

U.S. Department of Education
2016 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mrs. Misty Renee Johnson

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

Official School Name Samuel Bissell Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1811 Glenwood Drive

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

City Twinsburg State OH Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 44087-1214

County Summit County

Telephone (330) 486-2101 Fax _____

Web site/URL http://www.samuelbissell.k12.oh.us E-mail mjohnson@twinsburg.k12.oh.us

Twitter Handle

https://twitter.com/BissellSchool Facebook Page _____ Google+ _____

YouTube/URL _____ Blog _____ Other Social Media Link _____

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mrs. Kathryn Powers E-mail kpowers@twinsburg.k12.oh.us

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Twinsburg City School District Tel. (330) 486-2000

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. Rob Felber

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

Date _____

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

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

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

Part I – Eligibility Certification

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

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The public school has met their state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) using the most recent accountability results available for the year prior to nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) for the year in which they are nominated (2015-2016) and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2010 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, or 2015.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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

DISTRICT

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

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

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

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	161	151	312
3	145	165	310
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	306	316	622

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 8 % Asian
 - 20 % Black or African American
 - 1 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 63 % White
 - 8 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2014 – 2015 school year: 6%

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	24
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	14
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	38
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	607
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.063
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	6

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

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

Russian, Malayalam, Telugu, Puunjabi, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Philipino, Hindi, Gujarati, Tamil, Marathi, Sinhalese, Portuguese, Japanese, Vietnamese, and Armenian.

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 20%
 Total number students who qualify: 124
8. Students receiving special education services: 10%
61 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- 7 Autism
- 1 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 0 Emotional Disturbance
- 0 Hearing Impairment
- 3 Mental Retardation
- 2 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 5 Other Health Impaired
- 33 Specific Learning Disability
- 9 Speech or Language Impairment
- 1 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 0 Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers	24
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	17
Paraprofessionals	7
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 26:1

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

Required Information	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	97%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2015.

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

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

Yes No

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

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

Everyday we show respect to our school and one another. Through hard work, we strive to reach our goals. We celebrate our achievements and take responsibility. Bissell Tigers R.O.A.R.

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

PART III – SUMMARY

Samuel Bissell Elementary School Tigers ROAR! Each morning, students lead our staff and student body in reciting the mission statement, which highlights the following four character traits:

Respect
Organization
Achievement
Responsibility

These traits are ingrained in our everyday practice as we prepare our students to be successful in and out of the classroom.

These traits exemplify the idea that the success of our students is our number one priority! The student-teacher ratio is 26:1. Students are exposed to a rigorous curriculum aligned with the Ohio Learning Standards, which include the instruction of Art, Music, Physical Education, and Technology. We implement guided reading instruction and integrate science and social studies content through shared reading. Foundations and Traits of Writing activities supplement the language arts curriculum. The interactive, hands-on Go Math program keeps students engaged in daily problem-solving and enhances critical thinking skills. To prepare students for the 21st Century, the curriculum utilizes technology through the use of SmartBoards, iPads, laptop computers, and computer labs.

To enhance and enrich the curriculum, students participate in various projects and activities, such as Invention Convention, COSI (Center of Science and Industry) assemblies, Science Day, and Math Morning. Assistance from Reading/Math Interventionists, before and after school tutors, and Tiger Reading Camp allows students to practice and refine needed skills and strategies. Students are given intervention and enrichment opportunities through the use of computer-based programs such as Moby Max and Raz-Kids. In the 2014-2015 school year, Samuel Bissell Elementary School recognized its “50th Year of Learning” with an all-day comprehensive program celebrating our educational past, present, and future.

Samuel Bissell Elementary School has earned an “Excellent” rating from the Ohio Department of Education, resulting from our positive and supportive learning environment which focuses on individual student needs and knowing every child’s story. Teachers collaborate on a regular basis to analyze data and student performance identifying and addressing students’ individual strengths and areas of concern. However, that is not the only recognition bestowed upon Samuel Bissell Elementary School. During the 2014-2015 school year, we were recognized as a Fox 8 Cool School and were featured on a local newscast. In addition, several of our teachers have been recognized by community organizations for their dedication to students including The Sylvan Learning Center, Walmart, Verizon, The Twinsburg Rotary Club, and The Twinsburg Police Department.

Young families are attracted to our school district not just because of our classroom success. We offer all students a quality education fostered through the connection the school district has with our three communities; the City of Twinsburg, the Village of Reminderville, and Twinsburg Township. In August of 2015, the city of Twinsburg was ranked as the 22nd “Best Places to Live” by Time’s Money magazine. Samuel Bissell Elementary School is one of five schools in the Twinsburg City School District. Our school district has evolved from a small farming community to a growing suburban school district, serving a diverse population of 622 second and third grade students from all over the world.

We believe in educating the whole child at Samuel Bissell Elementary School. The character education program teaches students to make positive choices in and out of school. We celebrate students’ accomplishments through Golden Paws Tickets, Random Acts of Kindness Doves, and Student of the Month recognitions. Students and staff participate in the “Community of Caring” initiative. Participants engage in conversations about positive behavior choices while eating lunch together in a smaller group setting.

Students' nutritional needs are met through our partnership with the Emergency Assistance Center/PAWS on Child Hunger Program, which provides qualifying students with healthy snacks on the weekends. Our collaborative efforts with many organizations such as Kent State University, The Cleveland Clinic, Twinsburg Historical Society, and Twinsburg Public Library help support the academic needs of students.

We are very proud of our parent teacher partnership. The Parent Teacher Association sponsors a "Read-a-Thon" Fundraiser each year. All proceeds are donated to the school for the purchase of instructional materials, incentives, hands-on assemblies, and field trips. Parent volunteers oversee Popcorn Fridays, Book Fairs, Lunch on the Lawn, and Field Day. Families are invited to take part in our yearly Father's Walk, Veterans Day Concert and Fine Arts Festivals.

Since 1964, Samuel Bissell Elementary School has taken pride in educating the whole child by providing the best educational experience to prepare students for future success!

BISSELL TIGERS ROAR!!!!

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Samuel Bissell Elementary School incorporates Ohio’s Learning Standards in all core subject areas. Professional Learning Communities as well as grade level teams, collaborate with administrators, interventionists, specialists, and instructional assistants to review and incorporate the standards into daily instruction. Learning objectives are communicated between teachers and students to connect prior learning and future objectives. Built upon the standards, the curriculum focuses on interdisciplinary instruction to provide authentic learning experiences. Teachers consistently use evidence-based research to enrich classroom instruction and further student growth.

The reading/ English language arts curriculum is conducted through flexible grouping and is provided in the areas of reading, phonics, and writing in order to promote success. Formative and summative assessments such as DIBELS Next, Scholastic Guided Reading Assessments, and MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) Reading are given continually to monitor progress and to adjust instruction. Reading is a priority that stretches across the curriculum. Teachers utilize programs, such as Guided Reading, Foundations, Traits of Writing, CAFÉ, and Daily 5 to deliver instruction. Lessons are differentiated to provide enrichment and remediation. For example, students who receive reading intervention participated in a Stone Soup literature unit. Activities included comparing and contrasting cultural versions of the story and creating a child-friendly recipe of Stone Soup, which students and staff enjoyed during lunch. This activity allowed for text to text, text to self, and text to world connections. All students participated in the Fall Read-a-Thon, which resulted in students reading more than 94,000 minutes in a week, surpassing the goal of 90,000 minutes. As a celebration, the principal danced on the roof!

The mathematics curriculum incorporates required skills with real world application and problem solving. Formative and summative assessments are conducted through mid-chapter checkpoints, chapter tests, anecdotal notes and exit slips. Supplemental support is given as needed. MAP Math and Go Math benchmark assessments offer beginning, midyear, and end of year data. Gardner’s multiple intelligences are met through the use of interactive smartboard lessons, student-led centers, mnemonic devices, and hands-on activities that promote critical thinking. Daily math lessons include enrichment and remediation opportunities. To extend what is learned in the daily math lessons, students participate in many hands-on activities, such as Pumpkin Math. Teachers, parent volunteers and students work together to determine the number of seeds, vertical lines, weight, and circumference of pumpkins. During this activity, students are asked to estimate, reevaluate, and record data.

The science curriculum uses inquiry based instruction with a variety of integrated materials such as text books, informational trade books, and hands-on activities. These resources provide students with the opportunity to expand their knowledge and make connections between the standards and real-life experiences. The second and third grade students explore science through Center of Science and Industry (COSI) on Wheels Assembly, Invention Convention, Cleveland Aquarium Field Trips, Lego Robotics student-led demonstrations, science day, building life habitats, nature hikes, experimentation, observation, and partner research. The COSI team shares interactive exhibits and working labs with students, parents, and staff. The most recent theme was Exploring Ecology. Students observed and recorded changes in nature and explored animal adaptations through many hands on centers. This allowed students to conduct all parts of the scientific method and show mastery of standards.

The social studies/history curriculum is aligned with the Ohio Learning Standards and is enriched through integrated materials and activities, and partnerships within the community. For Biography Day, students dress up, assume the character of a historical figure, and present to students, staff, and parents. This enrichment activity allows students to conduct research, organize information, and apply what they have learned. The students also participate in schoolwide initiatives of citizenship and multicultural awareness in order to become responsible and respectful members of society. In addition, the social studies instruction is enhanced through partnerships with the Twinsburg Historical Society, Cleveland Clinic Foundation, and Kent State University, where classroom discussions and presentations are held with the purpose of students’

making connections with classroom content and the world around them. These real-world connections are also enhanced through field trips to the Twinsburg Waste Water Treatment Plant and Twinsburg City Hall.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

In addition to core curricular requirements, second and third grade students participate in art, physical education, music and technology. These areas are equally important as acquiring skills in the areas of math, reading and writing because of our belief in educating the whole child. Each child has gifts beyond the core curriculum. Samuel Bissell Elementary School has two teachers in art, music and physical education. Students attend classes on a three-day rotation schedule. Students also have the opportunity to attend Computer Lab Instruction twice a week, once with the classroom teacher and the other with the Technology Resource Assistant.

We believe in students showcasing their artistic abilities through many different avenues. Students are exposed to the works and contributions of many different artists where they create projects illustrating different styles, such as abstract and pop art. Students learn form, shape, perspective, and scale. These art concepts are intertwined into projects, which are displayed in and out of the classroom. In addition, Samuel Bissell Elementary School has partnered with a local yogurt business and dentist office in an effort to showcase students' artistic abilities within the community. Student art work is exhibited during one of two Fine Arts Festivals where parents and students have the opportunity to view art pieces.

Music is another curricular area where students can showcase their talents. Students learn rhythm, meter and pitch. Using these foundational skills, students perform during Veterans Day Concerts, Fine Arts Festivals and other annual concert events. The third grade curriculum includes instruction using recorders. Students learn how to play the instrument, which serves as a precursor to learning how to play other instruments. Third grade students also have the opportunity to be part of the Bisselletes school choir, which allows students to perform in front of their peers and parents.

Physical education classes provide students with an avenue to showcase their locomotor abilities. Second and third grade students attend physical education classes to learn different movements and skills, which are demonstrated in end of the year performances in front of teachers and peers. A schoolwide commitment to physical fitness is evident through student participation in "Jump Rope for Heart" and the "100 Mile Club." Students are encouraged to meet or exceed the challenge of walking 100 miles during recess. Students' progress is documented and recognitions are made on a monthly basis.

Samuel Bissell Elementary School is committed to preparing students for the ever-changing technological society of the 21st Century. The technology curriculum includes instruction in the areas of keyboarding, Microsoft Office applications, and computer coding. The Technology Resource Assistant plans activities to enrich what is being taught in the classroom, as well as integrate current events. For example, computer-based activities were completed to commemorate Martin Luther King Day, Presidents Day, and Engineers Week. Finally, because of the implementation of online assessments, an emphasis has been placed on students' abilities to manipulate the mouse, cut/paste, and tabbed browsing to better prepare them for next-generation assessments.

Our mission is to educate the whole child at Samuel Bissell Elementary School. To accomplish this goal, we provide our students with a well-rounded educational experience, which includes instruction in the areas of art, music, physical education and technology.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Teachers collaborate regularly to analyze data and student performance to inform daily instruction. They employ a multitude of instructional approaches, methods, and interventions to meet the diverse needs of second and third grade learners. Instructional approaches and methods include but are not limited to: direct teacher instruction, student-led instruction, scaffolding, and small group collaboration.

Students receive intervention services as outlined by their IEP, 504, RTI, or ELL program. Reading interventions are provided in the regular education classroom and resource room as well as before and after school. Intervention Specialists provide “Tiger Camp,” which is an instructional-level reading club to boost comprehension skills, fluency, and vocabulary. “Phonics and Writing Camp” is an instructional-level class to improve basic reading skills such as phonics, decoding skills, and writing skills including: conventions, sentence fluency, and generating ideas. Title I Reading includes fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary instruction for at-risk students to reinforce lessons from the regular education classroom. Students receive enrichment opportunities based on performance outcomes through leveled Guided Reading groups and independent/group projects.

Before and after-school reading programs include Roar into Reading, which provides skill-based instruction and Extra Scoop Tutoring which provides exposure to a variety of texts to build stamina and increase critical thinking. Students receive instruction through Summer Reading Camp to maintain skills and bridge concepts from grade level to grade level. During the evening, parents/guardians are involved in Fluent Family Nights, OAA/OST State Assessment Informational Nights, and Make-It-Take-It sessions, which offer creative and informative reading strategies and activities for use at home.

In math, students engage in lessons through Listen and Draw/Model and Draw, Share and Show, and On Your Own practice with HOT (higher order thinking) problems. Guided Math, centers, and learning games allow students to work at their own pace towards mastery of concepts.

In both reading and math, at-risk students are provided support which includes RTI (Response to Intervention), “A+” and Title I services. “A+” provides one-on-one and small group interventions with an instructional assistant. RTI services provide additional supports for students with interventionists. Teachers meet with students on a weekly basis to reteach lessons and deliver services based on the analysis of data and/or RIMPs (Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plans).

Intervention and Enrichment Time (I/E Time), a period of no new instruction, is provided daily to allow small group enrichment and remediation lessons and activities.

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

Samuel Bissell Elementary School provides instruction based on data compiled from a variety of assessments, including NWEA MAP for Math and Reading, Next Step Guided Reading Assessment, DIBELS Benchmarks, RAZ-Kids, Writing Diagnostic, Go Math Benchmark Assessments, progress monitoring, and formative/summative assessments.

NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) is an adaptive online assessment tool that provides a Learning Continuum in both reading and math based on students’ results. This Learning Continuum provides information on students’ past, present and future readiness on specific skills. Teachers use this information to drive daily instruction, differentiate lessons and meet the needs of all learners.

The Next Step Guided Reading Assessments and DIBELS Benchmarks are used at the start of the year to assign individual levels and are continually monitored throughout the year to determine student growth and to adjust classroom instruction as needed. The Next Step Guided Reading Assessment measures students on an A-Z reading level based on fluency, retelling, and comprehension. This leveling system was created by Fountas and Pinnell and is used in a variety of other assessment programs. DIBELS Benchmarks provide teachers with word per minute fluency scores. These scores are used by teachers to provide leveled reading passages to improve fluency, accuracy, and reading with expression.

RAZ-Kids is an online progressive reading program used during school and at home. It allows students the opportunity to read and answer questions, at their individual level, and advance as mastery is shown. In addition to quarterly writing assessments, a schoolwide Writing Diagnostic is administered to show individual strengths and weaknesses in the areas of content, conventions, and word use. The Go Math program offers beginning, middle, and end of the year benchmark tests and unit assessments to monitor progress, which allow teachers to interpret data and adjust daily lessons to meet the needs of all students.

The use of assessments enables teachers to monitor the progress of all subgroups in order to close any possible achievement gaps. Quarterly data meetings with administrators, teachers, school psychologist, and the guidance counselor, are held to examine data to make informed decisions about the potential needs of all subgroups.

Samuel Bissell believes in the partnership of parent, student, staff, and community. Academic progress is provided through written and verbal communication, student work samples, Parent/Teacher Conferences, Interim Reports, Report Cards, and daily online parent access. The community is kept informed of student achievement through the Local Report Card, District Quality Profile, Bissell website, Principal's weekly tweets, and presentations at bi-monthly Board of Education Meetings.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

When entering Samuel Bissell Elementary School, the Mission Statement, ‘Bissell Tigers R.O.A.R. (Respect, Organization, Achievement and Responsibility) is prominently displayed. Visitors and students are greeted by administrators, safety patrol, and teachers to start the day. Once the bell rings, Student Council members read morning announcements, where the pledge, mission statement, and special announcements are communicated to build a warm and caring start to the day. These special announcements include Student/Staff of the Month, birthdays, as well as behavior, social, and academic awards.

Samuel Bissell recognizes both behavior and academic achievements of students and staff. Random Acts of Kindness Awards and Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) Golden Paw Tickets are used to acknowledge students that are representing good character traits and making good choices. Academically, students who demonstrate hard work and achieve their best every day are awarded, ‘Reach for the Stars’ tickets, GRIT (Give it your all, Respond with a positive attitude, Independent thinker, Totally engaged) tickets and ‘Best on the Test’ recognitions. The use of positive reinforcements motivate students to always give their best and encourage them to take ownership and responsibility for their actions and their learning.

The school counselor takes an active role in supporting the social, academic and emotional needs of all students. Monthly guidance lessons teach students the importance of demonstrating good character traits and treating others with respect. This year, as part of our PBIS initiative, we initiated the ‘Sandy Hook Promise - Start with Hello Week,’ where the entire school united to raise awareness of feelings of social isolation. Character Education programs are a priority at Samuel Bissell Elementary School with the inclusion of the ‘Buddy Bench’ (where students sit during recess and are invited by others to join in activities/games), lunch bunch groups with the school counselor, support from the Beech Brook counselor, and the ‘Community of Caring’ program. ‘Community of Caring,’ involves all staff, students and community members having lunch and interacting with each other to discuss the school’s mission statement. As a result, the students become more comfortable approaching students from other classrooms and adults they may not know.

The staff feels a sense of family and togetherness through team building activities, such as GRIT Day, interactive bulletin boards, Staff of the Month, and staff breakfasts/lunches. Our staff is valued and supported during PLC, grade-level, committee and staff meetings, where they are able to provide input and share ideas that lead to decisions and programs implemented in the building.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Samuel Bissell creates an atmosphere which is inviting to families of second and third grade students and the Twinsburg School Community. This partnership is crucial and important to creating a successful home, school and community connection. The City of Twinsburg hosts its annual Twins Days and Taste of Twinsburg, as well as the ‘Cost of Freedom,’ showcasing Vietnam memorabilia and student artwork. At these events, Samuel Bissell staff participates and interacts with members of the community. In addition, our school has developed partnerships with The Cleveland Clinic Twinsburg Family Health Center and Kent State University Regional Academic Center. Both facilities provide representatives to teach classroom lessons, read books and have class discussions on many topics, including a variety of related careers.

Families are invited to our ‘Sneak Peek’, where students and parents can meet teachers and tour the building with a scavenger hunt prior to the beginning of the school year. Once the school year begins, families attend Open House, where teachers introduce classroom, behavior and curricular expectations. Because communication with parents is such an integral part to the success of our students and school, Parent/Teacher Conferences are held throughout the year to give staff and parents the opportunity to engage in conversations that lead students to the best educational experience possible. Parents attend IEP and 504

meetings to offer input and take an active role in their child's academic success. Families also stay informed through ProgressBook, teacher newsletters/websites, student planners and Twitter. Finally, staff members volunteer to take part in and invite parents to attend after-school activities, such as Family Focus Nights, which discuss state testing, learning standards and new curricular programs.

While academics are very important to our school, so are social programs during and after school. Samuel Bissell participates in a variety of programs such as: Bissell Tailgate BBQ/Homecoming Parade, Annual Father's Walk, Veterans Day Luncheon, Senior Citizens Visit, Lunch on the Lawn, Talent Show, Boys and Books Night, Read-a-Thon, Fall/Spring Book Fairs, 50th Birthday Celebration for Samuel Bissell, GRIT Day, Girl/Boy Scouts and Spirit Days.

Samuel Bissell strives to create a strong relationship between the students and families through various community outreach programs. Within the past five years, we have provided over 400 Thanksgiving meals for families in need over the holidays. Healthy snacks/meals are given to qualifying students on Fridays to provide a supplement to meals over the weekend through the PAWS on Child Hunger initiative. The Annual Student Council Food Drive and District Canned Fruit Drive provide donations for The Emergency Assistance Center which in turn, assists families in need.

3. Professional Development:

In an effort to "Know Every Child's Story," teachers create common assessments that are aligned with differentiated instruction. During monthly PLC meetings, each grade level collaborates to work toward achieving this goal. In addition to these meetings, our district has designated six days (Data and Curriculum Days) to analyze data, align curriculum, develop assessments and create instructional strategies. Staff uses this time to share best practices as they attend professional development sessions.

Teachers participate in many professional development opportunities, such as Google Guide training, Reading Recovery, Math Content Advisory Committee and "GRIT" workshops. Imbedded professional development is evident through presentations and the modeling of new and innovative approaches to learning. Five staff members attended the Google Guide training and, in turn, instructed staff on the use of Google Apps for Education. The staff is using these applications in the classroom with students, as well as to complete tasks and share documents more efficiently.

The Reading Recovery conference offered attendees strategies, activities, and resources that can be used in the classroom setting. Two staff members participated in this conference and upon their return, shared ideas and materials with their colleagues that were applicable for specific classrooms.

Each teacher completes a professional growth plan as part of the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES). Teachers create one personal and one professional growth goal each school year. Examples of personal and professional growth goals are working with a literacy coach, mentoring student teachers/field experience students, completing the Master Teacher program, incorporating STEM Projects, and implementing Daily 3 for math.

Ongoing professional development allows Samuel Bissell staff the opportunity to stay current with educational trends and respond to federal, state and local changes in a timely manner. Professional development cultivates life-long learning.

4. School Leadership:

Samuel Bissell employs a collaborative leadership style where the principal develops leaders as she empowers teachers to take on leadership opportunities and own their success. Through active engagement and buy-in of the school's mission of educating the whole child, teachers use relevant information/data to facilitate good decision making in developing classroom lessons, creating common assessments, and differentiating daily instruction. The principal's goal is to build positive relationships and encourage students to do their very best. The "GRIT" initiative was introduced as a main focus of this school year. The principal purchased *Fostering Grit* by Thomas Hoerr for each staff member and facilitated a book

study during staff meetings. Staff members were grouped together and presented various parts of the book to their colleagues. Discussions were held and a plan of implementation was developed. This initiative has contributed to the positive and nurturing environment at Samuel Bissell Elementary School.

Teachers are empowered at Samuel Bissell Elementary School. Two teachers, per grade level serve as teacher leaders. Their responsibilities include meeting on a bi-monthly basis with administration to review curriculum, assessments, data and procedural expectations for each grade level and the school. Teacher leaders facilitate grade-level meetings to share information and receive input to make informed decisions. This year, the teacher leaders piloted a new social studies curriculum and presented the materials to staff, parents and district administrators for a vote of approval for use during the upcoming school year.

Teachers have the opportunity to lead committees, such as Multicultural, Right to Read Week, Career Day, and Social Sunshine. Teachers plan and organize events, and schoolwide activities centered around a specific theme.

The Building Leadership Team (BLT) consists of grade-level teacher leaders, intervention specialists, specials teachers, reading interventionists, school counselor and administrators. Each member offers their input with regard to school climate, Student Learning Objective (SLO) approval, state testing, and student/staff needs and support. The BLT has been instrumental in developing student and staff recognitions and celebrations.

The students at Samuel Bissell have a variety of opportunities to demonstrate leadership skills through programs such as Student Council, Safety Patrol and Bookstore Staff. The Student Council program consists of four representatives from each classroom. Student leaders attend monthly meetings with the advisor and are responsible for leading annual food drives, monthly Spirit Days, weekly popcorn sales, and selling items at the school bookstore.

Through the collaborative efforts of our PTA, staff and students, Samuel Bissell lays the ground work for leaders of tomorrow.

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Samuel Bissell Elementary School’s success is sustained through our belief that all students can learn and achieve their goals in and out of the classroom. The supportive family atmosphere provides a nurturing and caring environment for students and staff.

These beliefs are intertwined into our daily routines, through the GRIT initiative, which represents the following ideals:

Give it your all
Respond with a positive attitude
Independent thinker
Totally engaged

Whether students are taking assessments or working on everyday activities, they are encouraged to persevere, put forth their best effort, and never give up! Several days throughout the school year are designated as “GRIT” days. Classroom teachers plan activities that challenge students to work through difficult tasks, which may require them to start over many times. Teachers support students in an effort to instill the idea of “good failure.”

Outside of the classrooms, students are supported by their classmates across different grade levels. When third graders take state assessments, their second grade friends decorate the building with posters encouraging them to do their best! Also, announcements of encouragement are made daily and the front sidewalk is decorated with messages, such as “You can do it” and “Rock the test, third graders.”

This continuous support exemplifies the idea that we are a family! Samuel Bissell Elementary School staff strives to “Know each child’s story,” in an effort to educate and meet students’ social, emotional, behavioral, and academic needs. Students take part in the “Community of Caring” initiative, which brings different homerooms together during lunch to eat with peers and staff they may not know. The idea behind the program is for students to see themselves, not only as a member of their homeroom, but part of the Samuel Bissell Elementary School family. This idea of family is transferred onto the playground, where students can sit on the “Buddy Bench,” and other students can invite them to join their game or activity.

As a school family, we feel passionate about creating a culture where students feel supported in everything they do. By modeling and practicing the ideas of GRIT, students and staff strive to give their best and to do their best each day. This support and encouragement has translated into high student achievement and well-rounded students, prepared for future success.