

WHAT DRIVES 2018 NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS TO THE TOP?

A review of the

KEY DRIVERS

reported by 2018 applicants revealed that regardless of school size, level, locale, percentage of disadvantaged students, or diversity

65% attributed their success to INSTRUCTION or STUDENT SUPPORTS



within each **KEY DRIVER**
some practices stood out as especially strong

1

INSTRUCTION

DATA-DRIVEN INSTRUCTION

Leeton Elementary School, Leeton, MO

Utilizing data to understand student needs goes beyond student achievement data to make informed decisions by including parent and student surveys.

Center Point-Urbana High School, Center Point, IA

Instructional practice is informed by Data Teams structured by content area using a five-step data review process to analyze data, identify strengths and challenges, and prioritize needs.

Falmouth High School, Falmouth, ME

A student-centered team approach to RTI and MTSS provide a systematic, coordinated, and intentional mechanism to problem-solve and adapt instruction and intervention in real time.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORTS

Mariemont Elementary School, Cincinnati, OH

Flexible and intentional learning environments support independent practice, whole group meetings, and small group instruction.

East Greenwich High School, East Greenwich, RI

A multistep performance-based task process associated with each course provides students multiple and varied opportunities to demonstrate proficiency.

Steller Secondary School, Anchorage, AK

Students take responsibility for defining their own educational goals, selecting or devising a course of study and assisting to continuously evaluate their performance.

2

STUDENT SUPPORTS

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL FOCUS

Settles Bridge Elementary School, Suwanee, GA

Teachers and leaders promote relationship-building by meeting the needs of the whole child while inspiring them to excel.

SCHOOL CULTURE

Central Valley School, Buxton, ND

A focus on student engagement creates an atmosphere in the school where critical thinking, problem-solving, fun, and excitement abound.

[The STEM Early College at NC A&T, Greensboro, NC](#)

Integrating character development, service learning, and STEM serve as a foundation to innovation.

[West Shore Junior/Senior High School, Melbourne, FL](#)

Weekly Small Learning Communities focused on the social-emotional needs of students foster an environment of caring and commitment.

[Cascade Senior High School, Clayton, IN](#)

High expectations for students is matched by intentionally planning and supporting a growth mindset and school culture.

[Captain Johnston Blakely Elementary School, Bainbridge Island, WA](#)

Creating a culture where student voice is actively used to engage students accelerates student learning.

3

SCHOOL SUPPORTS

COLLABORATIVE CULTURE

[University of Hartford Magnet School, West Hartford, CT](#)

Collaborative grade level coaching rounds encourages collegiality, increases teacher confidence, and increases trust.

[KIPP DC Promise Academy Public Charter School, Washington, DC](#)

Teachers are provided planned opportunities to work as a collaborative team to motivate each other, learn from each other, plan together, and reflect on practice.

[Anne L. Magee Elementary School, Edinburg, TX](#)

Teamwork is a philosophy that drives collaborative peer mentoring and observation, vertical alignment, grade level meetings, and trainings.

EMPOWERED TEACHERS/EFFECTIVE LEADERS

[James Fallon Elementary School, Wayne, NJ](#)

Creating a positive learning environment helped establish a partnership between the principal and teachers, students and parents.

[Homer Middle School, Homer, AK](#)

Recruiting, retaining, and sustaining a great staff is done through intentional planning and having a proactive approach to hiring opportunities in the future.

[Bloomsburg Area High School, Bloomsburg, PA](#)

Investing in teacher capacity rather than a revolving door of programs and initiatives allows teachers to focus on student learning.

4

CURRICULUM

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

[Mesa Academy for Advanced Studies, Mesa, AZ](#)

Intentionally embedding literacy across all content areas has created a culture of literacy and improved student outcomes.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, MATH

[Christ the Teacher School, Fort Lee, NJ](#)

An emphasis on engineering and integration of math skills, laboratory sessions, and technology have boosted student problem-solving skills.