

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mrs. Melissa Garofalo

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

Official School Name P.S. 35 The Clove Valley School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 60 Foote Avenue

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

City Staten Island State NY Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 10301-4038

County Richmond

Telephone (718) 442-3037 Fax _____

Web site/URL http://PS35PTA.com E-mail mcassan2@schools.nyc.gov

Twitter Handle _____ Facebook Page _____ Google+ _____

YouTube/URL _____ Blog _____ Other Social Media Link _____

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

Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr Anthony Lodico E-mail Alodico@schools.nyc.gov
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name District 31 Tel. (718) 420-5657

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

Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

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

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

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

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

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

Part I – Eligibility Certification

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

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

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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

DISTRICT

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

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

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

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	37	29	66
1	40	32	72
2	25	29	54
3	48	24	72
4	26	24	50
5	29	30	59
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	205	168	373

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 6 % Asian
 - 9 % Black or African American
 - 23 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 57 % White
 - 3 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2014 – 2015 school year: 1%

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	2
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	0
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	2
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	381
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.005
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 3 %
10 Total number ELL

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 36 %
Total number students who qualify: 136
8. Students receiving special education services: 21 %
79 Total number of students served

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

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

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 7
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers	20
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	11
Paraprofessionals	21
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 18:1

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

Required Information	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	94%	93%	95%	95%	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 2015.

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

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.
Yes No

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

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

Our mission is to meet students' needs in a point-of- service manner which provides on-going feedback to students that will insure academic success and high expectations as they move forward in their schooling.

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

At P.S. 35 our mission is to insure that all of P.S. 35's students receive a high quality well-rounded education that serves as a solid foundation for future success. To quote Johanne Wolfgang Von Goeth, "Knowing is not enough; we must apply, willing is not enough; we must do". Our teachers have in depth knowledge of the Common Core Standards and provide our students with the strategies to become independent thinkers who strive to meet and exceed the standards by applying themselves. We pledge to support our students to meet their fullest potential by supporting, encouraging, celebrating their individual differences and working together to make their elementary school years the most memorable of their lives. We strive to keep everyone "Happy in the Hive" at P.S. 35.

PS 35 is a small school with an enrollment of 373 students. Our population composition is 57% White, 23% Hispanic, 9% Black, %6 Asian, 3% Multiracial, 1% Pacific Islander and 1% American Indian. Thirty-six percent of our students are economically disadvantaged; however we are not a Title 1 school and therefore do not qualify for additional funding. Despite this high percentage and limited funds, PS 35 continues to meet the needs of all the learners within our community by providing a rigorous curriculum in a small, nurturing class setting. Being very strategic with budgetary decisions has supported us to remain focused on our mission. Over 90% of PS 35's budget is allocated to personnel, consultants and resources that directly impact student engagement, teacher's professional development, and enrichment opportunities.

PS 35 is a 63 year old building where many of our students' grandparents are alumni. Although admittance into our school adheres to zoning regulations, the limited number of young children in our neighborhood allows us to invite approximately 20% of non-zoned students yearly into Kindergarten. This year, we have 275 applicants who placed PS 35 as their first on their Kindergarten application, unfortunately we have only 75 seats. We are logistically challenged with having little to no space for providing our students extracurricular activities. Despite the fact that we have limited space and our cafeteria serves as a gymnasium and auditorium, 97% of our parents would recommend PS 35 to other families. This high percentage of parent satisfaction can be contributed to our rigorous curriculum, our dedicated and knowledgeable staff, and the enrichment opportunities offered to our students.

At PS 35 the rigorous curriculum across content areas develops our students into assessment capable learners. Our students can answer three critical questions: "Where am I in my learning?", "Where do I need to go next?" and "How will I get there?" Teacher created Success Criteria supports and guides the students through the self-assessment process. Student reflection is embedded into every learning activity and peer assessment is encouraged as well. For our students to truly be career and college ready, they need many opportunities to analyze their work and create a plan which includes synthesizing new learning to improve their work. This level of student accountability lifts the level of student engagement which highly correlates to students' academic success.

A key strategy used within our school is for teachers to become life- long learners and deepen their understanding of research based strategies. Through collaboration, teachers and administration share best practices and support each other. Having in-house professional development sessions to meet and reflect on teaching approaches and looking at students' work supports the teachers in differentiating instruction to meet all the individual students' needs and in creating a healthy and positive school environment.

We foster communication between teachers at all levels to maximize the expertise and input of all staff members to support student growth. Classroom teachers meet by grade weekly and have common preparation periods in order to plan together. Teachers in the classroom meet with out of classroom support and service providers to plan and create a cohesive instructional plan for each student. What goes on in the classroom is transferred throughout the school building and supported by those teachers who pull students out and who push into classrooms to work with students.

It has been our goal to cultivate a culture of continuous learning based on school-wide and individual teacher goals. Teachers plan in teams and groups along with the principal.

PS 35 has created an environment of shared decision making. This allowed us to move from a top down leadership structure to collaborative decision making with real teacher input. We have accomplished this by creating weekly administrative periods on all grades where teachers, and the principal meet to create, refine and plan curriculum together.

This shared decision making branches out to our student body as well. Each year a student government is elected into office by their peers. October is always an exciting month at PS 35, as the candidates campaign for a seat on our student government. The student government meets weekly with the principal to discuss students' concerns and plan events to fundraise for various worldly causes.

The school newspaper, The BUZZ, which was created by a 5th grade student in 2013, is published monthly by a team of twelve 4th and 5th grade students. The team meets weekly on their own time to report on school issues and current events.

Limited funding and space has not impacted the enrichment opportunities our students are offered at PS 35. A partnership with Sun Dog Theatre provides our students with in-house teaching artists who focus on various art disciplines. This year, our 2nd and 3rd grade students are engaged in a 15 week program entitled 3D Literacy which meets twice a week. 3D-Literacy is an exciting and interactive program that integrates theatre concepts and technology into classrooms to improve reading and student engagement. Other in-house residencies include Hip Hop Dance, and Artists as Mentors. Twenty-five high performing Math students were selected to participate in an enrichment afterschool program, called Smart Money. The STEM program involves students working within a group and learning how to become entrepreneurs.

Our school band consists of 4th and 5th grade students who meet in our Greenhouse twice a week. Many of our band students are invited to play in Borough Wide Band. This year, a grade 3 strings program was created to enhance our Music program.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

The alignment of our ELA curriculum with the Common Core Learning Standards is a process that began over 5 years ago at PS 35. We identified the need to create a rigorous curriculum that held students and teachers accountable to very high academic expectations. Our ELA curriculum has been CCLS aligned. This work has had a tremendous impact on our pedagogy. Teachers are being asked to prepare students to handle much more rigorous materials including, but not limited to, the following: higher level texts, more complex thinking problems, more complex questioning, an extensive use of text evidence in responding to questions and the incorporation of more non-fiction in both reading and writing. This was accomplished through Inquiry Teams across grade levels, common planning periods with the principal and professional development from educational consultants.

The incorporation of these rigorous standards has also led us to re-evaluate both the way we question students and the types of questions we ask. It has been a school-wide focus to look at our questioning and ensure that our questions encourage our students to think at a high level in all content areas. Emphasis on text complexity and document based questioning has lifted the level of rigor in both instruction and student college and career readiness in terms of their independence and ability to monitor and assess their own progress.

PS 35 employs a rigorous, comprehensive and inter-disciplinary approach to its curriculum. We believe that student engagement is a critical component to retention of skills and strategies and their appropriate and successful application to real world problem solving.

Our reading and writing curriculum are inter-connected and are aligned to the New York State Common Core Learning Standards. All teachers implement six units of study throughout the course of the school year. For each unit of study, priority and underlying supporting Common Core standards are identified. Through extensive professional development, teachers have aligned resources to each of the standards and incorporate these familiar resources into multiple units of study. Through close reading, students strengthen comprehension skills and strategies, study the qualities of exemplary literature and specific literary genres. The gradual release model is embedded into our workshop model. Students learn when "I", the teacher, model during minilessons. Next, students learn when "WE" work at a learning activity collaboratively with supports in place during small group strategy lessons. And lastly students learn, "BY" engaging in the learning activity independently. Through whole class mini-lessons, small group strategy lessons, partner work, book clubs, literature circles and individual conferences, teachers are able to differentiate instruction to best meet the needs of each individual student.

Teachers actively assess the progress of their learners on a daily basis. Conferring is an embedded structure that enables teachers and students to meet bi-weekly to craft reading and writing goals in order to maximize student progress and the attainment of skills.

Our Math curriculum, is comprised of three components: Eureka Math a Common Core aligned program, Math Exemplars, and Number Talks. The data gathered from pre-assessments informs our instruction and guides our pacing throughout the Math unit. Throughout the unit, we expose our students to methods that drive their understanding beyond process but rather to deep mastery of mathematical concepts. The goal of our curriculum is to produce students who are not merely literate but fluent in mathematics. Therefore, we engage our student three times a week in problem solving using Math Exemplars where students learn to make sense and persevere in solving them. Word problems align to the Common Core State Standards but are differentiated to meet the needs of the diverse learners within the class. In addition, we implement Number Talks which encourages students to solve mathematical equations using multiple approaches. The beauty of Mathematics is that there are many different ways to arrive at the right answer, and students who are fluent with number sense master this concept with ease.

Our Science Curriculum uses a combination of Harcourt and FOSS programs following the NY State Science Scope and Sequence. We have embedded CCS anchor standards 1, 2, 3 and 7 into our curriculum. Students make inferences, draw connections, explain the relationship between a series of events and integrate and evaluate diverse media. Our students have multiple opportunities to engage in hands-on activities to deepen their understanding of a scientific concept. Students have the opportunity to investigate their hypothesis and participate in scientific inquiry. In addition, students explore content through interactive Promethean Board science lessons, authentic texts, multimedia, and group discussions.

Social Studies is taught utilizing a multi-disciplinary approach. Students are taught the content as defined by the New York State Social Studies standards scope and sequence. Additionally, with the Common Core Shifts on literacy through the content areas, students are provided with regular opportunities to engage with complex, informational text in order to not only engage with appropriate content but to build their content knowledge. Experience based learning is embedded into the Social Studies Curriculum through student field trips that deepen their understanding of the content.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

At PS 35, we believe that incorporating other curriculum areas into our daily school lives has a positive impact on our student's social-emotional developing and leads to developing well-rounded students with a strong sense of self-esteem.

In 2008 we created the initiative, "The Arts are Alive at PS 35", and I am proud to say that quote is still accurate!

We have a three day a week visual arts teacher who delivers art instruction once a week to all students. The certified art teacher follows the Blue Print for Teaching and Learning in Visual Arts. Art units of study for each grade emphasize the skills students need to acquire by the conclusion of the benchmark grade, which in elementary school are grades 2 & 5. Articulation with the classroom supports the art teacher to plan culminating art projects that align to the classes' unit of study. For example, in second grade the students wrote an all about piece on a specific sea animal after completing their report writing unit. Their culminating art project for their collaging unit was to create a collage of the sea animal they researched.

In Kindergarten, Sun Dog Theatre provides a 10 week residency which meets twice a week called Artists as Mentors. A professional artist introduces students to the lives and artistic styles of famous artists. Students learn a variety of artistic skills, enrich their visual arts vocabularies, and explore new art making techniques.

In the summary section, I explained the theatre residency, 3D Literacy, in detail.

Our students receive physical education twice a week by a licensed physical education teacher. Our curriculum includes teaching students the relationship between physical activity, proper nutrition, and injury prevention as components of a healthy lifestyle. We teach sportsmanship and team comradely through organized games. The NYC Fitness Gram is used as a means to build students' physical activity level over time and measures their body composition, muscular strength, flexibility endurance and aerobic capacity. Student progress is communicated to families through a report to parents at the end of the school year. Physical education is one of our students favorite subjects!

Our school is fortunate each school year to receive funds from our borough president and assemblyman. These funds are allocated for technology upgrades. Over the course of the eight years, we have installed Promethean Boards in all classrooms and purchased over 120 Macbooks with mobile carts and printers.

Technology is integrated into all of our curriculum areas on a daily basis. We believe that technology is essential to our students' acquisition of essential skills and knowledge. In literacy, we use technology to model close reading of complex texts, access multimedia resources, research and publish writing.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

The PS 35 learning community strives to differentiate instruction to best meet the individual needs of all learners. For this reason we utilize the Workshop Model of instruction in all content areas as it provides an opportunity for teachers to provide curriculum driven instruction to the whole class while also allowing time for students to practice newly acquired skills and strategies and for teachers to meet with students individually or in groups for assessment driven targeted instruction.

The architecture of the workshop model includes teachers modeling a skill or strategy in a whole group setting. This is followed by the active engagement portion which allows the teacher to monitor student progress toward meeting the instructional outcome of the lesson. Socratic Seminar is often utilized during the active engagement which allows students the opportunity to engage in a focused discussion. Next, the students are engaged in independent, partner work, or small group instruction. During this time, students work on a learning activity to demonstrate transference of the new learning which they acquired during the minilesson. Teachers confer with students during this time. Conferences have multiple purposes and are strategically planned by the teacher. The purposes include: teachers check in to see students demonstrate the progress they have made using a specific strategy that was introduced during the last conference, teachers go in with a planned teaching point based on data from informal assessments, or teachers have the students drive the focus of the conference by asking, "How can I support you today?" All conference notes are recorded in the students' conference notebooks. Conference notebooks travel with the students from Kindergarten through Grade Five. We refer to these notebooks as the students "toolbox"; they are filled with individual teaching points to support the students at their instructional level. At the conclusion of the workshop students are provided with the opportunity to share at which time the students consolidate their learning and the teacher gauge students' understanding.

The incorporation of Common Core Learning Standards into our curriculum has lead us to study the concepts of Universal Design for Learning. Our school, like many others, has barriers which impact student learning. 20% of our population is students with disabilities. Teams of teachers, along with the principal, frequently meet to refine the curricula and academic tasks using student work and data to create learning activities that include multiple entry points. Multiple entry points are designed using a multi-sensory approach. K-5 teachers work in teams using common assessments to create a clear picture of student progress toward meeting individual goals. Teachers make strategic decisions based on the student work for next steps such as, but not limited to: whole group instruction (planning questions for all the learners within the class) , small group instruction(scaffolding the learning activity) and/or one-to-one instruction.

Learning progressions which are vertically aligned to the Common Core Standards are utilized in the classroom to differentiate learning activities. These progressions support the teachers with planning activities on grade level, above grade level, and below grade level.

Intervention and Part-time Special Education Teachers received training in Orton-Gillingham and assist their colleagues in the development of intervention strategies to implement into daily classroom instruction.

In addition, an afterschool intervention program is provided twice a week for 20 students in each of the grades 2-5 who are not meeting grade level standards.

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

Formative assessments drive the instruction and curriculum at PS 35. Our school has mapped our curriculum in all content areas across all grades within our school. The on-going daily assessments, both formal and informal, are fully aligned to the Common Core Curriculum. The teachers use the data to drive the small group, whole group and individual instruction of students. There is flexible student grouping using on-going data collection and evaluation. Data is reviewed and analyzed by all stake- holders on a regular basis. Some of the assessments and data utilized are: formal and informal reading assessments.

(Fountas & Pinnel Running Records, daily reading conferences, guided reading notes, success criteria, and learning progressions), formal and informal writing assessments (pre and post-on-demand writing pieces,

end of unit published pieces with checklists and teacher feedback, small group writing notes and individual conference notes), formal and informal math assessments (Eureka Math Unit pre and post assessments, exemplar student work aligned to the common core standard unit, exemplar word problems and exemplar rubric, and math conference notebooks), Social Studies performance tasks, Science post unit assessments and culminating art projects.

Teacher- created Common Formative Assessments (CFA) are administered throughout each reading unit of study. The CFA's are aligned to the grade level common core standards and assess the students' understanding on priority standards and supporting standards within each unit. CFA data is submitted to the principal on the dates included in the school's ELA curriculum map. This data is analyzed to observe trends across a grade and across the school on specific ELA standards.

Impact Teams meet once a week during an administrative period, an additional prep period a week, to analyze data, organize data into four groups (levels 1-4), discuss trends across the grade and within individual classrooms to refine and adjust lessons and or curriculum maps to meet the needs of current students. During this meeting teachers focus on the characteristics of level 3 work, which is work that meets grade level standards. They refer to the success criteria and learning progressions to insure coherence across the grade. Collaboratively, teachers brainstorm next steps for each group of students and student work samples are shared in an effort to "norm" our assessment/ grading policy.

The school uses the data from formal and informal assessments daily to adjust curriculum and inform instructional entry points for students in all subject areas. Data is looked at throughout the year and student progress is monitored for every child. Data collection in all classrooms is a constant practice. Instruction is directly driven by the data. The culture of the school is such that teachers and students assess progress in all areas throughout the day. These formative assessments allow teachers and students to set goals and develop action plans to meet those goals. Teachers insure that goals and expectations are clear and visible to their students. Each child knows what he or she needs to be working on. In all interactions (conferring, small group and whole group) teachers provide a next step in the child's learning. Children wherever possible are given the opportunity to contribute to these actionable next steps. Common Core aligned success criteria, turn and talk and peer/self assessments afford every student the opportunity to develop into an assessment capable learner.

The Student Assessment Folder (SAF) is shared with parents four times a year in addition to a Common Core aligned Progress Report which is distributed four times a year. The SAF includes student's work in all content areas. Teachers chose the work that best represents the students' level within the content area. The learning progression is attached to each work sample with teacher feedback, which includes a recommended strategy for the parents to support the child at home.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

PS 35 is a school that has a culture of success, professionalism and high expectations. Those expectations are embedded in our practice, embedded in our culture and embedded in our sense of family. The practice of good citizenship, which includes; being courteous, well mannered, friendly and respectful can be seen throughout the school building. The school is a safe, welcoming, fear-free environment, for students, staff and parents. At PS 35 we are “Happy in the Hive.”

At PS 35, we strive to create a learning culture where students and teachers have a shared expectation that finding out what makes sense and what doesn't is a joint and worthwhile project, essential to taking the next steps in learning. Our students understand that power in the classroom is not held solely by the teachers, but it is distributed so that teachers and students work collaboratively to share responsibility for learning. The classrooms at PS 35 are a safe place where students are encouraged to ask for help and regard their errors as sources of new learning, and admit difficulties or problems in learning without fearing that these actions will diminish them in the eyes of their teachers or their peers. Relationships in and out of the classroom are supportive and collaborative, characterized by mutual trust among all members within the school community.

At PS 35 our students feel safe to say they do not understand something and receive constructive feedback from both teacher and peers. Our teachers have established a classroom culture characterized by recognition and appreciation of individual differences. Our students listen respectfully to each other and respond positively and constructively, and appreciate the different skill levels among their peers. All of our students feel safe in the learning environment to learn with and from each other.

The staff at PS 35 are aware our students "watch us all the time", they listen to us sometimes, and, most importantly learn from us ALL the time. These three statements act as a driving force for the teachers as they establish norms in their classrooms to foster learning.

As teachers at PS 35 facilitate the learning in their classrooms, the principal facilitates learning for the teachers. The open door policy at PS 35 welcomes teachers to visit the principal at any time with any concern. Weekly administrative periods enable teachers to work collaboratively with the principal for various reasons. Teachers come prepared to administrative periods with a problem of practice they need support with. For example, the second grade team's problem of practice for the past several months was, "How can we create one success criteria that incorporates the priority standard and supporting standards?" Collaboratively, the principal and second grade team used various professional resources to create an ELA success criteria. The success criteria was implemented in the classroom and had a positive impact on the students' performance as evidenced by 87% of the students meeting or exceeding the standard on determining the lesson or moral of a story. This revised success criteria was shared with teachers across the school during a professional development and all grades are in the process of revising their success criteria.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

At PS 35 strong school to family and community connections are stressed and fostered on a daily basis. Through a family friendly school environment, social events and fundraising activities, families are actively engaged in the PS 35 community.

PS 35's welcoming environment is evident as our open door policy allows for parents and guardians to enter the building during the school day to observe their child's classroom without an appointment. A consistent group of parent volunteers converge on the school each day to supervise during the lunch hour, to assist during classroom activities and to chaperone class trips while Parent Teacher Association officers are usually present busily preparing for their next fundraising activity or event. This is the atmosphere that our students and staff observe each day, one which gives them the knowledge and the security of knowing that they have a community with a vested interest in their education which clearly translates to student success.

PS 35 has a staff position created exclusively to strengthen school-based parent support and involvement. Working under the supervision of the Principal, the PS 35's Parent Coordinator's role is to engage and involve parents in the school community. In conjunction with the school leadership team and the PTA, she has worked for ten years to create a welcoming environment for families. The position's responsibilities include identifying parent and community concerns while ensuring that these issues are addressed in a timely manner. It is a twelve month a year position, ensuring that families have support even during the summer months.

Academic support at home is integral to student success in school. By establishing partnerships with the families in our community, PS 35 offers many opportunities during the school year for parents to gain the knowledge to offer that support. We begin every school year by continuing the tradition of inviting our students' families into the classrooms to discuss curriculum and expectations. Each year, the principal engages parents in a series of academic workshops that align to PS 35's Comprehensive Educational Goals. To support an understanding of the curriculum across content areas, teacher teams develop monthly newsletters to inform parents of the expectations within each content area and how they can support their child at home. These newsletters inform parents of dates they can join us to celebrate or work with their child during events such as writing celebrations and Parents-as-Reading and Math partners. Student Assessment Folders with reading, writing, math and content area goals are sent home four times a year. This practice has served as another way to inform families about the individual goals their child is working on and a specific action plan as to how they can help support their child's progress. All of the aforementioned activities place our children on a trajectory for a college education. Fall and Spring Parent Teacher Conferences, Parent Grade Orientations, and morning appointments before school can be arranged for individual parent meetings.

PS 35's vibrant social calendar for families and students continues throughout the school year. Families are invited to attend holiday and end of year performances as well as culminating events for enrichment programs. Such special events as: the Father Daughter Dance, Mother Son Bowling, Spring Family Picnic, Grandparent's Day, Memorial Day Celebration, Carnival Day, Field Day, Movie day, and "Bee" Yourself Day, have created a sense of inclusion and community that transcends age, gender and socio-economic groups.

3. Professional Development:

"How well teachers are learning determines how well students are learning", is a quote which drives all professional development at PS 35. Learning is a process that requires gaining knowledge, applying that knowledge, and most importantly synthesizing the new knowledge with prior knowledge to deepen one's understanding of a concept. To accomplish this, we need a great amount of time; therefore professional development occurs weekly at PS 35. Over the past eight years our professional development plan has evolved to include teachers selecting their professional development goal in addition to the principal selecting a school wide goals. Our professional development is organized into four learning cycles. At the forefront of every professional development cycle is the question, "How is our learning impacting our students' performance?" Each cycle includes various formats such as: teacher team work, team meetings with the principal, inter-visitations to other schools within our district and classrooms within our school, and learning sessions with an outside educational consultant from Core Collaborative Learning.

At PS 35, we believe "less is more", and our professional development is focused on quality rather than quantity. We hone in on two goals per cycle. At the end of each cycle, we reflect on our progress and either continue working on a previous goal or more forward and create a new goal.

Teachers select professional development goals based on the area where he/she feels they need support. Adults learn best when the knowledge they are gaining is relevant and valuable to them. For example, our kindergarten team's goal for professional development cycle III is, "To deepen students' comprehension by asking standards based questions that can be utilized across all texts." The goal was selected based on feedback teachers received from the principal on informal classroom observations. As a result of this, the teacher team worked with Paul Bloomberg, the educational consultant, to brainstorm non-text dependent questions that could be asked before, during, and after a read aloud of an informational text. The team's

next steps include: revisiting a professional text, *Effective Questioning Strategies*, to find research based strategies on developing questions, observing a colleague who was rated highly effective in component 3b of the Danielson rubric (Questioning and Discussion Techniques), collaboratively work with the principal on creating a Close reading lesson plan for narrative texts, and collect and analyze student data once these new questions are implemented within the classroom.

School wide professional development goals are selected based on the data collected from informal classroom observations and results from student assessments. For example, the 2014-2015 school year, PS 35 transitioned from a traditional Math curriculum to Engage NY, which is aligned to the Common Core Standards. Common Core Mathematics is not about rote learning but rather the process of why we perform the four operations. We developed a partnership with Core Collaborative Learning, who provided the staff with professional development on the 8 Mathematical practices to deepen teachers' understanding of what students need to learn to become mathematically proficient. The principal performed all observations in Mathematics, and provided specific, honest, and frequent feedback including next steps for the teacher. Teachers created Math progressions focused on the critical areas of mathematics which highlight the, "I can statements" for each area in each of the grades Kindergarten through grade 5. This work directly impacted our students as evidenced by the 7% gain on the New York State Mathematics exam and the results on formative and summative classroom assessments.

The professional development structures in place at PS 35, has been successful in creating capacity building among the staff. Teachers' ownership over their learning has enabled the principal to become the facilitator who supports the staff in their journey to become lifelong learners.

4. School Leadership:

Leadership at PS 35 is a shared and collaborative endeavor. All members of our school community share a common vision for our school and work together to make that vision a reality.

At PS 35, our principal is an instructional leader, who has developed a deep and broad knowledge base with respect to the curriculum across content areas. Leading by example, the Principal dedicates the majority of her time to modeling lessons in classrooms, planning collaboratively with teachers, attending academic parent meetings for support, planning, providing and attending all professional development and analyzing student data with teachers. Similar to the classroom culture established at PS 35, the principal is not the only individual who has power within the school building. The collaborative effort between principal leadership and teacher leadership has led to revisions in curriculum that have had a positive impact on student achievement. For example, in Math, there was a school wide trend indicating that students struggle with problem solving. As an outgrowth of this, the principal and teachers researched various approaches to be implemented within the classroom. Teachers were finding it challenging to "fit" this problem solving into their plans in addition to the Math curriculum that needed to be taught. Collectively a decision was made to add an additional daily thirty minute block into the school day for implementation of Math Exemplars. When we analyze math data, we can see evidence that our students are successful in using multiple approaches to solve rigorous word problems.

The team structures in place at PS 35 ensure teachers are allocated the necessary time to analyze student work weekly in an effort to plan next steps to further student learning and take ownership over curriculum development. For example, Impact teams "fishbowl" data meetings for their colleagues bi-weekly during professional development time. This allows all teachers to observe the work that their colleagues are doing in respect to analyzing data across content areas. This structure has directly impacted our students' achievement as our curriculum is vertically and horizontally aligned across the school. For example, the grade 4 Impact Team presented their data on an English Language Arts Common Formative Assessment which assessed standard 4.2, determining the theme of a story. The teachers were questioning how to challenge the students who mastered a level 3 on the assessment. At the meeting, the grade 5 teachers articulated with grade 4 teachers and offered support by sharing the grade 5 success criteria for this same standard.

The Instructional Team (IT), which consists of a lead teacher from each grade and the principal, meets bi-monthly. This team was instrumental in creating the English Language Arts curriculum, aligned to the Common Core Standards. The IT members create the agenda for each meeting based on the feedback they receive from their colleagues. For example, teachers found finding resources aligned to each standard very challenging and time consuming. The IT dedicated several months to finding resources for the teachers and created an ELA resource binder for each grade.

Our School Leadership Team (SLT) which is comprised of the principal, four staff members (including teachers and paraprofessionals), and four parents meets monthly. SLT members are voted into the positions by the school community. The SLT serves many functions such as: analyzing school wide data to create the school's Comprehensive Educational Goals, writing grants to support our current programs, creating surveys to share with the school community on various topics, technology enhancements, guest speakers "hot" topics etc.

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The Professional Learning Community (PLC) that has been developed over the past eight years at PS 35 contributes greatly to our school success!

A Professional Learning Community (PLC) involves much more than a staff meeting or group of teachers getting together to discuss a book they've read. Instead, a PLC represents the institutionalization of a focus on continuous improvement in staff performance as well as student learning.

Our PLC has been the most powerful professional development and change strategy which has led to reliable growth in student learning.

The success of our PLC is a direct result of the extensive time allocated to curriculum development. Teachers dedicated two years to unpacking the Common Core Standards to create our English Language Arts curriculum and continue making revisions as needed based on data. By taking ownership over curriculum development, the teachers have not only gained the necessary knowledge to improve their pedagogy but also gained confidence in shared decision making. Teachers view themselves as learners who problem solve on a daily basis to meet the needs of the diversified learners within their classroom. Becoming "experts" on the ELA standards has enabled the teachers and the principal to tackle innovative approaches which are at the forefront in literacy. Our knowledge impacts our students on a daily basis as we provide a rigorous curriculum in a nurturing, supportive environment where we all learn together.

Our PLC, meets regularly, shares expertise, and works collaboratively to improve our teaching skills and the academic performance of our students.

It entails whole-staff involvement in a process of intensive reflection upon instructional practices and desired student benchmarks, as well as monitoring of outcomes to ensure success. Our teachers continually learn from one another via shared visioning and planning, as well as in-depth critical examination of what does and doesn't work to enhance student achievement.