

U.S. Department of Education
2012 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School - 12NJ2

School Type (Public Schools): Charter Title 1 Magnet Choice
(Check all that apply, if any)

Name of Principal: Mr. Robert Fuller

Official School Name: Middlesex County Vocational School Perth Amboy

School Mailing Address: 457 High Street
 Perth Amboy, NJ 08861-3505

County: Middlesex State School Code Number*: 23-3150-060

Telephone: (732) 376-6300 E-mail: fullerr@mcvts.net

Fax: (732) 376-6391 Web site/URL: http://www.mcvts.net/

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

_____ Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*: Mr. Brian Loughlin Superintendent e-mail: loughlinb@mcvts.net

District Name: Middlesex County Vocational and Technical Schools District Phone: (732) 257-3300

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

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. John Bicsko

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

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

**Non-Public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

12NJ2

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2011-2012 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2006.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 or 2011.
7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

12NJ2

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district 0 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 (per district designation): 0 Middle/Junior high schools
7 High schools
0 K-12 schools
7 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 17897

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Urban or large central city
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2011 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0		6	0	0	0
K	0	0	0		7	0	0	0
1	0	0	0		8	0	0	0
2	0	0	0		9	43	37	80
3	0	0	0		10	42	33	75
4	0	0	0		11	40	30	70
5	0	0	0		12	41	29	70
Total in Applying School:								295

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
1 % Asian
10 % Black or African American
75 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
14 % White
0 % Two or more races
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting 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.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2010-2011 school year: 6%

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

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	4
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	13
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	17
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2010	300
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.06
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	6

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 2%

Total number of ELL students in the school: 6

Number of non-English languages represented: 1

Specify non-English languages:

Spanish

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 75%

Total number of students who qualify: 223

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

The total represented above is from our current Master Eligibility List for students currently qualifying for Free or Reduced Lunch.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 0%

Total number of students served: 1

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

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

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>18</u>	<u>1</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>
Total number	<u>32</u>	<u>1</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1: 16:1

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

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Daily student attendance	96%	99%	99%	99%	98%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2011 are doing as of Fall 2011.

Graduating class size:	<u>67</u>
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	<u>3%</u>
Enrolled in a community college	<u>42%</u>
Enrolled in vocational training	<u>24%</u>
Found employment	<u>23%</u>
Military service	<u>4%</u>
Other	<u>4%</u>
Total	<u>100%</u>

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

No

Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

The Perth Amboy Campus of the Middlesex County Vocational and Technical Schools (PAVT) is a part of the oldest county vocational school district in the nation, established in 1914. Our district and individual schools have distinguished themselves with many awards and a fine reputation for education. PAVT was established in 1927 in Perth Amboy, NJ, and in 2004, we relocated to a modern hi-tech facility along the city waterfront. The entire school is outfitted with extensive, state-of-the-art technology and we share our campus with Middlesex County Community College (MCCC). There are mini-computer labs between each two academic classrooms, which allow teachers to differentiate instruction and work with smaller groups of students as well as afford students the opportunity to do independent work.

Students come to PAVT from the City of Perth Amboy and several surrounding communities. Eighty-six percent of our student body is from a “minority” group with a large percentage being bi-lingual. We also have a disproportionate number (75%) of students who are of low income status which designates PAVT as a Title I school. Many of our students come to PAVT having scored “partially proficient” in both mathematics and language arts on statewide assessments and we take great pride in our ability to increase the academic achievement of these students such that our school has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for the past three years. The drive to succeed at PAVT comes from our district mission statement which is as follows:

"To prepare students for employment in the competitive labor force and for life-long learning by providing a program that stresses the expectation that all students achieve the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) at all grade levels; the work ethic; technology; industry-driven occupational skills competency; broadly transferable academic, thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills; diversity and equity behaviors, and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship."

In keeping with our mission statement, we realize that today’s vocational students are entering college or post-secondary technical training in greater numbers than ever before and we are proud to be at the forefront of this evolution with nearly seventy percent of our graduates continuing their education in post-secondary schools and the remaining graduates entering the competitive labor market or the military.

The Perth Amboy Campus offers eight different career majors in traditional as well as emerging fields. The offerings are classified into four groups with each having its own industry certified exams through National Occupation Competency Testing (NOCTI), Automotive Service Excellence/National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (ASE/NATEF) or articulation agreements with various colleges.

- 1 The School of Construction Technology:
 - a Electrical Technology (NOCTI)
 - b Carpentry (NOCTI)
 - c Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration (NOCTI) as well as Environmental Protection Agency certification.
- 2 The School of Computer and Business Technology:
 - a Computer Assisted Drafting/Design (NOCTI)
 - b Computer Applications for Business (NOCTI and Microsoft Office User Specialist)
 - c Computer Systems Technology (NOCTI, CompTIA)
 - i Certified Cisco Academy.

- 3 School of Automotive Technology (ASE/NATEF):
 - a Automotive students also receive dual credit at Fairleigh Dickinson University.
- 4 School of Culinary Arts (NOCTI):
 - a Our culinary program is certified by the American Culinary Federation.
 - b Students receive dual credit at MCCC, Atlantic Cape Community College, Culinary Institute of America and Johnson and Wales University.

Students at PAVT are provided with a well-rounded education with opportunities to participate in a well respected sports program that includes soccer, baseball, softball, and girls and boys basketball. We have a local chapter of the National Technical Honor Society for those students who have achieved the greatest heights of academic success and model citizenship. We also engage our students in the betterment of the community by encouraging students to volunteer at the local Salvation Army, preparing holiday meals for the elderly, and participating in Public Service Announcements for the Middlesex County Freeholders.

Every member of our faculty is “highly qualified” in their respective fields and all participate in Professional Learning Communities (PLC’s) to focus on successful teaching strategies and use what works in the classroom on a daily basis. Parents have real time access to their child’s grades and may track their progress through the Parent Access Module on our computer network. We utilize data that is generated through two annual tests and allows us to track the progress of individual students as well as show their strengths and weaknesses in language arts and mathematics. Students who fall behind are referred to our Intervention and Referral Services Team (I&RS) which tracks each student’s progress and actively engages the administration, faculty and support staff in the success of the student. Perhaps our greatest strength is our small size. As you can see we offer a lot to our student body of nearly 300. We get to know each student in our school and work with them and their families to achieve their goals.

1. Assessment Results:

PAVT administers to grade eleven students the NJ High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) as a graduation requirement to fulfill our responsibility for the New Jersey Department of Education. We accept the performance levels that have been established by the department of education which are 0-199 partially proficient, 200-249 proficient, and 250-300 advanced proficient. These proficiency levels are the same for both language arts literacy and mathematics.

For our students in grades nine and ten we use the Northwest Evaluation Association's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment in both reading and mathematics. The MAP test quickly adapts to a student's ability level and is an untimed test of approximately forty-two to fifty-two questions that provides, within two days, actionable data we use to improve student learning. Our students take the MAP assessment in the fall and spring of each year which allows us to use this computer based assessment to measure a student's achievement and academic growth over time. The MAP assessment provides a Rasch unit score (RIT) named for the mathematician George Rasch. It also provides the standard error of measurement to measure the precision of the score, the percentile rank, percentile range, and Lexile range among other measures. The normative data is based on data from over five million students from over thirteen thousand schools across the nation. The NWEA also provides data tables from this vast data base for both mathematics and reading RIT values which they then place in grade level equivalents.

PAVT has been making progress increasing student achievement for the last three years. In the 2006-2007 school year, we were in School In Need of Improvement status year three hold for Language Arts Literacy. For each of the next four school years, PAVT made adequate yearly progress for language arts literacy. For mathematics, PAVT did not make adequate yearly progress for the school year 2006-2007. In the 2007-2008 school year, PAVT made adequate yearly progress for math and was put on year one hold. For each of the next three school years we have been successful in making adequate yearly progress.

Since the performance tables were completed using data from our first time test takers in grade eleven on the New Jersey High School Proficiency Assessments the following comments are based on the performance trends found there for the years 2006-2011. It is important to note that the number of students in the total population for grade eleven has remained relatively stable having between sixty to seventy students each year in the eleventh grade class and we are successful in testing one hundred percent of our students most years. We have no students who are tested through an alternate means and over the last two years have no special education students in our school. Although we have many students that are bilingual in our school we do not have a population of English Language Learners. Seventy-five percent of our student population is economically disadvantaged and qualifies for the federal free and reduced lunch program. It is important to note that there is no achievement gap between the students who are economically disadvantaged and those that are not. The majority of the student population of PAVT falls in the Hispanic or Latino ethnicity with forty to fifty students in this subgroup each year. The next largest ethnicity is white students with ten to twenty students and the third largest ethnicity is African American students with less than ten students each year. The City of Perth Amboy has a very high population of Hispanic and Latino families. PAVT is known in the City of Perth Amboy, where it is located, as a school that offers a wide variety of programs and is successful in getting students to be college and career ready. Families in the city enroll their children in large numbers and we are happy to be a community based school.

Although the numbers of students in the ethnic groups other than Hispanic or Latino are too small to be considered significant, we do look at the data to see if the achievement levels of the students are at all different. For most years, the scale score mean of the students in each subgroup has not been more than five points different. Although we have been making incremental progress over the years in both mathematics and language arts literacy, there was a very large jump in scores between the 2008-2009

school year and the 2009-2010 school year with the total population achieving 69% and 87% proficiency respectively. This large jump in scores has been attributed to the principal's emphasis on academic achievement daily while in the cafeteria, hallways or in meetings with students, parents and counselors. Students at PAVT have academic targets and know where they are in relation to the target from conversations with teachers, counselors, parents and the principal.

2. Using Assessment Results:

PAVT uses the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment extensively to analyze and improve student performance. Each year the students are assessed in the fall and two days later the teacher has the results of the assessment to use in the classroom. The teachers have been taught how to access and use the data for instructional planning, differentiation of instruction, screening, growth, goal setting and informing instructional decisions. The teachers can log in to the NWEA website and see each of their classes in the teacher report with the students' results of the MAP assessment sorted by RIT range, national percentile, and Lexile range in reading. The teacher report in reading is further broken down into the clusters tested which are: decoding and word recognition, reading strategy/vocabulary development, comprehension skills, and response to text. Each teacher also receives the mathematics report of the students in their class which also has RIT range, national percentile, and standard error. The clusters tested and reported on the teacher report for mathematics are: number and operations, geometry and measurement, patterns and algebra, data analysis and discrete mathematics, as well as mathematical processes.

Along with the teacher reports, teachers take the data and make it meaningful for the students by meeting to discuss the student's individual report which shows the students strengths and weakness in the clusters. It is at these meetings that students do some goal setting for post testing in the spring and then keep track of their progress in the clusters towards these goals. The individual student reports are shared with families who also make goals for their children and are asked to help at home with strategies to meet the goals. After the spring administration the students again meet with the teachers to see what their growth was in relation to what is typical growth.

Another piece of the NWEA package is the class breakdown by cluster which our teachers use on the days they differentiate instruction. The teachers simply print the table which places the students in individual classes based on their strengths and weaknesses. They then use this information to group students in appropriate ways for the stations, collaborative groups, or instruction with peers or teacher. The *DesCartes: A Continuum of Learning*, which states what the student knows, is ready to learn, and what their target skills are is an additional piece our staff members use to work with students to take them from where they are today to where they want to be. It is another piece of the conferencing with students and parents that clears up what the students know and is ready to learn.

During their sophomore (10th grade) year, students who are deemed to be "at-risk" based on their assessment results are referred to their guidance counselor and the principal who meet with each individual student and parent to plan remediation strategies. Remediation strategies include tutoring, assigned tasks on the web-based program Study Island, encouragement to read more, or referral to our Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) team which tracks and monitors student progress. The same is done during 11th and 12th grade if there continues to be an issue with a student's progress.

We have several different ways that we share student achievement with the community. We have notification of a student's inclusion on the Honor Roll and High Honor Roll printed on their report cards directly. Students who achieve High Honor during any marking level are also honored by having their group photo taken and hung outside of our guidance office for all to see. We also recognize students who are achieving at a high rate in academic and career area classes with their inclusion in the "Best in Shop" or "Best in English/History/Math/Science/Physical Education." In addition, these students have their pictures hung in the hallways with the High Honor Roll students. Students who are selected "Best in Shop" also have that denoted in the comments section on their report cards.

High achieving students who are outstanding members of the community are also eligible for inclusion in the National Technical Honor Society. This prestigious honor is given to only the highest 2% of vocational and technical education students. Inductees are honored at a public ceremony where they are celebrated and recognized for their achievements in front of family, friends and high-level school officials.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

PAVT is one of seven high schools in the Middlesex County Vocational and Technical School District (MCVTS). Through monthly staff meetings and frequent professional development we share our successful strategies with each other with the generous support of our Central Office staff and our Superintendent. One major undertaking that we have shared as a district is the success of the Math-in-CTE program. In the 2008-2009 school year, Math-in-CTE was initiated by the MCVTS district. A Career Educator and a Math Instructor facilitated the adapted version of the model from the National Research Center for Career Technical Educations (NRCCTE) over two school years. Each career and technical educator was paired with a math instructor to explicitly teach and reinforce math concepts in the given career field. It utilizes professional learning communities in order to develop and enhance lessons based on the mathematics naturally embedded within each career major. These teams and communities develop math-enhanced lesson plans based on the seven-element pedagogic framework developed by the NRCCTE. These lessons were posted on the district E-board. After being presented at a Best Practices Conference, the New Jersey Department of Education decided to initiate the program throughout the state. The facilitators are now working with the New Jersey Department of Education in order to implement this model in many districts around the state. They have completed the training of over thirty instructors for the Health Technology and Auto Technology clusters and are in the midst of training over fifty instructors in the Business Finance, Construction and Hospitality and Tourism clusters. These teams are from twenty-six different districts across the state of New Jersey, several of which have sent one or more teams to each of the clusters. These lessons are shared via a wikipedia: <http://njmathincte.wikispaces.com>.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

The Perth Amboy Campus of the Middlesex County Vocational and Technical Schools (PAVT) has found several successful strategies working with family and community members for student success.

We feel that it is important to have an open door policy when it comes to parents and students. We always work with parents for the success and well-being of their child. Communication is the key to success at PAVT. Our parents have real-time access to their child's grades and can see all completed and missing assignments through our Parents Access Module. All assessment data is communicated to our parents on a bi-annual basis. If any negative trends are evident we will meet with the parents to discuss strategies to help improve student success. In doing this, parents are actively engaged in their child's education.

Students at PAVT are actively engaged in our local community. Through our Interact Club, students volunteer their time at the local Salvation Army Chapter collecting food items for the pantry as well as preparing and serving meals to the homeless and impoverished in Perth Amboy. Students volunteer at the local elementary school reading books with at-risk youths in the primary grades. Culinary Arts students work with the City of Perth Amboy's Office on Aging to cook holiday turkeys and hams for the elderly during the Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter holidays. Each student received a certificate of commendation from the Mayor for their efforts.

Senior students have the opportunity to work in our Cooperative Education program. This program has allowed PAVT to develop an excellent rapport with local business leaders who employ our students in their chosen vocation and allows them to receive on the job training. We also use these relationships as part of our Advisory Committee to develop strong partnerships with post-secondary educators and with business, industry, organized labor and community representatives who assist us in the evaluation of our programs and review of our curriculum in an effort to meet or exceed industry standards in our career areas.

1. Curriculum:

Students at the Perth Amboy Campus of the Middlesex County Vocational and Technical Schools (PAVT) receive a quality vocational and academic education. The core curriculum at our school ensures that students are career and college ready when they graduate. Our curriculum has been revised and is aligned with the Common Core State Standards for Language Arts and Math and with the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards in science, social studies, world languages, health and physical education, and technology. All content area curricula are aligned with the 21st Century Life and Career standards. The district has established a 5 year cycle for curricula revision. New courses are developed when necessary and beneficial for students. This provides a consistent methodology for updating curriculum and keeping the content relevant to the academic needs of students.

Mathematics

Students who attend PAVT are required to successfully complete three years of mathematics. The courses include Pre-Algebra, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II and Pre-Calculus. If remediation is necessary, students are given a fourth year of math called Math for Practical Applications.

English/Language Arts

PAVT students are required to successfully complete a four-year course of study in language arts.

Science

PAVT has two state of the art science labs to facilitate students in learning the necessary scientific skills for success at the high school and post-secondary level. Students are required to complete three years of science which includes Physical Science, Environmental Science, Biology and Chemistry.

Social Studies

The Social Studies curriculum at PAVT has a comprehensive offering of required and elective courses. Required courses include U.S. History I & II and World History. Our elective courses include Principles of Democracy, Economics, and Sociology.

Physical Education

All students are required to complete a four year course in Health and Physical Education. We are currently involved in the School Health Initiative which promotes healthy eating and exercise for school aged children and requires each student to complete a “fitnessgram” which monitors their progress towards a healthy lifestyle.

Technology

PAVT is a modern facility outfitted with technology in every classroom and career area. Students regularly use advanced technology in their career technical education (CTE) courses. CTE programs are updated to meet industry standards with the latest technology. From intimate knowledge of Cisco Systems routers and servers to car diagnostic systems and from AutoCAD and Rivet to HVAC-R trainers, students are immersed in technology on a daily basis.

Foreign Language

Students in our College Preparatory classes receive Spanish I and Spanish II while general track students receive Conversational Spanish to meet the requirement for graduation.

Career Areas

PAVT offers eight different career majors. Students are required to go through an exploratory period to test their aptitude in a given career major. Once a compatible CTE program has been found, students are required to complete 4 years of training in order to graduate.

2. Reading/English:

PAVT has students that come from many different educational backgrounds and cultures, which is reflected in the disparity between more proficient students and those who are struggling in language arts when they arrive at our school. Despite the challenges that we face as a school when it comes to language arts instruction, we are able to bring our partially proficient students up to proficient status and our more advanced students to new heights in their language arts education. We offer a rigorous curriculum that pushes our students to develop critical thinking skills and become life long readers and learners. Through our data analysis, we are able to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses of each student which reflects itself in a Lexile score. Our Media Specialist then uses her resources to locate books, essays and articles that fall within the Lexile range of a given student. By matching up the level of literature to the student, students read more than they ever have because they are able understand what they are reading. When students begin in 9th grade, they are exposed to classic literature. Students read, analyze, critique and write about Shakespeare, Homer, Poe, Hughes, Dickinson, Frost and others. Students learn and utilize the basic elements of expository and persuasive writing as well as the basics of grammar and punctuation. Students who are more advanced will work on higher order thinking skills while also engaging in peer to peer instruction in small groups. As students move into 10th grade, they are exposed to more American literature and they continue their writing development and literary analysis. Students learn to effectively express their thoughts and opinions clearly both orally and in their writing. When students advance into the 11th grade, they hone their analytical and writing skills by writing complete persuasive and expository essays and defending their positions on current topics of interest. Our 12th grade curriculum is about self-reflection and societal analysis. Through the reading of various novels and essays, students critique and analyze literary works within the scope of the following topics:

Real Life Writing, Autobiography and Memoir, Race, Culture and Stereotypes, Gender Studies, Family and Relationships, Ethics and Morality, War and Genocide

Students who are unsuccessful completing the High School Proficiency Exam (HSPA) are required to complete English for Practical Applications which not only focuses on HSPA preparation but also prepares students for college English and placement exams.

3. Mathematics:

PAVT has developed several different methods for bringing students up to grade level in Mathematics. There are special curricula and smaller class sizes for at-risk math students. Students who struggle with math as indicated by their NJASK scores, final average in their grade 8 math classes and Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) math scores are given added support in Pre-Algebra and/or Geometry. These students are grouped into smaller classes to individualize and differentiate instruction. As they progress through the upper grades, at-risk students are given an enrichment math class on a daily basis to hone their skills and accelerate their progress. During these classes, at-risk students have an opportunity to solve difficult and complex problems by recognizing and clarifying mathematical structures in other contexts and determining reasonableness of solution, and to solve practical problems by distinguishing relevant and/or missing information. They learn to represent and analyze a situation by using a multi-representational approach including symbols, graphs, tables or diagrams, and how to effectively communicate mathematical thinking by justifying and documenting work in both oral and written forms. In these smaller classes they have more time for the review of skills necessary for content understanding on current material and for building a solid foundation for future upper level math courses. Our school has also implemented a program called Math in Career Technical Education (CTE). Math in CTE emphasizes the use of essential math skills and their application in everyday life, especially in the students' career majors. Career Major Instructors are paired with a mathematics instructor to develop practical lesson plans that introduce advanced math concepts to students creating an immersion in math for the students. Students who are unsuccessful completing the High School Proficiency Exam (HSPA) are required to complete Math for Practical Applications which not only focuses on HSPA preparation but also prepares students for college math course and placement exams.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

The PAVT science program, which includes Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry and Environmental Science, is taught with our students in mind. Highly-qualified instructors relate scientific concepts to students' lives or real-world scenarios so they can comprehend new or difficult concepts. Hands-on and virtual labs help students integrate technology into their coursework as they work through the scientific method of observation, constructing a hypothesis, experimentation, collecting and analyzing data and communicating results.

In Biology, students learn about evolutionary similarities as they dissect worms, squids, frogs and fetal pigs. Students' genetic traits such as earlobes, eye color, and hair color are explored through various student centered labs. Students learn about the science and ethics of stem cell research. Debates on embryonic and adult stem cells arise as the students explore both sides of the issue. Annual Field trips to Sandy Hook National Park are learning experiences for the students as the topics of water pollution, erosion, overfishing, and species evolution are explored.

In Environmental Science, students are introduced to the 'Decision Making Model' and the values that affect environmental decision making. Students are given a hypothetical environmental situation, gather information, explore the positive and negative short and long term consequences, and then make a decision. The process involves research, listening skills, communication skills and decision-making. Students learn that the environment is interconnected and human actions can have unexpected effects on the environment. Students take 'home efficiency surveys' and are encouraged to write action plans on how they can conserve water and energy in their everyday lives. Students learn about the effect that point and non-point pollution have on the environment in which they live. Current events, such as the 2010 BP oil spill, 2010 Haiti earthquake and the 2011 nuclear disaster in Tokyo, teach students the effects that human activities and natural disasters have on the environment. Discussions on mutation occur when students learn about the detrimental effects of radiation on current and future generations as well.

The Chemistry curriculum combines content with technical support and a variety of hands-on lab investigations. Students enjoy learning about chemical changes and how they occur in their everyday lives and relate them to their chosen CTE subject areas.

Throughout the three years of science education, students learn to think critically, problem solve and communicate with others - all valuable assets for college-readiness or employment in the competitive labor force.

5. Instructional Methods:

Differentiation of instruction is the key to successful schools, especially those with a wide disparity in student abilities, and PAVT is no different in that regard. Instructors utilize various methods to tailor their instruction strategies to fit the needs of their students. Each two classrooms in our building have a common computer lab that allows the teacher to assign meaningful independent study activities to students while they focus on a smaller group of students in the main classroom. Students will often work on a web-based program called "Study Island" that tracks their progress and adapts to their individual skill level to provide pinpoint instruction in their area of weakness. This program can also be accessed by students from home so that learning does not end at the conclusion of the school day.

PAVT Math instructors utilize the ELMO Document projector to introduce new concepts to students. These projectors allow the instructor to record the steps taught to the students which can then be posted on their individual E-Boards so that if students are struggling, they can access the actual lesson on their home computer. Math instructors use manipulatives to drive home various concepts that they teach.

Instructors utilize common assessment to help streamline instruction and to make sure all students are receiving the same curriculum. They analyze the data from the common assessments to discuss the

strengths and weaknesses of their students and classes as a whole in their Professional Learning Communities and strategize on how to improve instruction.

The language arts and social studies instructors at PAVT have adopted the Collins Writing Program which utilizes five different types of writing assignments to focus the students on their writing skills throughout the curriculum. The program helps instructors to guide their students through the five types of writing which greatly increases the students' writing skills.

All of the instructors at PAVT, academic and career, have been trained and are in year one in the use of "Keeping Learning on Track" (KLT). KLT uses formative assessment techniques to gather information for the classroom instructor about how well the students have mastered a particular subject and whether remediation is necessary. As the program develops and progresses, students take ownership of their learning by providing instant feedback to the instructor in the classroom with the results driving the direction of the instruction given.

6. Professional Development:

The professional development program at Middlesex County Vocational and Technical Schools has moved over the past few years from a district-centered program to more of a building-centered approach that puts the focus directly on student achievement.

The entire district has received training in Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) which helps direct teachers to coordinate with one another and focus on student achievement. Teachers meet twice per month in their PLC's to discuss a variety of topics centered on student achievement.

During the summer of 2011, select faculty leaders were trained in a program called Keeping Learning on Track (KLT). KLT was developed by the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) which is also the company that we use for our bi-annual assessment of students. According to their website:

"The Keeping Learning on Track (KLT) Program is a sustained, interactive professional development program that helps teachers adopt minute-to-minute and day-by-day formative assessment strategies that have been shown by research to powerfully increase student learning. The program was designed to support teacher change by joining two powerful ideas: formative assessment and sustained, school-embedded teacher learning communities."

The combination of KLT in the PLC's in conjunction with our use of NWEA assessment data helps to coordinate our professional development district-wide.

Although the focus in the past few years has been PLC's, teachers are also encouraged to seek out professional development opportunities in their chosen fields. Contractually, teachers receive a \$250 stipend annually to seek out professional development opportunities.

Career area instructors often have certain continuing education responsibilities to remain current and maintain certifications in their fields. Our automotive instructors receive training at Fairleigh Dickinson University to maintain our articulation agreement with them for our students to receive dual credits in automotive studies.

The district also provides professional development training via a web-based program called "PD360". PD360 allows teachers (at no cost to them) to seek out opportunities in a wide variety of topics to better serve our students in the classroom. The district is also working on instituting a walk-through evaluation system that works in conjunction with PD360 to provide instant feedback to the instructor and also recommends training based on the results of the walk-through evaluation.

7. School Leadership:

The Principal of PAVT is the unquestioned instructional leader of the school. During his five year tenure at the school, PAVT has gone from a school that was in “Year 3 School in Need of Improvement” in 2007 to a school that has made Adequate Year Progress (AYP) for the past three years. His vision for excellence has permeated throughout the faculty and staff and set the tone for greater accomplishments to come.

The Principal makes himself a visible force in the school by being out in the hallways and not behind his desk. In doing so, he gets to know each student and develop a rapport that enables students to feel that they are cared for and that he takes an interest in their learning. The Principal is also actively involved in parent meetings for students who are not making adequate progress in our program.

The Principal is actively involved in both the formal and informal evaluation of his staff. The use of “Walk-throughs” allows the Principal to closely monitor instruction and keep abreast of the climate in the building. After a “walk-through” is completed, the Principal meets with the instructor to go over the positive aspects of what was observed and offer advice and professional development for any negative aspects. These are informal observations but can turn into a formal observation if there is a continuance of sub-par instruction over an extended period. Formal evaluations involve checking grade books, attendance books and lesson plans as well as a critique of an entire lesson. Course of Study pacing guides are used to ensure that instructors are moving through the curriculum at a prescribed pace. After a formal observation the Principal meets with the instructor to go over the critique and offer suggestions for improvement.

The Assistant Principal of PAVT has the authority to closely monitor instruction as well and also handles all disciplinary actions with the students. He also meets on a regular basis with parents of students who are struggling behaviorally in the school and develops strategies with parents to get the student on track.

In order to ensure the safety and well-being of the staff and students, security cameras are used to monitor hallways and all entrances to the building as well as monitor student behavior.

The principal communicates with his staff at regularly scheduled monthly meetings. He has an open door policy to help staff members feel that they have immediate access to him so that their concerns are addressed in a timely fashion.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 11 Test: High School Proficiency Assessment
Edition/Publication Year: 2005 Publisher: Measurement Inc.

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
proficient	67	49	52	59	45
proficient advanced	3	1	3	5	8
Number of students tested	69	71	70	63	67
Percent of total students tested	100	100	97	98	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
proficient	69	51	53	56	52
proficient advanced	0	3	3	3	7
Number of students tested	51	37	34	36	29
2. African American Students					
proficient					40
proficient advanced					0
Number of students tested	6	9	7	4	10
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
proficient	63	50	48	52	41
proficient advanced	4	0	0	0	5
Number of students tested	49	50	46	48	44
4. Special Education Students					
proficient	0	0			
proficient advanced	0	0			
Number of students tested			1	1	4
5. English Language Learner Students					
proficient	0	0	0		
proficient advanced	0	0	0		
Number of students tested	3			1	3
6. White					
proficient	85	67	67	91	62
proficient advanced	0	8	7	18	23
Number of students tested	13	12	15	11	13
NOTES:					

12NJ2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 11 Test: High School Proficiency Assessment
Edition/Publication Year: 2005 Publisher: Measurement, Inc.

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
proficient	84	87	69	76	76
proficient advanced	1	1	0	0	2
Number of students tested	69	71	72	63	67
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	98	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
proficient	84	87	69	78	72
proficient advanced	0	0	0	0	3
Number of students tested	51	37	35	36	29
2. African American Students					
proficient					70
proficient advanced					0
Number of students tested	6	9	7	4	10
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
proficient	82	84	70	75	75
proficient advanced	2	0	0	0	2
Number of students tested	49	50	47	48	44
4. Special Education Students					
proficient	0	0			
proficient advanced	0	0			
Number of students tested			1	1	4
5. English Language Learner Students					
proficient					
proficient advanced					
Number of students tested	3			1	3
6. White					
proficient	92	100	69	91	85
proficient advanced	0	8	0	0	0
Number of students tested	13	12	16	11	13
NOTES:					

12NJ2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
proficient	67	49	52	59	45
proficient advanced	3	1	3	5	8
Number of students tested	69	71	70	63	67
Percent of total students tested	100	100	97	98	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
proficient	69	51	53	56	52
proficient advanced	0	3	3	3	7
Number of students tested	51	37	34	36	29
2. African American Students					
proficient					40
proficient advanced					0
Number of students tested	6	9	7	4	10
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
proficient	63	50	48	52	41
proficient advanced	4	0	0	0	5
Number of students tested	49	50	46	48	44
4. Special Education Students					
proficient	0	0			
proficient advanced	0	0			
Number of students tested	0	0	1	1	4
5. English Language Learner Students					
proficient	0	0	0	0	0
proficient advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	3	0	0	1	3
6.					
proficient	85	67	67	91	62
proficient advanced	0	8	7	18	23
Number of students tested	13	12	15	11	13
NOTES:					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
proficient	84	87	69	76	76
proficient advanced	1	1	0	0	2
Number of students tested	69	71	72	63	67
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	98	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
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proficient	82	84	70	75	75
proficient advanced	2	0	0	0	2
Number of students tested	49	50	47	48	44
4. Special Education Students					
proficient	0	0			
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Number of students tested	0	0	1	1	4
5. English Language Learner Students					
proficient					
proficient advanced					
Number of students tested	3	0	0	1	3
6.					
proficient	92	100	69	91	85
proficient advanced	0	8	0	0	0
Number of students tested	13	12	16	11	13
NOTES:					

12NJ2