

U.S. Department of Education
2016 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 Mr. Dave Hyatt

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

Official School Name William Mason High School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 6100 South Mason Montgomery Road

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Mason State OH Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 45040-3708

County Warren County

Telephone (513) 398-5025 Fax _____

Web site/URL http://www.masonohioschools.com E-mail contactmason@masonohioschools.com

Twitter Handle _____ Facebook Page https://www.facebook.com/mason
https://twitter.com/MasonSchools ohschools/ Google+ _____

YouTube/URL _____ Other Social Media
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeS23 Link _____
mbrYWH3F-oYHHfZ6Pg Blog _____

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. Gail Kist-Kline E-mail kistklineg@masonohioschools.com
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Mason City School District Tel. (513) 398-0474

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 Ms. Courtney Allen
(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, write N/A in the space.*

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. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The public school has met their state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) using the most recent accountability results available for the year prior to nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) for the year in which they are nominated (2015-2016) and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2010 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, or 2015.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
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. 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.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2015-2016) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 3 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 5 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- ☐ Urban or large central city
 - ☐ Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
 - ☒ Suburban
 - ☐ Small city or town in a rural area
 - ☐ Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2015 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

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	414	421	835
10	469	465	934
11	439	434	873
12 or higher	428	427	855
Total Students	1750	1747	3497

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 16 % Asian
 - 4 % Black or African American
 - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 75 % White
 - 3 % 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 2014 – 2015 school year: 11%

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, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	224
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	159
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	383
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	3513
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.109
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	11

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 2 %
61 Total number ELL

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

Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Fulani, Japanese, Mandarin, Micronesia, Swahili, Spanish, Tagalog, Tamil, Twi, Ukrainian, Urdu, Uzbek, Vietnamese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 9 %
Total number students who qualify: 314

8. Students receiving special education services: 10 %
341 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. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

<u>31</u> Autism	<u>3</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>96</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>138</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>21</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>3</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>2</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>5</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>25</u> Mental Retardation	<u>2</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>15</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	8
Classroom teachers	147
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	25
Paraprofessionals	34
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	27

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.

Required Information	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	95%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	99%	99%	100%	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 2015.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	788
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	78%
Enrolled in a community college	10%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	1%
Found employment	1%
Joined the military or other public service	1%
Other	9%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.
Yes X No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2001

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

We are committed to delivering: high impact learning so that all MHS students graduate prepared to thrive in the global economy; superb staff support so that every MHS student has great learning experiences; deep parent and community partnerships so that engaged parents and community members champion Mason teens.

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

PART III – SUMMARY

The Mason City School District serves a vibrant, mostly college-educated community in southwest Ohio - 22 miles northeast of Cincinnati and 30 miles south of Dayton. The 25 square mile suburban district is a destination for families desiring nationally ranked schools and culturally diverse neighbors. Mason residents deeply value education, and hold high expectations for our community's children and schools. Their expectations are reflected in the school district's commitment to provide a "consistently great" education for each student through highly qualified and dedicated educators, rigorous and relevant academics, and excellent enrichment opportunities.

The district's vision is "Growing Greatness Together!" That vision comes to life with powerful community partnerships including: innovative student internships with West Chester Hospital and Assurex Health (an innovative biotech firm specializing in pharmacogenomics); a 13-year joint venture between Fifth Third Bank and the student-run school bank where students annually manage over \$250,000 in student accounts; a thriving "grow our own" IT leaders initiative with Interalliance, an organization of regional tech innovators and IT professionals; collaboration with the City of Mason to build the Community Center and High School with many areas of shared use that jointly saved taxpayers approximately \$12 million in construction costs.

Family and community involvement greatly expands learning opportunities for our students. In its eight years of existence, the Mason Schools Foundation has provided over \$600,000 in grants to take students "above and beyond." These funds pay for programs that otherwise could not exist, and often spur innovation as Mason pioneers take risks and try new approaches. In addition, volunteerism by our booster clubs and families greatly supports student activities and school goals.

Mason High School has a tradition of excellence - and growth. In 1886, William Mason High School held its first commencement ceremony for seven graduates. Today, 130 years later, MHS is the largest high school in Ohio - educating about 3,500 students.

Mason High School is committed to growing critical thinkers, creators, collaborators, and communicators. The school strives to develop students' empathy and entrepreneurship, while giving students opportunities to explore and experiment. MHS has a strong college-preparatory curriculum that includes 17 honors courses (including Anatomy & Physiology, Financial Accounting, Microsoft Certification, Symphony Orchestra and Teacher Portfolio and Practicum) and 24 Advanced Placement courses. In 2015, MHS students scored an average composite of 25.8 on the ACT test, with 89 percent meeting or exceeding the ACT established college readiness benchmark for College English Composition, and 82 percent meeting or exceeding the ACT established college readiness benchmark for College Algebra.

MHS routinely ranks in the top 200 high schools nationally by Newsweek (144th in nation in 2015), earns the US News & World Report silver award, and has made the AP Honor Roll every year since the award's inception. The AP Honor Roll is a particular point of pride since it recognizes the school for simultaneously increasing access to Advanced Placement course work while increasing the percentage of students earning scores of 3 or higher on AP Exams. In 2015, there were 127 AP Scholars, 92 AP Scholars with Honors Awards, 166 AP Scholars with Distinction Awards, and 48 AP National Scholar Awards for a total of 433 Advanced Placement Scholars.

Nearly 18 percent of the Class of 2016 was recognized by the College Board for National Merit status. In 2015, Mason High School had 20 National Merit Finalists, 20 National Merit Semi-Finalists, 28 National Merit Commended Scholars and three National Hispanic Scholars.

Mason High School cultivates the talents each student brings to school by offering students opportunities inside and outside the classroom to explore their passions and take control of their own learning. MHS students lead and learn through a student-run charity (Comet Cares), student-run bank (Comet Savings & Loan), a student-run store (Comet Zone), a student-run website (Masoncomets.org) student-run media outlets (The Chronicle, Comet Student Press Network, Mason Broadcasting Company), internships, and community service that includes raising over \$70,000 in 2015-16 for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, the Mason Food Pantry, and a myriad of other causes close to student leaders' hearts.

In addition, 45 percent of students participate in the school's 68 athletic teams for 27 sports. Fifty-two percent of students participate in the school's nationally recognized band, orchestra, visual arts, choral and drama programs. And, 57 percent of students participate in over 70 school-sponsored clubs or activities including ACM/Robotics, Mock Trial, Model UN, National History Day, Science Olympiad, Speech and Debate, Future Teachers, Investment Club, MC2rd Rubik's Cube, Radio Club, Shakespeare Society, Spoken Word, Women In Engineering, Writer's Block, Art Club, Drama Club, NoteOrious, Photo Club, MHS Student Government, Chinese/French/German/Spanish National Honor Societies, National Honor Society, Science National Honor Society, Ambassadors, Key Club, Mentoring Mason Men, Culinary Club, Games of Strategy, Knitting Club, Japanese Animation & Culture, Comet Skippers, Paintball, Ultimate Frisbee and Waterpolo.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

The curricular focus at MHS centers on college and career readiness through a rigorous program of standards-driven core academic courses complemented by electives and experiences that provide rich opportunities to explore students' interests, hopes and dreams. Ninety-five percent of entering ninth graders have earned high school credit at the middle school level, opening up high school scheduling options for honors, Advanced Placement (AP), and college courses that offer increased levels of rigor. In 2015-16, 46 percent of students are enrolled in honors-level core academic courses, and 42 percent of all sophomores, juniors, and seniors enrolled in one or more AP courses. In fact, 1,089 students took 2,144 AP exams last year. These numbers indicate that a high percentage of MHS students embrace the challenge of college readiness by participating in rigorous courses.

Mason High School's curriculum builds from Ohio's Learning Standards. Teachers "deconstruct" the standards, identify essential knowledge and skills, and sequence the content into courses to achieve vertical articulation. Each course contains standards-driven units of study with clear learning outcomes and engaging instructional activities, with particular suggestions to provide classroom differentiation for enrichment and intervention. Core academic courses also have common assessments that teachers can use to identify students' progress toward essential knowledge and skills. This approach allows the students to acquire foundational skills as well as opportunities to stretch understanding through rigorous application and analysis.

English Language Arts: Core English courses are offered for each year of high school at grade-level and honors level. These courses are designed around Ohio's Learning Standards with an emphasis on college and career readiness standards for reading, writing, listening and speaking. Reading selections include literature and informational texts. Students complete informational, argumentative, narrative, and literary analysis assignments. In addition to the core courses, students have opportunities to take two AP courses in the junior and senior years. High-interest electives include speech and debate; creative writing; visual literacy; journalism; best sellers; and Word from the Wild: Environmental Literature.

Mathematics: Many middle school students enroll in honors-level mathematics with advanced content, including Algebra and geometry for high school credit. This creates more opportunity for students to take advanced-level courses resulting in 14 percent of MHS students completing at least one AP or college credit math course. Honors-level experiences are offered for each mathematics course from geometry to pre-calculus. AP calculus, statistics, and computer science offer advanced learning opportunities. Two college courses in linear Algebra and differential equations are taught on-site by a visiting professor for transcribed college credit. All courses are organized into standards-driven units of study with "I-Can" statements that help students understand learning goals and track their progress.

Science: Nineteen science courses offer students rich experiences centered around Ohio's Learning Standards for Science. Foundational skills are integrated into every course through the scientific inquiry/learning cycle with attention to achieving appropriate depth of content and cognitive demand. AP courses include biology, chemistry, physics, physics--mechanics, and physics--electricity and magnetism. Students can also choose elective courses in forensics, zoology, environmental science, and astronomy/meteorology. A biomedical sciences program includes a sequence of courses that prepares students for careers in the biomedical field.

Social Studies/History: Anchored around Ohio's Learning Standards for Social Studies, MHS social studies courses stress the foundational skills of historical thinking, spatial thinking, civic participation, economic decision-making, and financial literacy. World and American history, government, and economics lead to AP courses in American history, European history, government, psychology, microeconomics and macroeconomics. Students can choose from electives in law and criminal justice, and global issues.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Applied Technology

The MHS Applied Technology Department offers Computer-Aided Design (CAD), Advanced CAD Engineering CAD, Architecture CAD, and Computer-Aided Manufacturing (CAM) (1-3) for elective credit for all grade levels. CAD and CAM experience before students reach college is important for students interested in STEM careers, and guides students' ability to model, adapt and develop ideas using their science and math skills, engage in three-dimensional visualization and design (students employ a commercial 3D printer), and develop an understanding of the need for quality and precision in making things.

Business Education

The MHS Business Department is a leader in providing students with real-world experiences and ways to apply their learning in work contexts. Students in grades 9-12 enroll in Microsoft Office Certification, Honors Microsoft Office Certification, Financial Literacy, Accounting I, Honors Financial Accounting, Entrepreneurs in Action, Online Entrepreneurs in Action, Small Business Management Internship, Introduction to Web Design, Website Design and Management, Banking & Investments, Integrated Media Internship, Comet Savings & Loan, and Mason Innovation Lab (student-run Genius Bar). About 19 percent of MHS students pursue a business degree in college, and many of those students have successfully "tried on" their major through these business offerings. Proudly, several MHS students have left high school as CEOs of their own successful companies that they developed and grew at MHS!

Performing Arts

Mason High School's nationally recognized fine arts department cultivates students' creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration skills. MHS students in grades 9-12 can choose from 27 fine arts courses including Acting, Foundations in Technical Theater, Marching Band, Wind Symphony, Honors Symphony, Philharmonic Orchestra, Concert Choir, Honors Concert Choir, and Contemporary A Cappella Choir, and AP Music Theory. As the recipient of both the Sudler Flag and the Sudler Shield, Mason is one of just fourteen schools across the world, and the only Ohio band, to win both international awards. The MHS Marching Band (which has placed in the top 10 bands in the nation at the Bands of America Grand National Championships for the last five years) appeared in the 2016 Rose Parade. Additionally, both the MHS Band and Orchestra have been selected to play at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center. The MHS Band, Choir, and Orchestra regularly receive state honors, and are considered a tremendous source of pride for the Mason community.

Visual Arts

The MHS Visual Arts Department develops students' cognitive and creative skills, and stokes their imaginations. The visual arts department helps students channel their inner "creator" by creating various solutions to visual problems and executing solutions. Not only does the department give students a strong foundation in visual mediums, it also gives students opportunities to explore animation, and graphic design that are increasingly important as students set themselves in the business world - most recently using 3D printing as part of the curriculum. Students in grades 9-12 can choose from 27 visual arts courses including: Cartooning and Narrative Drawing, Ceramics I, II, III, Digital Image Design I, II, III, Design Studio Internship, Drawing and Mixed Media I, II, III, Fashion Design and Construction, Metals/Jewelry, Painting I, II, III, Photography I, II, III, Sculpture, Studio Management Internship, AP Studio Art, and AP Art History. MHS students are regularly accepted at the most prestigious fine art schools in the country, and are consistent Gold and Silver Key Winners at the national Scholastics competition.

Health/Physical Education

The MHS Health/PE Department promotes students' well being, and helps them establish lifelong patterns of healthy behavior. Students in grades 9-12 can choose from 11 courses including: Health Education, Independent Living/Wellness, Sports Medicine, Physical Education, Individual Sports, Strength Training, Personal Fitness, Team Sports, and Lifeguarding.

World Languages

The MHS World Language Department helps develop global citizens who can communicate well in other languages, and endeavors to give students insights into other cultural perspectives. Mason offers introductory level through AP in German, French, Spanish, and Mandarin for students in grades 9-12, and offers American Sign Language introductory level through level four for students in grades 9-12. Complementing the classroom instruction in world languages are rich opportunities to learn and serve in national honor societies for German, French, Mandarin and Spanish.

Computer Programming

Mason High School understands that along with a world language, there's one other language that tomorrow's workers need to understand - code. MHS offers students in grades 9-12 the opportunity to learn Visual Basic 6.0, C++ and Java in four levels of Computer Programming (including Android and Apple app development) that culminate with AP Computer Science.

Teaching Professions

MHS students in grades 9-12 interested in becoming future educators can explore that passion in the school's Teaching Professions Academy, which is an Ohio Career Pathway Program. As juniors, students can then take Teaching Professions and as seniors, students can take Honors Teaching Professions which offers students the opportunity for up to 6 hours of dual credit at Xavier University.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

MHS teachers use a wide variety of strategies to engage students in learning and meet a wide range of diverse needs.

Problem Based Learning

Projects are used to help students apply knowledge and skills in situations that simulate the real world, preparing them for further learning and the workplace. For example, in a recent project for government class, students created Presidential candidates and outlined campaign platforms and strategies. The culminating presentations were given to citizens from the community who were asked to indicate which candidates they would actually support in a Presidential election.

Harkness Method

Four years ago, the math department chair had a burning desire to learn about an innovative approach to teaching, the Harkness Method which helps students learn to think critically, listen analytically, and interact respectfully. Most importantly, however, the Harkness Method promotes the idea of each student taking responsibility for his or her own education. What is happening in MHS math classrooms is truly transformational teaching and learning. As one of our students recently shared, "There's an ability to learn things from the ground up, to build up understanding rather than just memorize rules or formulas. When you get a firm grasp on the concept from the beginning, you're able to learn it in a more natural way than the usual "memorize this" method. In groups where everyone is at an even level, there's a feeling of investigation when you try a problem and figure it out as a team. On a more personal level, you feel satisfaction when you figure something out the hard way."

Flipped Classrooms

Anytime, anywhere learning is promoted through teachers "flipping" their classrooms and providing online modules that engage students outside of class. The focus in class then becomes highly engaging dialog and activities. Flipped classrooms happen throughout the contents areas - and are especially helpful in science courses where students come into class prepared for lab work and high level discussions.

Differentiation

Differentiation is used to meet the needs of multiple groups--from students who may be struggling with course content to those who are at an advanced level and need enrichment. In the classroom, differentiation takes the form of flexibly grouping students for targeted instruction; offering materials of different text complexity; re-teaching; and making assignments of varying length or complexity. Students may receive scaffolded notes, extended time, or assistance from peers. Additional help beyond the classroom is available

in mathematics, sciences, and language arts through an extra help period that pre-teaches and re-teaches concepts so that students become more confident in their skills. Students who need intensive extra help are placed in co-taught classes with a content area teacher and an intervention specialist.

4. Assessment for Instruction and Learning and Sharing Assessment Results:

How Assessments Are Used

Three different types of assessments are used to assess students' mastery of course content that leads to college and career readiness. First, common assessments are used at regular intervals, usually at the end of units of study, to measure students' understanding of key knowledge and skills. Based on the content standards, these assessments can include traditional objective items, open-response, or performance components. End-of-semester and end-of-course exams are also used to provide teachers with a sense of students' overall mastery of content for each course.

In addition to common assessments, teachers use formative assessments on a regular basis to check for understanding and identify misconceptions that prompt re-teaching or further practice. These take the form of quizzes, exit tickets, note summaries, classroom assignments and homework. They allow students to get feedback that is essential to their learning.

Finally, MHS uses standardized assessments to look at students' progress toward grade-level and college readiness standards. These assessments allow teachers to compare their students to others across the state or nation, as well as to cohort groups of students longitudinally. MHS students take state end-of-course tests, ACT Aspire, and the PSAT. Students elect to take either the ACT and/or SAT to benchmark their college readiness. Since MHS has a robust enrollment in AP courses, data on these assessments is also important.

How Assessment Results Are Analyzed and Discussed

Teachers review their students' performance on common assessments and assess the validity of the items on the assessments as well as their students' strengths and areas for improvement. These reviews are conducted at monthly department meetings during early release time. In addition to the review of common assessment data, building leaders analyze state and national assessment data to get a big picture of student achievement. This data is analyzed according to subgroups by ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, and special learning needs (English Language Learners and those with Individualized Education Plans).

How Decisions Are Made Based on Assessments

Common assessments impact several kinds of decisions. First, teachers use the data to modify instruction. For example, teachers in World Languages use a pacing guide to align their instruction with state standards. After giving common assessments they review the pacing guide and make adjustments to spend longer on standards on which students did not do well. Secondly, the results help guide curriculum and assessment refinement. New state end-of-course exams in American History provided additional information on our students' performance on specific state standards. Our teachers review that data and adjusted the content of core units of study and formative assessments to provide better instruction. Standardized test data also impacts decisions. ACT Aspire data on students' career preferences are used to guide students in the design of their program of study.

Sharing Assessment Results

Mason High School uses a variety of strategies to communicate assessment results to families and the community. School wide assessment results and data trends are shared with parent organizations including the district Student Achievement Committee, Diversity Council, Connection & Engagement Committee and Mason Schools Foundation. In addition, the Mason City School District annually publishes and distributes a Quality Profile that provides data in relation to high-level goals that are important to our stakeholders. The profile gives information about student performance, and benchmarks state and national peers using AP, ACT, and SAT data. In addition, the Quality Profile examines other critical areas that might not be measured on standardized tests including finances, innovation, learning environments, global awareness and whole child - sharing key data points and goals for improvement.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

The largest high school in Ohio, in Mason “big” isn’t simply measured by the number of students, teachers or classrooms. Instead, it means creating big opportunities for students to own their learning, find their niche, and hone their passions.

In August, each MHS student and staff member receives a “Comet Strong” T-shirt as they enter the high school with our drum line playing, and SIBS (Students Involving and Befriending Students) high fiving and chanting. This reinforces that everyone in the high school is part of something - a strong culture that will push and support students as they grow academically, socially and emotionally.

Students are actively encouraged to pursue rigorous courses connected to a career interest, and are supported by MHS teachers’ open door policy, student-run tutoring labs, and goal-oriented academic advising. MHS’s eight Academic Advisors build four-year relationships with their students that prepare students to get into the college of their choice and attain their dreams for what comes after MHS.

Strong connections also means getting involved. MHS offers 70 clubs, 27 athletic teams, three yearly theatrical productions, and a plethora of music offerings. There is a strong emphasis on growing leaders, and many of the school’s extra-curriculars develop students’ character and leadership so that they are prepared to serve and shape their community. Diversity is celebrated at MHS, and student-run groups like the Interfaith Alliance, International Club, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Gay-Straight Alliance, Mason African-American Students for Change (MAASC), Muslim Student Association, Social Justice Club, and Young Women’s Club regularly collaborate to host school-wide events and bring student organizations together to create an inclusive, welcoming environment. Teachers, too, are encouraged to lead as department chairs, academic coaches, innovation coaches, technology leaders, athletic coaches, and club sponsors. Since 1996, Mason High School has built in educator collaborative time (called Prime Time) for teachers to receive and lead professional development, to examine student data, and to assess instructional practices.

MHS staff stand ready to support students’ mental wellness. Help for students experiencing emotional difficulties occurs in small group sessions, and individual counseling is also available at school during the school day with Solutions - a non-profit giving families affordable mental health and alcohol/drug services that promote recovery, overall health and a sense of belonging. Since 2012 Mason High School uses a teacher-created “blue dot plan” to create safe spaces in school. By hanging a simple blue dot in their classroom or door, teachers let students know that they are never too busy to listen. This sends a message that every student belongs and has a place to go where their concerns can be heard.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Many of Mason High School’s success stories are possible because of the support of talented people and organizations in our community. Our community continuously steps up to update our facilities and technology, and to provide rich opportunities for Mason teens. This year, Mason High School provided deeper opportunities for students to partner with area businesses through guest speaker/site visits, job shadowing, and internships at ABC Pediatric Network, Assurex Health, CMO Axis, and UC Health West Chester Hospital. By participating in these experiential learning opportunities, students increase knowledge, develop essential workplace skills, cultivate a civic mindset and explore career options through direct experience and focused reflection outside of the traditional academic setting.

Booster organizations, parent committees, and civic organizations like Kiwanis and Rotary invest heavily in our students - volunteering countless hours to coordinate musical, theatrical, athletic and After Prom events, recognizing student accomplishments, and ensuring that all students (regardless of economic ability) have the opportunity to participate in school activities and events. The Mason Schools Foundation has supported many Mason High School initiatives including teacher training in the Harkness Method

which revolutionized our math instruction, a world language lab resulting in increased AP scores, planters and seeds for a school vegetable garden cultivated by students with special needs, two commercial 3D printers for our visual arts and applied technology students, a Rain Garden project, and after school trips for students with special needs and students who need mentoring.

The Taste of Mason is a high school-led initiative in partnership with Mason City Schools Diversity Council that showcases our community's diversity, and encourages community members to enjoy exciting offerings from many ethnic, and independent Mason restaurants. At the Taste of Mason, guests sample a new dish, catch up with old friends, and get mesmerized by incredible talent from multicultural acts featuring our students and community members such as classical Indian dance, performances by the Mason Chinese School, Chinese/Vietnamese Lion dance, Colombian dancers, and Mexican folk dance.

Strong communication is a priority at Mason High School. MHS shares information with families in a multitude of ways, including emails, phone calls, text messages, and social media posts. Parents are connected to the school through Home Access Center, Naviance, and Edline – online communication portals that offer 24/7 access to grades, assignments and instructional supports. Additionally, the school's website also posts school and community resources, important dates and deadlines. In addition, parents are encouraged to attend the school's Academic Showcase, College 101 Night, College Fair, Financial Planning Night and Wellness seminars on timely topics like parenting in the digital age, or reducing teen anxiety.

3. Professional Development:

To create a climate of professional learning and a culture of coaching, MHS is using a teacher-based team strategy to organize a staff of over 170 teachers into professional learning groups. Last fall, teachers were asked to identify topics that they would like to learn more about. Building leaders established the groups and offered them two hours a month of early release time to explore their topics together. For example, several teams tackled the problem of how to use Google Apps to enhance instruction. After identifying a number of uses for a variety of applications, teachers shared their ideas, visited each others' classrooms to see the techniques in action, and discussed the impact. The World Language teachers worked on improving the language lab which provides extra help to boost students' listening and speaking skills.

Using the MHS building goals, teachers are strategically selected to attend conferences and workshops and bring back ideas. Last year, a team of teachers attended on-going workshops around what research shows to be the most effective practices in increasing student achievement. Their learning drove the development of a building-wide focus on feedback and efforts to share the most effective ways to provide specific, timely feedback to students.

Teacher Lead Learning Coaches work with individuals and small groups using job-embedded professional development such as designing common units of study, videotaping their instruction and analyzing the impact of their teaching. The peer observation process is also used to enhance reflection on practice and encourage teachers to share effective strategies.

In addition to these professional learning opportunities for teachers, the administrative team participates in district-level professional learning on leadership. The team attended a series of district workshops in which they identified their leadership styles and worked on specific leadership skills such as setting mission, vision, and goals; clarifying core values; and aligning work with priorities.

4. School Leadership:

Mason High School shares leadership among all its staff and with students. MHS is undergoing a leadership transformation modeled more like General Stanley McChrystal's Team of Teams - where the MHS Principal endeavors to share decision making by "seamlessly sharing information while dissolving hierarchical walls." For example, teachers are tackling the challenging issue of examining the school's grading practices, and improving them so that students are given more effective feedback based on standards.

The Principal and the five Assistant Principals are instructional leaders who average about 20 classroom walk-throughs a month. Administrators and lead learning coaches use walk-throughs to regularly give feedback to improve instruction and propel professional growth.

As the school leaders closest to our students, teachers design course offerings that reflect the needs of today's learners, develop their own department meeting agendas, help craft school goals, analyze school data, and facilitate discussion about school initiatives. The school's Building Leadership Team is an important sounding board for continuous improvement.

Many of our classified staff are the heart of our school - and their leadership in connecting with students makes MHS a safe, vibrant place to learn. For example, our campus supervisor mentors at-risk students and has a reputation for always putting students first. The school's head custodian is an exemplar of how one individual can positively impact school culture, and no one works harder at maintaining a school that is a source of pride for students and community members' alike.

Families and students provide feedback about learning, school safety and school engagement through spring stakeholder surveys, and school administrators and coaches examine that perception data to analyze what is working well and what needs improvement.

In addition, Mason High School's Student Leadership Advisory Committee, with student representation from school clubs and organizations, meets once a month as an internal student communication link with the school's administration to discuss school concerns and events, and provide updates on community service projects.

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Mason High School's magic comes from empowering our 3,500 students to be leaders. MHS students are getting patents, starting businesses, serving others, and speaking out. What we, as adults, know is that our responsibility is to remove barriers, and to encourage our students' risk-taking and passion exploration. The high school has adopted an "the-answer-is-yes" attitude, that is followed up by providing the safe and supportive environment to let students take risks and achieve success. For example, an MHS student is an internationally ranked cyclist. MHS supports his passion, and allows him to flexibly attend school online and through projects - allowing him to walk with his friends and proudly accept his Mason High School Diploma.

Students Leading Their Learning

Our students lead their learning. Whether it is by creating social media group help accounts, inventing apps, actively monitoring their progress and celebrating their successes - leadership does not end when students walk inside the classroom. Students apply their learning in moving ways. Integrated media students learned about World War II in their history classes. But, they knew there were local veterans who had stories to tell that could inspire future MHS students. Not wanting those stories to fade, they produced a video series that captured the Greatest Generation.

Students Creating a Safe & Inviting School Culture

The Say Something Campaign was fueled by our Senior SIBS group and is now part of our school's DNA. Students take seriously their responsibility to keep our school safe by reporting anything that could cause harm to a student or staff member. Every year, students report nearly 100 tips about things that are concerning them. Students have shared information that resulted in avoiding tragedy and saving lives. Our students know that being "Comet Strong" means a commitment to supporting everyone in our school community.

Students Changing the World

Whether it is the male student athletes who mentor male students with special needs, the nationally qualifying speech and debate team who worked without an adult coach, the Student Government leaders who provide Christmas presents for over 50 Children's Hospital patients, senior SIBS who help transition middle school students into the high school setting, or the Mason African American Students for Change leaders who organize the school's month-long Black History Lecture series, student leadership is on display in every facet of our school. Our students tackle issues large and small that make our school, our community, and our world better.