



## **PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) or its equivalent each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's AYP requirement or its equivalent in the 2012-2013 school year. Meeting AYP or its equivalent must be certified by the state. Any AYP 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 and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2007 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for that period.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 or 2012.
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

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All data are the most recent year available.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district 5 Elementary schools (includes K-8)  
2 Middle/Junior high schools  
0 High schools  
0 K-12 schools  
7 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 13173

### SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Suburban
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 2
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2012 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	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	101	93	194
7	102	79	181
8	96	94	190
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12	0	0	0
<b>Total in Applying School:</b>			<b>565</b>

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native  
22 % Asian  
1 % Black or African American  
3 % Hispanic or Latino  
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
70 % White  
3 % Two or more races  
100 % Total

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

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2011-2012 school year: 4%  
This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Step	Description	Value
(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	2
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	18
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	20
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2011	565
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.04
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	4

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 1%  
Total number of ELL students in the school: 6  
Number of non-English languages represented: 27  
Specify non-English languages:

Albanian, Amharic, Assyrian, Cantonese, Farsi, French, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Lithuanian, Malayalam, Mandarin, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Pilipino, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Tamil, Telugu, Ukrainian

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 8%  
 Total number of students who qualify: 44

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

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 11%  
 Total number of students served: 67

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

<u>3</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>12</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>17</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>31</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

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

	<u><b>Full-Time</b></u>	<u><b>Part-Time</b></u>
Administrator(s)	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>24</u>	<u>1</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>20</u>	<u>9</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>11</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>10</u>	<u>1</u>
Total number	<u>67</u>	<u>11</u>

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

23:1

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

	<b>2011-2012</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>2009-2010</b>	<b>2008-2009</b>	<b>2007-2008</b>
Daily student attendance	96%	97%	96%	96%	95%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2012.

Graduating class size:	_____	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	_____	0%
Enrolled in a community college	_____	0%
Enrolled in vocational training	_____	0%
Found employment	_____	0%
Military service	_____	0%
Other	_____	0%
<b>Total</b>	_____	<b>0%</b>

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

No

Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award? 2007

## **PART III - SUMMARY**

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Twin Groves Middle School sits in the middle of suburban Buffalo Grove, in Lake County, Illinois. From the moment one enters the school, it is clear that there is a tradition of excellence and genuine pride emanating from the students and staff members. Every morning, students and staff pledge to embody Twin Groves Gold-Star traits to be responsible, accountable, respectful, and safe community contributors. Twin Groves has attained its excellence through its core values: Every child, every school, every day; Learning has no boundaries; Best practice, not first practice; Model for others what we expect from others; Celebrate success. Due to its many accomplishments and the community's expectation of excellence, Twin Groves serves as an anchor to the District 96 vision: Become the premier elementary district in the nation.

Twin Groves students are engaged by a rigorous curriculum administered by a motivated and supportive staff. The daily program includes instruction in five core areas: math, science, social studies, a language arts block, foreign language for 7th and 8th grades, and options for 6th grade. Additionally, students attend daily physical education or health instruction and a quarterly rotation of specials courses: family and consumer sciences, communications, music, and art. The curriculum provides a well-rounded experience that equips Twin Groves students with the skills necessary to be innovative and motivated 21st-century learners.

All staff members encourage Twin Groves students to participate in the after-school program, which offers a variety of clubs and service opportunities, as well as sports, band, orchestra, and chorus. For the students who benefit from additional academic support beyond the regular school day, there are several after-school opportunities: leveled study halls, the After-School Assistance-Program (ASAP) for reading and math, and general support sessions with any of the classroom teachers. While most after-school academic support opportunities are voluntary, the ASAP program is required in the event that a student's scores on common formative assessments demonstrate a need for re-teaching of current learning targets or for continued intervention. To accommodate busy family schedules and foster greater participation, bus service is available to students who attend any of the after-school programs.

Twin Groves is truly an exemplary model of an effective Professional Learning Community (PLC). In cultivating their PLC, Twin Groves faculty and staff have developed a schedule that allows for meaningful, consistent meetings for teams of teachers—interdisciplinary and content—to monitor the students' progress, curriculum, and the systems of support. Interdisciplinary teams meet multiple times each week to discuss their students' needs and curricular connections and to review and update building goals. Additionally, content teams meet multiple times each week to examine current learning targets, collaborate about best practices, review common formative and summative assessments, and plan for future instruction and interventions. Further, content teams are constantly revising their benchmark assessments to ensure that student learning is reported frequently with validity and reliability. This assessment data is used to drive pacing, differentiation, and target-specific weekly interventions: Academic Intervention (AI) for reading, writing, and math. While teachers have an established meeting time each day of the week, it would be remiss to assume that these are the only times during which they collaborate. Indeed, it is common to find these dedicated teachers meeting and collaborating during planning periods and lunch, before and after school, and even during passing periods. Twin Groves is truly home to a family of compassionate educators.

In addition to the interdisciplinary and content teams, Twin Groves students reap the benefits of having a dedicated and supportive Pyramids of Intervention Team (PIT). PIT consists of social workers, a school psychologist, a speech pathologist, a school counselor, special education staff members, and administrators. This team collaborates with the interdisciplinary teams to identify specific student needs

or concerns, monitor interventions, and recommend classroom strategies to help maximize students' academic, social, and emotional success.

Likewise, the parent community collaborates to support student achievement. Parents are considered to be an integral part of the learning team and readily accept organized opportunities for them to become active members of the Twin Groves community. For example, the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) arranges fundraising programs that support student activities and classroom resources to enhance the curriculum. The Parent-to-Parent Network creates and presents district programs that assist parents in supporting their children's academic and social growth as the students transition from middle school to high school. The Education Foundation funds grants for teacher resources that support innovative curricular proposals. In addition to these organizations, there are many meaningful opportunities for parents to have an active role in the goals, new initiatives, and current happenings of Twin Groves. The support from the parent community has a tremendous and evident influence on student success.

## **PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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### **1. Assessment Results:**

A. Twin Groves students achieve at high levels on all of our standard measures of achievement. The Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) is administered each March to monitor overall student achievement levels. All students in grades 6 through 8 are assessed in their understanding of reading and math, and students in grade 7 are also assessed in the area of science. Reports to Twin Groves provide individual scores as well as an aggregate school and district report. The ISAT reports achievement according to four performance levels: Exceeds State Standards, Meets State Standards, Below State Standards, and Academic Warning. (Additional information about these levels can be obtained at [www.isbe.net/assessment](http://www.isbe.net/assessment).) The scores that are published regarding student achievement combine the Exceeds and Meets percentages into one overall percentage.

Our district goal is that at least 90 percent of our students will Meet or Exceed state standards. An additional goal at Twin Groves is to move an increasing percentage of students from the Meets standards category to the Exceeds standards category. The Twin Groves staff uses the data to evaluate student learning and to drive instruction. The reading and math data is disaggregated into subgroup categories so faculty can identify academic concerns in the curricular framework and make modifications to address specific students' weaknesses. The Twin Groves staff's commitment to our continuous improvement model is unwavering; on average, on the 2012 ISAT 98.8 percent of our students meet or exceed state academic standards-based results.

B. Throughout the past five years, our students have maintained and extended their strong academic performance and are succeeding at extremely high levels. Nonetheless, our staff continues to collaborate regularly to improve instructional strategies and techniques in order to meet the needs of all Twin Groves students. Teachers monitor individual student progress through common formative and benchmark assessments and provide extra time and support not only for students experiencing academic difficulty but also for those demonstrating readiness for academic enrichment.

Reading Data: Over the last five years, the 6th-grade reading data for students meeting or exceeding standards ranged from 96 percent to 100 percent, with the most current data being at 98 percent. The 7th-grade reading data for students meeting or exceeding standards ranged from 96 percent to 99 percent, with the most current data being at 99 percent. The 8th-grade reading data for students meeting or exceeding standards ranged from 96 percent to 100 percent, with the most current data being at 100 percent.

Math Data: Over the last five years, the 6th-grade math data for students meeting or exceeding standards ranged from 96 percent to 100 percent, with the most current data being at 97 percent. The 7th-grade math data for students meeting or exceeding standards ranged from 97 percent to 99 percent with the most current data being at 99 percent. The 8th-grade math data for students meeting or exceeding standards ranged from 97 percent to 100 percent, with the most current data being at 100 percent.

Subgroup information—specifically, the special education student subgroup—also has been analyzed.

Review of the data showed a gap of greater than 10 points between the performance of 6th-grade special education students as compared to the scores of all students. No achievement gaps for the special education students' subgroup existed for 7th- and 8th-grade students. Twin Groves staff have subsequently worked to identify the specific needs of the students in the 6th-grade special education subgroup and the school has modified some of the programming options for these students to allow instruction to be tailored to their individual needs. Through the use of weekly progress monitoring aligned to students' individual skill deficits, specific instruction is provided to target areas of weakness in ways that complement the students' achievement of general education learning targets. Additional time

and support are also provided for students via the school's Academic Intervention period, where students receive direct instruction in math or literacy using research-based interventions to further address skill gaps. These efforts ensure that struggling learners not only make progress, but that they also close the gap relative to their peers' achievement.

The Twin Groves teachers, along with their colleagues district wide, work collaboratively to develop our content standards. These standards are communicated to all parents and students. From these standards, pacing guides are developed for each marking period throughout the year. Likewise, benchmark assessments measuring the identified standards are created for the end of each marking period. Also, individual teams develop shorter-cycle formative assessments to guide and inform instruction. This clarity about what we want students to know and be able to do—coupled with a detailed assessment system—has strongly influenced academic growth for our students over the previous five years in math and reading. When teachers understand the standards and the expectations for proficiency at a higher level, they are able to provide richer and more focused instruction and intervention.

## **2. Using Assessment Results:**

Twin Groves teachers continually analyze various assessment results in order to differentiate instruction, determine appropriate intervention placements for students, create school improvement plans, effectively collaborate with content-alike teams, and refine the validity and reliability of in-district content benchmarks. Data-analysis is truly the foundation of the Professional Learning Community work within Twin Groves. Through the lens of assessments, teachers ask themselves four (4) guiding questions when planning to best support student learning: what is it we want our students to know, how will we know when they've learned it, what will we do if they already know it, and what will we do when they don't learn it? It is the timely and systematic use of data analysis that fosters the atmosphere of academic excellence within Twin Groves.

There are various forms of assessments analyzed in Twin Groves. The “most summative” form is the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT). These results allow the staff to identify its greatest areas of need and immediately start intervening with individual students in math and reading. The Common-Core aligned Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment is given three times a year in reading and math. These results serve to monitor student progress, identify intervention trends and needs, facilitate student goal setting, and drive collaborative discussions pertaining to target domains within reading and math. Beyond ISAT and MAP data, students' progress is monitored with Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM) and MAZE assessments, which are part of the intervention identification process.

What sets Twin Groves apart from many other middle schools? It is the continual creation, revision, and analysis of teacher-created benchmark assessments. All contents have common formative and summative benchmark assessments that monitor student learning. These common assessments are entered into the Mastery Manager system to allow for clear, effective, and efficient data-analysis for the content-alike teams. The results from the formative assessments allow for weekly target-aligned interventions and teachers to differentiate and adjust instruction in their classrooms accordingly. Students who don't show mastery on the reading, writing, and math formative assessments are sent to Academic Intervention (AI). During this same period, classroom teachers are open for less formal re-teaching and differentiation to all students. The grading period's summative benchmarks are monitored for overall mastery of targets and used to identify students who need to join the math or reading After-School Assistance Program (ASAP) for a small-group re-teaching and intervention of the targets outside of the regular class time. By nature, this program is more intensive and is set aside for students who are struggling with several learning targets. Both AI and ASAP utilize the in-district assessments for target-aligned entrance requirements and both continually re-assess students to determine target mastery before exiting students. It is clear that Twin Groves teachers do not allow students to flounder or fall behind on targets.

Aside from academic assessments, students' work habits are also closely monitored for data trends. Having systems in place to guarantee that work is completed with quality is integral to preparing students

for the real world and equipping them with the necessary skills to succeed in their current classes. If an assignment is missing, students are sent to Lunch and Learn, which allows them to catch up on missing work in a focused environment with the support of staff members. For students who demonstrate patterns of missing work, there are three tiers of after-school study halls: General, Team, and Extended Study Time (EST). Each type of study hall is monitored by staff members and offers the necessary assistance to keep students engaged and supported. The first two supports are offered immediately after school with transportation provided; students invited to join EST stay to work with adult guidance until 5:00 pm twice per week. In these specific prescribed ways, teachers at Twin Groves use assessment results and data patterns routinely to ensure that students are appropriately supported and that classrooms offer purposeful, differentiated instruction.

### **3. Sharing Lessons Learned:**

District 96 is widely recognized for its sharing of successful strategies with other district schools, the community, statewide, and nationally. Within the district, teachers share strategies through teacher institute days and district job-alike and grade-level meetings that occur on early release days six times per year. These meetings connect the Twin Groves staff with colleagues from the other middle school in the district, Woodlawn Middle School, to discuss curriculum, instructional practice, assessment implementation, and data.

Opportunities for sharing strategies with the Stevenson High School consortium elementary schools and Stevenson High School staff occur biennially at the Consortium Institute Day. This day brings together educators from all the schools in all the districts that send students to the area high school. The program, regularly featuring District 96 presenters, is devoted to sharing successful learning strategies for K–12 students. In addition, the six (6) consortium elementary district middle school teachers and Stevenson High School teachers have worked together over the past several years to develop a common curriculum based on the Common Core Standards in English/Language Arts and Math. This collaboration will continue with the Science standards once they are finalized, and through continued conversations related to instruction and assessment.

One way teachers and administrators share successful strategies with districts nationally is through monthly Professional Learning Community (PLC) visits. District 96 hosts hundreds of visitors annually and focuses on lessons learned and successful strategies related to implementation of PLC practices. Twin Groves staff and leadership offer opportunities for visitors to observe teams in action and learn how Twin Groves has improved academic achievement through implementation of PLC practices. During the 2012-13 school year District 96 had the privilege of hosting visitors from Australia. These visits also allow the Twin Groves staff to be reflective practitioners as they discuss their successes and challenges as educators; they often learn as much from the visitors as the visitors learn from them.

District 96 encourages participation in professional organizations. A strong partnership with Learning Forward (formerly the National Staff Development Council) has been forged over the years, helping keep high-quality professional development for every district teacher a priority. Several Twin Groves teachers are directly involved in this process as members of the District Professional Learning Team, which brings teachers and administrators district wide together to learn, discuss best practices, and plan meaningful professional development.

### **4. Engaging Families and Communities:**

Twin Groves Middle School is extremely proud of the collaborative culture that defines it and engages families and community members in helping all students succeed. Collaboration to support student achievement is embraced by the parent community. Parents are an integral part of the learning team and have many organized opportunities for parents to become active members of the Twin Groves community.

From the start of the school year, Twin Groves families have opportunities to create and reinforce that connection, including a locker set-up evening and Curriculum Night for parents. Curriculum Night allows parents to experience their child's schedule and meet their teachers. Throughout the year, opportunities for parents and community members to learn actively about the work of Twin Groves staff and students are plentiful. There is the weekly Principal Blog that keeps families up to date on the happenings and initiatives at Twin Groves. Each grade-level team writes a monthly newsletter containing current curricular topics that are shared via the blog. Twin Groves parents and students also have access to PowerSchool, where they can view current student grades and assignments. All students have their own @kcsd96.org email addresses that they can use to contact teachers and other students to foster collaboration and independence in the learning process.

The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) arranges fundraising programs that support student activities and classroom resources to enhance the curriculum. Some of the most notable fundraisers include the special lunch and dessert program, Scholastic book fairs, activity night raffles, and spirit wear sales. The Parent-to-Parent Network creates and presents district programs that assist parents in supporting their children's academic and social growth as the students transition from middle school to high school. The Education Foundation reviews and grants teachers resources that support innovative curricular proposals. In addition to these organizations, there are many meaningful opportunities such as the Parent Network and district-level committee work for parents to have an active role in the goals, new initiatives, and current happenings of Twin Groves. It is clear that the continued support from the parent community has had a tremendous impact on student success.

## **PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Curriculum:**

Twin Groves staff members have worked collaboratively with the other middle schools to develop Curriculum Frameworks. These Frameworks provide teachers and parents with a list of standards for each content area, course level, and grade level. These standards are the basis for all of the instruction, intervention, and enrichment provided to our students. The middle schools are moving toward a standards-based reporting system in which every standard on the Curriculum Frameworks is assessed on the student report cards.

The Curriculum Frameworks are deliberately and specifically aligned with the Illinois State Standards, incorporating the Common Core as well as the national standards. To help our students reach the highest of academic standards, staff regularly differentiates the curricular objectives, assesses and monitors student learning, and provides interventions for those students who need extra time and support to succeed in their learning. Teachers collaboratively design grade-level pacing guides outlining the learning standards for each trimester. Likewise, they align common formative and summative assessments to the standards in the pacing guides and use the assessment data to guide instruction. The power in this process is involving staff from both middle schools in our district to provide a guaranteed and viable curriculum.

Specifically for Reading/English-Language Arts and Math, our district worked with six other elementary districts feeding into the high school district to develop the standards collaboratively. Twin Groves teachers were leaders in this process. The staff uses a balanced literacy approach to provide a comprehensive reading and writing instructional program. The double period block requires students to apply their previous knowledge as they learn new skills. Two levels of instruction are provided at our middle schools. They include Regular and Honors Levels, with text complexity being the main difference between the two levels.

Twin Groves currently has three levels of math available at each grade level: At-level, Advanced, and Honors. Students have many opportunities to apply alternate strategies to solve equations and to use higher-level thinking skills in real-world applications. They learn about patterns and relationships in their surroundings and are challenged and encouraged consistently to develop as lifelong mathematical thinkers. The number of students placing into high-level courses upon entering high school has continued to increase over time.

Likewise, our hands-on science program requires students to demonstrate investigative and problem-solving strategies. Through inquiry-based activities, students learn and apply scientific methods. Students are expected to master science skills that include the ability to make inferences, draw conclusions, compare and contrast, generalize findings, create hypotheses, and implement experiments.

Twin Groves students learn about all aspects of social studies. These include Historical Comprehension, Archaeology, Economics, Geography, and Chronological Thinking. Students are provided instruction and modeling in how to access informational text for deeper understanding. Social studies instruction also compels students to compare the past to the present with the objective of preparing them to be critical thinkers and contributing members in society.

In addition, the Twin Groves curriculum includes classes in art, music, physical education, health and wellness, family and consumer sciences, communications, Spanish, options, and band and orchestra. Technology is an embedded part of instruction in all content areas and is not seen as a separate subject.

In art, students study various artists and create projects using the artists' styles and techniques. In music, students learn to sing, play instruments, compose, and perform. Our daily physical education/wellness

program provides vigorous activities for our students to develop high standards to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical fitness. Students in grades 7 and 8 may take Spanish, with an emphasis on speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

## **2. Reading/English:**

Twin Groves is committed to the 2012-13 District 96 goal of enhancing best practices in literacy instruction. Twin Groves spent the 2011-12 academic school year pacing and scaling the Common Core English/Language Arts standards in preparation of full implementation this current school year, collaborating with other middle- and high-school teachers in the Stevenson High School consortium to create a guaranteed curriculum for all middle-school students. While students are exposed to a variety of classic and contemporary novels, short stories, informational articles, poetry, folk literature, and dramas, the reading and writing curriculum are skills-based. Students engage in the writing process through a variety of argumentative, informational, and narrative pieces. Grammar, language, research, listening, and speaking skills all are taught in context with the reading and writing curriculums.

Twin Groves students have a two-period language arts block. Within the block, reading and writing targets are integrated in order to foster authentic literacy experiences. For example, students will conduct a “close reading” of an informational article and then synthesize the information to create an argumentative writing piece that analyzes the textual evidence cited during the “close reading.” From this point, in-context language, vocabulary, and grammar lessons follow that are then applied to the students’ writing pieces. With the implementation of the Common Core standards, the Twin Groves language arts classrooms have focused on increasing text complexity, embedding various vocabulary strategies and skills, fostering text-dependent reading and writing activities, and developing strong analytical skills. Students also are exposed to a variety of reading comprehension strategies and reading workshop systems. Twin Groves students apply the following writing skills to their informational and argumentative pieces: organizing, providing text-dependent support, using content and sophisticated word choice, using appropriate transitions, maintaining a formal style, and demonstrating English conventions.

The rigorous language arts block is differentiated through a target lens. Each target is scaled for four levels of differentiation: *academic warning*, *below*, *meets*, *exceeds*. The clear understanding of target scaling allows for teachers to intervene effectively and extend when appropriate, while ensuring that all students demonstrate mastery on each target. All of this is monitored through common formative and summative assessments that are aligned to the reading and writing intervention programs: Academic Intervention (AI), After-School Assistance Program (ASAP), and Literacy Extension And Practice (LEAP). After acquiring these skills in language arts, students apply them to their other content courses in order to foster building-wide embedded literacy instruction.

## **3. Mathematics:**

Three levels of Math instruction are available for all grade levels at Twin Groves. These levels include approximately 25 percent of students in At-Level programming, 50 percent of students in an Advanced Level, and 25 percent of students in an Honors Level. Instruction and materials are chosen to meet the identified learning targets for each course. The staff within the school and across the district collaborates regularly to align the math curriculum to the state standards. Through this process, our staff has developed a curricular framework that addresses the instructional needs of all students at different levels. Teachers monitor student progress through the use of formative assessments to inform instruction. Common formative assessments monitor student growth leading to end-of-trimester district benchmark assessments. The staff evaluates all of these assessments after each implementation and uses the results to improve instruction in the classrooms and provide intervention and enrichment opportunities. District 96 has aligned these math structures, levels and practices to Best Practices for effective math instruction. The middle school math teachers continue to learn more about the Common Core standards for implementation during the 13-14 school year.

Students have multiple opportunities for additional time and support in order to meet grade-level expectations. Middle school teachers make themselves readily available to students before- and after-school or electronically through email. The school has developed an intervention period two days a week. All of the classes were shortened to create two (2) thirty-minute blocks of time called Academic Intervention/Academic Extension (AI/AE). Academic Intervention is provided in a timely and flexible manner to meet the needs of the students. Teachers develop lessons to meet these needs. Academic Extension is used for students who benefit from additional learning opportunities. When Academic Intervention is not enough, additional after-school intensive support is provided for students needing more math support. Through the After-School Assistance Program (ASAP), students who do not show mastery of essential concepts are provided weekly support in small groups targeted at remediating these skill deficits.

#### **4. Additional Curriculum Area:**

“Ensure that every child achieves his or her maximum potential” is the mission statement for Kildeer Countryside School District 96. This goal resonates in everything done by the Health department at Twin Groves. The Health curriculum is revised and updated yearly to stay on top of current best practices in health education. In addition, the Wellness Department is piloting Standards-Based Reporting this year, prior to full implementation in the 2013-14 school year. Specific learning targets are assessed via student-friendly rubrics for all assignments.

Successfully preparing today’s youth for learning in a 21st-century environment is one of the instructional targets of the health and wellness team. Using technology, students are taught to analyze current health data correctly. With a more hands-on approach to health, many students who typically lose interest in class are finding health to be more relevant in their day-to-day lives. There is a classroom set of laptops and iPods/iPads to further foster learning in the classroom.

The Health Education curriculum has taken a “flipped” model approach. All lectures and Powerpoints are uploaded to Google Docs so that students can watch the video lessons beforehand and the in-class activities are designed to further explore the lesson. The “flipped lessons” are no longer than ten minutes and allow students to go back through the material several times for better retention and understanding. Since the lecture component is now at home, there is more time to apply what they have learned to the activities in order to enhance their knowledge and “master” the learning targets.

The “flipped” model has allowed for differentiation in the Health Education classroom. Students might be working on different activities in the class in order to meet the specific learning targets that are taught that day. The day after a video lesson, a brief “check for understanding” quiz is given at the beginning of class. Students who do not master the material will have a “health intervention.” The “health intervention” can include readings from the Twin Groves Health Education Packet (found online in their Google Docs), additional short movies and quizzes from BrainPop, or activities from the BrainPop website. Once students have demonstrated mastery on the learning targets, they can then participate in that day’s activity. On any given day, students might be working on several different targets, all pursuing mastery at their own pace.

#### **5. Instructional Methods:**

Twin Groves teachers are dedicated to ensuring that all students will achieve at high levels. The teachers recognize that students enter their classrooms with varying amounts of background knowledge, different target proficiencies, and diverse motivations. Keeping this in mind, the teachers analyze previous assessments and current baseline data to differentiate their instruction. Similarly, teachers create, monitor, and analyze target-aligned common formative and summative assessments throughout each grading period. The analysis of the common assessments allows for content-alike teachers to reflect upon their instructional methods to identify what has worked, is working, or may work for differentiation purposes.

Twin Groves teachers recognize the social and emotional needs and motivations of middle-school students. Keeping this in mind, they employ a variety of engaging and research-based methods to differentiate instruction for all learners. When walking through the halls of Twin Groves, one should expect to see engaging whole-group discussion, small-group stations, conferences, flexible grouping, authentic group collaboration experiences, goal-setting, hands-on activities, real-world problem-solving scenarios, research, meta-cognitive note-taking, Socratic discussions, active reading strategies, and much more.

Teachers enthusiastically participate in a multitude of professional development opportunities to supplement their instructional methods. They pursue structured classroom visits to observe new strategies, job-alike collaboration, and Japanese Lesson Study, which allows teachers the opportunity to plan a lesson, observe each other, and refine that same lesson to improve student learning. Most notably, Twin Groves has added three new instructional coaches this year: Technology, Literacy, and Information Communication Technology (ICT). The coaching initiative allows for embedded professional development that focuses on improving student learning through the use of new instructional methods and materials. The coaches have truly helped build the teachers' instructional pedagogies through the continual support of implementing new materials and methods within the classrooms. Students are meaningfully using more 21st-century technology tools in all of their contents, exposed to engaging and rigorous texts that connect to specific targets or content topics, reaping the benefits of new active reading and note-taking strategies, exploring multi-media connections, and much more due to the passion and knowledge of the building's instructional coaches. Additionally, the coaches and school administrators meet weekly to ensure that all efforts are complementary and efficiently support the school's work to reach the District goals. Twin Groves teachers constantly push themselves to better support their students' learning as they reflect on and respond to instructional needs.

## **6. Professional Development:**

“Every child, every school, every day.” At Twin Groves Middle School—and as a district—professional development focuses on every educator having an opportunity to engage in effective professional learning every day so that every student in the district achieves his or her maximum potential.

We know that educators can best solve a school's most complex problems when collaborating and learning together, so professional development often occurs in team meetings. The staff recognizes that they function more efficiently and effectively working together as grade-level and content-alike teams. They know that continuously learning together best equips them to improve student achievement for all and that the collaborative process also fosters opportunities for their own growth as educators. Literacy, Technology, and Information Communication Technology coaches provide job-embedded support to teams and individuals as they work to provide high-quality instruction for students, and to transfer new knowledge and skills to the classroom.

Staff meetings are dedicated to ongoing professional development and directly address school district goals and initiatives. Grade-level and job-alike meetings offer additional opportunities for growth as staff share research-based pedagogy. Likewise, staff members use monthly release time productively to collaborate on the topics of student writing, developing rubrics, unwrapping power standards, developing common formative assessments, participating in curriculum development across grade levels, analyzing various assessment data, and sharing ways to use data to improve student learning and achievement.

During their first two years, teachers new to District 96 participate in a mentoring program. This in-depth program provides numerous opportunities for staff to learn about curriculum and assessment programs and district and community culture. In addition, new teachers receive support in addressing the day-to-day operations and procedures that come with being a classroom instructor. The mentoring program also helps the newcomers fully understand their roles as significant members of our collaborative teams, charged with helping all students achieve at high levels.

The professional development District 96 engages in continues to be fundamental to students' academic success. The more our teachers prepare to meet the needs of every child in the classroom, the better off are all our students. This is evident in the continued increase in the number of our students meeting and exceeding state standards on the ISAT assessment. In addition, we continue to see student achievement increase on district benchmark assessments and an increase in the number of students who place into honors-level courses at Stevenson High School.

## **7. School Leadership:**

The leadership philosophy of Twin Groves mirrors the vision of District 96: to ensure that every student achieves his or her maximum potential. To respond consistently as a high-performing Professional Learning Community, our principal and assistant principal partner with their two middle-level district peers in focusing on the district's vision, mission, and yearly goals. The district's Directors of Curriculum and Instruction, Staff Development, and Educational Technology also participate on this job-alike leadership team. This group meets formally every other week. At these meetings, school principals plan and pace professional development opportunities aligned with district goals. As important, however, is the regular, daily, informal communication to ensure that programming is consistent for all grades 6-8 students in District 96. Daily, the principal heads the professional development for staff, manages school culture, handles student discipline, and guides instructional practices.

In addition to the school principal, there are identified grade-level and specialist team leaders who provide additional support to all teachers. This Leadership Team meets weekly with the principal and assistant principal to identify needed supports, and develop goal-specific, targeted plans. This year in particular, the focus has related to building the staff capacity to implement standards-based reporting and the Common Core Standards.

Twin Groves' teachers welcome the support of Instructional Coaches. These coaches meet weekly with administrators, content area teams, and with individual teachers to support students' learning. Their meetings address student data, standards-aligned learning, and collaborative planning for instruction, intervention, and enrichment. This coaching model provides teams and teachers with opportunities for modeling, co-teaching, observation, and collaboration around best practices. It also maximizes teacher effectiveness, as they can "share the load" with the coaches.

Our Pyramid Intervention Team (PIT) includes the Principal, School Psychologist, School Social Workers, Special Education Teachers, and Speech & Language Pathologist, along with itinerant staff who focuses on specific student needs. This team meets weekly as a group to review data for students qualifying for Tier 2 and 3 interventions, and for those already eligible for special education. Additionally, this team attends weekly grade-level team meetings to provide "just in time" support to help teachers deliver the best possible instruction for students who need intervention or extension.

Leadership at Twin Groves is distributed so that all staff members play an active role in building the school's capacity. With this level of collaboration and dedication, it is clear that the school community is fully committed to supporting student success.

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 6 Test: ISAT

Edition/Publication Year: 1999

Publisher: Pearson

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	97	100	98	96	98
Exceeds	62	72	62	62	52
Number of students tested	196	178	193	204	170
Percent of total students tested	100	99	99	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	1	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	1	1	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	9	6	5	5	5
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	4	4	1	4	1
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	9	2	3	3	4
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	83	100	91	77	93
Exceeds	17	33	32	29	31
Number of students tested	35	24	34	35	29
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	100	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	70	Masked
Number of students tested	5	2	2	10	2
<b>6. Asian</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	98	100	100	100	96
Exceeds	80	83	77	81	48
Number of students tested	54	36	31	47	23
<b>NOTES:</b> Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. The minimum of reporting subgroup is 10.					

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## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 6 Test: ISAT

Edition/Publication Year: 1999

Publisher: Pearson

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	98	100	96	96	98
Exceeds	60	66	50	57	56
Number of students tested	196	178	193	202	169
Percent of total students tested	100	99	99	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	1	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	1	1	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	9	6	5	5	5
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	4	4	1	4	1
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	9	2	3	3	4
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	89	100	82	80	86
Exceeds	29	29	21	26	21
Number of students tested	35	24	34	35	29
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	5	2	2	8	1
<b>6. Asian</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	98	100	100	98	100
Exceeds	72	78	74	64	55
Number of students tested	54	36	31	45	22
<b>NOTES:</b> Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. The minimum of reporting subgroup is 10.					

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 7 Test: ISAT

Edition/Publication Year: 1999

Publisher: Pearson

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Feb	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	99	99	97	99	96
Exceeds	76	68	70	58	59
Number of students tested	176	189	198	181	200
Percent of total students tested	100	99	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	0	0	1
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	1	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	7	6	3	4	3
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked		Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked		Masked
Number of students tested	3	1	3		2
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	1	5	1	5	4
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	95	90	84	96	79
Exceeds	48	19	44	17	27
Number of students tested	21	21	32	24	33
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	3	2	4	3	3
<b>6. Asian</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	100	100	100	97	100
Exceeds	88	86	89	68	86
Number of students tested	41	29	45	31	35
<b>NOTES:</b> Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. The minimum of reporting subgroup is 10.					

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 7 Test: ISAT

Edition/Publication Year: 1999

Publisher: Pearson

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	99	98	96	98	96
Exceeds	50	54	47	44	41
Number of students tested	175	188	198	180	200
Percent of total students tested	100	99	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	0	0	1
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	1	0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	7	6	3	4	3
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked		Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked		Masked
Number of students tested	3	1	4		2
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	1	5	1	4	4
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	100	86	81	92	85
Exceeds	33	14	25	8	15
Number of students tested	21	21	32	24	33
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	2	1	3	2	3
<b>6. Asian</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	100	100	100	97	97
Exceeds	65	79	43	45	54
Number of students tested	40	29	44	31	35
<b>NOTES:</b> Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. The minimum of reporting subgroup size is 10.					

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 8 Test: ISAT

Edition/Publication Year: 1999

Publisher: Pearson

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	99	98	99	97	98
Exceeds	69	71	65	66	63
Number of students tested	187	207	179	208	191
Percent of total students tested	99	100	100	100	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	1	2
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	1
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	6	4	5	4	1
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	1	6		2	4
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	8	3	5	4	2
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	94	81	92	83	88
Exceeds	22	27	21	27	21
Number of students tested	18	26	24	30	24
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	3	3	2	3	1
<b>6. Asian</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	100	100	100	100	100
Exceeds	81	88	79	87	85
Number of students tested	31	48	28	38	27
<b>NOTES:</b> Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. The minimum of reporting subgroup is 10.					

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 8 Test: ISAT

Edition/Publication Year: 1999

Publisher: Pearson

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	100	98	99	96	96
Exceeds	28	28	34	27	23
Number of students tested	187	207	176	208	191
Percent of total students tested	99	100	100	100	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	1	2
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	1
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	6	4	5	4	1
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	1	6		2	4
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	8	3	5	4	2
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	100	81	91	87	75
Exceeds	6	12	4	10	4
Number of students tested	18	26	23	30	24
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Exceeds	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	3	3	1	3	1
<b>6. Asian</b>					
Meets/Exceeds	100	100	100	97	93
Exceeds	52	31	59	34	33
Number of students tested	31	48	27	38	27
<b>NOTES:</b> Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. The minimum of reporting subgroup is 10.					