

***U.S. Department of Education***  
***2020 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program***

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Rhawnhurst School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 7809 Castor Avenue  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Philadelphia State PA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 19152-3603

County Philadelphia

Telephone (215) 400-3220 Fax (215) 400-3221

Web site/URL https://rhawnhurst.philasd.org/ E-mail jkingwood@philasd.org

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\* Dr. William Hite Jr E-mail hite@philasd.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Philadelphia City Tel. (215) 400-4000

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

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

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

## **PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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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

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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)

- Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
  - 150 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 16 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 58 High schools
  - 27 K-12 schools

251 TOTAL

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

- 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

- 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
<b>PreK</b>	10	10	20
<b>K</b>	49	38	87
<b>1</b>	54	43	97
<b>2</b>	75	45	120
<b>3</b>	58	61	119
<b>4</b>	64	52	116
<b>5</b>	36	50	86
<b>6</b>	0	0	0
<b>7</b>	0	0	0
<b>8</b>	0	0	0
<b>9</b>	0	0	0
<b>10</b>	0	0	0
<b>11</b>	0	0	0
<b>12 or higher</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	346	299	645

\*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):
- 0.5 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 30 % Asian
  - 21 % Black or African American
  - 19 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0.5 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 23 % White
  - 6 % 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: 13%

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

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

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	48
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	40
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	88
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	681
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.13
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	13

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

Chinese, Arabic, Portuguese, Bengali, Russian, Spanish, Uzbek, Albanian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Pashto, Hindi, Mandarin, Creole, Pidgins, Turkish, Ukranian, Napali, Wolof, Haitian Creole, Georgian, Khmer, Tajik, Cantonese, Yue

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 28 %  
179 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 100 %

Total number students who qualify: 645

8. Students receiving special education services: 7 %

47 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>8</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>7</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>22</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>24</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>2</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 2

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:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	24
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	13
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	15
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	8

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

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	59%	65%	67%	69%	64%
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.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
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.

Our focus is to create a positive learning environment in our school and community that will provide opportunities for all children to be engaged and successful learners. We believe that all children can learn and have the right to high expectations. Our goal is for our children to be critical thinkers, good problem solvers, and confident learners. They should have an awareness of self in relationship to others. These skills are essential for our children to become productive citizens in our society.

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**

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Rhawnhurst is a great community of diverse learners and dedicated staff. We serve families in the Northeast section of Philadelphia and have students who originate from all over the world. Our special community has a very diverse population of students who speak over a dozen languages. We work each day to fully embrace our differences and try to ensure we provide an education that is appropriately reflective of the students we serve. We pride ourselves on our diversity because we truly believe “together is better”!

We foster a strong collaborative climate that embodies a growth mindset! Our community values partnership between the school community, parents and local stakeholders. The foundation for our work each day is grounded in this belief. From the leadership team to the instructional staff to the climate staff and support professionals we have an “all hands on deck” approach to the work we do each day. Each member of the leadership team plays a vital role in the management and function of our school building. As a team, we look at our overall school behavior management system, attendance incentives, school events and even school communications to determine ways to be more responsive and reflective of the student body we serve. I believe we have the best ideas when we collaborate and invite all stakeholders to be a part of the decision making and planning. One person does not hold all the answers and we try to implement a systematic structure that allows for input and feedback on all levels. Professional learning communities are the hub of this collaborative work. Various members of the leadership team, teachers and support personnel meet weekly to discuss on-going goals, review data, track progress and address concerns. Our consistent team meetings ensure all members have input and share in the work we do.

Rhawnhurst is extremely proud of the programming we provide our students and work to address all facets of the student experience. Partnering with our parents and community partners for this work is very important. We have established the Friends of Rhawnhurst just recently which is a parent and community group that collaborate with Rhawnhurst staff to enhance the school experience of all students. Parents volunteer inside our classrooms, cafeteria and recess yards and are a familiar part of our operational landscape.

It is also imperative that students see examples of their own culture and ethnic backgrounds represented in school. I challenged my teachers to be more inclusive of the students represented in their classrooms in their instructional programming. Teachers are encouraged to be mindful of ethnic restrictions when planning and grade teams have collectively planned unit plans so that all students can access our instructional experiences. I also created a safe space for our Muslim students who fast during Ramadan to have a quiet space to go during lunches. In specific circumstances, we have made special accommodations for students including alternatives for music programming so all students can be included despite religious restrictions. For example, we have incorporated school events and celebrations of various cultures, purchased literature in different languages for classroom libraries and including parent resource books in a variety of languages. I also have also taken steps to widen out talent net to include qualified persons of different ethnic backgrounds and persons who speak more than one language.

Rhawnhurst also has a Culture & Climate Committee that not only plans ways to enhance our instructional programming but share the work of making additional programming a reality in our school. We host an after school remediation program that allows us to focus on target students in each grade and develop a plan of appropriate intervention. This is different than most after school clubs because we focus on a 6-8 week intervention cycle to track student progress and make gains toward instructional goals and targets. After completion of the intervention cycle, we adjust and revise our groups to “graduate” our scholars to the next tier of our intervention programming with the overall goal of servicing the children who need us the most. To address our gifted students, we create extension activities across the grades. Teachers plan together to create real-world experiences that allow students to think outside the box and channel these energies through project-based learning activities. Just this year, we held our very first Design Thinking Curriculum after school club. The program culminated in a design showcase where our scholars presented their work to students across the city and other design business professionals.

Inside the classroom and around the school building, it is also imperative that students see examples of their

own culture and ethnic backgrounds represented in school. Teachers are challenged to be more inclusive of the students represented in their classrooms in their instructional programming. Teachers are encouraged to be mindful of ethnic restrictions when planning and grade teams have collectively planned unit plans so that all students can access our instructional experiences. In specific circumstances, we have made special accommodations for students including alternatives for music programming so all students can be included despite religious restrictions. For example, we have incorporated school events and celebrations of various cultures, purchased literature in different languages for classroom libraries and including parent resource books in a variety of languages. In addition, we have also taken steps to widen out talent net to include qualified persons of different ethnic backgrounds and persons who are bi-lingual. Teachers and staff continue to build valuable learning content and real life experiences for our scholars each day. So much learning happens beyond the classroom and Rhawnhurst attempts to create these authentic learning opportunities for all our scholars!

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.**

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

At Rhawnhurst the underlying philosophy that all students can learn is an approach that influences the environment, teaching, communication, and climate. We do not offer “opt-out” as a strategy for students or teachers to use when progress is not the outcome. Regardless of their gender, race, socio-economic status, or academic needs, Rhawnhurst works to facilitate high-standards across subject areas. Furthermore, each child is a unique individual who needs a secure, caring, and stimulating atmosphere in which to grow and mature emotionally, intellectually, physically and socially. Of course this type of work is not easy and does not happen magically. The Rhawnhurst Team, from the principal, to teachers, to bilingual support assistant, to cafeteria staff, down to the maintenance staff, welcome a growth mindset. This mindset allows us to have some difficult conversations around student achievement. We try to communicate with each other in an honest way with the common goal of student progress as our focus. Much attention is placed on successful alignment of the common core standards to the classroom objectives and tasks. Teachers are supported through professional development, coaching, Common Planning Times and Professional Learning Communities. It is this collaborative work that allows for continuous improvement in instruction and lesson planning to ensure that student work is appropriately challenging for all students. We see education as transformative, and as a result change is a constant. We use our time together to look at the data, both summative and formative, and then explore the “why” for the gap in progress and “how” we will work to close the gap. From these data conversations, change in process, grouping, product, and goals are examined. Teams of teachers identify target students and then develop an action plan with goals to help each student experience success in making progress at their independent level.

**1b.** Reading/English language arts

Rhawnhurst uses a comprehensive approach to literacy. Classrooms host a 120-minute literacy block daily. The components encompassed in the time frame include: Phonics/Word Work, Shared Reading, Read-Alouds, Independent Reading, Small Group Instruction, and Writer’s Workshop. There is some flexibility in the amount of time spent on the different components within the block each day. There is the expectation that each component is not taught in isolation, but rather flows with connections between literacy content and the planned activities and tasks. The materials used during literacy instruction are mandated by the district, but supplemental use of alternative resources is encouraged, as long as they represent complex text. The staff at Rhawnhurst has received professional development on selecting grade appropriate texts, and receive additional support from both the School-Based Teacher Leader and Literacy Lead when selecting materials. Within components of the literacy block, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension are targeted through the English Language Arts and Literacy anchor standards. At Rhawnhurst vocabulary is of high importance with our very diverse English Language Learner population. Teachers use an intellectual preparation process when planning so they are able to understand the language demands of the text and also identify misconceptions that could occur for our diverse learners. Teachers also create pre-planned student talk opportunities to ensure to engage all students in conversation. Accountable student talk is a school-wide initiative that is encouraged through teacher modeling, small group practice, and the use of sentence stems. Rhawnhurst proudly boasts of culturally diverse text in all classroom libraries. These texts represent both literature and non-fiction. While students engage in texts they are taught how to annotate their connections, vocabulary, and skills being taught. This has been powerful for the students to be able to take steps to becoming more skilled at locating evidence in text that they are reading. Weekly Constructed Responses (grades k-3) and Text Dependent Analysis (grades 4-5) prompts are developed. Teachers engage in norming to score these responses so they can determine next steps to improve the students’ abilities to find and cite evidence. This past school year, Rhawnhurst implemented the use of a complex graphic organizer for our students in grades 3-5 to improve their performance on open-ended questions. We believe if we teach something with fidelity, commitment, and the right support, over time the students will achieve the audacious goals we have for them! A critical component of the literacy block for all learners is small group instruction. Depending on the standard being taught, there is flexibility within the student groups. Some

students engage in a guided reading lesson that may be skill or strategy based. Other students are able to use this time for independent work. Every classroom is fortunate to have a one-to-one Chromebook-to-student ratio, which allows for technology to easily be fused into the literacy block. Overall, Rhawnhurst is working to develop a culture of literacy and works to be innovative in providing meaningful learning experiences with books.

### **1c. Mathematics**

At Rhawnhurst, instruction in math comes in the form of both direct instruction and inquiry-based learning. Productive student struggle is something Rhawnhurst math teachers are becoming more comfortable encouraging their students to do. Number Talks are used almost daily by teachers, to encourage students talking about math. Number Talks are used as a tool at Rhawnhurst to reduce the risk of students being “right” or “wrong”, understanding that there are multiple paths to solving a problem and/or multiple correct answers. We have learned that having the correct answer does not always show what is learned. Instead it is often the process that our students go through that tells us what they understand. Students work on daily multi-step word problems where they show all their work to a final answer. The final answer may not be exactly accurate, but the students can still demonstrate the understanding of the skill. As a new skill is introduced in mathematics, teachers do spend some time engaging in direct instruction prior to stepping back and acting more as a facilitator of their students’ learning. This gradual release is done by asking probing questions to have students justify their responses. Technology is incorporated into teacher planning. Often teachers identify visual learning videos that the students, even if they do not speak English fluently, are able to connect with and gauge an understanding. Rhawnhurst sees active engagement as a critical strategy in the math classroom. Often students work in groups or teams to solve real-world scenarios. The students love when they see their own name in a word problem or can relate to the situation described in a mathematical scenario. Similar to other content areas, teachers engage in an intellectual preparation protocol to create learning tasks that while focus are the same standard are scaffolded based on students’ proficiency and prior knowledge. Student groups in math are very flexible across all classrooms. Daily, teachers make observations and develop groups to work with. For some students, teachers use manipulatives as an effective tool to increase understanding. At Rhawnhurst teachers use Common Planning Time to examine vertical alignment of the mathematics standards. For example, while addition spans across grade levels the expectations are very different. This vertical progression is extremely helpful for teachers to understand what prior knowledge the students bring and also the expectations that will follow the next school year. Teachers execute various strategies to determine if the content being taught is understood. Many of the mathematics teachers at Rhawnhurst utilize both teacher observations and exit tickets to assess student knowledge. It is these same tools that teachers use to group students for small group instruction in future lessons. Similar to math concepts, teaching math is quite complex. The teachers at Rhawnhurst spend time pre-planning math instruction but still eloquently work minute by minute to adjust their teaching to meet the diverse needs of the students.

### **1d. Science**

At Rhawnhurst we have a skilled grade teacher who took on the role of a Science Teacher for all kindergarten through fifth grade classrooms. We have our very own Mrs. Frizzle and the students could not be more engaged in her lessons. While there is a prescribed curriculum in our district for science instruction, materials are not provided. However, our science teacher is a star and makes learning accessible to all students regardless of limited resources. Science is taught as a very hands-on approach. Mini science videos are used to get students thinking about a concept at the start of a lesson. Science concepts are then further discovered through inquiry and open-ended questioning. A main focus across grade levels is the use of senses. Students learn and discover by smelling, seeing, touching, hearing, and tasting (sometimes). Sometimes students describe, sometimes they compare, and other times they might perform a test or experiment. These actions engage them fully and they begin to make many of their own hypotheses and present interesting questions. There is quite a bit of overlap between science and other content areas which encourages teachers to collaborate. Often science lessons lend themselves to math concepts, graphing opportunities, or specific texts. This is a vital part of the curriculum as we know the positive effects of learning across the content areas. Students are able to see the practicality and usefulness of content in their everyday life. Within the science classroom, students are given opportunities to act as science experts and

engage in reciprocal teaching. This strategy encourages self-study, collaboration and helps build mastery of science content. Students are always excited to wear a lab coat and put on protective goggles. Students want to be a featured “scientist” and find an inner passion to learn more about the content.

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

At Rhawnhurst we are creative with our Social Studies curriculum. Often we search for educational activities to immerse students in valuable learning experiences to maximize on instruction that begins in the classroom. Many of the standards build upon skills teachers and school staff are working to instill in their students. Similar to teachers’ approach to the growth mindset, students are encouraged to learn more about character education. Every month the school, as a whole, focuses on one character trait (i.e. responsibility, empathy, kindness) and teachers work with the school counselor to prepare lessons. Additionally, each month a different grade is selected to create a play or song to perform for the school that represents the centralized character trait. These character traits are easy for our students to relate to and can help our students make sense of their interactions in the world. Social Studies is also presented to students across grades level in the form of literature. Since our school represents a very mixed student population, we capitalize on the opportunity to explore the cultures that represent Rhawnhurst. We proudly share books, both fiction and non-fiction, to learn about celebrations, food, dress, education, and much more of other cultures. We have spent time looking at the demographics of our organization and created a school mural/display that represents our school culture. Imagine a student seeing a bulletin board with an athlete wearing a hijab...their expression lets you know they feel included and valued. Another important aspect of the Social Studies curriculum is college and career readiness. Students in grades 3 through 5 complete tasks within the Naviance platform, a College and Career Readiness solution, that requires them to think about their future and build skills on how to best prepare. These tasks are preceded by lessons co-taught by the classroom teacher and the counselor. We believe it is critical for students even at the elementary levels to already be thinking about their future goals!

#### **1f. For secondary schools:**

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

Rhawnhurst has one Pre-K class that is home to 20 of our youngest learners. Pre-K teachers focus on PA Early Learning Standards and actively collaborate with Kindergarten teachers to ensure they are preparing students to be successful once they reach Kindergarten. Classroom centers include areas for a library, writing, science, math, dramatic play, art and music each day. Each year we host several Building Bridges parent/student events that allow local daycare facilities to schedule a visit to our Bright Futures classroom to encourage students to enroll in Pre-K the following year. We also host events that allow Pre-K students and families an opportunity to visit a Kindergarten classroom at Rhawnhurst School to get information about Kindergarten registration and begin learning about the types of content and curriculum children will be exposed to in Kindergarten and even in 1st grade. We begin building our community of learners at the preschool level and have found that children with quality preschool experience a smoother transition into the higher grades. It is important for parents and families to know there are levels of support available to them and our school team wants to ensure our scholars have the best head start we can provide!

#### **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

Beyond the core content areas, Rhawnhurst also provides instruction for students in Vocal Music, Instrumental Music, and Visual Art. These other curricular areas allow students to express themselves and perhaps discover hidden talents. It has been our experience at Rhawnhurst that often students who struggle academically, excel in the Arts. Student motivation in Music and Art has carried over to show evidence of increased concentration and confidence in academic areas. We value student confidence and want to further explore the effect of creativity on student achievement. Music is a universal language amongst our students who represent so many regions of the big wide world. Students in grades K-5 are scheduled weekly for at least three “arts” courses. During vocal music students explore their voice and the basic components of music (i.e. rhythm, tempo, and pitch). Often instruction is presented with technology, but the student break out groups allow students to take chances and “hear their voice”. It is great for students to understand that

their tone does not determine their grade, but instead their effort is their “performance” is what is being assessed. This is a valuable life lesson for our students. Students in grades third through fifth also have the opportunity to learn an instrument. These students learn the hard work that goes into dedication. We do not offer them the option to quit an instrument during the school year. We try to honor a foundation of a commitment and engage the students in this learning opportunity! If at the end of the school year they do not wish to continue to study their instrument it is permitted. Similarly, all students at Rhawnhurst are exposed to Visual Arts and through weekly lessons connected to literary text. The central objective of Visual Arts through Literacy is to provide students with occasions where they can express their feelings, tell stories, and share personal ideas. We hope to further expand our Arts Education program as our budget allows. Students performing below grade level

### **3. Academic Supports:**

#### **3a. Students performing below grade level**

At Rhawnhurst, when students are initially identified by their classroom teacher as struggling to work on grade level material and content they are referred to the Multi-Tier System of Support (MTSS) to receive additional support. For such students, the grade team develops a 6-week plan to provide intervention and collect data on student performance. At Rhawnhurst we utilize standard-based intervention programs. The literacy intervention we use is Lexia Core 5 and the math intervention program is iReady. These are both adaptive programs that place students based on their performance and provide ample opportunities for reteaching and extra practice. Additionally, we utilize math and literacy intervention teachers to work with students in groups of three or less. Intervention teachers attend Common Planning Time with classroom teachers to look at data. The data that is shared is used for the intervention teachers to create appropriate student groups and identify the focus of lessons. Intervention teachers consider learning styles of their target students to appropriately plan and carry out lessons. Additionally, Rhawnhurst as a school provides after-school enrichment programs for students identified in the MTSS system. This program is well attended by our students who struggle with grade level content and standards. While small group instruction is a successful intervention for some students, others require a Tier 3 Intervention. Families are informed of all interventions that students participate in. Additionally, all students receive interim reports to inform families of student progress. When growth is not seen, often testing measures are put into place that follow the dictated steps for students to become eligible for Special Education Services.

#### **3b. Students performing above grade level**

While at Rhawnhurst we do not have a mentally gifted program, teachers have identified students who continually perform above grade level. Additionally, students in second grade are required to take the Naglieri Assessment that identifies gifted students. Students who display gifted abilities then receive work that challenges them beyond their regular classroom requirements and even extends their work to grade levels beyond their current placement. This extension work is created by the classroom teachers. Sometimes the assignments take the form of a scaffolded lesson that accelerates and expands student learning. Long-range project based assignments have been a successful track to encourage independent study and growth. Many students who work at a level beyond their peers engage in learning experiences that are open-ended to ignite their thinking outside of the box. Another strategy used by many of our teachers is the use of choice boards. These choice boards allow for exploration and extension. It is most appropriate to find ways to meet the education demands of high-performing students. Another approach that has been successful at our school is to have advanced students serve as mentors to other students in areas that are of high interest to them. As a mentor, there are social and emotional skills that are all effectively being enhanced that will serve them in future leadership roles. This is not seen as extra attention, but instead our responsibility to provide instruction that is appropriately differentiated for all of the students at Rhawnhurst!

#### **3c. Special education**

At Rhawnhurst we have a special education team that consists of two special education teachers, a psychologist, a speech therapist, an occupational therapist, and one school counselor. Students who do not experience adequate progress within a reasonable time frame are considered for Special Education Services.

Once parental permission is given, a student will receive an evaluation and if eligible will receive an Individualized Education Plan. This plan includes appropriate accommodations and educational goals based on the student's abilities. For students who receive Special Education Services, both the general education teacher and the special education teacher co-plan to create lessons that are appropriate. These teachers often co-teach together and their roles intersect seamlessly within the classroom. Based on individual students' needs, some children receive their support in the form of push-in services, while other students require additional assistance from the special education team and are pulled out of the classroom daily to receive support and instruction. At Rhawnhurst, both general education and special education teachers attend weekly Professional Learning Community meetings and Common Planning Time. It is during this time that collaborative work is carried out to support our special education students. Not all of the general education teachers at Rhawnhurst are proficient in creating scaffolded lessons to support this population. We rely on the expertise of our special education staff to advocate for our students with unique needs! This team is also effective in providing professional development for teachers to improve their interactions and the academic access they provide to this student group. Certain students are identified as needing more individualized day-long support, and are assigned to a Special Education Assistant. Often our special education students need additional support that extends beyond academics. Many students receive additional support emotionally through meetings with our school counselor. Our counselor is an excellent resource to our special education students to hear their frustrations and help them apply coping strategies in the challenging classroom environment.

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

At Rhawnhurst School, our English Language Learner (ELL) students are the fastest growing population. While the initial process is scary and demanding, the outcomes and achievements of this student group are amazing. We understand and appreciate that we are truly quite unique with our extensive group of students who have limited English language proficiency. We currently have five ELL teachers and four Bilingual Counsel Assistants, to service our large population who speak over twenty-seven languages. Similar to special education, co-teaching is a strategy we use to meet the needs of the students who are new to the English language. Group work is an essential component that we implement. In doing so, we hope to encourage student talk. This student talk develops over time with many opportunities to practice new words and language concepts. Teachers engage in ongoing professional development opportunities to support instruction to students who do not primarily speak English. Vocabulary is an area that is of primal focus across content areas. We want our students to develop a functional vocabulary, but also a content specific vocabulary so that they can make connections in their native language and academic understanding. Of more profound priority is the use of videos and recordings to explain directions. These videos allow access to all learners to visual representations of classroom content. Google Translate is an application that all staff members have on their phones and utilize to communicate with students and families! This tool is empowering for all involved. Teachers are able to have conversations with families and families are likewise able to share their concerns. This creates an atmosphere of collaboration and acceptance which we feel at Rhawnhurst is not only extremely important, but also necessary if we want all students to experience progress and growth.

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

## **PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE**

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### **1. Engaging Students:**

At Rhawnhurst, teachers consider student engagement when they plan their instruction. Since there are supports in place to help our students with academic or language barriers, it is the expectation that all students are actively engaged in meaningful learning experiences. Teachers tap into students' interests when selecting instructional materials such as books and when creating choice boards. Open-ended questioning is utilized to ensure students do not have the option to opt out of participation. A simple yes or no question, does not promote the conversations that are conducive to learning. Teachers also ensure that directions are clear and understood by students to make certain that they understand the expectations and can ask questions to help them be most engaged in their own learning. Additionally, students are held accountable for their understanding; they recognize that they will be responsible for a product/process to showcase their learning. Attendance is also closely monitored by our school counselor. We see that students who attend school regularly are more easily able to be engaged in their learning, because they want the follow through of what comes next in lessons and are equipped with the foundation of prior lessons. We utilized monthly attendance rewards to further support this initiative. Many teachers also have students keep data notebooks with quarterly goals. In doing so, the students are aware of their own needs and are engaged in seeking to improve their own performance. Similar to teacher collaboration, we encourage student collaboration in the form of group work and student talk. During group work, teachers assign roles so all students will contribute in some way. These tasks are scaffolded as needed to meet individual group needs. Teachers provide opportunities for brain breaks through movement and music. Music has been an effective strategy that really engages most of our students. A jingle in math helps our students connect with content beyond recall or memorization.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

At Rhawnhurst we have worked very diligently this past two years to improve and continue to build relationships with parents and families. We believe schools should be community hubs where parents and families have access to resources and information. We are proud to employ multiple paths of inclusivity to ensure both our students and families feel welcomed and valued. This inclusivity has created a culture at Rhawnhurst Elementary that ultimately impacts our school's success. We host many parent-involvement workshops throughout the year to help families in areas where struggle has been identified. We survey parents to determine desired topics of future events and find out what concerns are important to students and families. Workshop topics have included Understanding the Math Curriculum, Shifts in the Common Core, Balanced Literacy, Helping Parents Obtain Clearances, Choosing a Middle School, Attendance, Assessment, Google Classroom and Online Interventions. These gatherings have been widely attended. Our Bilingual Counselors co-plan and attend these workshops to ensure the information is delivered in multiple languages. Additionally, all flyers and information sent home are translated into several languages. Our school secretary communicates daily with school visitors and families using a phone translation service available in our school district. At Rhawnhurst, the communication tool Class Dojo is utilized school wide. Since Class Dojo has a translation service built into the application, it has empowered our parents to feel safe to ask questions and play an active role in their child's daily schooling. Grade level teams send home monthly newsletters to help the families understand what topics, skills, and events will be taking place in the month ahead. Rhawnhurst has an open-door policy and welcomes families to come in, visit and volunteer at the school. We are working on developing partnerships with organizations in our neighborhood, as well. We have made some great connections with the local insurance company that helped us host a Movie Night for families. Other community partnerships include our local congressman, the neighborhood library, The Boys and Girl Scouts, and several cultural restaurants. Annually, we host a Multicultural Night to celebrate the diversity of our families. Families prepare a dish that represents their culture and share their culture's traditions. We also hold Literacy and Math Nights to show families fun ways they can incorporate academics into play time with their children. Most recently we have created a school Instagram page to share Virtual Spirit Weeks, videos of staff members reading to students, and pictures of students engaging in digital learning. We hope to broaden the scope of the parent and community involvement by creating and implementing various committees to ensure this work continues with fidelity.

### **3. Creating Professional Culture:**

At Rhawnhurst, team leaders work to create environments that inspire effective teaching and teacher satisfaction. Beginning with a shared vision, the staff is invested in achieving success for our students. There is a genuine relationship built on trust and transparency between school leaders and the staff. While difficult conversation can be uncomfortable, the team agrees to have honest two-way communication. This honesty really builds upon staff morale. When possible, teachers engage in team-building activities. A “non-negotiable” goal at Rhawnhurst is for teachers to commit to being lifelong learners. Of course someone cannot just be told that they are required to continue to grow as an educator, instead at our school we try to create professional development opportunities to meet the needs of the staff. This is done through teacher surveys to identify areas where staff members struggle. These same surveys allow for teachers with expertise to share their knowledge and act as co-leaders in our school! Grade teams also take part in instructional rounds where they collaboratively plan a mini-lesson together and then observe a team member teach the lesson. These teams then debrief and share how the lesson could be taught differently and/or the same for their individual student populations. It is not meant to be an “I gotcha” moment, but instead an opportunity to share how growth and differentiation can be applied. Professional Learning Community meetings contain the bulk of the professional development for the staff at Rhawnhurst. It is a valued time where teachers are immersed in best practices and teacher-led professional development. It is important for the Rhawnhurst Instructional Team to continue to build our capacity so we can be more impactful as leaders in the building. Teacher satisfaction is also monitored through surveys to identify where teachers are struggling with instruction, paperwork, or planning. This information is used to inform future professional development and opportunities for coaching. We most recently have begun a Professional Book Study where continuous discussion around an applicable topic takes place over several weeks. As we read together we learn new things to apply and try in the classrooms. Rhawnhurst staff members value the importance of collaboration and team-building. Colleagues utilize staff shout-outs and use meetings to celebrate successes and accomplishments amongst the team.

### **4. School Leadership:**

Rhawnhurst School is a team of moving interconnected parts. The principal values distributive leadership and collaboration amongst colleagues so the team works to build the capacity of all staff members. The Leadership Team, consists primarily of (but not limited to) our principal, counselor, Special Education compliance monitor, teacher leaders and school secretary. All team members are extremely instrumental in the everyday functioning of the school day. Responsibilities vary based on each leadership team member’s focus area and are responsive to the needs and functions of the overall school building. For example, the counselor manages much of the work to improve the climate of the school. The counselor is then responsible for professional development and helping to connect resources with families. The Rhawnhurst team members collaborate on an on-going basis to ensure that the school systems function efficiently and with fidelity. Parents share in this responsibility, and through our parent organization, Friends of Rhawnhurst, our families have a safe and consistent space to share input on the everyday functions and programs that the school performs and also voice concerns. The leadership at Rhawnhurst does know the strengths and weaknesses of the staff and work to develop them to their best potential. The leadership team works to research current best practices. It is understood that education is transformative and even leaders never stop learning. The school is always looking for more individuals with areas of expertise to share their knowledge. They utilize this knowledge to implement change within their school when needed. Leaders within the school listen to teachers and colleagues to create and respond appropriately. A leader is only as good as its followers, so the influence our leadership team hopes to create is one of trust, acceptance of challenges, and willingness to keep trying new things to achieve our shared school goal. Leadership also involves our team analyzing data and making the necessary decisions to improve the school. Furthermore, the leadership at Rhawnhurst finds it essential to promote safety, support risk-taking, and invite a positive sharing of ideas among all staff and students.

## **PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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One of the things the Rhawnhurst Team is most proud of is our work around creating a more robust instructional learning environment for both students and teachers. However, we recognized that in order to best serve our students we must address our practice as educators. Our work began by looking at what instruction looked like on a typical day at Rhawnhurst. We knew quality instruction has one of the greatest impacts on student achievement so as a team we created a system of quick and consistent informal classroom observations to support my teachers around providing quality student-centered instruction. We wanted to ensure classroom observations were not punitive but instead, were meaningful to our overall plan to improve student achievement. Being present in the learning space was vital to determine the instructional gaps and support teachers accordingly. In addition to creating an observation and feedback cycle, the leadership team aligned informal and formal observations to the instructional goals we developed as a school instructional team based on various but appropriate student data sets. The principal wanted to ensure that consistent feedback was happening with teachers after coaching sessions. In an effort to be proactive, the principal worked with the Instructional Leadership team to create the Rhawnhurst Quick Visit form. We paired the form with an application called AutoCrats that allowed instructional administrators and coaches to generate a user-friendly document that would populate feedback notes into this form. This allowed us to keep a digital copy to refer back to later during our coaching meetings. Using this form we aggregate data across Rhawnhurst School and find trends to determine areas of weakness and successes to celebrate. We also created dedicated professional learning communities (PLC) within the grades, being sure to include special education and ESOL professionals to lend their expertise. During PLC, we spent time looking at state standards and the instructional experiences we were currently providing children. Upon examining lesson plans and completing student work analysis protocols, we discovered a gap between the instruction we were providing for students and what was actually being assessed by the standard. We also saw that many of our classrooms were heavy with teacher talk which meant that much of the cognitive heavy lifting was done by the teacher and not by the children. As a result, we spent more time on intellectual preparation, using professional learning community meetings and common planning time to create safe learning environments where teachers could feel safe to take risks and be vulnerable during this learning experience.