

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2015 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 Dr. John Langston Lowry

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

Official School Name Shades Cahaba Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3001 Independence Drive

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

City Homewood State AL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 35209-4109

County Jefferson County State School Code Number\* \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone 205-871-1113 Fax 205-871-1186

Web site/URL http://sces.homewood.k12.al.us/ E-mail jlowry@homewood.k12.al.us

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 that it is accurate.

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

Name of Superintendent\*Dr. Bill Cleveland

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr.,

E-mail:

bccleveland@homewood.k12.al.us

Other)

District Name Homewood City Schools Tel. 205-870-4203

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

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

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mrs. Nancy Ferrin

(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 that it is accurate.

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

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

## **PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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**Include this page in the school’s application as page 2.**

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 school has made its Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) or Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state’s AMOs or AYP requirements in the 2014-2015 school year 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 2009 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: 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, or 2014.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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All data are the most recent year available.

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

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 3 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 5 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. 2 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.
4. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	55	43	98
1	62	40	102
2	45	52	97
3	32	51	83
4	37	54	91
5	38	48	86
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	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	269	288	557

5. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 1 % Asian
  - 12 % Black or African American
  - 11 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 73 % 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.)

6. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2013 - 2014 year: 6%

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, 2013 until the end of the school year	14
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2013 until the end of the school year	19
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	33
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1	536
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.062
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	6

7. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 8 %  
65 Total number ELL  
 Number of non-English languages represented: 0  
 Specify non-English languages: Arabic, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Russian, Persian, Gujarati
8. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 24 %  
 Total number students who qualify: 134

**Information for Public Schools Only - Data Provided by the State**

The state has reported that 24 % of the students enrolled in this school are from low income or disadvantaged families based on the following subgroup(s): Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals

9. Students receiving special education services: 5 %  
28 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 categories.

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <u>3</u> Autism                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness              | <u>3</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>1</u> Deaf-Blindness        | <u>8</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>4</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment    | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>1</u> Mental Retardation    | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>6</u> Developmentally Delayed               |

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

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers	27
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	9
Paraprofessionals	9
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

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 21:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools)**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2014

<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. 1993

15. Please summarize your school mission in 25 words or less: Shades Cahaba educates, respects, protects, and loves children.

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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Shades Cahaba Elementary is located in Homewood, Alabama. Built in 1920, it served in its early years as a high school for the students in this valley. Since 1950, it has been an elementary school, with a current student body of approximately 550 kindergarten through fifth grade children. We have a small town feeling with sidewalks and community activities while enjoying the advantages that the city of Birmingham, our closest neighbor, offers. Our student population is a diverse one, adding a richness to our learning community. We are proud of our strong academic standing in the community as well as nationally. As a National School of Character, awarded in 2006 and 2012, our character education program directs a strong school culture of respect and responsibility.

The total enrollment of Shades Cahaba is five hundred fifty-six, kindergarten through fifth grade. We also house a separate Head Start preschool program run by the Jefferson County Committee for Economic Opportunity. Our ethnic makeup has been relatively stable over the past eight years. We currently have seventy-two percent Caucasian, twelve percent African-American, eleven percent Hispanic, three percent multiracial, and two percent Asian. Of our total 2014-2015 enrollment twenty-four percent of our students receive free or reduced lunches. Residents zoned for Shades Cahaba include students from well-established neighborhoods and apartment complexes. The population diversity serves to enhance the richness of the learning experience, tolerance, and appreciation of cultural differences.

The Shades Cahaba Way (SCW) was born in 2002. The SCW consists of 6 simple rules or life lessons. They are as follows:

Speak for yourself, and others when needed.  
Listen to others, and they will listen to you.  
Avoid put-downs, who needs them?  
Take charge of yourself; you are responsible for you.  
Show respect, every person is important.  
Have fun, life is a gift.

The SCW creates a common language among faculty, staff, students, and parents. It has been the vehicle that has allowed the common language to evolve. Having a common set of values is a way to constantly remind, address, and teach character traits to the students. Today, the SCW is heard not only in the halls, but also at the community pool, in Scout meetings, on the ball fields, at Homewood Middle School and at the family dinner table.

Shades Cahaba has many traditions that mold us into who we are today. In the fall families gather for the annual Owl Prowl. This event brings families together to promote physical fitness as they complete a mile fun run together. Everyone is awarded a finisher medal for participation. Physical fitness is also encouraged as faculty, staff, and students compete throughout the year in the Patriot Points Challenge. Patriot points are earned through physical fitness activities throughout the week. Incentives and awards are given based on participation. Families are also celebrated during the annual Grandpals' Day and Art Show. Students invite a Grandpal to school to play math games, view art work, read a book with the student, and many other activities around the school. Academic Expo is another tradition that encourages research, communication, and presentation skills as students ask the simple questions "I Wonder Why." Students participate individually or as class-wide project presentations on a variety of topics. Community members are involved as judges and are also invited to the Expo as students demonstrate their learning.

Community Service is encouraged and modeled by our faculty and staff. Every January, faculty, staff, and Shades Cahaba families gather on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day for the annual "MLK Day of Service." Everyone works together on service projects at various stations around the school and in the community. Throughout the year, students and staff are encouraged to be involved in community service. Community service hours are completed as a class or individually throughout the year, and at the end of the year we celebrate during a school-wide assembly. This year we have worked together to raise money for a little girl in Alabama through the Make a Wish Foundation. Many students took the initiative to hold garage sales,

donations instead of birthday presents, and have lemonade stands, all to raise money for Make A Wish Foundation to send her and her family to Disney World. These and many other actions by our students and staff are evidence of the success of our character education program.

The mission statement of Homewood City Schools is to educate and empower every student to reach his or her unique potential. Learning expectations are communicated to students and parents through learning targets. Our teachers have combined forces to clearly define what the students should know and be able to do at each grade level. By creating learning targets, our teachers have added rigor and clarity to the existing course of study. Learning targets ensure consistent expectations in teaching and learning.

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

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### **1. Core Curriculum:**

Although Shades Cahaba Elementary School’s curriculum is based on the Alabama College and Career Ready Standards, teaching and learning in Homewood City Schools is guided by collaboratively developed learning targets. Our teachers have combined forces to define what the students of Homewood should know and be able to do at each grade level. Much research supports the importance of being clear to students and their parents regarding exactly what is to be learned. Teachers maintain consistency and rigor through collaborating in the development of curriculum and assessments based on these learning targets. Our learning targets are developed per grade level identifying ten to twelve statements for each grade level that reflect the Alabama College and Career Ready Standards but are written in kid friendly language about what we want kids to be able to learn and do. “I Can” statements scaffold student learning toward target mastery.

Math instruction in kindergarten through second grade is based on students becoming familiar with numbers and developing a number sense. Third through fifth grade math instruction incorporates operations and properties (numbers and geometry) and fractions. Specific standards that are reflective of these “big Idea” math skills are incorporated in the learning targets at each grade level. For example, one of the third grade learning targets is to write and interpret numerical expressions and equations with addition and subtraction. Pervasive throughout all of the math curriculum are the practice standards of good mathematicians that include solving problems without giving up, thinking about numbers in many ways, explaining thinking and trying to understand others, showing work in many ways, using math tools and telling why they were chosen, working carefully and checking work, using prior knowledge to solve new problems and discovering and using shortcuts

Reading instruction at Shades Cahaba is a balanced approach to reading, incorporating phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. We use a variety of strategies and resources to differentiate and scaffold learning for all students. Students in kindergarten through second grade are reading and responding to literature as well as informational text with an emphasis on the process of learning to read. Students in grades three through five continue to develop foundational reading skills while increasing their mastery of informational text by understanding and explaining events, procedures, ideas, and concepts in historical, scientific, and technological text. Target-based instruction and assessment keeps teachers and students accountable for mastering the standards at each grade level. Students in kindergarten through fifth grade are all becoming familiar with and utilizing digital resources and other 21st century skills.

Social Studies standards for kindergarten through second grade focus on students developing an appreciation for their community, state and nation. These students experience social studies in real and meaningful ways as it relates to their lives and the lives of others. The standards encourage a print-rich environment as they investigate past and present events in history and how they relate to their everyday life, the present-day world and the future. Fourth and fifth grade curriculum incorporates economics, geography, history, and civics and government. Students study geography in third grade and Alabama history in fourth grade to develop an understanding of their environment and the potential role that they may play in their community. The standards at this level also provide students with the opportunity to compare different economic situations locally as well as internationally. Teachers use a variety of materials and resources to assist students in researching and investigating the world around them. Fifth grade standards continue to incorporate the four components that were introduced in fourth grade as students become even more familiar with the world around them. The standards require students to examine and explain interactions between states and nations. Content begins with Prehistoric times up to the Industrial Revolution. Major events included in the content standards are the American Revolution, the Westward Expansion, the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Science curriculum in kindergarten through fifth grade at Shades Cahaba is enhanced by the LEAD (Learning Enhancement Academic Design) program. Physical, Life and Earth and Space Science curriculum are spiraled throughout kindergarten, first, second, third, fourth and fifth grade focusing on inquiry-based instruction. Students are encouraged to model what a scientist would do. Hands-on opportunities are provided through the LEAD program for all students as they build learning on prior knowledge.

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

Shades Cahaba Elementary has a schedule that allows for each student to attend Connection classes every week that include Art, LEAD (Learning Enhancement Academic Design), Counseling, Library, Reading, Technology and Music. Physical Education classes are attended on a daily basis. These classes are a very important part of a student's day as they offer an opportunity for classroom instruction to be enhanced in a variety of ways and use a variety of activities and approaches.

The Shades Cahaba art curriculum is based on the Alabama State Standards for Art as well as a set of I Can statements developed by experts in the area of art instruction. These I Can statements for art are based on the developmental progression of students and incorporate tools and techniques that are appropriate to each grade level.

The LEAD Connections class is based in STEM related instruction that includes hands-on activities for students as well as problem based activities that enhance the math and science instruction that is taking place in the regular classroom. The LEAD teacher also works very closely with every classroom teacher to ensure that those math and science connections are being made.

The reading specialist at Shades Cahaba meets with every class each week to build on the reading skills that are being taught by the regular classroom teacher. She focuses her time in her Connections class on the comprehension learning targets for each grade level by reading a story with the students and facilitating an activity with them that builds on reading comprehension skills.

The counselor at Shades Cahaba also has the opportunity each week to work with all of the students in her Connections class. The curriculum provided in this class is based on the state standards that address the social, emotional, career and academic needs of students. There is a focus on students as learners as well as guiding them toward becoming responsible, contributing members of our society. She provides activities and instruction that develop the social and emotional skills of our students as they learn to function in the real world and deal with real world issues.

Library skills are taught each week by the Shades Cahaba librarian. These skills are based on the state standards provided by Alabama and enhanced by national standards. Kindergarten and first grade students learn about the library and continue to build on reading skills each week in their Library Connections class. Second and third grade curriculum in this class focuses on how to use the library and continue with extending reading skills. Fourth and fifth grade students become more independent users of the library as they begin to implement research skills taught in the weekly class.

Technology class is also a part of the Shades Cahaba Connections schedule. Each week students have the opportunity to enhance their keyboarding skills and to become more knowledgeable about computer functions through the Learning.com curriculum. Each week topics related to classroom instruction, new technology, and current events are provided for students. A variety of technology-based tools such as Brain Pop and kid-friendly YouTube videos are used to facilitate the learning in this class.

Music is also based on the standards provided by the state of Alabama as well as National Music Education standards. The music teacher provides a child-centered approach to music that is appropriate for each grade level. By the time Shades Cahaba students complete fifth grade, they have had the opportunity to play the guitar, the recorder, and drums as well as learn Orff techniques. Students also participate in musical performances every other year, incorporating the singing and movement instruction they have experienced

as a part of the music class. Reading music and music theory are also a part of the curriculum for each student.

Physical Education is a part of the daily schedule at Shades Cahaba. PE instruction is based on the state standards and is incorporated in a variety of activities and experiences for students. Physical Education is structured in a way that meets these standards by providing exercise, skills-based instruction, and fitness-based instruction every week.

### **3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:**

Shades Cahaba is guided by a philosophy of high expectations for students as they strive to meet curriculum standards. The teachers at Shades Cahaba are given a great amount of autonomy when it comes to instructional approaches and methods. Homewood City Schools has crafted thorough and detailed learning targets specific to each grade level to guide instruction. Using those learning targets as a guide, each teacher uses her professional judgment to meet the needs of her particular group of learners. The teachers at Shades Cahaba are also supported in their instructional approaches by two coaches--a reading specialist and a math specialist. They are available to co-teach, share materials, and analyze student data to enrich instruction. Student progress is monitored as they progress through a tiered instructional approach that includes assessment, analysis of data, and application of specific interventions when necessary. Tier 1 is grade level instruction offered to all students within the classroom. Tier 2 instruction is small group instruction by the regular education teacher that takes place within the general education learning environment such as a group of 1-4 students pulled aside for additional instruction. An additional Tier 2 reading computerized program that is offered is My Virtual Reading Coach. Tier 3 reading instruction involves pull out lessons with reading tutors and the school reading coach using SRA, Voyager Passport and Orton Gillingham research based programs. Tier 3 pullout math instruction is taught by math tutors using the V Math curriculum. Tier 4 students are those who have been evaluated for special education services and determined to be eligible for specialized multisensory research based programs. Additionally, our school will be exploring differentiated instruction in a systematic way next year through weekly instructional meetings with grade levels. While teachers are already implementing DI techniques successfully, we recognize the need to continue to grow in this area to address the diverse needs of all learners. In addition to differentiated instruction, many teachers throughout our school are employing problem-based learning as well, specifically in the LEAD classroom and through the Gifted program. LEAD, a STEM extension class that all students participate in, provides students chances to extend what they are learning in the classroom through problem-based activities. Our technology specialist also assists classroom teachers as they explore best practices for using technology to enrich instruction. Through a systematic, data-driven instructional process we work to ensure all students achieve at the highest levels.

## **PART V – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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### **1. Assessment Results Narrative Summary:**

#### **STAR**

The STAR Reading longitudinal data looking at the growth of each particular cohort of students shows a consistent number of students attaining end-of-the-year benchmark. An area of concern is the current third grade cohort, whose percentage of students at benchmark significantly declined from 1st grade to 2nd grade (87%-78%).

The STAR Math longitudinal data looking at the growth of each particular cohort of students shows that more students have ended the year above the fortieth percentile than the year before.

#### **ASPIRE**

The percentage of male and female students that benchmark in reading and math is similar. In reading seventy-one percent of the male students benchmarked and seventy-three percent of the female students benchmarked. In math seventy-three percent of the female students benchmarked and seventy-seven percent of the male students benchmarked.

There is a gap in the percentage of students benchmarking in math and reading based on ethnicity. In the area of math, sixty percent of African American or black students, thirty-seven percent of the Hispanic students, eighty-one percent of the white students benchmarked. Of the ten students in need of support six students are African American or Black and three are Hispanic

In the area of reading, forty-six percent of African American or black students, eleven percent of the Hispanic students, and eighty-two percent of the white benchmarked. In this twenty-seven were in need of support. Of the twenty-seven students in need of support fourteen are African American or Black and eight students are Hispanic.

There is not longitudinal data available for ASPIRE at this time.

#### **Closing the Gaps**

Homework Club was setup to help the neediest LEP students. It is a tutoring program that meets for an hour after school for four days a week. There are 2 highly qualified teachers to serve students. Scholarships are also available for at-risk students to attend Study Hall in the extended day program. They receive reading and tutoring services while there.

### **2. Assessment for Instruction and Learning and Sharing Assessment Results:**

Every Wednesday there are instructional planning meetings for teachers. Teachers meet within their grade levels during their planning times. Every nine weeks, one of those meetings is dedicated specifically to analyzing data and reviewing the progress of all students. This data is used by school personnel to coordinate and provide related learning support services that meet the needs of all students. Assessments that teachers use include DIBELS, STAR, ASPIRE, running records, and classroom observations. During the data meeting, we use an intervention eligibility matrix to identify the neediest students. We then decide the best method to help meet the needs of those students. Students can be placed in Tier 3 intervention groups where they receive help daily outside the classroom with highly qualified teachers. They can also be placed in Tier 2 groups that receive extra help inside the classroom. This information is shared with parents through conferences, phone calls, and STAR reports that are sent home. Our principal shares assessment data with our Parent Teacher Organization during their meetings at the beginning of the year. Our Assistant Superintendent created a video to explain ASPIRE results to parents. Student results were mailed out along with web address of the video link.

As a faculty we have identified goals to help us provide equitable and challenging learning and assessment experiences for all students. We are exploring ways to increase classroom rigor as well as build consistency among the grade levels as it relates to grading and reporting. One goal is to apply principles of sound assessment design to evaluate student mastery. This will be accomplished by creating common formative

assessments, analyzing data to evaluate mastery, and reviewing the five keys of quality assessment. The other goal is to ensure that all students will receive differentiated instruction for academic growth. Teachers will use grade level meetings to research, read, and discuss strategies for implementing differentiated instruction.

## **Part VI School Support**

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### **1. School Climate/Culture**

The mission of HCS is to “educate and empower every student to reach his or her unique potential.” Shades Cahaba Elementary School takes this mission to heart. As part of a community that is enriched by tradition, is supportive, and one that consistently provides resources to help our students and teachers, our school lifts all of its members up by making optimal use of our resources and having an uncompromising commitment to excellence.

As a National School of Character, we pride ourselves on the fact that our students, teachers and staff, come to work and learn and grow in a positive and supportive environment. The foundation of Shades Cahaba is the Shades Cahaba Way. This pledge guides the way that each student and staff member starts, the day, functions throughout the day, and carries out the rest of their day out in the community. The idea is to “live and learn the Shades Cahaba Way.”

We talk daily about our character word for each month. These words strengthen the SC Way and serve as a reminder of what we base our actions on. Our students are supported academically and emotionally by many programs: Operation School Bell (clothing and shoes for students in need), Backpack Buddies (snacks and food items for nutritional support over the weekend for students in need), Peer Helpers (academic support from students at HMS), Girls On the Run (guides and supports the emotional and physical well-being of SCE’s girls), and the Homework Club (for students who need an opportunity for homework time and help, when family members are unable to provide that). In addition to those programs, our counselor also meets with small groups centered around student needs and are chosen based on teacher and parent recommendation.

Besides providing and guiding a positive and supportive environment, the teachers are also enveloped in the same encouraging and warm environment. Our PTO provides financial support throughout the year through donations and grants and they also have “goodies” in the lounge each month that boost morale and show the parents’ appreciation. The teachers have the opportunity to steer their own growth by being able to choose sessions that they will attend during professional development days, deciding what their PLP plans will be, and by having the opportunity to sit down and talk with administrators in a relaxed atmosphere during instructional chats.

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

In Homewood there is a strong sense of community, and the five schools that guide, strengthen, and educate the children in this community are top priority to the residents. Besides monetary support through self-imposed taxes and donations, the community also supports and is involved in the life of Shades Cahaba through volunteering and attending school events. Here are a few:

First grade classes host “Writing Parties” and invite parents and other members of the community to celebrate and support these young writers. The students get to show off their work and their audience gets to enjoy the results of hard work and creativity being fostered in a safe and caring environment.

Fifth grade classes provide meals for families in need during the holidays. The students make shopping lists, shop for the food, and deliver the groceries to the families. This program allows them to learn about budgeting, cost of living, and service to others. Many in our community are blessed with having more than they need so this also teaches humility and gratitude.

Local architects and financial planners are involved in two other activities that the fifth grade participates in. The first is “building bridges.” With the help of local architects, the students learn about design and architecture from local professionals and the students work in teams to construct toothpick bridges based on design guidelines and the lessons that they learned. Many architects and parents attend the “bridge breaking” ceremony where each team’s structure is tested to see how much weight it can hold. The second

is the stock market game. Local financial professionals come into the classrooms to teach about investments and financial planning. The students work in teams and are given “money” to invest. The students have to track their investments and learn about the profits and losses of their investments.

Presently, our kindergarten classes are working with the Birmingham Zoo in order to re-word the signs at each exhibit so that they are more kid-friendly.

Each May our second graders celebrate their fathers with “Dads and Dudes Day.” Although Father’s Day is a month away, this fun morning of conversation and crafts gives the students an opportunity to show the men in their lives how much they appreciate their guidance, support, and love. Community members, neighbors, and coaches are often in attendance as “dudes” when a “dad” is not available.

### **3. Professional Development**

All staff members at Shades Cahaba participate in a continuous program of professional learning. Our Professional Learning Plan (PLP) structure is designed around teacher-led goals that maximize collaboration and a commitment to continuous improvement. PLP’s are individually designed and written to focus on improving instruction, student learning and creating a supportive learning environment. Each year grade level teams define areas of growth through data reflection in order to ensure that they are making decisions based on research and best practices. A variety of questions helps to guide this process, “What is working and how do we know it is working?”, and “What isn’t working and how do we know that it isn’t?” Protected time is embedded for teachers once a week to research, plan, share, practice and implement their new learning. During these sessions, our Assistant Principal is designated to facilitate dialogue and guide teachers to reflect on classroom practices and student achievement.

The impact that our PLP’s have on student achievement is evident in our data and in our ability to prepare 21st Century learners. Staying with current research on student learning and grading, overall, our grade levels have chosen to focus on aligning instruction with Common Core Standards along with implementing a standards-based grading system. The following are a few overviews from specific grade level PLP’s. Second Grade has chosen to build upon First Grade’s PLP from the prior year in order to improve writing instruction with a focus on learning targets and Common Core along with monitoring student growth. First and Third Grades are focused on creating common formative assessments for mathematics. First Grade utilized their assessments to differentiate math instruction in order to meet the unique needs of all learners while Third Grade chose to build upon their goal from the prior school year. In order to expand their goal, Third Grade added a midpoint formative assessment along with collaborative time to analyze the data as a means to inform their math instruction and measure student mastery of skills. Many common sources were listed in the action plans of these grades: collaboration with our building-based math and reading coaches, training with our AMSTI representative, and district horizontal grade level conversations, classroom observations and visits and reflection on student work. Our PLP structure encourages thoughtful reflection and documentation throughout the school year and is used to design district and building-based professional development throughout the school year.

### **4. School Leadership**

At Shades Cahaba, leadership is the professional work of everyone in our building. With our principal and assistant principal serving as facilitators, leadership roles and responsibilities are shared among the staff. With a focus on students' achievement, our administration helps to create a sense of support and ownership among our staff as they support and empower teachers.

Every year, teachers elect a body of eight staff members to serve the school as a leadership team. The team is called the Visionary Team. As our principal tells the faculty, "I do not need help managing the building; I need help setting the vision for this school." The Visionary Team leads the staff in school year planning, goal setting, and strategy implementation. The Visionary Team also decides how to best accomplish the mission of the school and plays a large role in helping the staff feel ownership of the decision-making process. At the close of every school year, reflection time is spent as a faculty to evaluate our mission

statements and beliefs in order to ensure that they align with the values of our school.

Teachers participate in decision making, have a shared sense of purpose, engage in collaborative work and share in the outcomes of this work.

# PART VIII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

## STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Math</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>Alabama Reading and Math Test (ARMT) +</u>
<b>All Students Tested/Grade:</b> <u>3</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>N/A</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>Alabama Department of Education</u>	

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Apr	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
Level III and above	97	94	88	85	88
Level IV	74	64	70	65	71
Number of students tested	80	91	96	108	111
Percent of total students tested	100	100	99	100	98
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment	0		1		
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level III and above	83	83	71	66	78
Level IV	50	45	32	44	48
Number of students tested	12	29	31	32	42
<b>2. Students receiving Special Education</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level III and above			50		58
Level IV			17		25
Number of students tested			12		12
<b>4. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level III and above		70	54		67
Level IV		50	23		27
Number of students tested		10	13		15
<b>5. African- American Students</b>					
Level III and above	90	87	79	66	86
Level IV	70	33	47	35	57
Number of students tested	10	15	19	29	28
<b>6. Asian Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Number of students tested					
<b>7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>9. White Students</b>					
Level III and above	98	100	97	96	94
Level IV	77	77	86	78	86
Number of students tested	65	61	62	69	65
<b>10. Two or More Races identified Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>11. Other 1: Other 1</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>12. Other 2: Other 2</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>13. Other 3: Other 3</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					

**NOTES:** There is no data reported for the 2012-2013 subgroup of Hispanic or Latino students. This subgroup had less than ten students tested this particular year; therefore, no data was reported for this group.

**STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS**

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Math</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>ARMT+</u>
<b>All Students Tested/Grade:</b> <u>4</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>N/A</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>Alabama Board of Education</u>	

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
Level III and above	94	90	93	92	94
Level IV	66	77	72	78	74
Number of students tested	85	84	96	106	102
Percent of total students tested	100	99	98	98	99
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment		1			
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level III and above	86	73	78	84	86
Level IV	48	50	39	62	46
Number of students tested	13	22	23	37	28
<b>2. Students receiving Special Education</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level III and above	90	75		77	90
Level IV	40	42		62	60
Number of students tested	10	12		13	10
<b>5. African- American Students</b>					
Level III and above	80	73	83	86	81
Level IV	40	55	42	65	44
Number of students tested	15	11	24	26	16
<b>6. Asian Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Number of students tested					
<b>8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>9. White Students</b>					
Level III and above	100	97	98	98	96
Level IV	80	88	86	87	82
Number of students tested	54	60	65	62	72
<b>10. Two or More Races identified Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>11. Other 1: Other 1</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>12. Other 2: Other 2</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>13. Other 3: Other 3</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					

**NOTES:**

**STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS**

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Math</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>ARMT+</u>
<b>All Students Tested/Grade:</b> <u>5</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>N/A</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>Alabama Board of Education</u>	

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
Level III and above	100	96	91	93	93
Level IV	91	83	84	73	80
Number of students tested	76	96	107	98	71
Percent of total students tested	99	100	98	99	99
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment	1		2		
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level III and above	100	87	77	86	80
Level IV	87	48	66	50	60
Number of students tested	15	23	35	28	20
<b>2. Students receiving Special Education</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. African- American Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Asian Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Number of students tested					
<b>8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>9. White Students</b>					
Level III and above	100	99	97	95	98
Level IV	95	94	92	83	94
Number of students tested	60	68	64	66	48
<b>10. Two or More Races identified Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>11. Other 1: Other 1</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>12. Other 2: Other 2</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>13. Other 3: Other 3</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					

**NOTES:** Where there is no data reported for the subgroup, fewer than ten students in applicable subgroup were tested this particular year. These subgroups had less than ten students tested this particular year; therefore, no data was reported for this group.

**STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS**

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Reading/ELA</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>ARMT+</u>
<b>All Students Tested/Grade:</b> <u>3</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>N/A</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>Alabama Board of Education</u>	

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
Level III and above	97	95	90	94	96
Level IV	79	74	73	77	75
Number of students tested	80	91	94	106	111
Percent of total students tested	100	100	97	98	98
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment	0		1		
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level III and above	83	83	74	91	90
Level IV	58	41	32	63	48
Number of students tested	12	29	31	32	42
<b>2. Students receiving Special Education</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level III and above			50		67
Level IV			10		25
Number of students tested			10		12
<b>4. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level III and above		90	50		73
Level IV		40	8		20
Number of students tested		10	12		15
<b>5. African- American Students</b>					
Level III and above	90	87	89	96	100
Level IV	70	40	50	61	68
Number of students tested	10	15	18	28	28
<b>6. Asian Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Number of students tested					
<b>8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>9. White Students</b>					
Level III and above	98	97	98	95	98
Level IV	82	87	92	87	89
Number of students tested	66	61	62	68	65
<b>10. Two or More Races identified Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>11. Other 1: Other 1</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>12. Other 2: Other 2</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>13. Other 3: Other 3</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					

**NOTES:** There is no data reported for the 2012-2013 subgroup of Hispanic or Latino students. This subgroup had less than ten students tested this particular year, therefore, no data was reported for this group.

**STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS**

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Reading/ELA</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>ARMT+</u>
<b>All Students Tested/Grade:</b> <u>4</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>N/A</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>Alabama Board of Education</u>	

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
Level III and above	99	92	94	95	96
Level IV	81	78	71	84	75
Number of students tested	85	83	98	106	101
Percent of total students tested	100	98	100	98	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment		1			
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level III and above	95	77	83	89	89
Level IV	57	50	38	76	57
Number of students tested	21	22	24	37	28
<b>2. Students receiving Special Education</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level III and above	100	64		85	80
Level IV	50	27		62	50
Number of students tested	10	11		13	10
<b>5. African- American Students</b>					
Level III and above	93	90	92	92	84
Level IV	60	64	40	73	63
Number of students tested	15	11	25	26	16
<b>6. Asian Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Number of students tested					
<b>8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>9. White Students</b>					
Level III and above	100	98	98	97	98
Level IV	91	90	85	95	83
Number of students tested	54	60	66	62	71
<b>10. Two or More Races identified Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>11. Other 1: Other 1</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>12. Other 2: Other 2</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>13. Other 3: Other 3</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					

**NOTES:**

**STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS**

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Reading/ELA</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>ARMT+</u>
<b>All Students Tested/Grade:</b> <u>5</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>N/A</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>Alabama Board of Education</u>	

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
Level III and above	100	94	93	98	93
Level IV	89	80	83	76	82
Number of students tested	76	96	107	98	71
Percent of total students tested	99	100	98	99	99
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment	1		2		
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level III and above	100	83	83	96	75
Level IV	73	44	69	61	55
Number of students tested	15	23	35	28	20
<b>2. Students receiving Special Education</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. African- American Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Asian Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Number of students tested					
<b>8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>9. White Students</b>					
Level III and above	100	97	98	98	98
Level IV	95	91	91	86	94
Number of students tested	60	68	64	66	48
<b>10. Two or More Races identified Students</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>11. Other 1: Other 1</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>12. Other 2: Other 2</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>13. Other 3: Other 3</b>					
Level III and above					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					

**NOTES:** Where there is no data reported for the subgroup, fewer than ten students in applicable subgroup were tested this particular year. These subgroups had less than ten students tested this particular year; therefore, no data was reported for this group.