

U.S. Department of Education
2020 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 Mr. Brad Mullins
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Hazel Green Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 2515 Highway 1394
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City East Bernstadt State KY Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 40729-6357

County Laurel County

Telephone (606) 862-4647 Fax (606) 862-4648

Web site/URL https://www.laurel.kyschools.us/9/Home E-mail brad.mullins@laurel.kyschools.us

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

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Doug Bennett E-mail doug.bennett@laurel.kyschools.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Laurel County Tel. (606) 862-4600

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

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board President/Chairperson Mr. John Begley
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

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

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

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, 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. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2020 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration 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.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2014 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, or 2019.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. 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 (2019-2020) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

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

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)
 Suburban
 Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2019 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	7	10	17
K	23	25	48
1	27	27	54
2	23	26	49
3	19	26	45
4	21	25	46
5	33	18	51
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	153	157	310

*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 3.9 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 96.1 % White
 - 0 % 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 2018 - 2019 school year: 35%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain:

During the 2018-2019 school year, we enrolled 57 students after October 1, 2018. From October 1, 2018 to May 31st, 2019, we had 49 students transferred to another school. Given the high amount of poverty in our school, we typically average this amount of student turnover each year.

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, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	57
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	49
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	106
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	300
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.35
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	35

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

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
0 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 80 %

Total number students who qualify: 249

8. Students receiving special education services: 28 %

87 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.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <u>7</u> Autism | <u>3</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>2</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>3</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>8</u> Developmental Delay | <u>19</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>29</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>16</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	15
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	7
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	3
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

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 20:1

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

Required Information	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	94%	94%	93%	94%	94%
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 2019.

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.

Hazel Green Elementary offers a child-centered learning environment and a supportive atmosphere to where success for everyone and achievement by all can occur.

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

Hazel Green Elementary is one of the smaller elementary schools in Laurel County School District but has a rich history in the community. Established in 1913 and graduating its first high school class of five on March 21, 1930, Hazel Green Elementary is steeped in tradition and remains a keystone in the Hazel Green community. Historically the community is especially proud of the state basketball championship their 'Bullfrogs' won in 1940. Hazel Green School is now Hazel Green Elementary, a successful elementary school servicing preschool through fifth grade. Hazel Green Elementary is located eight miles north of London, KY on state highway 490 in a rural community. Our school employs 60 dedicated and hardworking certified and classified staff members serving approximately 310 students.

Hazel Green Elementary School's population reflects the community with about 96% of our students being White, and the remaining 4% racial/ethnic composition of Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino. The socioeconomic status of our community is one of our largest obstacles to student learning. Our school's Free/Reduced lunch rate of 91% indicates the high level of poverty that our school works tirelessly to address. Many of our students are being raised by single parents, foster parents, or grandparents. Our Family Resource Center staff offers programs to support non-traditional families: 36% of students receive take-home food packages, 24% received Thanksgiving food assistance, and 20% of our students received Christmas season assistance. The family occupations include a wide variety of vocations including factory work, service jobs, and professional positions. Despite these persistently challenging obstacles, our teachers strive to give enrichment to all students to offset the impact of poverty. These enrichment measures include field trips, supplemental art and humanities programs, and specialized learning events and activities designed to increase learning and academic growth.

Our school staff works fiercely to refine instruction and materials to ensure that our students succeed in academics. For the past eight school years, our school has exceeded state assessment data percentages in nearly all subjects as measured on the Kentucky Performance Rating for Educational Progress (KPREP) Assessment. Despite the numerous changes to the accountability model, our school has met these new benchmarks of "High Performing, Distinguished, or 5 Star Rated" performance levels repeatedly. This achievement is based, in part, upon the rigorous and coordinated instruction of standards in both whole group and small group settings. Our principal believes there are no excuses for students not to learn. Consequently, we strive to identify and remove obstacles to learning for each student. We work to learn how to engage each student. We diagnose and prescribe the most effective learning plan possible and adjust that plan as needed to drive student progress.

Hazel Green Elementary takes a whole child approach to not only improve our students' academic performance but to contribute to their overall development. That is, we focus on the comprehensive needs of our students to provide a more individualized program of instruction is provided. Understanding and identifying individual learning styles is an integral component of our lesson planning. Students are instructed using a variety of methodologies such as peer tutoring, hands-on learning activities interactive lessons, or engaging student learning using supplemental technology. Our instructional approach reflects the most essential skill that our students can achieve is reading. All students participate in rigorous reading programs. The student assessment data from our reading programs show significant student growth and improvement in the benchmark assessment as well as state assessment reading proficiency percentages. All students are instructed daily via a wide range of reading materials that drive skill development and foster the love of reading. The culture we have established and maintained to foster lifelong readers is evident by the active participation our students have in the Accelerated Reader (AR) program. Despite the fact that we do not incentivize the accumulation of AR points, our students read hundreds of books each year for the pure enjoyment of reading. We work to help students learn how to value and enjoy reading.

The Hazel Green Elementary School climate is one that promotes student success. We believe that it is our responsibility to teach students to believe in themselves so they may develop the self-confidence needed to achieve personal goals through their lives. We share achievements of former students who have succeeded in academics (such as being recipients of scholarships or earning the distinction of being valedictorian or salutatorian of their graduating classes) or who have accomplished lofty professional accomplishments.

Providing students with the value of a strong work ethic is a core belief our staff holds.

The physical facility of Hazel Green Elementary School also adds to the school climate. The recently renovated design of our school provides the room and space our students need, and it also seamlessly incorporates the rich history of our school with revisions to the original gymnasium of Hazel Green High School. Our large library is usually busy with student activities such as students utilizing the computer lab for skill development activities and research. The structure is on about a beautiful 10-acre lot that is accessible for play and outside learning activities including two playgrounds, a physical fitness center, a covered outside classroom, and a nature walking trail.

In addition to academics, our school offers students a broad range of student programs and services that include after school daycare, archery, boys and girls basketball, cheerleading, academic team, future problem-solving team, gifted and talented programs, and after school learning clubs. Students and parents are frequently invited to participate and attend special events and programs within the county, such as dramatic student plays and student sports activities. We believe in strengthening the relationship with our parents and community partners to support student learning.

The performance of Hazel Green Elementary is difficult to distill to mere words. Our school is truly an integral piece of our community. While our families may be faced with many challenges, the support provided to our school provides evidence of the confidence our families place in our school. At our school, we believe that through working together with staff, students, and the community, we can help students achieve great success.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas

Our overall approach to delivering the core curriculum is based on monitoring student academic growth. We use an assessment model to gather essential data to drive instruction throughout the school year. Teachers utilize formative assessment as a means to ensure students are mastering the content delivered. Our school administers the i-Ready Diagnostic (Curriculum Associates) as benchmark assessments each fall, winter, and spring. The diagnostic is used to data to identify areas for improvement in reading and math, as well as to provide a learning path to close those gaps.

In our school, our mission is to provide superior instruction so that ALL of our students show academic growth throughout the year. Regardless of the initial placement score a student attains, Hazel Green Elementary School fosters a growth mindset for all of our students. Targeted interventions are provided to students so that content gaps are addressed allowing individual student growth goals to be met. Whether it be a reading fluency rate 1st-grade students are working to meet or a 5th-grade student working to improve their written expression, student growth is at the heart of our instructional focus.

Formative assessment is the driving force that provides tailored instruction to meet our students' needs. Intentionally formulated questions are embedded into our instruction to gather as much knowledge on student mastery as possible. Once our formative assessments indicate student mastery, summative assessments are given and analyzed to ensure student mastery of content. Feedback is routinely embedded in each of our assessment practices. Throughout this process, we ensure students are aware of the content they are expected to master as well as assessment criteria.

1b. Reading/English language arts

Our approach to delivering the language arts curriculum is divided into two components: learning to read and reading to learn. During the early primary years (K-1), our students are provided explicit direct instruction in a phonetically based program. This approach directly teaches the phonics skills necessary to become fluent readers. As we are teaching the foundational reading skills needed to decode grade-level text, we pair our reading instruction with the comprehension skills needed to understand the text.

The core reading program for grades K-2 at Hazel Green Elementary is the SRA Reading Mastery Program. This program has been implemented in school for the past four years. Reading Mastery is a direct instruction program that focuses on phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Reading instruction in our primary grades consists of a two-hour literature block each day. One hour consists of whole group instruction with the Language Arts component of Reading Mastery, and another hour is set aside for small group instruction. This instructional model allows for more intensive instruction tailored to the needs of students. Curriculum-based measures are administered monthly to continuously screen students to ensure they are meeting national norms, as indicated by the most recent Hasbrouck and Tindal oral reading fluency data.

In grades 3-5, we have recently implemented the Reading Wonders. Throughout any reading program, our school has made sure to focus on the key components of reading instruction. Reading instruction in grades 4-5 consists of an hour and twenty-minute blocks every day. Classroom reading instruction is heavily supplemented with additional novel studies and content area texts to further support reading comprehension. Reading fluency rates are assessed in our upper primary grades as well, however, we stress reading prosody with our older students.

1c. Mathematics

The math program at Hazel Green Elementary is driven by Kentucky's state standards for math. Student assessment is essential to our math curriculum and instruction at each grade level. Assessments are used to determine gaps in both procedural and conceptual understandings of the math concepts a student may have. Once the instructional level for each child has been determined, interventions/strategies are implemented to ensure grade-level proficiency standards are met.

As previously mentioned, our curriculum at Hazel Green Elementary focuses on both procedural knowledge and conceptual understanding of the math standards. A portion of our procedural instruction is to address the need for mathematical fluency. Our students are provided with various forms of procedural fluency activities such as participation in math fact fluency practice online through a program called Reflex Math. Through student progress monitoring, we are able to determine the need to alter our instruction or to provide additional instruction for each student.

Allowing students, the opportunity to develop their conceptual understanding of the standards is also a core initiative within our math curriculum. Our teachers have completed several hours of targeted professional development to ensure our instruction enables a child to describe and model the mathematical concepts they are learning. For the past two school years, our core math program in grades 3-5 has been the Ready Math curriculum.

By reviewing our assessment data, we identify students who may have gaps in their understanding of mathematical concepts. For these students, we provide targeted intervention services. We work diligently to address the instructional gaps our students may have using specialized programming and resources such as after school tutoring programs, individualized instruction with dedicated content tutors. Intervention services are not limited to those students who may have difficulty with math concepts but they are also for students who are excelling in their grade-level standards. Our school-wide vision for our math curriculum is to identify each child's instructional level and provide each with the instruction tailored to further individual educational growth.

1d. Science

Science instruction is guided by the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and supported by the Harcourt curriculum series. Teachers also use a variety of online resources, hands-on experiments, and teacher lead demonstrations. Students have access (at school and home) to the computer program, Science Gizmos. This computer program has hundreds of online simulations with lesson materials, activities, and research-based strategies to build deep conceptual understanding in math and science. Guest Speakers are invited to meet with our students throughout the year to enhance our science curriculum.

The currently adopted curriculum, Science Dimensions, provides opportunities for preassessment our teachers utilize to determine how in-depth their instruction should be. As with each of our content area subjects, formative assessments serve as a guide for student mastery. This curriculum provides measurable learning outcomes for each new standard. Hands-on activities allow our learners to make connections across various core ideas. Additionally, student performance-based assessments are utilized to provide teachers a clear picture of student understanding.

1e. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement

Our social studies curriculum is rooted in the standards outlined in the Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies. We begin each year with rigorous assessments based on the common core standards to determine each student's background knowledge, experiences, and understanding to tailor instruction to meet their needs. Using the student assessment data, we systematically craft our scope and sequence while intentionally including interventions to parallel and support formative student assessment data. Each step in the process of delivering sound social study content is reflective of our students as individuals and as a whole. Our students, for the most part, live in poverty and, in many cases, extreme poverty, with all the hardships that poverty entails. Hazel Green students direly lack background knowledge that only experience can afford. We address this issue in various ways at our disposal. We provide a constant review and preview, are always mindful of the big picture, and making the connections necessary to fully consume and

digest the content. More so, to connect with the world at large. All of our field trips are designed to reiterate and provide those much-needed experiences. When traveling is not an option, we bring the world into our classroom using virtual tours, videos, interviews, artifacts, documents, and replicas. We use online study, and review to make that knowledge concrete. This combination of diagnosis, sound directed instruction, constant formative assessment, real-life experiences, tangible learning, and consistent review and preview has proven very successful for our students. It gives them solid footing, on what otherwise would have been a slippery slope.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

The preschool classroom at Hazel Green Elementary intentionally focuses on what pre-kindergarten age students should be learning. Students in our program have learning goals established which are challenging but are achievable. Communication with families is a vital component of our program. In part to the instruction provided in school, home visits are conducted by our preschool staff to provide family support assistance so that students entering kindergarten have the needed prerequisite skillset.

Hazel Green Elementary preschool implements SRA Imagine It! Reading Series which prepares preschool students for kindergarten. This curriculum prepares them by teaching letters, sounds, phonological and phonemic awareness, writing, math, science, and social studies. This bridges the gap between preschool and kindergarten by better preparing them for the rigorous kindergarten core curriculum. Group activities and individual instruction provided by preschool staff members are implemented throughout the school day.

According to the 2017-2018 kindergarten readiness data from the Brigance Early Childhood Screen, results indicate that students who attended Hazel Green Elementary preschool performed approximately 35% higher than students in the home setting. Hazel Green Elementary students were approximately 65% ready for kindergarten, compared to the 30% who were in the home setting before they began kindergarten.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Students at Hazel Green Elementary attend large group Guidance Counseling lessons each week. Social-emotional learning is taught through a variety of techniques, such as teacher lecture, games with peers, crafts, or the opportunity to speak freely. The objective of our School Counseling Program is to give each student an opportunity to understand social-emotional learning and how that can be carried on with them through their life. Of course, it takes more than solely academics to be successful. Our school counseling program is another significant measure we take to reach and engage the whole child. Our school counselors work to remove obstacles to learning and help clear a path for students to achieve at high levels academically by focusing on the social and emotional needs of the individual student.

Through collaboration with the homeroom teachers, the Arts & Humanities curriculum is aligned with the curriculum being taught in the homeroom classroom, typically done by grade level. Lessons and activities correlate with the curriculum from the homeroom class to help introduce the students to the content or enhance what they have learned in the classroom through a hands-on approach, that allows the students to not only be creative but create a visual. For example, if 3rd-grade students are learning about the Solar System, the lessons that the students receive during Arts & Humanities will also focus on the Solar System, with the students being read books, seeing instructional videos over, and creating a painting of or mobile of the Solar System. All areas of the content are addressed. Students also take part in school presentations for Veteran's Day. Students also participate in a Christmas program, focusing on the historical perspective and cultural differences.

The Library Media Center involves all stakeholders in our community. In addition to the daily student activities such as encouraging a struggling 5th-grade student to select an engaging book that will pique their interest in reading, our media specialist actively works to include families in meeting the literacy needs of

our students.

A variety of family engagement activities are coordinated through our media center each year. Family reading events, such as immensely popular, “Pancakes, Pirates, and Parents,” are utilized to invite parents and loved ones for morning breakfast and read along with their child in our library. Other family involvement activities range from afternoon family reading events in our school’s courtyard to family paint nights, where families participate in creating scenes from a favorite book on their very own canvas.

The librarian at our school works diligently to teach our students about digital literacy and to provide support to our families. As with any high poverty school, many of our students are being raised by grandparents. In partnership with our local law enforcement agencies, we host an online safety program after school each year. Families are provided with information on how to ensure their children are safe while utilizing online resources.

The physical education program in our school provides instruction in the areas of health, physical education, and nutrition. Students at Hazel Green Elementary receive 30 minutes of physical activity each day, in addition to PE classes twice per week. Multiple opportunities are provided for learners of all ability levels to enjoy the benefits of physical activity during this time. Our focus for physical education instruction is that students will understand the benefit of exercise and provide them with activities requiring minimal resources to utilize. Partnerships with local businesses are also coordinated to provide classes that our students may otherwise not have access to. Students at Hazel Green Elementary have participated in yoga classes, jump rope classes as well as typical track and field style activities.

In addition to the various physical activity opportunities, we focus on providing students a strong nutritional education program so that healthy lifestyle choices may be made. Partnering with our local 4H cooperative, students are taught how to make healthy food choices and how these choices impact their health. We understand that many of the nutritional needs for our students are unable to be met at home, so we encourage our families to participate in workshops provided by our family resource center on preparing nutritional meals on a budget. Additionally, students and staff participate in an exercise and nutrition program to increase awareness of the importance of making healthy lifestyle choices.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

Our school has a strong model of response to intervention (RTI). As evidenced by research, effective RTI models begin with the assumption that all students have access to high-quality instruction. Regardless of the grade level, without appropriate instruction, achievement gaps are evident. In implementing the RTI program at Hazel Green Elementary, our overall level of instruction has improved as indicated by the steady increase in student proficiency on state assessments. Scores in Reading on the KPREP assessment have increased from 45% (Proficient/Distinguished) in 2012 to 73% in 2019. Math achievement gains have been similar with an increase from 41% proficient/distinguished in 2012 to 75% proficient/distinguished in 2019.

Additional support through focused content focused intervention complements our instructional practices. At Hazel Green Elementary, Data Review Teams are developed to assist in the implementation of additional supports. Progress monitoring data is analyzed to determine whether or not the prescribed interventions are meeting student need. Interventions are altered as needed to ensure students are provided with the best instruction possible. The i-Ready Diagnostic (our benchmark assessment administered 3 times each year) provides targeted skills/standards that students have not mastered. As part of TIER 2 intervention, students are provided with additional support in these areas. Depending on student needs, these supports may range from i-Ready computer instruction to small group instruction during an enrichment/intervention block. In implementing our RTI model, the view of student improvement has changed as well. Historically, special education referrals were made for students falling behind grade-level standards. Additional assistance is routinely provided to those students failing to meet grade-level expectations.

Parent Involvement during our RTI process has improved parent communication in Laurel County schools.

The individualized student progress reports regularly shared with parents help to provide an accurate description of their child's educational performance and growth. Each time an instructional decision is made for a child in Tier 2, notification of the changes made is provided to parents. This increased contact has proven to be much more useful than the quarterly progress reports that have been sent in years past.

3b. Students performing above grade level

At our school, response to intervention is not limited to those students below grade-level standards. Students performing above grade level are provided with intervention services to accommodate their unique needs as well. Each day we have an enrichment/RTI block that is built into our daily schedule. Students are provided with instruction at their level. For students who have significantly exceeded grade-level standards, gifted and talented services are provided. During gifted and talented classes, students participate in engaging activities that incorporate various STEM and STEAM activities.

At Hazel Green Elementary we provide our students performing above grade-level with opportunities to participate in afterschool learning clubs. Students are engaged in hands-on activities designed to enrich the content that they have received in class, in a setting with high student interest. Whether it be conducting science experiments or learning the basics of computer coding, our after school learning clubs have been a success for our high performing students.

3c. Special education

The support we provide to our students with special needs is one centered on ensuring that they have full access to our curriculum. Regardless of whether or not a child has an IEP, our standards for high student achievement do not vary. It is our belief that all students have the potential to learn at high levels.

In ensuring that the needs of these students are met, our staff takes into consideration each students' unique needs when providing students with service time and location as well as small group size. Special education at Hazel Green Elementary is truly individualized and educational decisions are made in the child's best interest. Student learning styles are considered when providing instruction and teaching styles are altered accordingly.

Hazel Green Elementary staff use a collaborative setting model with our special education program. Our program relies heavily on teaching students how to use individual accommodations and supplementary aids/services so that all of our students have access to the curriculum with minimal teacher support. Over the past couple of years, the increase of technology in our building has provided our school with the opportunity to ensure all of our students have nearly a 1:1 technology to student ratio. The assistive technology our students use provides them with the tools necessary to meet the grade-level expectations.

3d. ELLs, if a special program or intervention is offered

3e. Other populations (e.g., migrant), if a special program or intervention is offered

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Hazel Green Elementary staff approach student learning with the philosophy that every child can be successful. We work diligently to provide a positive school environment that supports student academic, social, and emotional growth. High expectations are held for each student and our teachers relay these expectations often to our parents. We believe that parents and teachers should work as a team to ensure student success. We have a wonderful Parent-Teacher Organization that provides many rewards and motivational activities for our students.

Our principal and staff promote the notion that enhancing student work ethic is a vital component to our continued success. As the students achieve success, we reward them. In our intermediate hallway, we have a “Wall of Fame.” This displays the name and photograph of every child who scores Proficient or Distinguished on state assessments. The following year when scores are made public, the Proficient and Distinguished students are also rewarded with a field trip and lunch during the school day. Our school collaborates with the middle school in order to bus the former 5th graders to the field trip. At the end of every year, we have an awards program in the gym where parents are invited. Students receive medals and certificates in all the areas they were successful.

We recognize the efforts our students make on state assessments. We routinely reward our students for excellence in other areas such as behavior and academic growth. Our librarian does an excellent job keeping the students motivated in the Accelerated Reading (AR) program. Each nine-week term, students are recognized for reaching their AR goals. Some of the rewards have included trips to the Newport Aquarium, Hummel Planetarium, The Lexington Legends baseball game, and various other trips. In partnership with our Parent Teacher Organization, we are able to provide a ‘shopping spree’ at a local bookstore for those students that have reached their goal in reading for the year.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Developing a strong collaborative relationship with the school community is important for a healthy school culture. Our school works closely with community partnerships for varying purposes-student health initiatives as well as school-wide programs. The community supports our school is able to achieve is evident in the strong collaborative partnerships we have developed with various stakeholders. Throughout each school year, we implement multiple opportunities for parents to become active leaders in their child’s education, be it serving on committees to review textbook series adoption or serving as a member of our school site-based decision-making council.

In addition to our family engagement opportunities, such as Paint Night, Student Art Show Nights, or Family Math Fair Nights, our school strives to involve all community members throughout the year. A tradition throughout the Hazel Green Community has come to be the Hazel Green Elementary Turkey Dinner. For the past several years, volunteers from across our community assist the school in serving over 700 meals to our community members each year. Many of these volunteers are former teachers or even former students from Hazel Green High School. Each Thanksgiving season, the community is invited for fellowship allowing our school to display the hard work of our students and staff.

We are immensely proud of student achievement at Hazel Green Elementary, so we strive to communicate this to the community as much as possible. Each year we invite families to participate in student award ceremonies, in which students are recognized for various achievements. Yearly we inform stakeholders of our school’s progress at local school board meetings. Additionally, school-wide achievements are publicized in the district newspaper.

As a school with a free/reduced rate of nearly 90%, parent participation is an area that we work to improve daily. Providing opportunities for families to participate in their child’s education is extremely important.

Studies conclude that parental involvement in education results in higher grades improved attendance, drop out less often, have higher aspirations, and more positive attitudes toward school.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The professional culture of our school has improved dramatically over the past few years. The decision-making process in our building is one that routinely addresses the question of what is best for our students. Decisions in our school are based on student needs and performance data. Teachers are encouraged to try new ideas or strategies after careful research has been conducted to determine prior effectiveness. Making sound educational decisions for our students is a strength of our school. The data-driven focus our school utilizes to address areas for improvement continues to positively impact our instructional technique.

Identifying professional development needs in our school is an area we have grown dramatically over the past years. Determinations for professional growth are based on student assessment data, walkthrough data, and individual teacher growth plans. When implementing new programs, such as the recent focus on conceptual mathematics instruction, support teams comprised of teacher leaders, district academic specialists, and our principal are utilized to ensure the proposed changes are implemented with fidelity. The receptiveness staff members display in regard to the additional feedback provided by these supports, is a testament to the willingness our teachers have for improving their instruction.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy at Hazel Green Elementary is based on shared responsibility. Teachers collaborate to drive instructional decisions in our school. Decisions for changes to curriculum needs are only made after input from all stakeholders.

Our principal has worked to develop a collaborative structure to ensure the best decisions are made for our students. Professional Learning Committees are utilized throughout our school to assist in cross-curricular planning, vertical planning, and curriculum adjustments. Teachers and the principal discuss student achievement, assessments, ideas for improvement, concerns, and future plans. The principal is always receptive to new and innovative ideas and strategies that could improve student learning. He always ensures that staff has the materials and resources needed to improve our student's success.

Throughout the time that our principal has been at our school, school leadership teams have been a central focus. The continued success of our school can only be realized when systems are in place that enables all staff members to provide their expertise in the decision-making process. Innovation and diversity of ideas are encouraged. Our staff works together as a team with the belief that together, everyone accomplishes more.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Identifying one particular aspect of our school that is the determining factor for our success is an improbable task. That is, our success is likely not due to one factor. Our students' high performance is due to many smaller decisions based on an approach to teamwork and a caring and expert staff who have made a commitment to excellence each moment of each day to do what is best for students. Our staff realizes the importance of educating the whole child. Given our demographic, our school's success is realized by the fact we understand that the needs our students have are not fully addressed through a content curriculum. Hazel Green Elementary takes a whole-child approach to teach their content area. The way the child learns is the most important part of what teachers at Hazel Green do for their own content areas. The students may learn through a variety of ways such as using peers to help teach, hands-on for themselves, listening to lectures, or working on things digitally, and etc. Our teachers take all of this information to find the best way to teach the students the content needed.

The continued success of Hazel Green Elementary is heavily attributed to the manner in which our teachers work to eliminate student barriers and obstacles. Measures to help students overcome barriers and remove obstacles include providing additional skill-specific tutoring services after school, frequent parent-teacher conferences, and partnerships with community organizations. The staff at Hazel Green Elementary strives to go above and beyond traditional expectations for the betterment of our students.

The staff of Hazel Green Elementary has made a commitment to excellence to serve our students in the most meaningful ways possible. As a result, Hazel Green has been recognized by the Kentucky Department of Education as a School of Distinction. While we are very proud of the achievements our school has made, we are even more proud of the environment that we have created for our students. At Hazel Green Elementary, our students feel safe, comfortable, and loved. State assessment results do not measure all of the vital components of what truly makes a school successful. It is our belief that if we continue to address the needs of our students, be it academically, socially, or emotionally, our students will continue to see high levels of success both today and in their future.