

**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. Patrick McClintock-Comeaux

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

Official School Name Albert F. Baker Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 2300 Morton Road

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

City Pittsburgh State PA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 15241-3302

County Allegheny County State School Code Number\* 103029203-5195

Telephone 412-833-1600 Fax 412-221-5283

Web site/URL http://www.uscsd.k12.pa.us/Domain/401 E-mail pmcclintockcomeaux@uscsd.k12.pa.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. Patrick O'Toole E-mail: potoole@uscsd.k12.pa.us  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Upper St. Clair School District Tel. 412-833-1600

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 Mr. Frank Kerber  
(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)
  - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 6 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. 3 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	49	39	88
1	41	26	67
2	39	41	80
3	40	40	80
4	56	35	91
5	0	0	0
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>	225	181	406

5. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 2 % Asian
  - 1 % Black or African American
  - 1 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 95 % White
  - 1 % 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	10
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2013 until the end of the school year	12
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	22
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1	398
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.055
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	6

7. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1 %  
4 Total number ELL  
 Number of non-English languages represented: 2  
 Specify non-English languages: French, Spanish
8. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 2 %  
 Total number students who qualify: 7

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

The state has reported that 2 % 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: 17 %  
69 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>4</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>12</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>16</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>36</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>1</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</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	1
Classroom teachers	17
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	11
Paraprofessionals	11
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

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 24:1

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%	96%	97%	97%	96%
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 X                  No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.                  1999

15. Please summarize your school mission in 25 words or less: Baker School, in collaboration with our community, seeks to customize learning, nurture potential, and deliver excellence for every student who enters through our doors.

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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Albert F. Baker Elementary School is a K-4 school located in Upper St. Clair, Pennsylvania. As one of six public schools in the Upper St. Clair School District, Baker currently serves 406 children.

At Baker Elementary, students are encouraged to not only do their best, but to become their best. The entire staff challenges itself each day to implement the school district's focus on customizing learning, nurturing potential, and delivering excellence. At every turn, they help children to develop academically, socially, and emotionally. The school's success relies on a synergy created by an outstanding faculty and staff, a supportive family network, eager children, and a school district structure that encourages both innovation and excellence. Among these varied groups, there is a singular purpose: to prepare our students to have success in whatever endeavor they may choose.

The foundation of Baker Elementary is rooted in relationships. Classroom teachers forge meaningful bonds with children and families that allow them to place their trust in the school. Every member of the faculty and staff then expands these relationships. Students know and trust the school custodian, secretary, aides, and principal as much as they do their homeroom teacher. Through an intentional effort to build community, students truly feel that when they arrive at school, they are members of an extended, embracing family; what the school refers to as the Baker Family.

Such a feeling of togetherness is not accidental. Baker utilizes a school-wide approach to help students feel welcome, nurtured, and challenged. Beginning with a foundation of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program and weekly classroom meetings, and built upon by a generous grant from our local Rotary Club, Baker has implemented the Baker Buddies program, pairing younger students with those in higher grades to develop friendships throughout the building. Each day, student broadcasters end the morning announcements by reminding everyone that at Baker, "We are how we treat each other." The school and community alike have embraced this motto. Students then seek to reach beyond our school borders by initiating community service projects through Baker Gives Back, a charitable wing of our PTA. Led by the student leadership club, students have given to local food banks, children in Haiti, The Make-A-Wish Foundation, local animal shelters, the Education Partnership, and many other causes. These efforts have shown Baker students that not only can they make a difference in others' lives, but also their own lives are made more meaningful by doing so.

Connected to the desire to become better people is the students' focus on always becoming better learners. Baker students' performance on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) has been a source of pride for our entire community. Not only have Baker students consistently scored in the top quartile of the state of Pennsylvania, but they have also shown consistent growth from year to year. For example, on the 2013 PSSA tests, seventy-nine percent (79%) of Baker third grade students scored in the advanced range in mathematics. While this is quite an accomplishment to celebrate, it is even more exciting when put in context of the next year, when those same students took the test as fourth graders and ninety-four percent (94%) achieved in the advanced range. The means of achieving these results is a commitment to the belief that teachers know their students best, and when they are allowed to make individual decisions based on student need and then given the resources to implement those decisions, students benefit. Teachers meet weekly as members of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in which they look at student data, discuss resulting student needs, and focus on best teaching practices with their colleagues.

Each faculty and staff member is an integral part of the Baker Family. During the 2013-2014 school year, each faculty member participated in one of four mission teams named "iTEAMs" for their focus on Teaching with Technology, Engaging Colleagues, Accessing Creativity, and Molding Behavior. As a result, specific teacher-led initiatives were put in place to make the 2014-2015 school year better for students in various ways. Baker teachers are the true leaders of the building, constantly seeking ways to better serve children and their families. Curriculum leadership in the district is comprised of classroom teachers, several of whom are on the Baker faculty. Every member of the faculty serves on a curriculum committee and many volunteer to lead district initiatives such as our emerging Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) program led by two Baker teachers.

Baker's previous designation as a Blue Ribbon School for the 1998-1999 school year has allowed the community to embrace what is occurring at Baker Elementary and has encouraged the team to continue to seek ways to better meet individual student needs. The Blue Ribbon program provides not only recognition, but validation and motivation as well.

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

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

Curriculum development is the foundation of the instructional program in the Upper St. Clair School District. Curriculum leaders in each core area (ELA, Math, Social Studies, and Science), along with teacher committees, meet once a month to review and refine the current curriculum. Staff members, students, parents, or citizens can initiate recommendations for change. Curriculum is analyzed and discussed at department meetings throughout the year, resulting in proposals presented to a district review panel. This continuous reflective process allows annual refinement in each curricular area.

The English/Language Arts program at the elementary level is The Upper St. Clair Balanced Literacy Approach. It is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum, which includes an instruction and assessment framework. This program aims to develop the individual literacy skills of each student. The curriculum was designed according to Upper St. Clair School District's continuous progress philosophy. Each student is taught according to individual rates of acquisition and levels of achievement. The framework consists of specific instructional modules: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, grammar, and writing. Progress through each module is informed by assessment of the individual student.

Within the reading module, students are explicitly taught comprehension strategy lessons based on PA Core Standards. Teacher-directed whole group lessons are reinforced during Guided Reading. Teachers meet with small groups of students based on the students' instructional reading levels. During the guided reading time, the teachers address students' accuracy, fluency, and comprehension proficiencies. Students are given opportunities to apply decoding strategies when reading in context with teacher feedback and coaching. Students interpret the meaning of text and analyze features through discussion with verification of answers, ideas, and inferences using evidence from the text.

Teachers at Baker are committed to meeting the needs of all students by differentiating instruction. Systematic and ongoing assessments (both formative and summative) help teachers diagnose who is reading below, on, and above grade level. Resource teachers use both pull-out and push-in strategies to deliver instruction individually or in small groups to those students who demonstrate a need.

The elementary Mathematics program in the Upper St. Clair School District is guided by the belief that there are certain critical learning opportunities that all students should experience. This includes learning that is related to concept development, computation, problem solving with real-life application, and communication of mathematical processes. We extend our students' view of problem solving even further by enabling them to see that problems are a means to an end in learning mathematics, and that a concept can be learned through problem solving. These experiences are facilitated through the Investigations Math Program used in grades K-1 and the enVision Math Program used in grades 2-4.

Continuous assessment in Mathematics identifies the instructional level for each student. A pretest for every topic in grades 1-4 determines student placement in groups ranging from novice to enrichment. All students study the grade level curriculum, and additionally may receive enrichment or alternative instructional support. Resource teachers push into the novice or enrichment groups at each grade level to provide opportunities for small group instruction or challenge. Students who need review of the daily objectives attend "Baker Boost" for second chance learning.

The Social Studies curriculum is designed around five basic strands drawn from the disciplines of history, geography, economics, political science and sociology. Units in the five strands are taught yearly, in each grade level. Activities and experiences within the grade level unit are designed to spiral from a very personal level to an increasingly global perspective. Units are created and revised by the Social Studies curriculum committee using the Understanding by Design principles of curriculum development.

The Science program in the Upper St. Clair School District makes use of units or modules acquired from ASSET Science. These units allow science to be both a "hands-on" and a "minds-on" experience for the

children. The modules, developed by nationally recognized publishers of science materials for children, such as FOSS, EiE and STC, contain all materials needed to teach inquiry-based science units. Science lessons focus on active learning, scientific practices, collaborative group work, and the integration of literacy. Science notebooks help students organize their observational data and maintain a record of their learning for future reference.

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

Students in grades 1-4 participate in general music two times per week for 30 minutes each. Emphasis is on music literacy and curriculum connections are intentional. Kodaly, Orff and Eurhythmics are regular components of instruction. Chorus is offered as an extracurricular option to students in fourth grade. Students in third grade are able to study a stringed instrument and students in fourth grade are able to study a stringed instrument or a brass, woodwind or percussion instrument. Group lessons are provided during the day for 30 minutes a week.

Visual Art is offered once per week for 50 minutes to students in grades 1-4. Kindergarten meets once a week for 30 minutes. The curriculum is linked to core subjects and is vertically articulated so students learn various art processes and techniques throughout their creative journey. Emphasis is on process over product and self-expression is encouraged. Art Club is available for fourth grade students to attend to further develop their artistic skills.

Spanish is offered to students in grades 1-4. In first and second grade, students have a 30-minute lesson once a week. Students in third grade have a 30-minute lesson with the Spanish teacher, and a 30-minute iPad lesson. During the iPad lesson the students are introduced to new vocabulary and review previously learned vocabulary. The students in fourth grade have two 30-minute lessons per week. The curriculum is based on the Natural Approach of Language Learning, where vocabulary is introduced and then built upon.

Students in grades K-4 have Library class once a week for 30 minutes. The focus of the elementary library curriculum is to develop lifetime library users, lifelong readers, and diligent researchers. Book selection is also a part of the weekly Library class. Students are encouraged to participate in additional book exchanges any time the library is open. One of the library goals is to connect the library and books to the classroom. The librarian also works with the teachers at Baker Elementary so that the library curriculum supports and integrates other curricular areas that are relevant to the classroom.

Students in grades 1-4 also meet for 30 minutes twice a week (once a week for Kindergarten) for Physical Education, promoting 60 minutes of activity daily. The program emphasizes improvement of cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, healthy body composition, and skill-related fitness. Games and skills are introduced and cooperation, teamwork, and sportsmanship are practiced. Dance steps are performed as part of the locomotor warm up, where Spanish is spoken. Fourth graders are trained in CPR, AED, and the Heimlich procedure and learn basic water safety and swim strokes. Intramurals are offered to students in fourth grade as well as intramural dance and folk dance, culminating in a performance at the high school International Fair.

The School-Wide Enrichment Program (SWEP) at Baker provides opportunities for students to expand their learning. The program serves children at all learning levels through classroom curriculum, any interested students through individual research projects paired with mentors, and identified gifted students through instruction with the Enrichment Resource Teacher. Design challenges have been a part of SWEP at Baker for many years. After participating in district initiatives to learn about Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM), opportunities arose to incorporate the Engineering Design Process into existing SWEP design challenges. These challenges address the creative and critical thinking goals that are required for SWEP learners. This year at Baker, all students in grades 1-4 were offered an opportunity to participate in similar design challenges after completing their science modules as an extension of existing units. These challenges are the pilot for of a district-wide curriculum recommendation that will eventually grow to all students in each elementary school.

Students will need to have not only fact-based knowledge, but also the skills to solve problems in the real

world. There are many 21st century learning skills taught through this engineering initiative. The students have to collaborate in teams, communicate and share ideas and information, and solve problems using critical, creative, and innovative thinking. These skills are not only critical in the SWEP classroom; they are vital for all of our students to demonstrate. Coordinating efforts and use of common language has helped accelerate this process.

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

Baker School's holistic approach to instructional strategies, methods, and interventions focuses on differentiation for all students. Resources, specialized personnel, and technology are utilized to meet each child's unique learning strengths and challenges.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are the impetus for analyzing patterns of student performance to make curricular decisions. Each grade level PLC reviews data, including formative and summative assessments, curriculum-based tests, standardized achievement/ability measures, and DIBELS results. Professional Learning Communities meet weekly and include grade level classroom teachers, the School Counselor, Librarian, Resource, Enrichment, Speech, ESL, and Special Education Teachers. Ongoing collaboration is the cornerstone of the PLC process.

Small group and individualized instruction are facilitated at each grade level and in the Learning Support, Enrichment Resource, Mathematics Resource, Reading Resource, Speech, and ELL classrooms. Research-based strategies and interventions are utilized across all settings. Reading methods and materials based on the body of research by Isabelle Beck, as well as Fountas and Pinnell are imbedded in the Balanced Literacy Program. Specific interventions are used in small group settings. These interventions include programming from the Read Naturally Company, Reading A-Z, SRA, and Xtra Math.

Classroom teachers administer ongoing assessments in both Reading and Mathematics. The curriculum process, implemented by Curriculum Leaders, assures that instruction is aligned with Common Core Standards. Students are pretested to assess prior knowledge in each math unit and are grouped accordingly. Enrichment and Resource teachers provide both push-in and pull-out instruction. Reading assessment is facilitated through the use of running records, DIBELS, and curriculum-based comprehension and language arts skills tests. This information is used to group students for enrichment, interventions, and small group instruction within the classroom setting. Ongoing assessments and flexible grouping also occur at the Kindergarten Level and are more developmental in nature.

A tiered support system is also in place to meet students' academic and behavioral needs. Driven by the PLC process and in concert with parents, students who demonstrate a higher level of need are first given interventions within the classroom. If the student continues to demonstrate need, then the PLC may determine assistance from a member of the resource team may be necessary. If the needs persist, the PLC discusses with parents the possibility of a multi-disciplinary evaluation. If an evaluation demonstrates that a student qualifies for special education, those supports are provided as part of the continuum of service.

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

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

Assessment results for Baker Elementary for the past five years demonstrate a consistent high level of achievement. More than ninety-five percent (95%) of third and fourth grade students routinely score in the advanced or proficient range in both Mathematics and English/Language Arts. The 2013-2014 academic year saw ninety-eight percent (98%) of both third and fourth graders achieving advanced or proficient in math while ninety-one percent (91%) of third graders and ninety-six percent (96%) of fourth graders achieved at this level in English/Language Arts.

While combining the advanced and proficient groups creates a picture of stable test scores, a deeper look into those categories reveals exciting growth. In nearly every testing category for both grades, the student percentage of advanced achievement has grown every year. For example, over the past five years, the percentage of students achieving “Advanced” in third grade has risen from fifty-nine percent (59%) to eighty-seven percent (87%). The same is true of fourth grade, with advanced scores progressing from seventy-two percent (72%) to ninety-four percent (94%). This same trend can be seen in the English/Language Arts scores for both grades.

Baker Elementary’s demographics do not lend themselves to analysis of subgroups with the exception of students receiving special education services. White students are the only ethnic group that comprises ten percent or more of the student population. Where gaps appear, they exist between the population as a whole and our students receiving special education. While scores of special education students lag behind those of their non-disabled peers at times, their growth as measured by the Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System (PVAAS) is among the highest in our school. So while students in this group continue to face challenges, their trajectory is promising. Our continued focus on customizing learning for all students gives us faith that this intermittent gap will continue to decrease.

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

At Baker School, reviewing and analyzing student data as indicators of academic success plays a critical part in driving instruction. This process begins through building-wide meetings to review school assessment data, and then is continued during weekly, grade-specific, PLC meetings. Teachers use assessment data to group students for instruction to meet their individual needs, pace instruction, and evaluate the effectiveness of their instruction.

At the forefront of instructional planning, teachers continually review state and local achievement test data. On an ongoing basis, teachers compare this data with student performance and achievement on formal district assessments. Student success is demonstrated, in part, through district-created unit assessments in the areas of Balanced Literacy, Math, Science and Social Studies. Within Balanced Literacy, teachers administer comprehension assessments aligned with individual reading levels, running records to assess student fluency and accuracy, and DIBELS to discern student readiness and progress. In Math, students are given opportunities for remediation, enrichment, or acceleration based on their needs. All district assessments are aligned with the PA Core standards and are approved through the curriculum development process.

Additionally, Baker utilizes a variety of informal assessments to monitor student understanding. Quick checks, exit tickets, and response journals are often utilized. Teachers plan for day-to-day instruction and ensure skill mastery through the use of these assessments.

Baker School prides itself in communicating student success to parents and students. Teachers continually communicate to students about their learning through descriptive feedback on class work and assessments. Parents are kept informed of their child’s growth through conferences, emails, and phone calls. They also receive a formal report card quarterly that highlights student growth. In the spring, students are given the chance to share academic portfolios during S.T.A.R. (Sharing Together And Reflecting) Night. The community is kept informed about student achievement through the school website, community publications, and an annual report mailed to all residents outlining district-wide assessment results.

## **Part VI School Support**

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

“We are how we treat each other” is a school-wide theme that permeates throughout the building. Baker Elementary School prides itself on educating and nurturing the whole child. The responsibility of teaching children math and reading is shared, but the staff also shares a greater responsibility of teaching beyond the academic curriculum. The school community values the development of students’ social and emotional well-being.

On the first day of the school year, Baker’s principal introduced the theme on the school news station. He explained that each month the school would focus on a trait to reinforce our message, “We are how we treat each other.” These traits are reinforced daily on the morning announcements, weekly counseling lessons during Baker Buzz (Olweus Bully Prevention Program) meetings, and through our classroom teachers’ daily emphasis. The monthly attributes of respect, responsibility, thankfulness, patience, cooperation, love, honesty, kindness, and caring are woven throughout each day.

These attributes guide the weekly counseling lessons that occur during Baker Buzz time. The counselor visits each classroom weekly and guides the students in discussion about not only social situations and incidents of bullying, but also on ways to be the best they can be. The counselor works with students on the foundation of teamwork and daily interactions, which affect social and emotional well-being as well as academic success. This is done in conjunction with a systematic tiered approach to behavior management, beginning in the classroom but reaching the entire building.

In addition, the Baker Buddies initiative was created as a way to promote a building-wide sense of community and support across grade levels. Students of varying ages are partnered to complete activities that build relationships and peer mentoring across grade levels. This adds to the foundation of trust and community among peers within the building.

Our fourth grade Leadership Club evolved from the school district’s Leadership Academy and the belief that, “Who you are is how you lead.” During monthly meetings, student leaders discuss how they can show teamwork and cooperation. Baker seeks to always provide a positive environment in which students can thrive and encourages and expects fourth grade leadership students to serve as models.

Finally, “We are how we treat each other” is also evident in how Baker’s principal interacts with his staff. He has created professional learning communities (PLCs) where the entire staff is involved in the academic, social, and emotional growth of every person in our building. He has an open door policy and has created an environment where teachers and staff feel valued and supported.

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

The mission statement of the Upper St. Clair School District is alive at Baker Elementary School. Baker is committed to “developing lifelong learners and responsible citizens for a global society...in partnership with the community.” Success is measured by more than academic scores; the school strives to nurture qualities that will promote Baker students’ happiness and success.

Although there have been dramatic changes in school safety procedures, the school continues to encourage parental involvement throughout the day. Parents and grandparents volunteer in the library, computer lab and classrooms. Baker has a vibrant PTA, which sponsors wonderful curricular and extra-curricular activities. Numerous family activity nights are sponsored. Teachers regularly communicate with parents, utilizing teacher pages on the website, group email lists and weekly and monthly newsletters.

Students at Baker have the opportunity to experience and understand the value of being part of the greater community. Parent volunteers and teachers work together to provide opportunities for all students at the local, national and international level. Locally, Baker is involved with several charities. The Education

Partnership provides students in underserved districts with school supplies. Baker also teams with a local food bank and students are encouraged to donate non-perishable food items during our annual drive. This allows the children to experience giving in a very tangible way.

Nationally, Baker Elementary has a long-standing relationship with the Make-A-Wish Foundation, for which the school has regularly sponsored coin drives. Internationally, the school community has a relationship with a mission in La Croix, Haiti. Baker collects funds to sponsor the education of four Haitian elementary school children. One of Baker's teachers has traveled to Haiti on two occasions. While there, she communicated via Skype with Baker students from the classrooms in Haiti. Baker students wrote letters to their counterparts in Haiti, which teachers and parents translated into Creole, and were delivered by the Baker teacher. This genuine connection has made the experience far more meaningful for students.

Student and school improvement begins when the students enter the building and goes far beyond academics. When students come to school to learn and leave to serve the community, they feel they are valued, respected and capable of making a difference.

### **3. Professional Development**

The best professional development originates with student need, sparks teacher interest, involves teacher training and collaboration, and culminates with a change in student achievement or behavior. Baker is part of a school district that values and supports professional development. One way change is facilitated is related to the many professional development initiatives originated by the professional development survey, designed in collaboration between the district and the teachers' union. Out of this survey come initiatives that take place over a number of years in order to properly train, implement, and refine each focus of our professional development. Teachers have a voice in recommending training, which emanates from the needs observed in Baker students. One example of an initiative developed in this way is the Olweus Bullying Prevention program. The initiative began with a district-wide training, in which experts in the field were brought to present. They provided training with a researched-based program. It then became the responsibility of a school-focused team of teacher volunteers to design a program tailored to Baker's needs. The team took responsibility for implementing the program and for training our staff. This program changed the climate of the school in many positive ways. Common goals, language, and expectations for behavior were established, giving the students a voice at weekly classroom meetings. Many other initiatives are ongoing, such as the implementation of technology, school safety issues, and Professional Learning Communities.

Another way professional development brings about change at Baker is for individuals to seek out training that addresses a need at the school. Baker is fortunate to have excellent professional development offerings through our Allegheny Intermediate Unit, ASSET science, and the many universities in our area. The STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Math) initiative at Baker began with individual teachers seeking out training in STEAM design from area experts. Initially, STEAM challenges were successfully completed with enrichment students. As a result of this success, the teachers trained in STEAM, along with the science curriculum leader, offered STEAM challenges to all Baker students. Next year, all elementary teachers in our district will receive STEAM training and will begin implementing this exciting initiative.

At Baker, staff members are involved as PLC team leaders, curriculum leaders, and members of district committees to ensure we are meeting the needs of our students through continual professional growth.

### **4. School Leadership**

Baker Elementary relies on shared leadership to create an atmosphere of learning, not only for students, but for the adults in the building as well. While the school principal is responsible for setting a tone of trust, setting expectations for excellence, and setting goals for each school year, these are all done in conjunction with the faculty and staff at Baker.

Trust, the combination of benevolence, honesty, openness, reliability, and competence, is the foundation for the leadership philosophy at Baker. Teachers work as colleagues, assuming that all professionals are looking out for the best interests of students. They believe that when a colleague says something, it is true. They are willing to both accept and offer suggestions for improvement. They know that they can count on each other to follow through. They are eager to implement new strategies and hone their craft. These qualities are evident to students and families as well, and they allow everyone to focus on new learning.

Decisions at Baker are guided by the drive to do what is best for children. Budgets are created for the building, specific curricular areas, and the PTA, with a singular focus of how to use resources to maximize benefits to students. The school principal is ultimately in charge of submitting or approving many of these budgets, but the input of the faculty and staff is vital in the decision-making process. Since teachers are the ones working directly with children, it is their insight that is most vital to make sure the supports get where they need to be.

Teacher evaluation, borne out of trust, focuses on student achievement and a desire to innovate. Teachers employ new techniques not for the sake of change itself, rather because diverse student needs require it. An atmosphere of thoughtful risk-taking is not only encouraged, but also expected by the teachers.

The leadership structure of Baker Elementary flows naturally from that of the School District. The School Board has a philosophy of hiring outstanding educators and then trusting them to do their work. The Superintendent models the philosophy of shared power while simultaneously expecting excellence. As a result, Baker School exemplifies the leadership beliefs of the district, resulting in school-wide excellence.

# PART VIII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

## STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Math</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>PSSA + PSSA-M + PASA</u>
<b>All Students Tested/Grade:</b> <u>3</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>2014</u>
<b>Publisher:</b>	

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Testing month	Mar	Apr	Mar	Apr	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above	98	98	93	99	98
Superior academic performance	87	79	76	75	59
Number of students tested	87	82	106	81	97
Percent of total students tested	99	99	99	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment	1	1	1	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. Students receiving Special Education</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above	86	88	69	100	90
Superior academic performance	57	65	47	56	21
Number of students tested	14	17	19	9	19
<b>3. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
<b>5. African- American Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Asian Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>9. White Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above	98	97	93	99	98
Superior academic performance	88	80	75	75	57
Number of students tested	83	76	101	77	90
<b>10. Two or More Races identified Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>11. Other 1: Other 1</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>12. Other 2: Other 2</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Number of students tested					
<b>13. Other 3: Other 3</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					

**NOTES:**

**STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS**

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Math</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>PSSA + PSSA-M + PASA</u>
<b>All Students Tested/Grade:</b> <u>4</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>2014</u>
<b>Publisher:</b>	

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Testing month	Mar	Apr	Mar	Apr	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above	98	92	99	94	98
Superior academic performance	94	77	71	67	72
Number of students tested	81	111	90	98	81
Percent of total students tested	99	99	100	99	96
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment	1	1	0	1	4
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. Students receiving Special Education</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above	89	63	89	71	93
Superior academic performance	72	26	44	29	27
Number of students tested	18	19	9	17	15
<b>3. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. African- American Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Asian Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>9. White Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above	97	91	99	94	97
Superior academic performance	95	76	73	66	71
Number of students tested	75	105	84	93	76
<b>10. Two or More Races identified Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>11. Other 1: Other 1</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>12. Other 2: Other 2</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>13. Other 3: Other 3</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					

**NOTES:**

**STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS**

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Reading/ELA</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>PSSA + PSSA-M + PASA</u>
<b>All Students Tested/Grade:</b> <u>3</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>2014</u>
<b>Publisher:</b>	

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Testing month	Mar	Apr	Mar	Apr	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above	91	95	93	96	93
Superior academic performance	55	52	48	57	40
Number of students tested	87	82	106	81	97
Percent of total students tested	99	99	99	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment	1	1	1	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. Students receiving Special Education</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above	50	82	74	78	74
Superior academic performance	0	35	16	56	5
Number of students tested	14	17	19	9	19
<b>3. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. African- American Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Asian Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>9. White Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above	90	95	93	96	92
Superior academic performance	57	53	48	57	38
Number of students tested	83	76	101	77	90
<b>10. Two or More Races identified Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>11. Other 1: Other 1</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>12. Other 2: Other 2</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>13. Other 3: Other 3</b>					
Satisfactory academic					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					

**NOTES:**

**STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS**

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Reading/ELA</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>PSSA + PSSA-M + PASA</u>
<b>All Students Tested/Grade:</b> <u>4</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>2014</u>
<b>Publisher:</b>	

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Testing month	Mar	Apr	Mar	Apr	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above	96	89	96	90	91
Superior academic performance	68	58	48	44	53
Number of students tested	81	111	90	98	81
Percent of total students tested	99	99	100	99	96
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment	1	1	0	1	4
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. Students receiving Special Education</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above	83	58	67	77	67
Superior academic performance	50	16	33	12	20
Number of students tested	18	19	9	17	15
<b>3. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. African- American Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Asian Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>9. White Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above	96	89	95	89	92
Superior academic performance	65	56	48	43	53
Number of students tested	75	105	84	93	76
<b>10. Two or More Races identified Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>11. Other 1: Other 1</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>12. Other 2: Other 2</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					
<b>13. Other 3: Other 3</b>					
Satisfactory academic					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
performance and above					
Superior academic performance					
Number of students tested					

**NOTES:**