



Freire Charter School Wilmington Title I Schoolwide Plan 2018-19

Freire Wilmington is a college preparatory charter school that serves grades 8 through 12 in the heart of downtown Wilmington. Providing a high-quality college preparatory learning experience to all students that pass through our building regardless of their background is imperative to our mission. Our school embodies a learning program that is focused on critical and real-world thinking as well as problem solving in an environment that is safe, supportive, and rigorous. Our educational model is built around high academic expectations, clearly delineated instructional and cultural principles, a commitment to nonviolence, a data-driven cycle of instruction, an emphasis on student voice, and a focus on social justice. We deliver these principles to our school community through rigorous research-based curricula, therapy services for students, individual academic mentoring and tutoring, a range of after-school activities, and special programs focused on peace and social change.

In traditional schooling, students are conditioned to be passive recipients of knowledge. The educator, philosopher, and Freire Wilmington namesake, Paulo Freire, believed that in order to learn, students needed to be “in dialogue” with knowledge. At Freire Charter School Wilmington, we update Paulo Freire’s notion of dialogic learning for 21st century adolescents. Our approach teaches our students to seek and value alternate perspectives, take responsibility for their learning, speak up in passionate yet appropriate ways, and use education to gain personal power. We support student success within our unique educational model by meeting our students where they are regardless of learning challenges, economic status, cultural backgrounds, or any other condition.

We evaluate all students carefully to identify their strengths and weaknesses relative to our rigorous college preparatory curriculum and plan a path of mastery for each individual student including accommodations for students with special needs and English Language Learners. As such, the 8th grade year is regarded as a support program; a year when students receive the continuum of intervention and remediation, they will need to be successful academically and socially in high school. Our core academic courses are designed to simultaneously help students catch up and to push them forward. We are further responsive to student need by providing intensive skill remediation and intervention as needed, making instruction active and engaging, and helping students persevere through and take ownership of challenging coursework.

Freire teachers and administration focus on a data-driven cycle of instruction to accomplish and identify our academic goals. Evidence from state tests, interim benchmarks, course midterms and finals, the SAT and PSAT are at the center of our professional development and instructional decisions. Furthermore, Freire Wilmington also uses student surveys and input to shape the learning environment and culture when applicable. Freire teachers are thoughtful, resourceful and dynamic professionals who use data to shape their practice by building and reinforcing core knowledge and skills, collecting data as they monitor and assess student mastery, and then analyzing this data to enable lesson adjustments and targeted re-teaching.

One of the Freire’s great strengths is a curriculum that is truly focused on preparing all students for college. Our curriculum is designed overall to reflect depth, Common Core alignment, programmatic coherence, and continuity while fostering critical thinking within reading, writing, numeracy, and research skills. For example,

in English, this means that students are pushed through a rigorous program of critical reading, where texts may range from the works of Shakespeare to *The Omnivore's Dilemma* by Michael Pollan. By incorporating challenging and high-quality texts into the regular English curriculum and providing the necessary supports, students hone their ability to deeply analyze texts through intensive discussion, reading, and writing. In math, Freire's instruction highlights high-level problem solving and critical thinking. Our math courses are designed to expose students to a wide variety of mathematical thinking, including shifting the focus from computation and fluency to problem solving application and conceptual understanding. Like math, many of our Core curriculum courses are differentiated based on need, meeting students where they are and giving them the basic supports so that they can meet our high standard of rigor.

Equally important as curriculum and instruction in fulfilling our college-preparatory mission is Freire's commitment to nonviolence. The support of our dedicated staff helps our students to create a caring community where our students adhere to and self-enforce our code of nonviolent conduct. Our strong peer mediation program helps students feel safe enough to take the risks needed for learning. In this environment, students can achieve both academic and emotional growth. In addition, special classes and activities engage students in dialogue about peace and social change and promote civic activism in order to prepare students for their futures as change-making and engaged adults. Freire's student-centered philosophy allows us to offer the kind of personalized, multifaceted, and rigorous education that students deserve.

1. Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of the entire school

2018-19 is Freire Charter School Wilmington's fourth year of operation as well as our fourth year of operating a Title I Schoolwide Program. During this year's need's assessment, Freire Wilmington utilized stakeholder (parent, student, teacher, and board member) input through various surveys in conjunction with comprehensive data analysis of the School's academic and cultural indicators. Below we present our collection of academic, climate, and demographic data as a part of the needs assessment used to inform the Schoolwide Plan.

Academic Data

9th Grade Credit Accumulation:

On-track in 9th grade measures the percentage of ninth graders who have earned four or more credits in core content areas required to graduate at the end of their 9th grade year (English, math, science, social studies, and a foreign language). This calculation allows us to deliver necessary supports to students who may need additional help to obtain state and school requirements for graduation.

School Year	Percentage of 9 th Graders On-Track
2017-18	98.8%
2018-19	93.3%

DSSF Growth Score Comparison to State

Delaware School Profile Reading Growth Metric		Delaware School Profile Math Growth Metric	
2016-17	Freire: 84 State: 50	2016-17	Freire: 74 State: 50
2017-18	Freire: 59 State: 62	2017-18	Freire: 50 State: 57
2018-19	Freire: not available State: not available	2018-19	Freire: not available State: not available

Proficiency Comparison to State—Smarter Balanced

Reading Smarter Balanced Assessment Proficiency Percentage of Students			
	All Students	Low Income Students	African American Students
2016-17	Freire: 41%	Freire: 29 %	Freire: 35%
	State: 57%	State: 35%	State: 36%
2017-18	Freire: 38%	Freire: 21%	Freire: 30%
	State: 53%	State: 36%	State: 37%
2018-19	Freire: 31%	Freire: 31%	Freire: 22%
	State: 52%	State: 35%	State: 37%

Math Smarter Balanced Assessment Proficiency Percentage of Students			
	All Students	Low Income Students	African American Students
2016-17	Freire: 23%	Freire: 23%	Freire: 20%
	State: 38%	State: 21%	State: 21%
2017-18	Freire: 31%	Freire: 15%	Freire: 27%
	State: 39%	State: 22%	State: 23%
2018-19	Freire: 11%	Freire: 7%	Freire: 5%
	State: 38%	State: 21%	State: 22%

SAT Proficiency Comparison to State

SAT ELA Proficiency Percentage			
	All Students	Low Income Students	African American Students
2017-18	Freire: 52 %	Freire: 38%	Freire: 41%
	State: 49%	State: 30%	State: 31%

2018-19	Freire: 38%	Freire: not available	Freire: not available
	State: 48%	State: not available	State: not available

SAT Math Proficiency Percentage			
	All Students	Low Income Students	African American Students
2017-18	Freire: 19 %	Freire: 10%	Freire: 6%
	State: 29%	State: 12%	State: 12%
2018-19	Freire: 18%	Freire: not available	Freire: not available
	State: 28%	State: not available	State: not available

PSAT Proficiency Comparison to State

PSAT- 10 th Grade ELA and Math Proficiency Percentage		
	Math	ELA
2016-17	Freire: 29% State: 33%	Freire: 60% State: 57%
2017-18	Freire: 16% State: 34%	Freire: 49% State: 56%
2018-19	Freire: 9% State: not available	Freire: 31% State: not available

Academic Data Analysis

Year after year Freire enrolls some of the highest percentages of low income and African American students of any high school in the state, with African American students making up roughly 70% of the student body and low-income students making up approximately half of the total student body every year since the opening of the school. Freire is committed to serving these historically underserved populations and works diligently year-round to ensure that they receive all the supports they may need to succeed within our rigorous academic program. One point of intervention we have also recognized over the years has been that a large percentage of our incoming student population are behind the state average in terms of performance as compared to their higher socioeconomic status counterparts. Closing the achievement gap for these groups is critical to our school's ethos, therefore our discussion of our historical academic data will center around the performance of our largest subgroups and the actions we take to close that gap throughout the student's high school career.

Freire Wilmington's academic performance in its first four years of operation has been largely influenced by the initial low proficiency rates of our students when they enter Freire. Additionally, because our school starts at 8th grade, we do not have students for multiple years of Smarter Balanced testing. Each year our Smarter Balanced scores are based upon a new cohort of students, making it a challenge to build trends over time.

Our diagnostic testing confirms that many students are arriving to Freire with academic proficiency rates 3 to 4 grade levels behind in core subjects, specifically English and math. Though we have been able to help our students show tremendous growth., many of our students are still not achieving proficiency. While we see this as no excuse and we still push for all students to reach proficiency and beyond, this does pose a challenge for us as we move forward.

We are implementing a number of strategic interventions to target student academic performance and generate more critical thinking around core subjects. We believe that our students can and will achieve at high levels and that our school model is developing to become effective in changing the narrative of public education for high school students in Wilmington. As a school and community, we are dedicated to reversing the lagging academic performance statistics for low-income and minority students in Wilmington and committed to continuous improvement for all of our students.

Proficiency Comparison to State

Academic proficiency within Smarter Balanced Assessments within the past two school years has shown mixed results. Overall, Freire was behind the state in terms of Smarter Balanced Reading proficiency, but Smarter Balanced Math school level proficiency has grown year to year, specifically within African American student performance. From the 2016-17 year to the 2017-18 year, schoolwide Smarter Balanced Reading proficiency percentages declined slightly from 41% to 38% and both Freire's proficiency percentages were behind the statewide averages. Specifically, low-income and African American students scored lower than the statewide average for these respective groups in the Reading Smarter Balanced Assessment for both these years. Additionally, these groups each scored lower in 2017-18 compared to 2016-17 on the school level.

In contrast, Freire has improved our schoolwide Smarter Balanced Math proficiency percentages from the 2016-17 school year to 2017-18 school year with 23% of students proficient in 2016-17 and 31% in 2017-18. These proficiency percentages were overall behind the statewide averages, however, year to year Freire decreased its distance from achieving the statewide average. In 2016-17, our low-income students outpaced the state proficiency percentage by 2 percentage points and African American students had proficiency slightly lower than the state average for this group. In the 2017-18 year, the percentage of African American students proficient on the assessment outstripped the state average by 5 percentage points while the percentage of low-income students proficient was lower than the state average. On the school level, these groups performed differently from year to year, with low income students showing a decline in proficiency and African American students showing significant growth from the 2016-17 year to 2017-18 year.

In the 2018-19 school year, performance on the ELA and Math Smarter Balanced assessments was overall lower than previous year performance as well as in comparison to the state-wide proficiency except for the low-income subgroup in ELA proficiency. On the school level, Freire students overall performed 7 percentage points lower than the previous year and 11 percentage points lower than the state in the Smarter Balanced Reading assessment with a 31% proficiency rate. Further, African American students were 8 percentage points behind last year's scores and 15 points behind the state within this subgroup with 22% proficiency. However, 31% of low-income students were proficient in the assessment, outpacing last year's performance by 10 percentage points but slightly falling behind the state by 4 percentage points within this subgroup.

Overall, Math performance in the 2018-19 school year exhibited a decrease in proficiency rates from previous years. This year, 11% of Freire students school wide were proficient on the Math Smarter Balanced assessment, 27 percentage points behind state proficiency percentage and 20 percentage points from Freire's performance last year. Both low income and African American subgroups scored lower than the last year's and the state's proficiency percentage within their respective subgroups. 7% of low-income students

scored proficient, 14 percentage points behind the state and 8 percentage points behind last year's performance in this subgroup. Further, 5% of African American students scored proficient on the assessment, 22 percentage points behind last year's percentage for this group and 17 percentage points behind the state proficiency percentage for this subgroup.

Year-to-Year Smarter Balanced Student Growth & DSSF Growth Score Comparison to State

Freire Wilmington has performed tremendously well in academic growth, outpacing most area schools as well as the state averages in the DSSF Growth metric. Furthermore, we have been able to make gains despite our 2017-18 cohort of 8th graders coming to us farther behind in Smarter Balanced ELA and math proficiency than our 2016-17 cohort did, based on their Smarter Balanced performance in the 7th grade. In 2016-17, our ELA score was triple that of the state average, with a positive 40-point change in ELA scores, compared to the 13-point change statewide for 8th grade. Math scores represented double that of state growth, with a 37-point change in Math scores compared to a 16-point change statewide. Indeed, Freire had some of the highest DSSF Growth scores of any school in the state, with ELA growth placing us #3 and Math growth placing us at #14 among schools in Delaware.

In 2017-18, Freire's reading scores on the Smarter Balanced ELA assessment showed a positive 27-point gain in scores, compared to the 15-point change statewide. This indicates that Freire's average growth was 1.73 times greater the statewide average. On the Math Smarter Balanced assessment, Freire's scores grew by 7 points compared to the positive 5-point change in Math scores statewide. This indicates that Freire's average growth in Math was 1.4 times greater than the statewide average. Further, though our growth score within the DSSF Growth metric is lower than the state average for 2017-18, our history of Smarter Balanced growth demonstrates our ability to sustain growth year to year.

PSAT Score Comparison to State & SAT Proficiency Comparison to State

In April 2017, students took the PSAT 9 and PSAT 10 as preparation for the SAT in 11th grade, and our students scored below state averages in both ELA and math. With this information, we were able to be more proactive and strategic about our SAT/ PSAT preparation efforts. As such, our 2017-18 SAT results were promising considering 2017-18 was our first year having an 11th grade cohort and thus our first class to take the SAT formally. The results indicate 52% of Freire 11th graders scored proficient on the ELA section of the SAT, outperforming the state average by two percentage-points. In Math, 19% of Freire 11th graders scored proficient, about 10 percentage-points behind the state, though this gap narrows considerably within the low-income subgroup. Our 2017-18 SAT scores were competitive with many northern New Castle County high schools and we hope to continue this performance going forward.

The 2018-19 school year was our second time administering the SAT assessment and our second cohort of 11th graders to take the assessment. Within ELA performance, schoolwide performance showed 38% proficiency; 14 percentage points lower than last year's cohort and 10 percentage points lower than the state. Within Math performance, the schoolwide proficiency rate was 18%. This cohort scored only 1 percentage point lower than last year and 10 percentage points behind the state proficiency percentage.

Academic Needs and Goals

We are taking a number of steps to increase academic achievement and growth, especially putting a great deal of effort into bringing students with proficiency gaps up to grade level and engaging students in the college preparatory structured curriculum. Further, Freire has taken many steps to increase our alignment to the college preparatory ethos of the school. Freire has been growing by one grade level per year and will graduate its first cohort in the 2018-19 school year. As a school with a college preparatory ethos, Freire is

continuously working to develop and implement programming that equips students with the skills and support that will enable them to graduate both high school and college. Our “Graduation x2” focus encapsulates this idea of high school and college success.

The premise of “Graduation x2” is not only getting students to college but equipping them the skills to succeed and graduate from college. We believe that in order to elevate our students to this goal, students will need rigorous curriculum and learning opportunities as well as core mindsets and beliefs that prepare them for post-secondary life and beyond. The core beliefs that we work to instill in students are, “I belong here in this academic community”, “My ability and competence grow with my effort”, “I can succeed at this”, “This work has value for me.” These core beliefs are tied to a growth mindset that we want to nurture in all our students. The “Graduation x2” focus enables students to realize the full potential of their intelligence and connect it to their effort through specific lesson plans, adult modeling, framing through lessons, and emphasis on data and progress. Further, through college experience, exposure, and messaging throughout the school, students will become more invested in the idea of college.

The rigor of our curriculum is another huge factor in actualizing the “Graduation x2” focus for Freire Wilmington students. A challenging curriculum not only prepares our students to perform on assessments such as the Smarter Balanced, PSAT, SAT, and others, but enables them to demonstrate core academic skill and deeper critical thinking around these assessments. Using data, student performance on assessments at all levels is tracked and analyzed by teachers to identify where students need additional support. In the 2017-18 school year targeted differentiated support will focus on Math. Listed below are specific strategies we will employ to fully actualize the “Graduation x2” goal for our students.

Intensive Focus on Excellent Mathematics Curriculum and Instruction

- School-wide shift of curriculum towards research- and standards-based curriculum.
- Outside professional development support to help teachers understand how to incorporate new curriculum into daily practice
- Increased time on core Algebra standards.
- Support from math coaches to target individual teacher needs

Data-Driven Instruction

- Emphasize implementing carefully aligned, high-level assessments that are aligned to national standards.
- Implement assessment data systems to more deeply understand the academic needs of our students especially in Reading and Math.
- Create teams of teachers to understand data analysis and implement specific interventions.
- Provide coaching and professional development so that teachers develop assessment literacy— understanding critical benchmark assessments like the PSAT and Smarter Balanced exams on a deep level.

Curriculum Rigor

- Focus on “Deeper Learning” to push students conceptually.

- All teachers will continue to focus on literacy, pushing the use of the highest quality texts, and implementing close reading and writing techniques in their classrooms.
- Math teachers will focus on complex problem solving and critical thinking, ensuring that they are aligning curriculum to standards and teaching not just basic fluency but also problem solving and conceptual understanding.
- Teachers will receive additional coaching in rigorous content.

Improved Instructional Coaching and New Teacher Induction Programs

- Curriculum and instruction specialists who will work with individual teachers to improve instructional effectiveness
- New teacher coaches to work with teachers in years 1-3.
- Scope and sequence of development for early-year teachers, as well as individualized plans for growth.
- Neuro-focused development for teachers that allow them to understand student learning from a cognitive perspective

Teacher Working Groups through Department Teams

- Improved collaboration across grade levels.
- Problem-solving and lesson workshopping-time.
- Increased teacher-leadership and mentorship.

One on One Support

- Have teachers perform data analysis to take a closer look at how strategic interventions could help individual students.
- All teachers will offer extra tutoring and support after school.
- Freire will open after school academic support centers in Math, Writing, Reading, and Science where students can go for additional help from their teachers and peers.
- Social work graduate students will work with students failing multiple classes to help them improve academic performance.
- Freire will intensify parent communication for students who are falling behind academically or socially.
- Freire will give students access to any technology they need to complete assignments or projects.

Through these actions it is our hope to see the following outcomes:

- Students will achieve at a high level, answering complex and critical thinking questions that meet college preparatory standards.
- Students are not only accepted to colleges but prepared to graduate from college, following through with the “Graduation x2” focus.
- Lower rate of students failing at the end of each quarter and on midterm and final exams.
- More students performing at a high enough level to make the honor roll.

- Achieve growth at a level that is double the state average by 2019.
- Work toward developing targets for SAT scores and graduation rates.

School Climate Data

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Enrollment (9/30 count)	234	322	411	479
Average daily attendance	88.5%	92.6%	93.4%	95.5%
Chronic Absenteeism (15+)	37.4%	25.5%	18.9%	19.8%
Suspensions	183	191	172	120
Per student rate	0.80	0.59	0.42	0.25
Expulsions	0	0	0	0
Referrals to Law Enforcement	7	0	0	0

School Demographic Data

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Total Enrollment (9/30 count)	234	322	411	479

Gender				
Male	39%	44%	50%	48%
Female	61%	56%	50%	52%

Ethnicity/ Race				
African American	65%	71%	72%	71%
Native American	-	0.3%	0.5%	0.4%
Asian	4%	3%	2%	0.4%
Hispanic/ Latino	14%	7%	14%	14%
White	15%	16%	8%	10%
Multiracial	3%	2%	3%	4%

Special Populations				
Special Education	6%	16%	19%	15%
English Language Learner (active)	3%	2%	2%	2%
Low Income	45%	55%	49%	43%

School Climate Needs and Goals

Improving school climate indicators such as attendance and suspensions will require building a sustained and deep level of trust with our students and continuing to increase connectedness within the school community by growing an even stronger school culture. We need more capacity at the staff level, more after school activities, more school spirit, a stronger connection with our parents, and more positive incentives. Finally, we need to ensure that all of our students experience academic success at school. We are working on improvements in all of these areas. Since our opening, we have steadily grown in critical climate indicators by lowering suspension rates and increasing attendance rates. Despite a slow start in these areas initially when

Freire opened, we hope to continue the positive trend within these climate indicators. Going forward, we hope to find more actionable ways to involve parents and families more in the Freire Wilmington community as a whole.

We were able to build up the culture of the school in our four years, offering a healthy mix of extracurricular activities, including basketball, student council, math team, art club, dance, and more. Additionally, year after year we offer students an exciting variety of field trips, including college visits, science laboratories, and pure fun days at amusement parks. In 2017, we were awarded the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program grant for \$300,000 per year over a three-year period. This funding is critical to nurturing a strong and identifiable school culture. A portion of these funds have gone towards our after-school programming partnerships with various local and national organizations to provide students the opportunity to engage in activities that align with their personal and professional interests. In addition, these funds also support our Academic Centers, which are run by our dedicated teachers and are available four days a week to students who may need extra math or writing help. Given our steady demographic trends over the years, it is important to us to continue to build our school culture for us to provide opportunities and resources to our students.

Attendance

We developed several interventions around absenteeism in 2017, and we have met our previous year goal of 93% average daily attendance rate in 2017-18. In 2016-17, Freire met its goal of 92% attendance, and further we were able to achieve an ADA of 95% in the 2018-19 school year. Going forward, we aim to see a steady increase in attendance from year to year up to at least 95%.

Also to be noted is the considerable decline in the percentage of students with 15 or more absences, or chronically absent students. From the 2016-17 school year to the 2017-18 school year, our chronic absenteeism percentage declined from 25.5% or just over a quarter of enrolled students with 15+ absences to 18.9% in 2017-18, a decrease of 6.6 percentage points. In the 2018-19 school year, 19.8% of students were chronically truant, a slight increase from the previous year, or specifically a 0.9 percentage point increase. We are working hard to build up our school's culture to increase student and family engagement with the school community to continue to see a decline in chronic absenteeism in the future.

Goals

We have developed the following goals and targets around improving school climate:

- Staff will create programs for new students in younger grades in order to help them understand the values and culture of Freire.
- Develop structures and systems for increased student leadership throughout the building, especially through student-led initiatives that cross grade levels and allow older students to model Freire values.
- Improved student culture data tracking and analysis that will allow staff to respond to data throughout the school year with specific interventions.
- Staff will create a peaceful, structured, and engaging learning environment by articulating clear rules and expectations and upholding them consistently
 - Focus specifically on consistent culture systems, especially consistent consequence systems and expectations. Staff will implement positive behavior systems by using research-based psychological principles, for example, referral and participation in peer mediation, positive write-ups, and raffle rewards.
 - Staff will create plan to communicate policies and expectations to students (“Breathe Fire”).

- Develop an inclusive Freire community through the strengthening of our school’s culture, climate, and parent/ family relationships. Overall, the development of the Freire community requires a collective understanding of what it means for students, teachers, and others to respect, value, and trust each other.
- Teams and committees of staff, including grade level teams (GLT’s) will build sense of belonging and community at the school including major events, structures to share news and information, rituals, and a sense of shared joy.
 - Staff will create a yearlong culture plan for students that includes:
 - Scope and Sequence for assemblies
 - Develop culture priorities - bullying/race/gender/difference
 - Pre-planned field trips & special events
 - Foster themes around Freire Dragons / College Prep
 - Foster student leadership and voice by implementing processes and structures to listen more deeply and frequently. These processes and structures to foster student voice and leadership within the school include relational meetings, student committees, surveys and other feedback loops to constantly improve throughout the year.
 - Create an environment that is inclusive of ALL kids, especially those with special needs
 - Staff will understand the importance of and expectations around special education
 - Staff will create collaborative team structures with an atmosphere of psychological safety
 - Meet regularly in collaborative teams to check in on expectations and consistency of application, reflect on data, and evaluate current systems
 - Create collaboration norms and structures including meeting templates and document sharing
 - Grade level teams will work together to identify students with specific behavioral needs and work together to implement relationship-focused positive supports and analyze result.
 - Incorporate parents into the life of the school more frequently and on a deeper level
 - Offer a greater variety of afterschool programming
 - Increase the quality of the school food service

2. Employ schoolwide reform strategies that:

- a. Provide opportunities for all children to meet the State’s proficient and advanced levels of student academic achievement**

The first topic we addressed in our needs assessment was how to continue and improve on helping our students meet the State’s standards for academic achievement. We are putting a great deal of effort into bringing students with proficiency gaps up to grade level, with the first goal we defined being to focus on assessment. Between the academic goals we defined through our needs assessment, the instructional strategies and school climate initiatives discussed above, and the professional development activities described throughout this plan, we believe Freire has a comprehensive plan in place to provide an opportunity to each of our students to meet Delaware’s academic standards.

- b. Use effective methods and instructional strategies that are based on scientifically-based research that:**
- i. Strengthens the core academic program**

- ii. **Increases the amount and quality of learning time, such as providing an extended school year and before- and after-school and summer programs and opportunities, and helps provide an enriched and accelerated curriculum**
- iii. **Includes strategies for meeting the educational needs of historically underserved populations**

In order to master proficient or advanced levels of achievement—and to ensure that our students will be accepted into and succeed in college—we understand that most of our students will need extra help and support along the way. Instead of regarding extra help as an add-on, our instructional program builds support and interventions into every aspect and part of the school day. Our 8th grade students take supplemental intensive reading and math courses where they develop fundamental skills. Further, we provide students with more needs timely intervention in the form of push-in or pull-out classroom support. Not to be overlooked is the academic culture at Freire, where there is no stigma attached to asking a teacher who is introducing a new concept in class to “break it down” or to getting extra help.

All teachers make themselves available to students after school for extra help with students who need it. Beginning in 2016-17, we opened after school academic centers where students can drop in for extra help in reading, math, and science from their teachers and peers. This specific intervention provides students with more personalized, one-on-one or small group support, resulting in greater mastery and engagement with course material. We also provide a summer school program for students in need of credit recovery so that the fewest possible number of our students are retained. Both of these programs have grown in strength since we have initiated them. Since initiation, our math, English, and science Centers have led to significant improvement in student performance. In the 2017-18 school year, 85% of regular participants improved their class participation, 73% improved homework completion, and 41% increased average daily school attendance. As we continue to expand our academic supports and targeted interventions, we expect even better academic outcomes for our students.

Helping each and every student who enrolls at our school succeed regardless of background is at the very core of what we do. The imperative that we meet the needs of historically underserved populations goes without saying at Freire. Year after year, the two largest subgroups of the student body at our school are African Americans, comprising over 70% of the student population, and low-income students, comprising roughly half of the student population. Helping all of our students means helping students in these subgroups, and overall, Freire has outperformed the state average in overall growth as well as in helping these students achieve proficiency. We provide professional development and implement a wide variety of school programming to help all members of our school community understand and value our diversity.

- c. **Includes strategies to address the needs of all children in the school, but particularly low achieving children and those at risk of not meeting the State of Delaware’s standards who are members of target populations of any program that is included in the schoolwide program which may include:**
 - i. **Counseling, pupil services and mentoring services**
 - ii. **College and career awareness and preparation, such as college and career guidance, personal finance education, and innovative teaching methods, which may include applied learning and team-teaching strategies**
 - iii. **Integration of vocational and technical education programs**

Providing a college-preparatory education and a safe and supportive school climate are at the center of what we do at Freire. We use our Title I allocation to fully fund a Dean of Students and an Assistant Dean of

Students, who are central to ensuring that our school is a safe environment where students can focus on learning. This is especially important in addressing the needs of students at risk of not meeting the State of Delaware's standards in a timely and effective manner. Our Dean works to remove social, emotional, and behavioral barriers to learning by coordinating some of the initiatives described below.

We are a safe school where students can focus on learning in a peaceful, orderly environment that is structured but free from regimentation. To create this space where students can learn and grow, we have strict rules and expectations that are clear and upheld consistently. As staff, we are united as a team in upholding these expectations and we are committed to transparency in our discipline policy and rationale. We have an especially strong commitment to nonviolence. We stand by these expectations because we believe that all students are capable of behaving at a high level and we commit to supporting all students as they grow to meet these high expectations.

To support students in meeting these expectations, we have all students who are new to our school attend a two-day summer clinic where we provide an intensive introduction to our unique school culture and expectations. Students learn conflict resolution skills, our anti-bullying program, and peer mediation. Any member of our community can request peer mediation themselves, our staff can refer a student, or a dean can require a student to participate as part of a behavioral resolution. Mediations are led by trained peers and are completely confidential. During the school year, we strive to make therapy available to our students in need. We establish relationships with counseling interns and professional therapists from Christiana Care to provide weekly therapy at no cost to students who are experiencing problems (whether in school or at home). Students can refer themselves in addition to staff and parents making referrals.

Our staff of counselors and advisors are always equipped to assist students with the challenges of high school as well as provide support during times of transition for students. Our college counselors incorporate their in-depth knowledge of our students built over time into planning for college essays, SATs, and all the other aspects related to the student's post-secondary transition. Beginning in the 2017-18 year, we put a new student transition program in place for our 8th graders. We created this program in part because the transition from 8th to 9th grade is a point at which we see high attrition, but also to ensure that all of our 8th graders feel supported and well positioned to enter high school regardless of where they choose to enroll. We support 8th graders through regular meetings with an advisor who assists them throughout the year with framing their goals for high school, whether it be college or career oriented. We have also noted that some students choose to leave because of our high academic expectations, and part of the advisor's role in the new student transition program is to ensure that students are connected to the supports available at Freire so that they can succeed in our rigorous curriculum.

In 2017-18, we have continued automated phone calls to parents when their students are marked as late or absent, as well as added new incentive programs. An initiative we used in 2016-17 (and which we plan to implement again in 2018-19) was for each homeroom teacher to receive a weekly report on their students' attendance rate. Any homeroom who hit a monthly attendance rate of 95% or higher received a monthly incentive and was recognized at school-wide assemblies. As a result of interventions like these, Freire met its goal of 92% average daily attendance in 2016-17, and most recently we met our goal of 93% attendance in the 2017-18 school year. Our goal is to maintain our high attendance percentage for the remainder of the current school year and in the long-term aim for a steady increase in attendance from year to year up to 95%.

Further, we have undertaken a number of diversity initiatives to help students and staff bridge differences. At the midway point of the school year, as students return from our rigorous midterms, we hold our annual "Dragon Day." This is a celebration focused on building the school family and creating a sense of belonging

and personal development. Teachers offer workshops and activities like chess lessons and escape the room activities that students sign up for based on interest. The day also includes a diversity session where participants discuss their own identities, get to know others, and ultimately build a greater mutual understanding of issues around diversity and sense of oneness. We also sponsor all-school field trips such as ice skating and Hershey Park as a way to build camaraderie and connectedness. Further, full courses in social justice and awareness are offered throughout grade levels. This continuity of diversity in school activities and curriculum represents the overall mission and vision of the school.

Every year our students participate in visits to college campuses. We have organized field trips for 8th and 9th graders to see Shakespeare plays, and for 10th graders to travel to Washington, DC to visit the Smithsonian museums. With the support of the 21st Century Schools Grant in 2017-18, we have been able to offer activities including young entrepreneur and leadership clubs, robotics, and an art program in partnership with the Delaware Contemporary Art Museum. We have been able to further expand our after-school offerings in the 2018-19 school year and hope to continue to expand these opportunities in the future. We have increased the number of athletic activities we offer since our first year in operation, facilitated by a growing student body. Offering more sports and afterschool clubs has noticeably increased student engagement at Freire. As a school of choice with a college-preparatory mission, Freire does not emphasize vocational or technical education.

d. Addresses how the school will determine if such needs of the children have been met

To ensure that our analysis of data is abreast of the performance of at-risk students, we utilize the services of the Performance Management Team at our charter management organization, Build the Future. Build the Future's Performance Management Team provides data analysis services to the school on an ongoing basis. This team tracks achievement on Smarter Balanced, PSAT, and SAT assessments in conjunction with other academic and climate indicators to monitor the effectiveness and alignment of our instruction and academic interventions such as the Afterschool Academic Centers. These metrics are discussed in detail at monthly data meetings between Build the Future and the Heads of School and are reported at bimonthly board meetings so that progress is tracked at the highest level. Additionally, the Performance Management Team provides ongoing review of assessment data, supporting the administration in understanding the meaning of the data. Evidence from state tests, benchmarks, and course midterms and finals are at the center of Freire's professional development and data analysis is made actionable through instructional decisions. Teachers also independently review performance data on a regular basis, doing so individually, in consultation with colleagues and administrators, at staff meetings, and in professional development sessions. Taken together, our comprehensive data collection and analysis system enables us to deliver appropriate support to students in a quick and efficient manner.

e. Are consistent with, and are designed to implement, State and local improvement plans, if any.

As a public charter school, Freire Charter School Wilmington observes any requirements mandated by the State of Delaware, but develops its own local improvement plans as its own LEA.

3. Provide instruction by highly qualified teachers

As part of ESSA implementation, the federally-mandated "Highly Qualified Teacher" designation was phased out. The new requirement was for teachers to meet appropriate state certification requirements. Our school is required to have 65% of our teachers hold state certifications, and in 2017-18 we met this requirement with 67% of our teachers certified. In 2018-19 our teacher certification percentage came just under the 65%

requirement with 64% teachers certified. When a teacher is not appropriately certified, we work with the teacher and create a plan for that person to achieve appropriate certification. We are currently working with all teachers with no certifications and emergency certifications to ensure they have the required licensure and certification for the upcoming school year.

At Freire, having the highest-quality teaching staff is of the utmost importance. We strive to achieve this by recruiting the best people, using instructional coaches, providing effective professional development, and building planning time into the school's schedule. Teacher exit survey results and teacher attrition data are collected and analyzed by the BtF Performance Management team. Over the course of our existence, we have retained most of our highly effective teachers.

4. Provide high quality and on-going professional development for teachers, principals, and paraprofessionals, and if appropriate, pupil services personnel, parents, and other staff to enable all children in the school to meet Delaware's Learning Standards

Before the new school year starts, all new staff participate in one week of pre-service professional development with new teachers participating in an additional week of new teacher professional development. Based on individual and group professional learning goals, our pre-service professional development topics include Freire Operating Values, Review of Freire Policies and Procedures, Stories of Our Students, School Culture, Technology Training, Effective Teaching, State Assessments, Special Education, Using Data to Drive Instruction, the School Schedule, Common Core, School Safety, Vertical Planning Teams, the Meaning of College Prep, and more. We also utilize Doug Lemov's *Teach Like a Champion 2.0* as a text and resource training in 62 topics that put students on the path to college, which we will continue to draw on throughout the year.

Once the school year is underway, the school calendar is structured so that full-day professional development sessions happen every 4-6 weeks. In addition to Lemov, based on individual and group professional learning goals, our 2018-17 topics include delivering rigorous content, core instructional techniques, understanding assessment analysis, the role of diversity in the classroom, and positive behavior intervention and supports. Professional development days may include built in planning time with either a teacher's grade level or their content area—or both.

Freire's professional development programming is centered on teacher empowerment and autonomy. We work with our teachers to build collective staff ownership of the school's curriculum and culture by keeping teachers involved in planning and execution of professional development. Furthermore, we give teachers a considerable amount of independence in lesson planning. This enables our diverse staff to produce exciting and engaging lessons while remaining aligned to Common Core Standards. In addition, experienced teachers have the opportunity to take on roles as instructional mentors and coaches. Staff and faculty voice is also crucial to our academic and cultural programming. Teachers influence the culture of the school through committees that brainstorm and plan school field trips, assemblies, and other experiences for students.

The Co-Head of School, Academics' role is dedicated to ensuring that there is a skilled and effective teacher in every classroom. In partnership with teachers and other administrators, the Co-Head of School, Academics can craft and implement professional learning opportunities that revolve around the instructional core and keep everyone focused on learning. The coach, using a variety of formats, can seed and cultivate teacher learning in schools. The Co-Head of School, Academics can help teachers plan and design lessons or units, observe and debrief lessons and provide actionable feedback, cultivate collaboration, develop the capacity of teachers to coach peers, and plan and set coherent, aligned, and mutually agreed upon goals for teacher development based on data specifically related to student learning. We also encourage our teachers to

experience and learn from different teaching methods by visiting other high performing schools in order to encourage their growth and development as educators.

We have also recognized the need for more professional development that supports teachers in understanding the diversity of the school and the importance of social justice as a common thread in all subjects in the Freire curriculum. To help teachers cultivate strong relationships with their students, who come from varying backgrounds, based on trust and mutual respect, Freire offers professional development sessions around cultural sensitivity and the alignment of social justice themes to different subjects. Going forward, Freire will continue to develop and expand professional development topics of this nature.

Our professional development program has been developed so that we not only support the professional growth of our staff, but also support students in their journey through Freire's rigorous academic program as well as through college. We designed the program to encourage teachers to develop lessons through a social justice lens and utilize data analysis to improve their instructional practices, with the main goal being that students will gain the understanding that their achievement is directly impacted by their effort.

5. Employ strategies to attract high-quality, highly qualified teachers to high-needs schools

Freire recruits teachers and staff from local colleges, universities, and job websites. Freire partners with Teach for America to ensure that it is attracting staff of the highest quality and effectiveness. Freire is drawn to the TFA program for recruitment because the training teachers receive is hands on and practical and instills within teachers a belief in kids and high expectations for students and their own professional growth. Freire also has a staff referral program that encourages staff to refer those they believe embody Freire values and can consistently support the school's goal of academic excellence.

We have a rigorous application and selection process for all staff members. Prospective instructional staff members submit a resume, cover letter, and three professional references. Staff members screen incoming applications to determine applicants' alignment with Freire values and expectations. Selected applicants then participate in 30-minute phone screenings with Freire staff to further determine whether an applicant will be a good addition to our team. Finally, a portion of applicants are invited to participate in an in-person interview with Freire staff members. Teaching applicants in most cases are required to conduct a demonstration lesson and meet with school leaders.

Once high-quality teachers are on board, we employ a variety of strategies to retain them, including:

- Providing a safe, peaceful work environment
- Engaging teachers in decision making
- Providing leadership opportunities for teachers
- Providing frequent feedback on instruction
- Providing high quality professional development and ongoing instructional coaching support

6. Employ strategies to increase parental involvement, such as family literary services

Freire Charter School Wilmington is fully committed to finding meaningful and mutually enriching ways for parents to participate in our school that involve improving the quality of teaching and learning for all our students and at every level.

At Freire, we are always working to form stronger, better partnerships with families, and we have an open-door policy for families to communicate their needs, questions, or concerns to us at any time.

The ways that we communicate information to families include:

- Our website at www.freirewilmington.org, which is updated regularly with current news and event information
- A weekly email newsletter with updates for families on any and all activities, events, issues, etc.
- Frequent family mailings through the regular mail
- An automated family notification system so that families can be notified by phone when necessary
- The Home Access Center allows families to view their student's grades on a continual basis throughout the school year, with access codes provided in the first month of school and training available at back to school night and upon request
- Through family meetings, visits, back to school night, and conferences (more information below)

The ways that we solicit input from families include:

- Parent participation on the Board of Directors and various committees
- Family meetings throughout the year
- Including a family component in the interview process for hiring staff when possible, particularly when hiring senior administrative staff

Freire works to help families understand how we assess our students, as well as how Delaware and the nation as a whole assess them to determine whether or not they are college-ready. As part of our regular academic calendar, families and school staff discuss achievement, standards, assessments, and student academic growth at the following events:

- Family Meetings – Regularly held family meetings where a Freire staff member is often present to highlight college counseling, the Co-Head of School, Academic Supports' office, after-school activities, the therapy program, etc.
- Back to School Night – Back to School Night happens very early in the school year and is the first chance families have to meet their children's teachers in person.
- Parent-Student-Teacher Conferences – At Freire, conferences work best when both the student and parent attend the conference with the teacher. That way, we can work together to build on each student's individual strengths and make sure we all follow the plan as a team.

In addition, course syllabi for every class are available to families, which provide a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessment used, and the standards students are expected to meet. All of our staff are always available to families, and we invite them to come in and discuss not only what is expected at the state and national level for their children to learn, but also how their individual children are performing at the present time. Parents are invited to reach out to anyone on staff to schedule a meeting at any time during the school year.

From the students themselves to their families, teachers, and support staff – each and every member of the school community has a critical role to play in supporting success for our learners. To make sure each individual knows their role in the process, all community members must agree to and sign the Freire Contract for Excellence, which was developed jointly with families.

Freire makes every attempt to ensure that information related to school and family programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the families of participating children in a format and a language families can understand. Parents/guardians are required to complete a Home Language Survey when a student first enrolls in the school, which enables us to plan for any translation needs. We contract with a telephone translation service (Language Line) to facilitate communication as necessary.

An event offered for the first time in 2016-17 was a parent college workshop. At this event, we brought in an expert to speak with parents about the role they play in a student's success in college, how to plan for and pay for college, and how to find the resources a family will need. This event was successful so we ran it again in the 2017-18 school year.

Two parents of currently enrolled students serve on the school's Board of Directors, and families are invited to serve on various school committees.

In order for Freire to maximize every teaching and learning opportunity available during the secondary school experience, there needs to be a strong partnership between the student's families and teachers. As a result, Freire provides trainings for all staff in the summer training/orientation as well as at least one other educator training yearly on the important role that families play and how we can effectively work together with families. In these trainings, we address differences in culture, expectation, communication styles, and more.

We plan to send out a parent satisfaction survey that we will use to adjust our parent programming, methods of communicating with families, our schoolwide planning, and our family involvement policy. We incorporated parent voice into this schoolwide plan through meetings.

7. Develop plans for assisting preschool children in the transition from early childhood programs, such as Head Start, even Start, early Reading First, or a State-run preschool program, to local elementary school programs

This is not applicable to Freire as our program begins with 8th grade.

8. Implement measures to include teachers in the decisions regarding the use of academic assessments in order to provide information on, and to improve, the achievement of individual students and the overall instructional program

Freire teachers are thoughtful, resourceful, dynamic professionals who use data to shape their practice, by identifying and emphasizing core knowledge and skills, collecting data as they monitor and assess student mastery, and then analyzing this data to enable lesson adjustments and targeted re-teaching. Teacher voice is actively sought into assessment selection, and teachers are coached to be active users of data to improve instruction on a real-time basis. We solicit teacher feedback informally throughout the year during the monthly professional development sessions and formally in an annual teacher satisfaction survey.

Teachers are included in Freire's schoolwide planning conversations. Led by the Co-Head of School, Academics, teachers are directly responsible for implementing many of goals set forth in this schoolwide plan. We discuss the school's goals and incorporate them into the agenda at weekly staff meetings, during common planning time, in one-on-one meetings, and within professional development days. These regular conversations ensure that we are all working toward our common priorities.

Many of our schoolwide plan goals for 2017-18 and 2018-19 focus on increasing teachers' engagement with and literacy in assessment. We devoted an entire professional development day during this school year to having all teachers examine their own students' past assessment results and then create plans in response. Following all interim assessments, individual teachers use their students' data to review results and re-teach as necessary to achieve results for all students.

9. Implement activities to ensure that students who experience difficulty mastering the proficient (meets) or advanced (exceeds) levels of academic achievement standards are provided with effective, timely additional assistance which include measures to ensure that students'

difficulties are identified on a timely basis and to provide sufficient information on which to base effective assistance

At Freire, we accept students with a wide range of needs and academic skill levels and who come to us from a wide range of backgrounds. The Freire approach has always been to meet each student where they are when they arrive at our school, which requires personalizing each student's education program – setting goals, working with parents and students on identifying and planning their needs, and setting students up with the right fit of services and programs to build their academic growth. All of our students are considered potentially at risk of not mastering the demanding college readiness standards and Common Core Standards held by the school, and therefore we employ an RTI process throughout the school, continually monitoring the progress of all of our students with curriculum-based benchmarks and nationally normed reading and mathematics tests.

We begin with diagnostic testing of every new student (which is tied to Smarter Balanced), followed by individual planning based on the results of that testing. By identifying needs and strengths and employing Response to Intervention, we can provide grade level and subject area programming in regular classrooms, but tailor the materials and instructional approaches in those classrooms to individual student needs.

While we always plan to meet the needs of our identified special education students, we also have learned that what are often called best practices for students with special needs can also be recognized simply as good teaching. Our Student Services (Special Education) staff helps integrate supportive approaches and instructional ideas into the “regular” teacher's classroom instruction, providing students – who may or may not have IEPs but all of whom benefit from extra support – the kind of deliberate, explicit teaching they need.

Through adapted texts, “push-in” special education and reading and math support, supplemental “pull-out” instruction in small groups, and after school subject-matter tutoring, coupled with frequent academic monitoring, we are able to educate students with no particular learning challenges, students at risk of academic failure (far below grade level skills), students with IEPs, English Language Learners (ELL), students with 504 plans, migrant and newly immigrating students, and homeless students. A student's individual needs (whether identified in an IEP, ESL plan, or homeless student plan) are used to adjust the curriculum and scope and sequence for that student through differentiated instruction involving grouping and assignments of different types of learning tasks in projects, additional courses, and/or above-level or below-level courses in a particular academic area. Students with IEPs and students with 504 plans are assisted by a certified special education teacher assigned to their grade. We always place students in the least restrictive environment that will enable them to succeed.

10. Coordinate and integrate Federal, State and local services and programs, including the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), violence prevention programs, nutrition programs, housing programs, Head Start, adult education, vocational and technical education, and job training

As a small school using a co-leadership model, coordination and integration of services is built into our model. Our Co-Head of School, Academics oversees teaching and learning while working closely with our Co-Head of School, Academic Supports who oversees school climate and operations. Our two leaders are assisted in their work by charter support organization Build the Future Education Collaborative. The Director of Operations and the Controller from that organization help the school manage its federal programs and its overall budget. All federal funds supplement the school's budget in a carefully coordinated way.

Funding allocations for federal programs are as follows:

Federal Grant Program	2016-17 Funding	2017-18 Funding	2018-19 Funding
Title I, Part A	\$121,158	\$195,286	\$247,259
Title II, Part A	\$26,216	\$33,499	\$39,296*
Title IV, Part A	N/A	\$10,000*	\$26,036*
IDEA	\$55,250	\$65,598	\$97,876
21 st Century Grant	N/A	\$300,000	\$300,000

*Transferred to Title I, Part A