laboratory experiments or observe teacher demonstrations at the start of a unit in order to build scientific models that are then deployed and revised as the unit progresses. Hands-on work is used in a unit cycle and predominantly as a tool for inquiry as opposed to verification. This cycle of development and deployment is based on the Modeling Method which is nationally recognized as an effective method of science instruction.

The department uses both tiered and differentiated instructional approaches to ensure quality learning experiences and outcomes for all students. Introductory, intermediate, and advanced courses in a variety of disciplines are offered. Within each course instructors use approaches such as goalless problems, optional extra practice, enrichment activities, one-on-one coaching, and peer instruction. Many department members use voice and choice options where students decide how to build and demonstrate their content mastery.

Teachers have autonomy to use instructional strategies that suit them and their students, such as computer-

based practice and assessments, analog or digital data collection, collaborative presentations and discussions using whiteboards, as well as intentional and random grouping of students. As students progress through the department, they are exposed to many different teaching techniques.

Data analysis tools (both student and teacher records) are used to identify groups that need more instruction on specific learning objectives. Those groups of students are re-taught and given the opportunity to re-assess. These tools also inform teachers in reviewing and revising teaching strategies as well as identifying students in need of enrichment or remediation.

Materials developed during the height of the pandemic, virtual labs, instructional videos, online discussion and assessment tools, are still in use as supportive materials for all students.

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

Social Studies teachers at OHS begin the process of unit planning by first analyzing the academic content standards established by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) and also utilizing teacher-designed curriculum blueprints created at the district-level. ODE standards are instrumental in determining what knowledge students must establish and the curriculum blueprints help teachers work towards long-term skill development and transfer goals.

After the essential knowledge and skills have been determined, the teachers begin designing formative and summative assessments that will be used throughout the unit. Summative assessments are designed to measure student understanding of knowledge and skills required by state and district standards in an authentic manner that involves real-world applicability. This includes primary and secondary source analysis, evaluation of source reliability, the development of an argument, and supporting an argument using accurate and relevant evidence. Formative assessments are implemented on a regular basis to monitor student learning and drive instructional practices. These assessments may take the form of entrance/exit slips, interactive presentations that require students to submit responses electronically (Pear Deck), and asking students to rate their own level of understanding at various points throughout the unit.

The final step in the curriculum, instruction, and assessment design process for social studies teachers is to develop the instructional practices that will be utilized throughout the unit. Teachers consider what knowledge and skills students need to develop in order to meet the established learning objectives, and then design instructional practices to facilitate the development of that knowledge and skills. This will involve a wide array of instructional practices, including student-centered learning that provides opportunities for student voice and choice, collaborative learning that fosters the development of healthy relationships while building deeper understanding of core content, and lessons that emphasize the development of historical thinking skills. The emphasis on historical thinking skills has been a focal point for the department in recent years with efforts made to ensure the continued development of these skills through students' high school social studies experience.

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

Preparing OHS students for the careers of their choosing – no matter the domain - is paramount to what staff do each day. For students wishing to go to a traditional four-year university, OHS is fortunate to offer students several supports. First is the standard college-prep curriculum. While some courses are required, this curriculum otherwise proposes: 13 options for Business; 19 English courses; nine (9) courses in the Family & Consumer Sciences; nine (9) Industrial-Arts courses; 16 Math classes; 17 Performing Arts courses; eight (8) options for Physical Education; 11 different Science classes; 10 Social Studies courses, 30 Visual Arts options; and 12 World Language courses. Beyond those courses, OHS offers 25 Advanced Placement courses across those content areas, in which 620 students are enrolled taking a total of 1,344 exams. Students can also take advantage of OHS partnerships with local colleges and universities – and about 12% of them do. Participating in these college courses affords students the chance to graduate early, obtain a full Associate's Degree, or enter directly into a four-year university with enough credits to be a second-semester Freshman or even a Sophomore.

Additionally, students benefit from many “in-house” programs sponsored by the District. Science and Math students can attend a Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) school; students looking toward education can participate in a Teacher Academy, and OHS has a dozen students who participate in the ROTC (Reserve Officer’s Training Corp) Program.

Students interested in entering the workforce after high school have the possibility to cross-enroll in the Delaware Area Career Center (DACC), where they can choose from a diverse sampling of programs, ranging from diesel-engine mechanics to firefighting and cyber security. Students at DACC often leave their programs fully certified in their chosen area and ready to be employed, having benefited from unique internship opportunities and community partnerships.

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

**2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

Art I, is a prerequisite to all studio courses. OHS offers eight studio courses: Drawing, Painting, Sculpture, Ceramics, Jewelry, Digital Art and Design, Modeling and Animation, and Photography. Each studio course has four levels. OHS also offers an AP Art History.

Since students of all levels of experience and abilities take the course, teachers use pre-assessments to determine each student's needs. Differentiation is utilized to help each student reach their own goals and potential. In the digital courses, staff are using the most relevant and updated technology to ensure students are prepared for higher education and careers in these fields.

Students have opportunities to compete in art contests throughout the school year. Students compete locally and at the state and national levels. The state and national level competitions offer students resume development, scholarships, and admission opportunities.

Student agency is encouraged and increases as students reach upper-level courses when the students begin to focus on personal artistic voice and goals.

In Health, OHS supports students in the development of life skills. The units contain information that students can use for life after high school. OHS teaches cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), strategies to cope with stress, and how to reduce heart disease or stroke. Staff discuss the importance of exercise and nutrition and how it impacts students on a daily basis. Staff also talk about human reproduction, relationships, healthy dating, and how to interact socially with people from different backgrounds. OHS has begun to implement a self-defense curriculum. Staff consistently try to meet the needs of all students by giving them the tools they need to be successful in the future.

In a physical education setting, the goal is to teach the importance of exercise and the impact that it can have on you physically and mentally. OHS classes develop exercise plans and execute them throughout the semester. Students see first-hand how beneficial exercise and physical activity is on the body and mind. By offering different these options, OHS is able to utilize student agency and give students a choice. The goal is that the students find at least one activity that they will continue to participate in after high school.

Along with creating an understanding and acceptance of other cultures, World Languages help broaden vocabulary in English and help with understanding grammar to improve and enrich students’ writing and literature interpretations in English. The cross disciplinary applications also include critical thinking and problem solving skills used in Math and Science. World Language helps students understand and operate in a more connected world.

All students have the opportunity to learn digital citizenship skills through project-based research projects, where they are taught problem solving, critical thinking, source analysis, and collaboration skills.

Students have access to chromebooks, iPads, smart TV's, and various online programs to help meet their educational needs students are taught how to use various apps and technology programs to showcase their understanding and present their work across the curriculum.

### **3. Academic Supports**

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

At Olentangy High School we are supporting the lowest achieving math students via the implementation of an Algebra Double-Block class. Students are identified via teacher referrals, state test scores, and Aimsweb Plus data, as well as being statistically unlikely to score at a proficient level on the Algebra Ohio State Test (OST). Students have two class periods for the Algebra I class instead of the typical single period. On a student's transcript, it appears as both the Algebra I class and a half-credit, yearlong lab course. In reality, it functions as a way OHS can provide additional support to students struggling most in math. Using Aimsweb Plus data, collected three times per year, staff can generate specific plans for students to target areas of need and the double-block allows staff to dig deeply into the Algebra I curriculum, while conducting a spiral review of prerequisite concepts students need to be successful. Staff structure this class in two discrete periods as opposed to back-to-back periods because it gives students, whose favorite subject is not math, a brain break before continuing to work through the content.

The group size typically sits below twenty, and the teacher is occupied for two periods, making it expensive and inefficient to staff. OHS made a conscious decision to devote resources to the incoming freshmen in this way after experimenting with double-blocks in Geometry and Algebra II. Staff felt that giving students the best basis in algebraic thinking makes them successful in their other math classes. Aimsweb Plus data supports this method of intervention for all the students in the double-block are ALL now projected to be proficient on the OST.

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

Olentangy has thirty-five percent gifted population in math, thirty-two percent in English, twenty-nine percent in science, and twenty-five percent in social studies. Identifying students in their gifted areas takes place throughout their careers in the Olentangy School District. At Olentangy High School, we have adapted the schedule to accommodate students that attend the feeder middle schools so if students are accelerated in an area, they are able to attend a higher-level class at the high school. This allows students who are accelerated to move up to high school classes at their own pace. It is not dictated by the grade that they are enrolled. For students who are accelerated, OHS offers many ways for students to continue an acceleration pathway. Students can accelerate through doubling up on honors courses, or taking one honors course at a time. Honors courses are offered in all of the core classes and are taught at an accelerated pace. OHS offers Advanced Placement courses for students who would like to attempt to earn college credit by scoring well on the Advanced Placement exams. Again, the Advanced Placement courses are accelerated and are geared to helping the students achieve success on the exams. Finally, OHS has partnered with multiple universities to offer College Credit Plus courses. This is a great opportunity for students that want to start earning college credit, or if they have surpassed the offerings at OHS to continue to grow as a student while earning the dual credit for both high school and college. OHS will have an accelerated graduate this year who will earn a high school diploma two years early and also earn an associate's degree. The opportunity to accelerate at Olentangy High School allows students like this to move on to the next great thing that they will accomplish.

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

Olentangy High School offers a broad continuum of services to serve our students with specialized education plans. At a base level, OHS offers study center periods every period of the day to provide small group support and intervention for students. The intervention specialists chose to forgo a traditional collaboration period that our other departments enjoy to provide additional periods of study center for students and keep groups smaller, with averages sitting between eight and ten students per class. This allows them to provide more intensive and individualized instruction to their students.

OHS offers co-taught classes in English, Math, and Science. In these classes, both a general education teacher and intervention specialist collaborate to provide specialized instruction and a higher degree of support to students. To provide further specialized instruction in the area of math, OHS schedules a Math Lab period for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) who need them. This allows staff to pre-teach, re-teach, and otherwise provide additional minutes of math instruction for students who are achieving below grade level. To support students in reading, Olentangy High School has a robust Orton-Gillingham (OG) multisensory reading program. As the first district in the country to have an OG accredited training program for staff, OHS ensures that teachers have the tools they need to reach struggling readers. Intervention Specialists attend training in the summer following their hiring so that they have the skills to meet student needs in small groups or one-on-one.

On the most intensive end of the spectrum, OHS has specialized learning center classrooms. OHS has both a Cross-Categorical class and one that specializes in Autism Spectrum Disorder and Emotional Disturbances. These classrooms provide both small group instruction in the smaller classes and support in the general education classroom with multiple intervention specialists and paraprofessionals trained in a variety of services and specialties.

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

Based on Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment (OELPA) scores, OHS offers a variety of support for English Language Learners. OHS couples small group English classes specifically for ELL students with English Language Development courses to better facilitate students, as they learn how to read, write, listen, and speak English at greater levels of proficiency. These classes are available at beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels depending on the level of student need. These classes are taught by a teacher with an endorsement in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), and are further supported by a bilingual aide and specialized study halls with small groups. There is also additional support tailored to the ELL population to help them be more successful with general curriculum requirements. OHS will also be offering push-in services beginning with next year's master schedule where the TESOL-certified teacher will be available to co-teach typical English classes for students transitioning out of the ELL English classes and into the mainstream curriculum.

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

Olentangy High School offers academic support to students whose current life situation dictates a different approach than what is traditionally offered in a regular school day. The categories of these special situations that require a different academic approach may include: 1) Students with circumstances that affect their home life, 2) Students with medical/mental health issues, or 3) Students who have a special talent or activity that conflicts with attending school in a traditional fashion.

For each student's individual situation, the assigned guidance counselor completes an initial assessment, and then confers with their assigned assistant principal to develop the specialized academic support that may help the student to be successful. If the interventions are not successful, students will be referred formally through our school psychologist.

Academic strategies that staff may possibly use to help student success are: schedule adjustment, dropping non-essential classes, or reducing the school day. Student's may also take classes using "Apex" software which switches the delivery method of instruction from the traditional approach to an online model for credit recovery. At-risk students may also be placed with a tutor in the academic success center. For some students, particularly with specialized talents, taking classes at a local community college through the college credit plus program may be a part of their academic plan.

For students that need additional academic support for potential issues affecting their academic performance referrals may be made to the following areas: Mental Health/Social Emotional referral to our Social Workers;

School Nurse, and Student Resource Officer.

All stakeholders including parents/guardians are included throughout the process. Communication with teachers, counselors, and administrators are important to determining a successful path for each student.

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

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

Making OHS students feel included and a part of their school community is a task that staff are very passionate about and take seriously. In our opening class meetings, staff tell every student that our goal is to help students find their passions. Staff impress upon them that we offer an abundance of electives, clubs, and safe spaces, and we want them to take advantage of these opportunities that we provide for them. The message to our students is to fill their funnels and find out what they are most interested in or passionate about; so, that when they graduate from OHS, students may have a better idea of a future major in college, career, hobby, or pastime.

In addition to the courses and encouraging students to take a variety of electives, staff emphasize that our students should become involved in an activity. This could be being involved in one of OHS 28 sports, competitive cheer, Esports, band, orchestra, choir, show choirs, class cabinets, student government, or numerous other clubs. If a club does not exist, staff encourages students to create the club. Again, staff want students to be involved and take ownership of their high school experiences, are engaged and feel included. These past few weeks have been a glowing endorsement of positive student engagement as our OHS Student Council held a Spirit Week to celebrate our upcoming prom. This provided students and staff an opportunity to participate by dressing up on the designated days and ended the week with a school wide pep rally. Having these extracurriculars that students can participate in provides students with positive opportunities to engage with their peers and be positive representatives of the Olentangy High School community. During remote or hybrid learning, it was difficult to hold many club meetings or spirit weeks; but, through creativity we were able to overcome some of these obstacles. OHS held virtual club meetings, still held spirit weeks, but had students submit pictures via email to student leadership, and were able to watch and support OHS sport teams, bands, choirs, and orchestra through online links.

Again, making students feel connected and engaged is a priority; but what truly makes them feel a part of the Olentangy High School community is our common commitment to being BRAVE. This is a Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) initiative and it is our core belief. OHS has created a common language in which students know and can define what being Brave is and what being Brave looks like. If you are being Brave, you have balance in your life, are resilient, have a positive attitude, value yourself, others, and our things, and are empathetic. OHS celebrates our students when staff see them being BRAVE by giving them Bravo Braves (shout-outs that acknowledge their positive behavior) and nominating them for student of the month. This common language, initiative and acknowledgment has created a positive culture for students. Students take pride in being B.R.A.V.E. and being a part of the Brave family.

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

Olentangy High School engages the community in multiple ways to benefit students. The district has developed multiple relationships with many of the local universities to provide college credit for students. OHS worked with a local university to provide a teacher academy for students of color an opportunity to receive a scholarship if they major in education at this institution. Along with college credit plus, OHS has a relationship with Ohio State University to run the weight and athletic training programs for student athletes. OHS most recently added Mental Health personnel to the building which was also provided through our relationships with Ohio State. One of the most valuable relationships that OHS has in the building is with the Sheriff's department. OHS has a School Resource Officer (SRO) who is a liaison to the juvenile court as well as other county provided services.

OHS offers a mentorship course for students that allows them to explore different careers by shadowing professionals in their areas of interest. Staff has built a large number of relationships that has expanded to include doctors, dentists, engineers, and accountants. OHS has a positive relationship with some other business and entrepreneurs through the development of our National Business Honors Society. This group of students has speakers that come to share their experiences to the members of the club. Last year, they were approved by the national membership to be full members of the society.

In serving the community, OHS has a large membership in our student council, service, and environmental clubs that serve the community. They annually participate in a multitude of events to serve our local community. OHS hosts a blood drive for The American Red Cross as well as collect canned food for our local food pantry. We participate in the district events to feed Thanksgiving meals to needy families and help provide gifts to families that may not otherwise be able to afford them for the holidays. The most recent new relationship is called Neighborhood Bridges. This allows for teachers, counselors, or administrators that know a student has a particular need and items are donated anonymously.

OHS has partnerships with a couple of local businesses that provide services for our staff and students for athletic or special events. OHS also has a job fair in the spring and invites local business to come during lunches and hire students for summer employment.

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

OHS makes allocating resources to support our teachers a priority. One fundamental way that OHS accomplishes this is by setting a master schedule to allow for daily collaboration in each department. The size of the staff or external constraints on a school day, do not deter us from assuring a schedule that has this built-in daily collaboration. The Building Leadership Team is vital in steering each department's development. The Administrative Team, then, attends collaboration periods as the schedule will allow. The daily contact within departments allows teachers to solve problems together, align, calibrate, brainstorm, and to keep continual focus on the big picture and direction of the department. This is a beloved source of professionalism and support for teachers.

Additionally, the Administrative Team provides professional-learning opportunities throughout the year in alignment with goals set by the District. These "PD (professional development) Days" are led by the staff, which raises engagement and accountability. The Administrative Team acts as a support, but driving the learning is in the hands of the teachers. The facilitators assure all of the Professional Learning Days include breakout sessions and collaboration time so that teachers can walk away from each day with a tangible strategy or technique to use in class.

When OHS had to switch learning models, as the whole world did with COVID, the school was still able to guarantee maximal support. Last Fall, students had a chance to either return in a hybrid format or work through the year in a "CDL" model ("Committed Distance Learning"). Every family decided what was best for them. In either case, OHS was able to adjust our return-to-school calendar to allow for an extra two weeks of uninterrupted worktime, so that teachers could plan, collaborate, and compile resources to support students in both models. Additionally, the District leadership partnered with the Teachers' Association to create a formalized subcommittee, which led to amendments in contracts to assure maximal support and cooperation in unprecedented times.

Additional support modules for virtual teaching are available to staff on Schoology, the school's online platform. OHS uses Schoology to model professional learning, so that teachers can continue to use – and grow their comfort in using virtual platforms and pedagogy as blended learning will surely only continue to grow.

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

Officially, Olentangy High School uses a traditional leadership hierarchy with one head Principal, three Assistant Principals, an Athletic Director, and a building leadership team of teachers. The leadership team has structures in place, however, to collect input on all facets of school life from various stakeholders. The Principals host a Principal's Advisory Committee each quarter during lunch periods, inviting anyone and everyone who would like to share insight into the Olentangy experience and/or provide suggestions on how to enhance it. Parents are regularly invited and encouraged to provide feedback through online platforms. The team has even offered to pilot our district's new virtual tool, Possip, which solicits parent input each week on how the week has gone for them and their child, and what we, as a team, might need to consider. The leadership team sets aside time every afternoon to debrief and to reflect on improvement based on the

recurrent feedback we get from stakeholders.

On a day-to-day basis, the Principals divide up conventional responsibilities, such as testing, safety, evaluations, attendance, and duties related to special education. The three Assistant Principals are largely responsible for administering discipline, with the Head Principal serving as the neutral party to whom discipline appeals are made. Despite the official “divvying up” of duties and of the alphabet, what works best about the leadership team is that, practically speaking, we ultimately all collaborate about all students and all duties. Their team is in perpetual communication. We troubleshoot problems together, we tag team” discipline (for various reasons), we band together to support teachers and their needs, and, as mentioned, we find time each and every day to sit down, reflect, and plan.

The most important value that we uphold as a leadership team is answering this question in every situation: “is that what’s best for students?” Sometimes, this means giving students another chance before administering discipline because we know and care about that child in front of us; other times, it involves changing tangible items like the Master Schedule or space configurations in order to leverage time, resources, and teacher strengths. Often, answering that question leads us to revisiting day-to-day policies and procedures to create the safest environment possible, both physically and emotionally. Regardless of the circumstance, the leadership team remains one unified front in all instances; and, we communicate our passion for student well-being both explicitly and in every decision we make.

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

Culturally-responsive teaching can be found across the building both within and around the curriculum. In the course of study, OHS can cite the diversity of literature our students study across all grade levels. The in-depth analysis of novels, such as *Just Mercy* and *Beloved*, seeks to give a voice to African-American history as well as contemporary issues and struggles. Sophomores read the novel *There There*, which delves into Native American history and identity. Students explore poetry from Latin America, Asia, and the Middle East. If literature is an artifact from the culture that produces it, none of what the students read and analyze every day in classes can be understood without also discussing the history and the social context that the works represent. Consequently, students are well-versed in the cultural richness, struggles, triumphs, and contributions of peoples from around the globe, as well as from underrepresented communities in our own culture.

Moreover, the vast majority of students are actively enrolled in – or have passed through -- the school’s robust world-language curriculum. The paradigm has evolved over the past ten years to assure that all facets of language, in all levels, are taught through a cultural lens. In other words: culture comes first. In adopting this approach, the literary and artistic contributions, the history, the politics and current events, day-to-day life, social movements, and societal perceptions of the target cultures are placed at the very center of every unit. This exposure promotes being globally-minded, curious, and sensitive towards those whose experiences may differ from our students’.

Outside the curriculum, students have the opportunity to participate in numerous organizations, ranging from traditional cultural clubs (“Spanish Club” “Mandarin Chinese Club”) to groups that give a voice to alternative communities, such as our Diversity Club and Gender-Sexualities Alliance. These clubs actively seek to engage with their peers and the community, sponsoring events such as the Cultural Fair (open to families) as well as awareness weeks, days, and on-going forums to discuss social issues and current events. In addition to inviting families to participate in as many of these sponsored events as allowable, the school also provides supports for ethnically diverse families by way of multi-lingual options for our website and documents, inviting multi-lingual staff to facilitate gatherings and meetings, and by even providing community updates about upcoming holidays and timely cultural information through Pupil Services.

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

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The one practice that Olentangy High School does that is most instrumental in our success is that we prepare our students to be successful in the next stage of their lives. This sounds simple enough, but Olentangy High School is recognized across the country. Colleges and universities have accepted our students to attend their school and Olentangy students outperform others. A former student told us about her roommate in college. She was in class and the professor was lecturing and talks about Olentangy, this is a major university in another state. Other students have anecdotes about being in class and overhearing the panic in a student's voice when the professor assigns a five-paragraph essay on Monday and it is due on Friday. When asked why they were not worried, the response was I had to do those things in high school. OHS has students that move on to successful careers after high school as well. Many students leave with industry credentials and go right to work when they graduate.

How do we prepare students for success at the next level? Olentangy has high expectations for the students that attend here. Do not be mistaken, OHS has very talented students that walk in our building every day. They have the same expectations of us as we do of them. They expect to be challenged and pushed to be their best. Staff hold them accountable for all of the decisions that they make good or bad. Our students make a choice and they will be held accountable. You do poorly on an assessment, you face the consequences. You find success, you will be recognized for it as well. Finally, we love our students at Olentangy. Staff tell the students we love them, care about them, and want them to be successful. The food service staff, custodians, secretaries, and aides have high expectations, hold students accountable, and love them as well.

Olentangy High School is recognized as a top performing school in the annual U.S. News and World report and continues to rise in the rankings. When compared with other schools, we have no comparison. Other schools may have been split once or twice or redistricted for the addition of a new high school in a district, but the principal challenges that no high school across the country has been split three times and maintained the culture and community that Olentangy High school has.