

U.S. Department of Education
2023 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Robert A. Cross Middle School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 324 Lockett Station Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Albany State GA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 31721-4005

County Dougherty County

Telephone (229) 431-1212 Fax (229) 431-3476

Web site/URL <https://www.docoschools.org/o/cross> E-mail thelma.chunn@docoschools.org

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

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Mr. Kenneth Dyer E-mail kenneth.dyer@docoschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Dougherty County School District Tel. (229) 431-1285

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

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mrs. Melissa Strother
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

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

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, leave blank.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2023 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 2018 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2022.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 or 2022.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

12. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the current school year (2022-2023) 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):
- 14 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
4 Middle/Junior high schools
4 High schools
0 K-12 schools
- 22 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, 2022 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 Students
PreK	0
K	0
1	0
2	0
3	0
4	0
5	0
6	186
7	178
8	164
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	528

*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
 - 1.7 % Asian
 - 89 % Black or African American
 - 4.2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0.2 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 3.6 % White
 - 1.3 % 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 2021 - 2022 school year: 4%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain:

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	0
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	23
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	23
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	564
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.04
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	4

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

Spanish

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

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

Total number students who qualify: 528

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 0 %
Total number of students served 2

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 should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

<u>0</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>0</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>1</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>1</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 1 %
Total number of students served: 5

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 10

11. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	26
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	14
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	2
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

12. 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 20:1

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

Required Information	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018
Daily student attendance	95%	97%	98%	98%	98%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

14. **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 2022.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

15. 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. 2006

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

The mission of Robert A. Cross Middle Magnet School (RAC) is to educate students in a safe and active learning environment where all students will become responsible, achieving citizens. Our school provides students with quality and relevant learning experiences that will enhance their natural intelligence, teach them to recognize the connection between school and the real world, and inspire them to become energetic, empathetic, lifetime learners who recognize that people with diverse backgrounds and perspectives can have authentic points of view.

17. Provide a URL link to the school's nondiscrimination policy.

<https://www.docoschools.org/Page/426>

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

All students, except the students in the gifted program, seeking enrollment at Robert A. Cross Middle Magnet School must complete an application and meet the entrance requirements. In order to continue our high academic expectations, we screen all students before entrance is granted. Students must score grade level for the admissions test (Georgia Milestones) and meet Lexile Reading Measures per grade level. Students must also meet the attendance policy for the most recent school year. Students can not have received any discipline offenses in his/her previous school (fights, harassment, disrespect, terroristic threats, weapons, etc.). Also, students must not have been retained and/or placed in any grade level. Final admission to the school is based on passing all subjects in the current school year and being fully promoted to the grade for which the student has applied. This means, the student cannot attend summer school to meet promotion requirements.

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Robert A. Cross Middle Magnet School is a public charter school located in a small suburban community of Albany, Georgia. Our school serves students represented from all fourteen area elementary schools, as well as surrounding counties. Even though the city has increased rates of crime, poverty, and unemployment. We know that all children deserve an appropriate education that will assist them in becoming independent, responsible, and successful adults. Our parents and school personnel are of the mindset that socio-economic circumstances and demographics will not hinder our students' desires and efforts to achieve and excel at the highest level. Our students share a strong sense of cohesion and connectedness, which makes for smooth interactions between them and school staff. Our students follow the Eagles P's for Excellence, which include being Present (attending school daily), Prompt (on time to class, seated, and with materials out), Productive (study, keep trying, and always do your best), Polite (tolerant of others' differences, polite in words and actions), and Prepared (with everything they need for class).

Our school welcomes parental involvement and engagement in both academic and extracurricular activities. Parents are kept abreast of their children's behavior and academic performance via weekly emails, phone conversations, progress reports, and report cards. Electronic newsletters are emailed weekly to all parents with pertinent information regarding current and upcoming school or community events, as well as all academic standards of focus and due dates for upcoming assignments and assessments.

Our school takes pride in providing a quality educational program that significantly strengthens students' knowledge and skills in reading, mathematics, science, social science, foreign language (Spanish), visual arts, performing arts (band, chorus, and orchestra), career education, and technology. The curriculum also includes important lessons on citizenship, compassion toward others, accountability for one's actions, and patriotism. Teaching and learning take place in an organized setting where boundaries with expectations are firmly established and understood. We begin each day with the Pledge of Allegiance, Moment of Silence, and Eagle's Honor Code.

Classes are teacher-facilitated, and the whole group method of instruction is extensively used when introducing grade level objectives. Small groups and individualized instruction are used when deemed as necessary by the teacher. Instructional time is guarded wisely and consistently. Interruptions are not authorized for announcements, messages, or any other cause other than actual emergencies. Student activities, which would interrupt the regularly scheduled instructional times, are severely limited. Few activities are viewed as being important enough to justify releasing students from scheduled instruction. All student activities and programs that are permitted during school hours must be shown to enhance the objectives of the school before they are permitted.

Our students are more than capable of achieving and competing with other students anywhere in the world. U.S. World News and Report ranked Robert A. Cross No. 2 among magnet schools in Georgia. This is an amazing accomplishment for our school, students, staff, and parents. The wheel of academic achievement at our school has been and will continue to be fueled by research-based instructional strategies and practices to engage all students in authentic and relevant learning experiences. As a school, we model best practices in communicating and interacting with our students to support rigorous instruction undergirded by creativity. Our students believe they can learn and will become productive and successful citizens. Daily, all students are told "You are important!" and "You matter!" All students recite the school's honor code, "Life is about choices. I can choose to do the right thing, or I can choose to do the wrong thing. I am responsible for the choices that I make. Today, I choose to do the right thing".

The Robert A. Cross Middle Magnet School learning community, which is comprised of students, parents, teachers, support staff, and administrators, shares a strong commitment to Nothing But Excellence in all that we do. Therefore, high expectations for teaching and learning lead the way to assured learning outcomes that are personalized to fit the needs of our diverse student body. While our students have differences and unique needs, all students experience academic success in classrooms that are heterogeneously grouped. During extended learning time, teachers teach their students about their social, emotional, and mental health once a week through Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) activities. Extracurricular

activities support the academic program's objectives. For example, our Math Team, Academic Bowl Team, Beta Club, Robotics Team, Science Team, and Social Studies Fair Team encourage academic excellence. Student Council, Beta Club, Delta Academy, Theatre Arts Club, Dance Team, and Cheer Team conduct activities that give students opportunities to serve their community.

Robert A. Cross Middle Magnet School uses various research-based strategies to assist students in outperforming schools across the nation. Because our parents are so involved, our students happily and willingly participate in after school learning opportunities, as well as Saturday school in order to strengthen their learning. As a result, over fifty-four percent of our students are on the principal's honor roll list earning all-A's or the A/B honor roll list earning A's and B's. Our students complete additional practice for homework, turn in assignments ahead of due dates, and experience curriculum enrichment with creative projects based on rigorous standards. As a direct result of the teaching methods and educational expectations that comprise Robert A. Cross' learning experiences, students have access to additional educational opportunities when transitioning from middle to high school and are preparing to be Responsible Achieving Citizens.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

At Robert A. Cross Middle Magnet School, English-Language Arts (ELA) instruction is structured around the Georgia Standards of Excellence. The English curriculum, which is composed of reading/vocabulary and writing/language, provides our students the academic knowledge and skills needed to be effective writers, readers, speakers, and listeners. The Georgia ELA standards contain the reading, writing, language, speaking, and listening skills to teach and assess throughout the year. ELA teachers are highly qualified and have the pedagogical knowledge to implement best practices to meet the diverse instructional needs of our students. Our classrooms are structured to incorporate the components of a standards-based classroom. Teachers follow an instructional framework that consists of a Bell Ringer, Opening, Work Session, and Closing. Each lesson emphasizes a standard of focus. Standards are annotated and displayed within the classroom and consistently reinforced. Students become familiar with the learning targets of the standard and exposed to the language of the standard continually throughout the lesson. Instructional artifacts, such as a definition wall, student data, and exemplary student work, are displayed on the walls. Instructional lessons allow for teacher-led and student-facilitated instruction through traditional and technology-enhanced practices. Technology is incorporated into classroom instruction as a tool to enhance student learning. Platforms such as I Ready, Vocabulary.com, GCA Assesslet, IXL, STAR Reading/Accelerated Reader are used for reteaching, spiraling, and reinforcing curriculum.

To implement best practices, the English department starts the year by sharing and analyzing our students' previous year's assessment results. Data from universal screeners, such as Georgia Milestones, I Ready, the Assesslet, and DRC BEACON assessment, determine the student's domain performance, reading level (Lexile), grade level mastery, and/or writing standards proficiency. These assessment results assist teachers with identifying standards of focus. Furthermore, viewing assessment results, such as pre-assessments and common formative assessments, celebrating achievements and growth, and evaluating the evidence of learning places the student's performance in perspective. We analyze student work and assessment data to identify students' strengths or weaknesses and adjust instruction, as needed. Assessments consist of multiple-select, constructed response, extended response, and technology-enhanced items.

ELA teachers and instructional coaches collaborate weekly to plan instructional lessons to meet our individual students' needs. During collaborative planning sessions, we focus on what we expect students to learn, how we will know if they have learned it, how we respond when students don't learn, and how we respond when students do learn. Teachers refer to our District's ELA pacing guide and Georgia Standards of Excellence to examine the standards or skills necessary for academic success at each grade level. Teachers then discuss the most effective way the standards should be taught and assessed throughout the nine weeks, plan the duration of skills and standards to be taught, as well as provide a plan for any barriers or misconceptions that students may face when engaging in the content.

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

At Robert A. Cross Middle Magnet School, we use the Georgia Standards of Excellence to drive our curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Using the Georgia standards and the district created lesson progressions, we design a curriculum pacing guide that meets the instructional needs of our students. In preparation for pre-planning, our math faculty meets to discuss the pacing for the upcoming year and how standards vertically align from grade to grade. During this session, we also reflect on the effectiveness of the prior year's pacing, unpack grade level standards and make adjustments to the pacing schedule for the upcoming year in order to help students learn and understand concepts that may connect, correlate, or build upon each other. This allows us to move faster and more efficiently than in prior years. This process also helps our math teachers exchange strategies and activities across grade levels to effectively remediate and accelerate students to ensure their math skills are at or above grade level. Throughout the year, we collaboratively plan weekly, by grade level, where we analyze current data and discuss and model teaching

strategies to address common misconceptions of the standards. This process guarantees that teachers are prepared and equipped with the pedagogical knowledge and strategies that meet the needs of all students.

Within the mathematics classroom, a gradual release approach is implemented. Instructional lessons are presented through teacher facilitated whole group instruction, collaborative practice, followed by independent practice. At the beginning of each lesson, emphasis is placed on the language of the standard and re-emphasized throughout teaching the lesson. Learning experiences are provided to allow the teacher to teach and model the concept of focus and for students to then practice what they have learned. Teachers allow time for students to make sense of the mathematical process and help them to make connections among previously taught skills. Teachers encourage students to reason abstractly, concretely, and digitally. Technology platforms such as I Ready, Tutor.com, Brainiaccamp, and Desmos calculator are utilized for additional practice, targeted instruction, and to monitor student learning.

Content mastery of the state adopted math standards is assessed yearly using the Georgia Milestones Assessment System. Prior to this state mandated test, we utilize various formative assessments to diagnose student learning. The formative assessments administered during the school term are: DRC Beacon Assessments, I-Ready Diagnostic assessments, common formative assessments, and teacher developed checks for understanding. Such assessments allow us to pivot quickly to better serve students and obtain what they currently know and their progress toward standard mastery. Results are analyzed immediately and consistently within our weekly professional learning communities. During these sessions, we identify standards that have not yet been mastered by students, their areas of strengths and weaknesses, and then develop a plan to best meet the needs of all students.

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

The science curriculum at Robert A. Cross Middle Magnet School is structured around the Georgia Standards of Excellence, which emphasizes Earth Science, Life Science, and Physical Science. In each grade level, students investigate and make sense of concepts in our world. The sixth grade science curriculum focuses on the study of the earth, delving into meteorology, geology, astronomy, and oceanography. The seventh grade curriculum seeks to provide opportunities for becoming familiar with the diversity of living organisms, structure and function of cells, heredity, ecosystems, and biological evolution. At the eighth grade level the curricular focus is on physical science. Students take a deeper look at the structures and properties of matter, energy, force, mass, motion, waves, gravity, electricity, and magnetism.

To effectively meet the students' science needs, teachers follow the 5E instructional framework. The 5E model aids to promote scientific inquiry through the stages of engagement, exploration, elaboration, explanation, and evaluation. Each inquiry-based stage is interchangeable and places the student at the forefront of their own learning. The science curriculum and instructional pacing are provided in the district created learning progression. This progression serves as a guide, outlining the order in which the standards should be taught and providing the materials and resources necessary for standards mastery. It provides a means to ensure an active learning environment, while still allowing the ability to adapt the instruction to meet student needs. Classroom instructional practices include hands-on labs, teacher demonstrations, independent learning, peer interactions and scientific explorations through digital resources, such as StemScopes, USA Testprep, and IXL. Students are further encouraged to explore their scientific interest through participation in school and district level science fairs and educational field trips to Burton 4-H camp or Flint River Canoe trips to explore ecosystems, the Mercedes Benz Stadium for STEM enrichment, and the Coca-Cola Space Science Center for planetary explorations.

Assessment materials are provided within the district created lesson progressions. These assessments include summative assessments used to identify what the students should know by the end of the unit as outlined in the performance-based objectives. Teachers administer many common assessments to evaluate the progress of the student learning, and the effectiveness of the teaching strategies being used. Assessment data is analyzed by grade level teachers and instructional strategies are adapted to ensure standards mastery.

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

At Robert A. Cross Middle Magnet School, the curriculum standards are derived from the Georgia Standards of Excellence. In the sixth and seventh grades, students are taught World Studies. At the sixth grade level, students focus on the study of Europe, Latin American, Canada, and Australia, whereas seventh grade students focus on Africa, Southwest Asia (Middle East), and Southern and Eastern Asia. With the intent of widening students' understanding of the world, both grade levels emphasize three major components, which are historical, geographical, and governmental understanding. In eighth grade, student inquiry pivots to the geography, history, government, and economy of Georgia.

Our teachers utilize multiple methods to teach the social studies curriculum. Current methods include the gradual release model, a student-centered standards-based classroom, and project based learning. Each instructional model provides students the opportunity to enhance learning through the use of technology to deepen their understanding of social studies content. Teachers generally have the autonomy to utilize the instructional model that best suits their teaching style. The gradual release model is the most commonly used model among social studies teachers. This model involves introducing students to performance based objectives, introducing or reinforcing academic language, presenting students with content related texts, and shared practice followed by independent practice. Although the gradual release model is more prevalent, teachers may opt to employ a standards-based classroom and project based learning. Teachers begin a unit, while ensuring that assessment is aligned with state mandated tests, as well as with the curriculum and instruction. This process is approached collectively by teachers, instructional coaches, and administration in weekly professional learning communities to create meaningful assessments. Teachers utilize formative and summative assessments to measure student learning and instructional decisions during teaching. Various types of assessments include common formative assessments, unit assessments, nine weeks exams, interim assessments, and project based assessments. The types of questions include multiple select items, open ended questions, and true or false items.

Assessment data is analyzed in professional learning communities to measure student learning and make adjustments to instructional methods. In these sessions, teachers work collaboratively with other teachers to analyze student work on common formative assessments to pinpoint areas of focus and maximize student learning. This provides teachers with the opportunity to provide students the necessary feedback and changes to make improvements.

1e. For schools that serve grades 7-12:

Robert A. Cross (RAC) Middle Magnet School takes pride in engaging and equipping our students with the academic, personal and social skills necessary to succeed in secondary education, postsecondary education and future careers. RAC offers accelerated courses that assist in students getting ahead in earning high school credits. This affords them the opportunity to begin post secondary courses while in high school through the dual enrollment program.

Currently, RAC identifies students yearly that enroll in a "fast track" mathematics course. Beginning in the sixth grade, students take a hyper accelerated mathematics course, in which they learn all of the sixth grade math curriculum and one-half of the seventh grade. Transitioning to the seventh grade, these students learn the second half of the seventh grade curriculum and all of the eighth grade curriculum; hence, students entering the eighth grade are automatically enrolled in Ninth Grade Coordinate Algebra. In addition to this course, select students take Ninth Grade Literature, Spanish, Personal Fitness - Health, and Intro to Business and Technology; all of which are high school courses. Upon successfully passing these courses, students have the opportunity, when transitioning from the eighth grade into high school, to register as a sophomore; this is due to the credits already earned.

Additionally, RAC has various structures in place to support college and career readiness. Our school counselor implements the "YouScience" platform for all students giving them the opportunity to think about and plan for their futures. With the assistance of the school counselor and the support of the faculty during the students' eighth grade year, students map out a four year plan to allow them to visualize their high school academic courses.

Academy. Through these tours, students are exposed to the various career pathways offered at each school and the opportunities for dual enrollment. During the school year, we also participate in various activities associated with our local college and university. These activities include allowing our students to showcase their talents in the local parade, inviting college professors to facilitate STEM related tasks, and encouraging the participation of college students to assist in school events.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

Through our visual and performing arts programs, students are provided a space to embrace their creativity and demonstrate exceptional skills in painting, sculpting, music, playing, dancing, singing, listening, public speaking, debating, and theater. All students enroll in a visual arts course each year and also have the opportunity to register for performing arts. Our performing arts courses include band, orchestra, chorus, and theater arts. Eighth graders may earn high school credit by successfully passing a yearlong performing arts class.

Our performing arts classes incorporate the use of academic content, observation, imagination, innovation and first hand experiences while using a variety of art instruments and materials. Through these classes, teachers intentionally make cross curricular connections to academic subjects. For example, teachers can relate acoustics to science and waves; rhythms are subdivided into fractions; literature from different parts of the world is used to improve students' knowledge of the performing arts classes. Additionally, the visual arts courses provide students the knowledge to enhance their presentations visually, verbally, and digitally through the use of color, design, perception, craftsmanship, balance, and harmony. By fusing art with other subjects, students who might not have previously been interested in their coursework are now engaged in the relationships discovered in all subjects.

At our school, these visual and performing art courses provide students the skills needed to showcase their talents at our annual Christmas and spring concerts, Chalk Fest, community parades, PTO nights, as well as the Miss Robert Cross pageant. Through all of this, specialized disciplines such as critical thinking, problem solving, and effective communication are utilized. This comprehensive aspect of student education promotes their academic growth as they continue to become responsible, achieving citizens.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Robert Cross's Health and Physical Education Program encompasses our student body and supports the commitment to physical activity in their daily lives. All students are registered for physical education in sixth and seventh grades, while eighth grade students enroll in personal fitness and health as a yearlong class to earn high school credit.

Physical education classes allow students to interact with each other. These opportunities teach students to work collaboratively and the benefits of teamwork. They provide our students social and emotional support lessons and activities, which assists them in learning and performing higher academically in school. Providing students a structured time to exercise daily improves their focus and attention span, as well as behavior in the classroom. The reduction of behavioral issues, gives academic teachers the additional time needed for student focused learning. This course allows for students to take a closer look at their personal fitness through the administration of the Fitnessgram and Scoliosis Screening.

In our health classes, we teach the ten building blocks for total health. These building blocks include accessing information, practicing healthful behaviors, stress management, time management, decision-

making skills, analyzing influences, communication skills, refusal skills, goal setting, and advocacy. These building blocks are not only essential for our students' health but also for supporting their academic success. Time management, stress management, decision-making skills, and goal-setting are all key to being successful in academics. With the exposure of these beneficial skills, students are shown to excel academically.

2c. Foreign language(s), if offered (if not offered, leave blank)

The growing interdependence of nations necessitates that students be educated on international and cross-cultural issues. Students must be able to communicate in multiple languages. World language classes require the same standards of excellence as academic classes. In our world language classes, we remind students that being bilingual opens up opportunities for future employment and that it can increase scores on the SAT and ACT. All students in the sixth and seventh grades take Spanish during a nine week grading period. All gifted students in eighth grade are registered for Spanish I, which is a ninth grade course. Honors students in the eighth grade are eligible to take Spanish I upon meeting select criteria, which includes academic averages and Georgia Milestones results from the previous year. Upon successful completion and passing the course, students earn one high school credit.

In our sixth and seventh grades foreign language program, the students are introduced to the Spanish language, which prepares them for the high school, year long Spanish course. In all grade levels, students are taught how to think, write, and speak in Spanish, with an increased knowledge awareness, as the student transitions from one grade to the next. Multilingual people have the ability to speak various languages. Learning a new language stimulates the brain to get familiar with new grammar and vocabulary rules. It allows students to train their memory to remember new words, make connections, etc., which can also help the student in other classes. Our students' analytical and mathematical skills improved as a result of learning a foreign language.

2d. Technology/library/media

The business and technology classes at RAC provide students with opportunities to be engaged and learn in ways that allow the most difficult tasks to become seamless and more efficient. Students interact with one another and collaborate on projects using digital tools that prepare them for almost any career. Equally important, students take more control over the learning process as they complete stimulating student-centered project-based learning. In addition, students are required to explore matters that are complex and challenging for them as they learn about pre-engineering and business concepts. Students in all classes learn using combined learning methodologies by using online videos and numerous other types of digital learning tools that help boost student engagement and develop critical thinking skills. These technology classes provide opportunities for students to explore STEM related concepts, robotics, and coding which is encouraging their desire to work in the technology advanced skills of the future.

The library-media center supports students' acquisition of skills and knowledge by providing access to a wide selection of print and electronic books that are available to be checked out or read in the library by students. The media specialist purchases both fiction and nonfiction books about a variety of subjects in which students are interested so that they will want to read and will enjoy reading. The media center collection contains many higher Lexile books to encourage students to read complex materials as well as many grade-level-appropriate books to be read for sheer enjoyment. The goal is to find a balance between helping students increase their reading proficiency and hopefully developing a lifetime love of reading.

2e. Any other interesting or innovative curriculum programs you would like to share

As the pendulum of education continues to shift, educators are tasked with finding methods that are engaging and innovative for students. Our school and district have transitioned to one-to-one technology, providing all students with a digital device. Robert A. Cross implements various innovative programs to provide our students with additional opportunities to create, manipulate, communicate, work together, and think critically about concepts that reach far beyond the walls of our classrooms. One program that we implement is the CTAE (career, technical, and agricultural education) program. This program allows

students to learn about the business world. Completion of this program allows students the opportunity to take the Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) exam, which provides national certification in Microsoft Word during their eighth grade year. This certification puts our students on the fast track to having a better understanding of the resources of the business world.

Two additional programs include robotics and coding. These programs are interest-based, and students volunteer their time to participate in them. The robotics programs allow students to build and program robots that will navigate through real-world simulations. The coding program teaches students about the programming and coding of computers, games, etc.

The Business and Technology Program sponsors both the Coding Club and the Robotics Club. Students strengthen their STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) skills. Robotics Club members design, build, and program a robot and compete against opponents both locally and regionally.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Robert A. Cross believes all students can learn and that meeting the academic needs of each student is a top priority. We utilize various preventions and interventions to support students performing below grade level. Teachers use an adaptive diagnostic assessment, classroom performance, and classroom assessments to identify students performing below grade level. The diagnostic assessments allow teachers to specifically identify which students are in need of support. Student data is analyzed to determine areas of weakness and track the progress of students over the course of the school year.

Once teachers know which students need more help, they set up "safety net" procedures in the classroom to assist students who are having trouble with certain skills or content. Teachers formulate small groups, mixed instructional groups, and one-on-one instructional activities to target deficit areas. This intervention is employed during regular instructional time, as well as on select days during connections or exploratory classes.

In ELA and mathematics, students performing two or more grade levels behind receive Response to Intervention (RTI) support. The teacher provides differentiated learning activities to remediate existing weaknesses and prevent further deficits. Students are grouped based on their instructional needs, not necessarily their grade level. Teachers provide researched-based interventions in a small group setting. Interventions are on their instructional level rather than grade level. Data is collected weekly from various assessment tools such as I-Ready, DRC Beacon, SchoolCity, and IXL to determine the effectiveness of the intervention. The frequency and duration of their intervention are based on the data.

In addition, students performing below grade level have various opportunities to receive targeted support beyond regular school hours. In our Race to Learn initiatives (after school and Saturday school), students are provided opportunities for explicit instruction in small groups. These sessions are integral for teachers to reteach and deliver content using research-based instructional strategies. This helps students master content at a pace conducive to meeting the individual needs of the students.

The use of technology is an important aspect of the process of closing the achievement gap. Although technology is not a teacher, we utilize one-to-one technology as an extension of what the teachers are teaching in the classroom.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Diversification initiatives frequently prioritize aiding struggling students over exemplary ones. Our academically gifted and talented students represent over half of our student population. At Robert A. Cross, we have several initiatives to support students who are performing above grade level, such as Study Skills, in which students receive additional time per content area to work on assignments, complete special projects, and receive direct instruction in struggling academic areas and behavioral concerns. Students are

assessed immediately once a standard has been taught in order to analyze the data from these assessments in a timely manner to determine pacing and instruction. For students performing at or above grade level, instruction is accelerated to advance them to a higher performance level, which could include exposing them to content for the next grade level.

In all grades, over one-fourth of our students, per grade level, are on the accelerated track. For example, students in the advanced sixth grade mathematics classes are taught the sixth and seventh grade curriculum in the second semester of school. Seventh grade students are taught seventh and eighth grade mathematics curriculum, and eighth grade students are taught high school Algebra I curriculum. Eighth grade students in the accelerated classes are taught Ninth Grade Literature, Physical Science, Spanish I, and Intro to Business Technology. These eighth grade students are allowed to take the Georgia Milestones End-of-Course (EOC) Assessment in Algebra I, Ninth Grade Literature, and High School Physical Science at the end of their eighth grade year. Students who score 70% or higher on this assessment receive high school credit for taking the course.

As a result of direct, unambiguous, and systematic instruction facilitated by all teachers, our eighth grade students performed and excelled beyond measures. When administering the 2021-2022 Georgia Milestones EOC (end-of-course) Assessments, 100% of the students passed mathematics, 86.9% passed the Physical Science and 100% of our students passed Ninth Grade Literature. Although curriculum, reduced class size, district funding, and family and community involvement all contribute to school improvement and student achievement, the most influential factor is the teacher.

3c. Students with disabilities:

Robert A. Cross Middle Magnet School does not have a large population of students with disabilities. As a result, our school does not have a department that is dedicated solely to special education; however, if a student qualifies for enrollment at our school, our faculty and staff assist in providing the necessary services for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 Plans. School administrators, teachers, the counselor, the school nurse, and district special education coordinators provide the necessary, individual support and related services for students. Although our students do not normally need extensive special accommodations through their Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) and 504 plans, we still provide the required, necessary interventions that serve as a road map to ensure goals are met and student success is achieved.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) mandates that all children who have disabilities be given access to the least restrictive learning environment possible. Therefore, our students are taught to the maximum extent appropriate with their non-disabled peers. All students have access to a supportive learning environment that addresses their specific requirements and differences. Our classrooms provide students with a safe, nurturing environment. Effective and individualized instructional strategies are in place to provide opportunities to all students, regardless of the program enrolled.

Children with disabilities who are enrolled at RAC receive support and services in the same way that they are provided to all other children with disabilities who are enrolled in any other kind of public school. Services are provided to students in accordance with their individualized education plans. As needed services are delivered through consultation with the district's special education department and a speech pathologist, who provides therapy according to the student's IEP. Individual and small-group instruction is provided daily and during after-school tutoring which aims to strengthen the students' knowledge and skill level. Our hope and desire is that despite a disability, all students will succeed in reaching their full potential.

3d. English Language Learners:

English Language Learners (ELL) make up about two percent of our student population at Robert A. Cross Middle Magnet School. Our goal of ELL support is to prepare students to speak the English language fluently and efficiently as possible in academic, social and extracurricular settings. We understand students learning English as a second language often have low self esteem, are disengaged and may be inaccurately

placed in academic settings that do not match their intellectual abilities. As a result of the language barriers, it is difficult for them to communicate what they already know and can do. Our Spanish connection and advanced eighth grade courses provide the opportunities for all students to be exposed to a language other than English. This course provides an environment for which students learning English as a second language can feel embraced and culturally accepted.

With assistance from our district ELL coordinator, ELL students are tested, identified and progress monitored. ELL support is provided during school hours as well as in our after-school programs. Teachers create meaningful relationships and work with our students individually to provide them with extra support in reading, writing, and listening. This extra support can be facilitated through direct instruction, small group instruction, and the use of web-based programs. Teachers provide reinforcement language skills throughout their academic courses using visual aids, as needed. Our ELL students benefit from the teachers speaking slowly and allowing for additional time to respond. In all content areas, increased emphasis is placed on the thirty most commonly used prefixes, suffixes, and root words of the English language. Because students are on varying instructional levels, differentiation of instruction is critical to providing them with diverse and relevant learning experiences on a regular basis. Providing rigorous instruction at the Tier I level, scaffolding lessons, and allowing them to work in those small groups help to ensure students are learning and retaining the skills needed in all content areas. This small group interaction also builds confidence with interacting with their peers and interacting in social situations.

3e. Other populations, if a special program or intervention is offered:

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

The positive school climate and environment for students at Robert Cross embraces safety, support, and connectedness. Students participate regularly in safety drills to ensure they are knowledgeable, secure, and skilled in responding to possible emergency situations. Academic engagement and growth are provided through our higher-level and secondary-credit courses, for both honors and gifted programs, while incorporating cutting-edge technology and promoting student collaboration. The higher-level academic and connection courses promote problem-solving and critical thinking skills. They also prepare students for Advanced Placement (AP) and dual enrollment courses in high school. Teachers are provided with professional learning opportunities for social and emotional learning, as well as Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS). These systems promote supportive classrooms and strengthen relationships with all students while reducing the number of discipline problems. Our school counselor utilizes YouScience, an online tool accessed through the State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) within Counselor Companion, for various classroom guidance lessons. This tool assists in gauging the college and career readiness of students throughout their middle school years. It also allows our counselor to monitor students' progress throughout the year for the Georgia BRIDGE law requirements. Students are able to create electronic portfolios, explore various careers, and become cognizant of possible job matches for their future.

Within the "My Career Plan" section of YouScience, our students access career assessments and inventories to measure their career interests and aptitudes. Eighth grade students are able to use their assessment and inventory results to assist with career pathway choices and to complete an Individual Graduation Plan (IGP). During the spring of each year, our school hosts a "Moving on Up to Sixth Grade" transitioning program. This event affords all rising sixth graders in our district the opportunity to tour and explore our programs, courses, and extracurricular activities they would possibly like to pursue the next school year. All current eighth graders at our school are also provided with a similar opportunity as our incoming sixth graders. Visits are scheduled at all three Dougherty County School System (DCSS) high schools, as well as at our local college and career academy. Students are able to apply for any of the high school magnet programs and the college and career academy to be considered for enrollment. These secondary institutions offer career pathways that students may be interested in pursuing. These events and partnerships with local schools, at all levels, assist us in promoting the college and career readiness development of our current and incoming students.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

At Robert Cross, we know that for student learning to prosper, family and community engagement must include a strong, consistent, and supportive relationship. The teachers set the standards for school from the very first day; that's when they start building a relationship with the parents and students. After the first week, teachers conduct follow-ups with parents and inform them of their students' progress. This allows teachers the opportunity to familiarize themselves with not only their students but also the parents. The parents' perspective is considered in all aspects of each student's educational journey. Our teachers are very flexible and understanding in regards to all factors that might influence parents' views about school. Making personal connections with parents in regards to academics, behavior, and the social and emotional aspects of their children encourages a positive difference in the overall success of students. We understand that an open line of communication with parents and students is vital. When the relationships are built with both the parent and student in mind, there is a noticeable difference in the child's behavior and academics. Parents are always encouraged to discuss their students' academic and behavioral progress with the teachers throughout the year to support the foundational relationship of support and trust that has been built. Our school leaders acknowledge that parents have a right to be heard. Parent-teacher conferences are welcomed on a scheduled and as-needed basis.

Our Parent Facilitator hosts workshops, family game nights, and Input Meetings throughout the school year to provide beneficial resources for parents to navigate essential middle school topics. This includes, but is not limited to, "Preparing for the Georgia Milestones," "The Dangers of Human Trafficking", "Exploring the

Infinite Campus Parent Portal," as well as math and ELA family game nights. Additional opportunities are also provided for parents to share potential ideas and input for our school. If approved by administration, these same ideas and suggestions are included for the next school term. Our school programs and community partnerships are a fundamental piece of our school and continue to assist students in various ways. From our Saturday School, weekly and summer-based Race2Learn programs, and Tutor.com, our students are provided a variety of opportunities for remediation and enrichment. Fostering community partnerships allows our school to promote excellence in education. With our partnerships, we are able to increase funding at our school and achieve the desired goals that assist in meeting the needs of our students. This enhances their abilities to learn, thrive, and reach their full potential currently and in years to come.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

At a time when retaining teachers is even more crucial than ever, we realize it is essential to create an environment where teachers feel valued and supported. This begins with our strong leaders, who set the tone for our building. From the beginning of the year, we are reminded that we are one school with one mission. The unity and shared purpose within our faculty and staff enhance the foundation established for a supportive school environment. This supporting professional culture of RAC is the driving force behind all of the aspects within our school.

Robert A. Cross Middle Magnet School leaders offer an open door policy for our teachers in need of additional care or concern. Before teaching and learning can take place within our school, teachers must feel as though they are valued, prepared and trusted. Teacher appreciation takes many forms within our school. This includes our annual Teacher of the Year nomination and selection process, catered lunches, the celebration of Teacher Appreciation week, holiday celebrations, Secret Santa events, birthday recognitions, faculty outings, and the distribution of special t-shirts provided for social events. This also involves school leaders providing teachers with the opportunities to build our professional capacity. Through these actions, teachers feel valued and appreciated for their contributions to teaching and student learning.

Leaders encourage continuous district and school based level professional development. These PL (professional learning) sessions enhance collaboration, foster effective leadership skills, and build trusting relationships for teachers. These sessions are intentionally scheduled ensuring that the teacher's time is respected and guarded. They consist of opportunities for teachers to enhance their pedagogical knowledge and classroom best practices. Each week they participate in grade level, teacher efficacy, mentor-mentee and planning session meetings. Within these meetings, collaboration among leaders and teachers is valued, through the monitoring of all aspects within the classes, teams, grade levels and school. Teachers are able to participate in constructive dialogue, as it relates to any possible suggestions for improvement as well as share their best practices for the betterment of the school.

Our school district provides an umbrella of support for all teachers and staff. Through our Employee Assistance Program (EAP), all employees are provided with professional and guidance services to help with the daily challenges of life. In addition to professional support services, our district hosts an annual "Back to School Tailgate" for all faculty and staff at our local state university. It's a fun and relaxing environment that provides opportunities for networking and collaboration between all schools and their educational stakeholders. Movie nights are also hosted throughout various times of the year for the teachers and their families to partake in. This promotes casual fellowship and camaraderie amongst teachers within the district.

4. School Leadership:

The overarching leadership philosophy of our school is one that is a shared and participative responsibility. It is a leadership style where everyone is a part of the instructional and operational decision-making process. It supports a healthy and positive learning environment of interconnectedness, where success is the only option and a team effort is needed. This philosophy is seamlessly compatible and supportive of our mission, vision, goals and beliefs of RAC in that we are one school with one mission and that our collaborative success requires everyone's input.

The principal sets the leadership tone at the start of the school year by setting high and clear expectations,

undergirded by the necessary, supportive school culture and climate for student achievement. The principal exhibits an inclusive mindset with a strong aim of sharing authority by ensuring trust and confidence; this validates the importance and value of the team's opinion on essential matters. The principal exercises a genuine open door policy where everyone feels comfortable in sharing their concerns and opinions. Thus, a culture of mutual respect, empowerment, equality, and trustworthiness prevails and is at the core of all interactions. The principal understands the importance of keeping everyone informed and abreast of the value of their contributions by providing opportunities for them to lead various meetings, functions, and activities. The principal encourages collaboration by promoting accountability with a focus on coming together to enhance the school's overall mission and vision.

The leadership philosophy views everyone as leaders and exhibits the mindset of there are no big "I's" and little "you's." Teaching and learning involves a collaborative effort; hence, RAC has a strong leadership team that consists of our grade level and departmental chairs, instructional coaches, counselor, and media specialist. This team ensures all stakeholders are represented and have a voice. We value the perspectives of team members and encourage involvement. It is vital to us that everyone be consistent and commit to the philosophy of the school. Being a team player and contributing to the decision-making process is vital for success.

Using relevant data to drive decision-making, leadership team members work alongside the principal by supporting, developing, and implementing the vision of academic achievement. The leadership team meets often to assess and evaluate rituals and routines of the school and makes necessary adjustments to allow for smooth operations. Leadership team members have a group of staff members in which they collaborate. These leaders have the autonomy to facilitate collaborative sessions and professional learning opportunities; they also share pertinent information and gather feedback from their colleagues to involve them in the decision-making process.

The assistant principal works with all aspects of the school to ensure the instructional and operational components meet mandated guidelines. Our school counselor promotes fairness and access to the necessary resources to support and optimize student performance. The counselor assists all students with academic success techniques, socio-emotional management and interpersonal skills, as well as secondary and postsecondary planning. The department and grade chairs are responsible for staff and students specifically in their area; everyone is responsible for all aspects of the school. Our instructional coaches are responsible for meeting with all teachers in all content areas to assess instruction, assessments, and make adjustments to teaching and learning as necessary. Our media specialist assists teachers with media materials, resources to enhance instruction and a flexible schedule with dedicated days for each grade level to visit the media center.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Robert A. Cross is highly dedicated and committed to ensuring that a student-centered learning environment remains at the heart of what we do and what we are about. This is predicated on the fact we understand and appreciate the uniqueness of cultural characteristics that exist among our students, teachers, support staff, administrators, and parents. Hence, we foster an environment that values cultural diversity. Robert A. Cross Middle Magnet School views culturally responsive teaching and learning as a stepping stone to further understand and appreciate the diversity among our school family. By understanding our diverse cultures and creating inclusiveness in the instructional and operational aspects of the school, we are able to establish collaborative and mutually respectful relationships among all stakeholders.

Robert A. Cross addresses the diverse needs of our students by creating a powerful connection between the content taught and the relevance it has for the various cultures represented in our learning communities. We recognize and appreciate the unique capabilities of each student. Teachers facilitate these learning experiences through auditory, visual, tactile, and kinesthetic learning modalities. District-developed curriculum guides classroom instructional practices to ensure equal access to content knowledge.

Support is provided to all students, staff, and families within our school. This is done by actively listening to their concerns, providing relevant and timely feedback, and prioritizing genuine and personal connections

with the staff, students, and parents through school based celebrations and extracurricular activities. Building a strong foundation is essential for accomplishing the mission, vision, and goals of our school.

Our teachers recognize and value the unique talents and needs of each student. This is demonstrated daily when teachers and staff express to all students that they are important and that they matter. At Robert A. Cross, we make it our objective to purposefully foster equity, cultural awareness, respect for one another, and demonstrate these values for our students and the families of students. An awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity is demonstrated through the inclusiveness of all ethnic groups; this involves students participating in school theatrical plays, ensemble and dance performances, clubs, cross cultural and themed days and organizations to promote our diversity. Through equity, we ensure all students have access to the resources and services needed for them to reach their full academic and social potential. Parental involvement events and workshops are held for parents during the school day and in the evening to engage parents and students in supporting our efforts.

Additionally, admission applications are written in both English and Spanish. This assists non-English speaking families who have a desire for their children to apply for enrollment at the school. Applications are readily available in-person at the school office, online, through the mail service or even email. We gladly accommodate all parents wanting to obtain an application.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

The success of Robert A. Cross Middle Magnet School is largely attributed to the structured and consistent routines that are in place. The daily operations, such as classroom procedures, conducting morning announcements, transitioning in the halls, lunchroom etiquette, and even hosting prospective student tours are organized with the intentions of maximizing instructional time and ensuring the safety of our students.

As a whole school, our faculty and staff embrace the vision of nothing but excellence. We understand the importance this plays in the structure of our school and how it vitally affects our ability to maintain and enhance our school's success and ability to serve the whole child. From the time students arrive at school daily, the tone for the day is established. Students are greeted upon arrival, report to safety checks, and follow the expectations of transitioning to the academic hall to prepare for their day in an orderly manner. There is a firm understanding and acceptance by students that they must pass through metal detectors and have their bags searched upon arrival. This process is not only for their own safety, but for everyone in the school.

The daily expectations at all grade levels are uniform and evident. The students are taught and modeled school procedures, expectations and safety drills the first few weeks of school. These are reinforced throughout the year. Teachers follow and implement consistent classroom and school rules at each grade level, along with the positive and negative consequences associated with them through our school wide assertive discipline plan. Because our rituals and routines for each part of the school day are expected and monitored continuously a productive, orderly school day is established.

Additionally, as a Title I Magnet Charter Public School, we are provided the flexibility with the order and operations of our school, while having increased resources to assist in promoting student excellence. This flexibility allows us to structure our instructional practices in a manner that meets the needs of our students. School wide expectations such as classroom rules and consequences, standards based classroom framework, implementing higher level questioning strategies and reading across the curriculum, can be seen in all classes. Classroom instructional approaches are implemented with standards mastery in mind. Students are formatively and summatively assessed to determine content mastery at which time structured safety nets are put in place to assist with obtaining mastery. This consistency among all grade levels allows for high levels of success at the end of each year and smooth transitioning yearly.

Continuing the safe and academic school of success we have established, requires structured, consistent and enforced implementations during a time that is needed even more. The purpose behind all of our many strategies in place continues to prove how we maximize our student potential, which is evident each and every day.