

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Sturgis Charter Public School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 427 Main Street  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Hyannis State MA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 02601-3905

County Barnstable County

Telephone (508) 778-1782 Fax (508) 771-6785

Web site/URL <https://www.sturgischarterschool.com> E-mail [pmarble@sturgischarterschool.org](mailto:pmarble@sturgischarterschool.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. Paul Marble E-mail [pmarble@sturgischarterschool.org](mailto:pmarble@sturgischarterschool.org)  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Sturgis Charter Public Tel. (508) 778-1782

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. Polyanna Rocha  
(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**

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

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 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

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**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):
- 0 Elementary schools (includes K-8)  
0 Middle/Junior high schools  
1 High schools  
0 K-12 schools
- 1 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	0
7	0
8	0
9	215
10	215
11	192
12 or higher	208
Total Students	830

\*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):
- 0.1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 3.5 % Asian
  - 2.9 % Black or African American
  - 5.7 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0.1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 83.9 % White
  - 3.8 % 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.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	14
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	22
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	36
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	846
(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):

Arabic, Bulgarian, Chinese, Creoles, Dutch, German, Greek, Gujarati, Haitian, Icelandic, Italian, Korean, Lithuanian, Nepali, Oriya, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Sign languages, Slovak, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese

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

13 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 23 %

Total number students who qualify: 191

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 15 %  
Total number of students served 125

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>11</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>43</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>25</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>24</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>4</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>17</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: 0 %  
Total number of students served: 0

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	9
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	80
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	28
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	14
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	12

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 10:1

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	91%	96%	95%	95%	94%
High school graduation rate	99%	98%	98%	99%	99%

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	207
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	80%
Enrolled in a community college	9%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	1%
Found employment	2%
Joined the military or other public service	2%
Other	6%

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes ☐ No ☒

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

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

Sturgis Charter Public School is dedicated to an International Baccalaureate (IB) for All philosophy, preparing high school students for higher education in a supportive learning environment. Sturgis provides each student a rigorous world-class educational program, encouraging academic achievement, intellectual confidence, and personal growth.

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

<https://www.sturgischarterschool.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Student-Handbook-2022-23-1-1.pdf>

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

In compliance with MGL (Massachusetts General Laws) Chapter 71, Section 89, students shall be accepted for admission to Sturgis Charter Public School by a lottery process in cases where there are fewer spaces than eligible applicants. From the ending date of each enrollment period, the school will give at least one week notice of the lottery. Students who have completed the enrollment process will be identified according to the following priorities for admission at each grade level:

First, siblings (resident or non-resident) of students currently attending Sturgis Charter Public School in the year of application. Siblings are defined as students who have a common parent, either biologically or legally through adoption. Secondly, residents of the following school districts: Barnstable, Bourne, Carver, Dennis-Yarmouth, Falmouth, Mashpee, Monomoy (Chatham/Harwich), Nauset, Plymouth, Provincetown, Sandwich, and Wareham. Finally, non-residents of the school districts listed above.

Each year, the lottery process and results will be public and audited. Sturgis will use software to conduct the lottery electronically and a neutral party shall certify that the process is fair and that the selection is random. The electronic lottery first generates a random lottery number for each applicant to determine the initial random rank order. After the initial random rank order has been determined, preferences for admission will

be applied. As identified above, applicants with sibling status will receive first priority for admission, followed by the resident applicants, and then the non-resident applicants.



## PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

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A Massachusetts Commonwealth charter public school since 1998, and an International Baccalaureate (IB) World school since 2004, Sturgis Charter Public School has educated thousands of students via a “rigorous world-class educational program, encouraging achievement, intellectual confidence, and personal growth.” The actualization of Sturgis’ IB for All philosophy has resulted in excellent word-of-mouth communication from students and parents across our eighteen sending towns; stellar Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) and Student Growth Percentile performance for all students, including high-needs subgroups; and elite rankings. For example, in 2022, US News and World Report identified Sturgis as the 3rd ranked Massachusetts public high school, 40th ranked public charter high school in the nation, and 164th ranked public high school nationally.

Sturgis’ commitment to excellence, equity, trust, and mutual respect has been featured across the U.S. and worldwide, including In Search of Deeper Learning: The Quest to Remake the American High School and a Global Learning Network case study. The Jay Mathews Challenge Index (which includes both private and public high schools) places Sturgis #162 in the country. The IB Organization included Sturgis as the only American public school in their 50th anniversary documentary entitled A Better World Through Education.

Our commitment to access and equity makes Sturgis unusual as students are enrolled via a blind public lottery available to any eighth grader in our sending regions, and choose their own IB classes without faculty screening. In fact, all eleventh and twelfth grade students take all of their coursework in the IB Programme. We are a full inclusion school, with a strong student support system that adapts to meet students’ needs. This approach offers students the access and tools necessary to succeed in one of the world’s most challenging college preparatory programs. Sturgis maintains that holding high standards and high expectations for all students leads not only to high achievement, but also to college readiness and the development of more inquiring and caring minds. Sturgis’ average class size of 17, student to faculty ratio of 9.3 to 1, student to counselor ratio of 140 to 1, and one-third of teachers having international experience all contribute to an intimate and supportive environment to actualize a global curriculum. Because of Sturgis’ unique support system for students, high standards, collaborative student culture of peer support, and strict graduation requirements, course failure in upperclassman courses is uncommon. Further, Sturgis pays for all IB fees for students out of our operating budget, eliminating financial gatekeepers.

Sturgis’ dedication to its mission compelled the Sturgis Board of Trustees to seek and receive an enrollment increase from the Board of Secondary Education in 2009 that enabled the development of a second IB for All campus. Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), MCAS, IB, and stakeholder data - along with financial statements - provide clear and strong evidence that Sturgis has successfully replicated the IB for All experience for twice as many students. In addition, Sturgis has witnessed a significant increase in the percentage of students classified as economically disadvantaged over the past few years, which combined with the stellar work of our Special Education and Multilingual Learner departments, demonstrates our strong commitment to the achievement of those in high needs subgroups. In 2016-2017, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) recognized this commitment and approved Sturgis’ charter amendment request for a maximum enrollment of 850 students.

Sturgis provides a transformative IB for All education for all students. Over the past five years, 978 students have graduated from Sturgis having taken an average of 5.67 IB exams per student, due in large part to our valuing participation in advanced coursework over performance. Among those seniors, 180 students on IEPs took an average of 4.76 IB exams, and a yearly average of 79 percent of these scores were 3 or greater (on a 1-7 scale). During that time, Sturgis’ attrition rate has averaged just above four percent.

All Sturgis students embrace the requirements of the IB Diploma Programme, and a strong majority of students choose the most rigorous pathways. In the past five years, 56 percent of the 978 graduates persevered through the most rigorous pathways (consisting of seven IB classes; Creativity, Activity and Service; and the Extended Essay), with 65.5 percent of those 552 students achieving exam scores that enabled them to earn the elite IB diploma.

A key component of an IB education is the development of what the IB calls Learner Profile Traits, helping students to become more knowledgeable, inquiring, reflective, balanced, principled, open-minded, and caring, and to improve as a thinker, communicator, and risk-taker. Our annual student and parent survey results indicate an overwhelming appreciation for Sturgis' ability to influence these traits in our students. At the end of the 2021-2022 school year, 85 percent of parents either strongly agree or agree that Sturgis has had a positive effect on developing the Learner Profile traits in their child, and 80 percent of students either strongly agree or agree that Sturgis has had a positive effect on their developing the Learner Profile traits.

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

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

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

All juniors and seniors take a two-year International Baccalaureate (IB) English course, either at the Standard Level or the Higher Level (based on their choice). Prior to the start of their IB courses as juniors, Sturgis' ninth and tenth grade students take an English program of study that is designed to prepare them for the style of learning expected in their IB English courses, and is aligned with the Massachusetts' Curriculum Standards.

Sturgis students focus on developing skills in reading, writing, discussion, and critical thinking in their English classes. Such skills are taught and developed through journals, creative writing, discussions, group work, and academic analysis. Students develop skills in close reading, analysis, and composition, and move toward a greater awareness of world literature texts while embracing the habits of mind necessary to be a true global learner.

Students gain increasing comprehension of genre and style as they analyze, interpret, and compare and contrast literature from different cultural and historical contexts. They develop their critical thinking skills and write with growing proficiency, and develop their speaking and listening skills through oral presentations and large- and small-group discussions. Students learn to incorporate a heightened literary register and make personal and insightful connections with literature.

Emphasis is placed on the student's ability to independently address the literary elements of works, to write and speak fluently, coherently, and knowledgeably, and to make personal and insightful connections with literature. Students will be expected to respond to literature orally and in writing on a personal and analytical level, and explore how readers, writers and texts interact, how time and space influences work, and how intertextuality influences interpretation. Throughout each course students will study a broad range of texts, written by authors from a wide range of social contexts, historical periods, and international settings.

Students learn to read and think critically via reading, annotating, and writing activities, as well as by participating in regular class discussions - both Socratic and informal - and performing frequent writing assignments. Essay writing is a cornerstone of the Sturgis' English classroom. Class activities serve to enhance skills of empathy and articulation, and students develop fluency in both the spoken and written word.

With autonomy, Sturgis' English teachers have taken up the challenge of presenting works and ideas with a layered understanding of their impact in terms of racial, economic, social, and gender equity. They aim to explore ideas and authors from a wide range of perspectives, and center class sessions and assignments in ways that enrich, rather than hinder, the creation of a society where all stories are valued and historically marginalized voices and ideas are centered and elevated.

Teachers regularly use formative assessments such as student journaling, short essays, and class discussions to inform future instruction. Additionally, teachers collaborate on the development of summative assessments (midyear and final exams), and work together to draw instructional takeaways from those exams. In particular, International Baccalaureate exams that are graded externally are an invaluable tool for informing Sturgis teachers' future practice.

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

All juniors and seniors take a two-year International Baccalaureate (IB) math course, either at the Standard Level or the Higher Level (based on their choice). Prior to the start of their IB courses as juniors, Sturgis' ninth and tenth grade students take a mathematics program of study that is designed to prepare them for the style of learning expected in their IB math courses, and is aligned with the Massachusetts' Curriculum

Standards.

For juniors and seniors, Sturgis offers the two-year IB Standard Level and Higher Level Analysis courses as well as the Standard Level Applications course. Sophomore offerings include Algebra 2/Trigonometry, Algebra 2, and Integrated Math 10. Ninth grade offerings include Integrated Math 9, Algebra 1, and a Math 9 course designed to help students who might not yet be ready for Algebra 1. Incoming Sturgis students sit an initial placement exam (which includes a qualitative survey about one's attitudes/habits towards mathematics). However, there are no course prerequisites, and Sturgis has purposefully structured a variety of flexible course sequences for students to pursue over the course of their Sturgis' mathematics career.

The math curriculum serves to inspire in students the notion that mathematics is both useful and interesting, and help students: develop logical, critical, and creative thinking; enhance skills at communicating mathematical ideas clearly; further develop patience and persistence when problem solving and learning new topics; and to apply mathematical knowledge and skills to new topics as well as other areas of knowledge. As math skills build on each other, courses are designed to help create and reinforce a strong foundation and maximize the potential for success in all future math courses, and there is a substantial emphasis on problem-solving skills and higher-level deductive thinking skills.

Courses enable students to learn content through reading, student-teacher discussions and exploratory laboratory activity. Students develop the skills to analyze and answer multi-step mathematical problems via teacher presentations and examples; teacher-student discussions; mathematical investigations; exploratory class activities; content-reinforcing class assignments; online math programs (such as Geogebra, Desmos, Excel, etc.); and graphing calculator-based work.

Sturgis math teachers regularly review (individually, in small cohorts, and as a full department) assessment data such as math placement exams, unit tests, mid-year and final exams, statewide MCAS results, and IB examination data in order to inform future instruction.

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

All juniors and seniors take a two-year International Baccalaureate (IB) science course, either at the Standard Level or the Higher Level (based on their choice). Prior to the start of their IB courses, Sturgis' ninth and tenth grade students take a science program of study designed to prepare them for the content and style of learning expected in their IB science courses, and is aligned with the Massachusetts' Curriculum Standards.

For juniors and seniors, Sturgis offers two-year IB Standard Level and Higher Level courses in Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, and Physics. Additionally Sturgis offers a two year Standard Level Environmental Systems and Societies Course, and an Applications course. Sophomores take a half-year Introduction to Chemistry course, and a half-year Introduction to Physics course. Ninth grade students take a year-long Biology course that includes elements of Earth and Environmental Science.

In addition to academic content, students learn how to think and write like scientists, evaluate scientific literature, conduct research, and analyze data. Key scientific skills taught include following procedures and instructions; asking questions; designing and carrying out a scientific investigation; using appropriate technology as scientific tools; predicting, explaining and interpreting scientific results; recognizing possible sources of error and limitations in science; applying mathematical skills to solve problems; communicating and writing scientifically; and developing awareness of moral, ethical, social, economic and environmental implications of science and technology. Moreover, the science department has been deliberate in their curriculum design to include contributions to scientific knowledge by individuals from traditionally marginalized groups, and awareness how bias can impact scientific exploration

Assessments include student and teacher-designed hands-on laboratory or field investigations, collaborative group work, student presentations, and authentic problem solving. Students collaborate on an IB field project that develops interdisciplinary skill and cooperative learning. Teaching strategies serve to model the nature of scientific work and to meet the needs of students with diverse learning preferences. Sturgis science

teachers regularly review (individually, in small cohorts, and as a full department) assessment data such as unit tests, mid-year and final exams, statewide MCAS results, and IB examination data in order to inform future instruction.

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

All juniors and seniors take a two-year International Baccalaureate (IB) history course, either at the Standard Level or the Higher Level (based on their choice). Prior to the start of their IB course, Sturgis' ninth and tenth grade students take a United States history program of study designed to prepare them for the content and style of learning expected in their IB history course, and aligned with the Massachusetts' Curriculum Standards.

The ninth grade US History survey course spans the 1760s through Reconstruction in the 1870s. The 10th grade course runs from after Reconstruction in the 1870s to the present time. Students will develop skills necessary for success later in the IB, including note-taking organization, keeping a notebook, reading for comprehension, writing a thesis essay, learning research techniques; examining news/media literacy; and interpreting primary documents. Students will also complete an Historical Investigation.

IB History is a two-year 20th Century World History course. The course includes in-depth analysis of documents. At the end of the first year students will complete a 1,500-word historical investigation, using the skills of a historian to answer a historical question. At the end of year two, students will take the IB exams, which assess their learning and analysis of the above subjects and topics. The first exam will assess students' ability to analyze documents and to synthesize historical knowledge and documents. The second exam will assess students' abilities to analyze the topics they have studied over the previous two years.

Teachers regularly use formative assessments such as short answers, essays, and class discussions to inform future instruction. Additionally, teachers collaborate on the development of summative assessments (midyear and final exams), and work together to draw instructional takeaways from those exams. In particular, International Baccalaureate exams that are graded externally are an invaluable tool for informing Sturgis teachers' future practice.

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

All students at Sturgis take all of their coursework in 11th and 12th grade in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program, which means they are all fully enrolled in advanced college-preparatory coursework. Moreover, students must take a balanced array of advanced coursework including English, history, mathematics, science, world languages, and elective courses. Ninth and tenth grade students take coursework designed to prepare them for the IB program, and almost all of those course offerings are unlevleled, meaning that they are all "college-preparatory" in design.

As a result, Sturgis students are well prepared and ready for their college experience, and onaverage, 89 percent of the graduates from the classes of 2017-2021 were attending college the spring after their high school graduation. Further evidence of the rigor of Sturgis' program is the U.S. News' college readiness index, which consistently rates Sturgis at/near the top of Massachusetts high schools for college preparation.

In addition, a wide majority of Sturgis' eleventh and twelfth grade students participate in the CAS program (Creativity, Activity, and Service). This co-curricular option formally begins junior year, at the start of the IB Diploma Program, and continues regularly, ideally on a weekly basis, for at least eighteen months with a reasonable balance between creativity, activity, and service. This experiential learning component contributes to making an IB education a holistic learning experience with real-world outcomes. Reinforcing Sturgis' inclusive values, all clubs, activities, and athletics are "no-cut," and as a result, nearly the entire student body is actively engaged in some of these activities that help to prepare students for a well-rounded post-high school experience.

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

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

### **2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)**

All ninth and tenth grade Sturgis students take an arts course, typically two to three times per week. These courses are half-year long, and students enroll in two courses over the course of a school year. Options include chorus, music, theater, and visual arts. During junior and senior years, Sturgis students must take an elective, and arts-based electives include IB Art, IB Music, and IB Theater.

These courses inspire young artists to create and appreciate the role of art in life. Students learn an understanding of other cultures and time periods of human expression in art, and are exposed to culturally rich and relevant works in a variety of artistic formats. They begin to be proficient at expressing individual ideas using a variety of media.

Sturgis' arts courses help students understand other individuals and situations different from their own, provide students with an outlet to form ideas and turn them into interpretive performances, create an environment for students to expand their communication skills and to take risks within uncertain circumstances, and expand the potential for creativity and the expression of ideas and themselves in a safe way. These courses help prepare students for IB coursework in the arts and other subjects.

### **2b. Physical education/health/nutrition**

All Sturgis students take a wellness course that meets once every seven days. Wellness provides a space for all students to understand themselves better and to develop wellness practices that explore and develop the relationship between the body and the mind. Ideally, this course helps students assume a lifelong responsibility to develop their social, physical, and mental wellness. Using a combination of yoga, mindfulness, breathing techniques, and various physical activities and cooperative games, students learn exercises to stretch and strengthen their bodies and minds, develop awareness of their mental and physical health discover what it means to be a part of a group or community, build community and cultivate positive peer connections, learn techniques to manage stress and anxiety including meditation and breath work, and become more confident in making better choices for themselves through the lens of mindfulness.

Using lesson planning that explicitly teaches why the students are engaging in physical activities in Wellness, students learn how to care for themselves and their own well-being, as well as for the relationships with those around them; that taking care of the body is just as important as taking care of the mind and vice versa; and that risk-taking, trying something new, and being outside of one's comfort zone are all parts of learning.

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

Sturgis highly values student acquisition of additional languages, and students must take a total of six years of additional language courses to graduate. During their ninth and tenth grade years, all students must take two years of Latin, and two years of French or Spanish. After tenth grade, students choose to study either French, Latin, or Spanish at the IB level for a two year course of study. In addition, students have the option to study more than one of these IB languages at the same time.

Studying additional languages serves to enrich students' lives through accessing other cultures, thereby fostering greater intercultural understanding and communication. The study of French, Latin, and/or Spanish will enhance students' academic and professional skills, opportunities, and options, and students will gain insight into their individual experiences and circumstances in our world. Studying a classical and/or modern language allows students to be able to communicate with, understand, and respect other people and their

cultures. Knowing and/or speaking more than one language is a skill that makes students more capable, well rounded, and respectful global citizens.

## **2d. Technology/library/media**

The Sturgis librarians actively work to support the research, reading, and teaching needs of students and faculty. They are an invaluable resource for teaching, learning, and personal library needs. They actively support the teaching of: the research process, information literacy skills; academic honesty; evaluating information; search skills: Google and Databases; the IB's Extended Essay; library orientation (both Sturgis and town); technology; collaboration; digital curation: LiveBinders, LibGuides, Destiny ebooks and audiobooks; resource lists in Destiny; special collections; IB subject-specific research assignments/assessments; and databases.

As true for the library as throughout all academic subjects, Sturgis values the incorporation of technology into student learning, and is committed to making learning available anywhere, at any time. To help achieve this goal, Sturgis has committed to ensuring that all students have access to an Internet-connected device to access resources, whether on campus or away.

Students may use their own device (a Windows or Mac computer, or a Chromebook), or Sturgis can provide a 1:1 Chromebook at no charge to any student who needs one throughout their high school years.

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

## **3. Academic Supports**

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

Sturgis has developed systems to identify and support diverse learners. The Student Support Team (SST) regularly reviews student progress across grade levels and determines interventions. This process is for all students not already identified as having a special educational need. Using a tiered process, students are provided with educational interventions and supports through the content area teachers and school counseling office. Students may have a Student Success Plan (SSP) that details the steps that the student and teacher will take to improve academic performance.

Students who have multiple SSPs or have had a significant change in their academic performance are referred to a Child Study Team (CST). This meeting is chaired by the Lead School Counselor and attended by the student's teachers, the Assistant Principal (if attendance is a concern) and possibly a representative from the Special Education Department or the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging office as a consultant on the CST. These and other responses to interventions (RtI) for struggling students are tracked through data collection. Should there be insufficient response to intervention, then the student is referred to the Special Education Office.

A non-exhaustive list of other support structures that are available to help all students include: schoolwide advisory system; extra help from teachers; peer tutoring; classroom accommodations (extra time on essays, quizzes, and tests as determined by counselors and teachers); counseling (student/counselor ratio of about 140:1 and multiple school social workers); programs offered by or run by the counseling department (Signs of Suicide and Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment); summer programming; and MCAS prep classes for ELA, math, and science.

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

Current standards for the statewide assessments in Massachusetts's high schools are designed to ensure students reach a minimal competency standard in order to graduate from high school. For many students, these assessments do not guarantee exposure to – or engagement in – a challenging, rigorous, standard-based

curriculum throughout high school. This is evidenced by the absence of any assessment accountability for grades eleven and twelve. Charter schools are charged with the expectation of being innovators in education, and Sturgis does exactly that with its unique mission of requiring all grade eleven and twelve students to take all their coursework in the rigorous, highly respected International Baccalaureate (IB) Program.

Graduation requirements at Sturgis are significant. They include four years each of math, science, English and history, as well as six credits of foreign language and two credits in the arts and electives. Courses in grades nine and ten are IB preparatory and heterogeneous. In grades eleven and twelve, all students take all of their coursework in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme. Students are striving, of their own volition, to realize their personal best and measure themselves against students nationally and globally.

Sturgis Charter Public School is a model of rigorous secondary education for all students. In this regard, it strives to improve foundation-level knowledge and skills through peer tutoring, study groups, and support from teachers and administrators both during and beyond regular school hours. Sturgis' IB offerings afford students opportunities for academic achievement, increased intellectual confidence, and personal growth. With its small class size, advisory, community service involvement and focus on supportive relationships, Sturgis provides both a physically and intellectually safe environment. This structure encourages each student to take risks to reach his or her potential and maximize future opportunities.

### **3c. Students with disabilities:**

Over the past five graduating classes, 180 students on Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) took an average of 4.76 IB exams, and a yearly average of 79 percent of these scores were 3 or greater on a scale of 1-7. For these students on IEPs, knowledge and skills are developed through peer tutoring, study groups, and support from a multidisciplinary team of educators (speech and language pathologist, psychologist, social skills instructor, reading and math tutors, therapeutic and school counselors, and a special education teacher) and general education teachers and administrators during and beyond regular school hours.

While preparing students with disabilities for their IB experience, Sturgis provides or arranges for the provision of each of the elements of the IEPs of students in need of special education beginning in grade nine and continuing to age twenty-two, if needed. Sturgis ensures that a continuum of services and alternative placements is available to meet the needs of all students with disabilities, and takes all steps necessary to ensure compliance with all elements of the IEPs, including vocational education.

Students on IEPs have the opportunity to be in a Study Skills classroom with a Special Education teacher, and have support from inclusion specialists as needed and delineated on the IEP. Sturgis provides social emotional support through school adjustment counselors/school social workers, behavioral consultants, consultations with school psychologists, and Speech and Language Pathologists who have expertise in social language pragmatics.

Tutorial support is considered for students who have a medical need to be home for a period of time, and extended year services are provided in the areas of social skills development, academic support, and Speech and Language support. Sturgis has two Transition Coordinators who work on vocational skills and opportunities, as well as the school counselors who provide assistance with transitions to a post-secondary educational setting.

### **3d. English Language Learners:**

Before the start of the school year, the MultiLingual Learner Department reviews prior school records to determine any incoming students who are currently classified as English Learners (ELs) and previews the student's ACCESS score to place the students in the proper English as a Second Language class and content classes. Home language surveys are administered before all new students enroll, which helps determine translation and interpretation needs as well as which students might need to be screened to determine English language proficiency.



Within the first thirty days of a student's enrollment, and after the WIDA Screener is administered if necessary, the required documentation regarding specific student's identification, English proficiency levels, placement information, and parental rights, etc. are sent home in the language the families have requested.

Under the Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) Program, all students who are classified as an EL are placed in an ESL class in addition to being placed in SEI endorsed teachers' content classes. The ESL teachers create curriculum using Massachusetts DESE Curriculum Frameworks, WIDA English Language Development standards, resources from DESE (including the ESL Model Curriculum Units and Collaboration Tool), as well as communication with teachers. The ESL teachers also push into Sheltered Content Instruction classrooms to support teachers, and help with the creation, instruction, and assessment of language objectives.

Some ELs are enrolled in an optional Multilingual Learner Support class which provides structured academic support to students who need it. Students classified as ELs take the ACCESS assessment in January/February of each year. When ACCESS scores are received, the department makes the decision whether or not to reclassify students as Former English learners based on DESE's criteria. Personalized language goals are created for students who did not meet their English proficiency benchmarks.

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

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

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

Sturgis utilizes the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme for its eleventh and twelfth grade curriculum, which is viewed by many as the gold standard for high school curricula. All Sturgis students take all of their coursework in eleventh and twelfth grade in the IB Diploma Programme. Ninth and tenth grade courses and curricula align vertically with the IB Diploma Programme and horizontally with the Massachusetts state frameworks. All course curricula are reviewed and revised on an ongoing basis, and professional development ensures fidelity to the IB curriculum, including lessons and materials that represent a variety of cultures and perspectives, and supports opportunities for all students to master IB skills and concepts. Sturgis was reauthorized in 2022 to offer the IB programme, and students consistently perform amongst the state’s best on MCAS in English, math and science; these metrics provide evidence that Sturgis’ delivers a high-quality academic program that meets the needs of all students.

Sturgis employs an outstanding collection of faculty across all levels of teaching experience, nearly a third of whom have taught internationally, and almost all of whom have been trained and certified to teach the IB programme. Our curriculum and mission are based on high expectations for all students and value cultural proficiency. Sturgis has nearly twenty IB examiners and/or IB workshop leaders who help to inform best practice and instructional leadership, and Sturgis has provided lead teachers with Critical Friends Group training to help them facilitate their colleagues’ ability to provide quality instruction for all students. New teachers are provided with mentors, and all faculty are observed twice by their lead teacher and four to six times by their principal to ensure healthy feedback regarding instruction. Observations include a discussion and written commentary. Teachers teach both IB and ninth/tenth grade courses to provide younger students with IB style instruction and habits of mind. In the spring of 2022, nearly 87 percent of students and nearly 94 percent of parents surveyed were very satisfied or satisfied with the quality of teaching at Sturgis.

Sturgis employs two school nurses, six guidance counselors, a guidance assistant, and three school adjustment counselors. Additionally, Sturgis staffs a school psychologist, and two diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging coordinators. All students participate in the weekly advisory program and have a wellness class once per rotation. Sturgis ensures all students have equal rights of access to the opportunities provided by our educational program, as students choose their own coursework (without prerequisites or teacher approval) and all of our clubs, activities, and athletic teams have a “no-cut” policy. These structures result in a strong majority of our students engaged in at least one non-academic pursuit at any given time. In 2022, 84 percent of students reported feeling very satisfied or satisfied with the physical safety of the school and 74 percent of students reported the same for the emotional safety of the school.

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

Sturgis communicates consistently with parents. Every week, parents receive an email with updates, news and notes. Additionally, parents receive formal updates on their child’s academic progress every six weeks, at which time parents also receive an updated executive director’s newsletter (which includes notes from the counseling department). In the fall, Sturgis hosts a parent open house as well as parent-teacher conferences, and members of the Sturgis leadership team regularly attend Sturgis Parents Association meetings. Additionally, parents are encouraged to email faculty and staff with questions and receive a response within one school day.

In our 2022 survey of Sturgis parents, greater than 87 percent of parent respondents reported feeling very satisfied or satisfied with the information provided by the school to parents; nearly 82 percent of parent respondents reported feeling very satisfied or satisfied with the school’s responsiveness to their concerns; and, nearly 79 percent of parent respondents reported feeling very satisfied or satisfied with the opportunities for parents to participate. Also, nearly 91 percent of parent respondents reported feeling very satisfied or satisfied with the physical safety of the Sturgis environment, and greater than 89 percent of parent respondents reported feeling very satisfied or satisfied with the emotional safety of the Sturgis environment. In addition, Sturgis surveyed parents in January of 2021 during hybrid/remote learning, and 76

percent were very satisfied or satisfied with the 2020-21 school programming, 72 percent were very satisfied or satisfied with communications from their child's teachers regarding academic progress, and 93 percent were very satisfied or satisfied with communications from Sturgis' administration.

Select community partnerships include: Arts and Justice Collective, Belonging Books, Cape and Islands Gay Straight Youth Alliance, Cape and Islands School Counselors, Cape Cod Family Resource Center, Cape Cod Voices, Career Opportunities of Cape Hyannis, Gosnold of Cape Cod, Hyannis Film Festival, Hyannis Main Street Business Improvement District, Hyannis Rotary Club, John F. Kennedy Museum, No Place for Hate Barnstable, and Zion Union Heritage Museum.

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

Teacher professional development and collaboration have long been hallmarks of Sturgis' culture. All teachers undergo offsite IB training when beginning to teach an IB course at Sturgis and attend IB workshops for more experienced educators approximately every four to five years. Additionally, Sturgis faculty starts the year with five days of professional development at Sturgis led by Sturgis faculty and leadership prior to the students returning from summer break, and there are three other professional half days throughout the year that are designed for professional development and collaboration. Sturgis faculty have a three-week rotating professional development meeting schedule after school on Wednesdays, alternating between departmental meetings, faculty meetings, and cross-campus departmental meetings.

Teachers work together in departments to create curriculum and share best practices, and our voluntary Critical Friends Group and Equity Professional Learning Community help to build on this culture of creativity and collaboration. Sturgis lead teachers and school leaders have been trained as Critical Friends Facilitators to help ensure healthy communication, teamwork, and collaboration. Teachers also share extensive resources via our Google Doc and Classroom systems. Every teacher is observed four to six times per year by their principal, and our instructional supervision process is both outlined in our staff handbook and designed to be individualized for each teacher's inquiry.

All teachers are provided with IB training, and access to SEI training. Our professional development this charter term – guided by our english learner coordinators, special education and counseling experts, Equity Professional Learning Communities, and our principals – has helped develop staff capacity to examine and dismantle implicit biases and systemic inequalities in order to create environments in which all students can deeply learn, grow, and thrive. When surveyed in January of 2023, 93 percent of faculty were very satisfied or satisfied with our educational philosophy; 96 percent were very satisfied or satisfied with their fellow teachers; 85 percent were very satisfied or satisfied with the instructional materials; and 73 percent were very satisfied or satisfied with staff development opportunities.

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

Sturgis school leadership is stable and experienced. The current executive director has worked at Sturgis for nineteen years, and has thirteen years of school leadership experience at Sturgis. Sturgis' two principals have a combined thirty years of experience at Sturgis. The director of finance and operations has served in that position at Sturgis since 2004. All four senior school leaders have deep and extensive experience with Sturgis and the International Baccalaureate Organization. Both principals and the executive director began at Sturgis as teachers and gained experience in a variety of leadership roles prior to assuming their current positions, demonstrating the strength and effectiveness of Sturgis' leadership development model.

The executive director and principals meet formally every week for approximately two hours to brainstorm, plan, and evaluate. Each principal formally meets once every three weeks after school with that campus' Faculty Leadership Council, composed of lead teachers from every department and the IB, SPED, and EL coordinators. Additionally, each principal is supported by an assistant principal who helps with a variety of leadership and administrative endeavors. Both principals attend the monthly Board of Trustees Meetings to assist with governance/leadership transparency and clarity. Within the past five years, Sturgis has added a human resources coordinator and diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging coordinators, all of whom will help to establish systems and structures for the recruitment, development, and retention of educators

reflective of the racial and ethnic composition of the students and families Sturgis serves, as well as ensure an inclusive, respectful environment for all staff. These systems help ensure that Sturgis continually meets its mission and strives to reach set goals, such as IB benchmarks, accountability plan goals, Student Opportunity Act, etc. When surveyed during the second semester of the 2021-2022 school year, 88 percent of faculty, 87 percent of parents, and 62 percent of students reported being very satisfied or satisfied with Sturgis' administration.

As charged by its mission, Sturgis administrators have been committed to dissemination. We have hosted well over a hundred visits from schools across North America (and international locations), including four schools from our sending districts and multiple Boston Public Schools. Sturgis has presented at ten annual IB Americas Annual Regional Conferences about IB for All. Sturgis personnel have led scores of international teacher and school leader IB workshops designed to help schools create a strong culture and support systems that enable all students to embrace a rigorous curriculum. Multiple Sturgis leaders were recruited by the IB Organization to develop project frameworks and to develop and lead teacher workshops/instructional coaching models for the IB's Bridging the Equity Gap Project, which aimed to increase the number of low-income students participating and succeeding in the IB's Diploma Programme in five large comprehensive American public high schools with Free/Reduced Lunch rates of 50 percent or greater.

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

Sturgis set a vision for and established plans to foster a sense of belonging and partnership for students and families. We support all students to attend school. Sturgis has a team who monitors attendance data daily, reaches out to students prior to the first day of school, and calls students/families who are not present. Our school policies and practices reinforce positive culture and climate. We plan pre-service professional development to support teachers as they plan to teach safety expectations, build community, and teach classroom routines in the first week of school. We review disaggregated discipline, attendance, and special education referral data and identify trends in the data to address in the upcoming year. Our policies actively affirm students and their diverse identities. We consider the multifaceted identities of our students and the need to provide windows, mirrors, and doors for all students.

We created two diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) coordinator positions, and they help to incorporate professional development opportunities to build understanding and skills in culturally responsive teaching practices. Our DEIB coordinators act as a resource, guide, and strategic planner with our administrative leaders, at both campuses, in the creation of DEIB systems. These coordinators provide faculty and staff with resources for academic, emotional and social support for students/families of diverse backgrounds; work with Sturgis' administrators to ensure that the school's curriculum fully reflects the diversity of our local and global communities; and inform curriculum and instruction, helping staff to consider identity, text choices, and classroom practice in/around DEIB. Also, they create and coordinate programs for education on DEIB to our community (faculty, staff, students, parents); sustain pre-existing and creating new groups and activities that support students' belonging (student-led clubs, belonging groups, etc); and work with the admissions office to recruit, welcome, and retain students from diverse backgrounds. Finally, they act as a liaison - along with other school outreach leaders - between the school and public service organizations in the greater community to improve efforts to serve our local community and support outreach, admissions, marketing, and recruitment programs.

Many faculty join our Equity Professional Learning Communities. A select list of student clubs that help to ensure equity and respect in the school include: Faith Club, GSA Club, Her Future Coalition, Human Rights Club, Khotang Menstruation Aid Organization, MARCH: Make Anti-racist Change Happen, Mental Health Matters Club, One Love, S.T.A.M.P. (Standing Together Against Misogynistic Practices, Students of Color Coalition (SOCC), and the Women's History & Rights Club (WHRC).

## **PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE**

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The most instrumental practice to Sturgis' success is that we are adamant about how we define success (and how we do not). Success is ensuring each student realizes their individual potential with an emphasis on International Baccalaureate participation over performance.

Success is not predicated on specific college admissions. Success is not about earning the IB Diploma. Success is not about earning an IB grade of 6 or 7. Success is not GPA based. In fact, Sturgis does not have honor roll, class rank, weighted courses, National Honor Society or valedictorians, among many other typical markers of success. Why? Success is about striving for your personal best in order to develop the habits of mind that allow you to become a mature college student and adult, and these traditional markers of success often get in the way.

At Sturgis, we strive to provide a free world-class IB education to all students who are selected by public lottery regardless of past academic record or personal circumstance. All of our students take all their coursework in eleventh and twelfth grade in the IB Diploma Programme, and students choose their IB coursework; there are no prerequisites nor screening processes. Because we support the dignity of risk for our students, Sturgis teachers, staff and school leaders work tirelessly to support each student, for these relationships lead to increased participation in class discussions, participation in clubs and activities, and commitment to the community.

Our first IB coordinator coined a phrase: We teach kids, not stuff. We need to find out who our students are as people; in order for that to occur, teachers need to believe that relationships in the classroom are an enormous indicator of successful learning. Who we teach, why we teach, and how we teach are much more important than what we teach. Success is a student who takes a higher level class they have an interest in, not an A in, or a student who continues in IB Latin because they want to explore the subject more deeply.

At Sturgis, you will hear faculty and students continually asking "why?" You will seldom find teachers lecturing, but will observe a great deal of collaborative and contextualized learning. You will find projects, labs, and essays broken down into manageable steps. You will observe flexible deadlines. You will learn about paraprofessionals, counselors, support staff and school leaders working with teachers and students to ensure that students are not falling between the cracks. You will circulate at lunch and notice the amount of faculty providing extra help to students. You will hear from teachers who define themselves not as science teachers, for example, but as IB teachers who help students.

In short, Sturgis adults base every professional choice on our instrumental practice of defining success as each student reaching their individual potential with an emphasis on IB participation over performance.