

**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 Mr. Regan B Tanner

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

Official School Name North East High School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1901 Freeport Road

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

City North East State PA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 16428-1905

County Erie County State School Code Number\* 4217160-6145

Telephone 814-725-8671 Fax 814-725-3357

Web site/URL http://www.nesd1.org E-mail regtanner@nesd1.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. Frank McClard E-mail: fmcclard@nesd1.k12.pa.us

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

District Name North East School District Tel. 814-725-8671

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. Kerry Corbin

(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):
- 2 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 4 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. 12 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	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	57	68	125
10	63	68	131
11	53	53	106
12	66	58	124
<b>Total Students</b>	239	247	486

5. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 1 % Asian
  - 1 % Black or African American
  - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 93 % 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: 13%

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	18
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2013 until the end of the school year	44
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	62
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1	486
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.128
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	13

7. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %  
1 Total number ELL  
 Number of non-English languages represented: 1  
 Specify non-English languages: Phillipine
8. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 41 %  
 Total number students who qualify: 200

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

The state has reported that 42 % 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: 12 %  
57 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>5</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness        | <u>39</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>9</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment    | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</u> Mental Retardation    | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed               |

10. Use Full-Time Equivalent (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	19
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	12
Paraprofessionals	6
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 16:1

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	94%	94%	94%	94%	94%
High school graduation rate	89%	85%	85%	91%	82%

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	117
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	53%
Enrolled in a community college	8%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	7%
Found employment	28%
Joined the military or other public service	2%
Other	2%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes  No

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

15. Please summarize your school mission in 25 words or less: The Mission of the North East School District is to challenge, empower, and engage all students to develop and achieve personal and career aspirations, to pursue lifelong learning, and to be responsible and accountable citizens in a dynamic world.

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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Our community of North East is located in the most northeastern tip of northwestern Pennsylvania and borders Lake Erie to the north and New York to the east. Our community is composed of North East borough, a residential area with local restaurants, businesses, churches, and other service providers. North East Township surrounds the borough and is roughly forty-nine square miles in area. Our student population is spread about 40% with the borough and 60% in the township. Our community would be classified as agricultural as most of the land is planted with grape vineyards that supply concord grapes to either Welch's for consumer products such as juice and jelly or wine grapes to several local wineries. Other businesses include manufacturing with businesses like The Electric Materials Company, Rid-U-Rak, Bay Valley Foods, and Better Baked Foods. We also have a branch campus of Mercyhurst University which offers mainly two year degrees in nursing, culinary arts, municipal police training, and agricultural studies.

North East has a rich history of farming from the Civil War era when sheep populated the area and wool was harvested for uniforms, blankets, etc for the Union troops; today's transition to grapes is due to the extended growing season provided by the close proximity to Lake Erie. Celebrations in the community are centered around agriculture with the "Cherry Festival" in early July and "Grape Harvest and Wine Festival" held in late September. Our school also hosts the "Community Fair" in September which allows the community to display various fruits, vegetables, and hand-crafted items for judging.

The North East School District began with one borough public school and thirteen schoolhouses within the township and has evolved to one high school, one middle school, one intermediate elementary school and one primary school. Our mascot is the "Grapepickers" which uniquely represents our community as one of the major industries. In fact, during the fall sporting activities, the air is filled with the scent of grape juice and the streets are sticky with the juice as grapes are harvested and hauled to various processing plants. Our school has a rich tradition in academic success as well as extracurricular and the arts. Our most famous sport is cross-country as our school has won the state championship in Pennsylvania seven different times since 1971. All of our sports programs are competitive with a focus on integrity, class, and character that has led us to several region and district championships. Our arts are very strong as well, especially in music both instrumental and vocal. Our marching band has been crowned the LMBA champions for the past six consecutive years and even competed in the national finals this year in Indianapolis placing sixteenth in the nation. We have several other groups which compete each year at the local and state level in robotics, LifeSmarts, Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science, Science Olympics, Envirothon, Model United Nations, and we sponsor a Reading competition for all of northwest Pennsylvania. This past fall, 370 students participated in an extra-curricular activity out of 485 students in the school. We are blessed with excellent staff both in the classroom and the extra-curriculars which inspire and guide our students to success in all of the endeavors.

We have several in school traditions which provide opportunities for our school family to showcase their talents and build school pride and support of all students. Homecoming week is a time when the school comes together with spirit activities which garner the school colors of maroon and old gold in a class competition of the show of spirit. Our fall drama production provides an opportunity for the school to see our students on stage in a dramatic role. Our "Night on Broadway" production involved twenty five acts of vocal and instrumental talent representing selections from various Broadway performances. Our spring "Dance Symposium" showcases our school dance team in all forms of dance from ballet to hip hop. Our festival of the arts culminates in early April with student displays of fine and practical art pieces and the performing arts assembly for the entire school. Our spring musical is truly incredible; this year's production is Titanic. The opportunities for our students beyond the classroom are limitless and provide another opportunity for student success through hard work and commitment.

Academically, our school provides seven Advanced Placement courses, over 30 "Honors" level courses, the Erie County Technical School for those students looking for technical skill-based careers, and dual enrollment opportunities for college coursework at Mercyhurst North East campus which students can walk to.

Our goal at North East High School is simple. We attempt to provide our students with the opportunity to prepare themselves for the career path that they have chosen. We do everything in our power to accomplish that each and every day at NEHS.

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

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

At North East High School, our core curriculum is designed to meet the standards outlined by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania via the SAS web portal. Specifically, our core curriculum in mathematics begins with the basic standard of every student achieving proficiency on the Keystone Algebra I assessment. In English language arts, the core curriculum begins with every student achieving proficiency on the Keystone Literature assessment. In science, the core curriculum begins with every student achieving proficiency on the Keystone Biology assessment.

These 3 “bases” are established as the achievement and growth calculations of these assessment results and are the basis for our School Performance Profile score (SPP) which gives our school a grade each year. In addition, this base is more important beginning with the class of 2017 as it is required to be proficient in all three assessments in order to earn a diploma.

Our schedule at North East High School is an A/B block design. Our students have four courses on “A” day that are 88 minutes in length. On “B” days, they have four different courses. Core courses are all year long (90 class periods total) while most elective courses are a semester in length (45 class periods total). A tutorial period of 19 minutes is built into the middle of the day which provides students the opportunity to meet with teachers one on one for makeup work or additional tutoring. We have no “study halls” at North East High School.

We believe at North East High School that the basic core outlined above is the minimum level of curriculum. Although the assessments are rigorous and many students take them multiple times to achieve proficiency, this is only the foundation to prepare students for the goals of our mission statement and their aspirations upon graduation.

Our curriculum is divided into four core areas, mathematics, science, English, and social studies. Students are required to have a minimum of four credits in each of the four core areas to be considered for graduation.

In mathematics, courses progress from Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Trigonometry, and ends with Calculus. In all mathematics courses there are three levels. Applied level which is a co-taught course meaning that a special education teacher “team teaches” the course with the regular education teacher. Students in this level may or may not have an IEP. The applied level focuses entirely on the Keystone Algebra test anchors. The regular level of a mathematics course goes beyond the Keystone core curriculum and is geared toward progression in mathematics toward SAT test material. Most students in the regular level have already demonstrated proficiency on the Keystone Algebra I assessment. The honors level of mathematics courses are geared toward those students who are pursuing higher education at the completion of high school. The SAT skills are emphasized as well as the relation to the mathematics concepts and the science courses they take during the same year. For example, honors trigonometry is taken at the same time as Physics I Honors. Our mathematics peak is Advanced Placement Calculus A/B.

In science, we follow a similar model and progress from Earth and Environmental science, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. Applied, regular and honors level exist in all. Additional electives include AP Chemistry II, AP Physics II, Human Anatomy and Physiology, and Organic Chemistry.

In English Language Arts, we again follow a similar model. Our courses are literature based, yet have components of vocabulary development, grammar, and the writing process. English 9 is based upon short stories, poems, and novels to give students a base in literary analysis. English 10 is a survey of world literature that correlates with our social studies World Cultures course. English 11 is a survey of classic American literature. English 12 is a survey of British literature. Again courses are at the three levels. AP Literature and Composition and AP Language and Composition are offered as well.

In social studies, the same model is used. The curriculum progresses from United States History reconstruction to present day, Contemporary World Cultures, History of Western Civilizations, and Principles of Democracy. AP European History as well as AP American Government and Politics are offered as well.

Our curriculum is considered a “living document” in the sense that we adapt it to meet the changes in the state required curriculum and our ever-changing student needs. Our student’s course choices are driven by their career pathway which they begin in grade nine. Students in grade nine, complete a career discovery elective where they choose a career pathway to guide their course selection through North East High School. All students use this to build an online career portfolio that is put together throughout their four years. That portfolio, which has career and educational goals, is presented to a committee of teachers at the end of their senior year to ensure each student has a plan upon earning their North East High School diploma.

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

In other curriculum areas, beyond the core curriculum, North East High School aims to offer its students the ability to explore and demonstrate proficiency in other areas that relate to the core curriculum and offer insight into other career aspirations.

In the Business education department, students can take three levels of accounting which are full-year courses designed to expose students to business and accounting standards and provide the opportunity to become proficient in the areas of accounting and business mathematics. In addition, elective courses are offered in entrepreneurship, investing, and business law.

Completion of a World language sequence is stressed to our student body as they become aware of the expanding world and “global economy” that is now the standard. Students are encouraged to understand that they will probably work with people from other cultures who speak other languages at some point in their career. Spanish is offered at five different levels. French is offered at four different levels. We also offer online access to languages such as Arabic, Mandarin, Italian, German, and Russian. Students also have access to college level study through dual enrollment opportunities.

Family and consumer science is offered to develop a well rounded and healthy lifestyle. These courses include Career Discover, Child Development, Food and Nutrition, and Fashion/Clothing design. Career Discovery is required of all ninth graders as a basis for their career portfolio project.

Technology education takes on many forms at North East High School. All freshmen are required to successfully complete “introduction to computers and keyboarding”. This course gives the students basic keyboarding skills (30-60 words per minute) and instruction in the use of word processing, spreadsheets and data analysis, and multimedia presentations. These skills are utilized during their high school career and in life. In addition we have technology education in materials technology and engineering where students are taught processes of working with wood, metal, and polymers to design and construct various items using CAD, metal-working machines, welding, wood working, and plastics. In addition we also offer drafting and design courses in both traditional and CAD modalities of which many students looking at engineering take advantage. We also offer robotics challenge as a competitive group through this department.

Health and Physical education plays a major role as well. Students are required to take driver’s education/health I for one semester and health/physical education II for one semester. These courses cover healthy living, CPR and first aid training, drug and alcohol education, nutrition, abstinence training, preparation for operating a motor vehicle and the use of heart monitors in physical activities. Beyond that, we offer courses in team sports, lifetime sports, weight training, aerobic conditioning, aquatics, and lifesaving certification.

In the area of arts we offer music courses in both vocal and instrumental areas. Vocals entail the traditional choral format as well as an a cappella group. This transitions into a musical production each spring. In the instrumental area, we offer guitar, jazz band, concert band, orchestra, and a competitive marching band.

The instrumental area has grown to well over 150 students and we have earned several local, state, and national accolades and awards for our students' performance.

We also field competitive academic groups in our school to enhance the curriculum in all areas. Science Olympics, Envirothon, Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science, Model United Nations, LifeSmarts, local Reading Competition, Physics Day at Penn State Behrend Campus, GE Engineering day, Math Opportunities for Females, Robotics Competition, and various PMEA vocal and instrumental competitions. We usually compete at the State/National level in all of these competitions that move beyond the regional area.

The other curricular areas at North East High school offer additional areas in the curriculum for students to learn essential life skills that are immediately relevant to their career aspirations and offer an opportunity for creativity, teamwork, time management, and commitment. These are all essential skills that students will need as adults while they pursue their career goals. Some courses are a semester in length while others are year long. We have found, especially in music, that quality programs come from a year long commitment rather than a semester of exposure. Most of these areas are open to all students with some prerequisite knowledge in certain courses to allow a rigorous progression and growth. These programs thrive at North East High School with most classes at a minimum of twenty-five students. Our instrumental music enrollment is well over 140, vocal music at over 100, and our physical education classes at an average of 30 students.

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

To say that North East High School has an established method of instruction that is modeled by all teachers and courses would be false. Our instructional methods vary based upon the content of the course being taught as well as the instructional needs of the audience we are teaching. Below, I will outline some strategies that are used that are based upon some educational research but in reality are based upon what I as an instructional leader and my staff as professionals in their area of content have developed together over the past twelve years and which yield success in our school.

Instructional approaches vary based upon the material being taught. Direct instruction may be used to present a concept or facts that are needed. From there, an inquiry-based model may be used to then allow the students to apply that concept to a real-world practical problem. Rubrics are the basis for many projects that students complete as we want to establish clear rules of student demonstration of proficiency of the skill or idea. Some areas, a traditional written exam will be used, especially in the areas of Keystone assessment as we try to model our assessments to the assessment that the student will see.

If one idea seems to be central throughout our school's instructional methods it would be relevance. We as a staff have stressed the concept of relevance for the past several years. When students see the reason that they are learning a particular skill or concept and can apply that directly to a real-world situation, learning becomes personal. This personalization leads to motivation and proficiency.

The other key concept is designing courses that meet student's needs rather than trying to design students to meet the course needs. Ten years ago, we had two levels of most core academic courses, regular and honors level. About five years ago, we changed our learning support model from a "pull out" system where students with disabilities were taught in small groups to a "push in" model where students with learning disabilities were put into a "co-taught" environment with a regular education teacher who was a specialist in content and a special education teacher who was a learning strategy specialist. This move has had tremendous impact on our achievement as the co-taught environment has allowed us to better serve all populations with a more differentiated approach and heterogeneous grouping.

Lastly, using technology in our class rooms is now standard. All rooms have smart boards, and our computer ratio is about 2:1. Technology is used as a tool to enhance the curriculum, not the foundation. However, students respond to technology and the opportunity for web-based research is endless.

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

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

When summarizing the assessment results for North East High School, we must first discuss the year prior to the chart. At the end of 2009, North East High School failed to earn AYP (adequate yearly progress) for the first and only time in its history. Not only did the school as a whole not score the minimum levels of proficiency, our subgroup of economically disadvantaged was almost thirty percent lower in proficiency levels and our iep subgroup was at zero. At that time, the state had a process called “Getting Results” that schools failing to make AYP were mandated to complete. This was a plan that identified weaknesses and proposed strategies to mend the deficiencies.

At that time, North East High School took a close look at itself and was forced to acknowledge that several things had changed in the school and community that had been ignored for several years. Our school population had dropped from 200 in a graduating class and 18% economically disadvantaged to about 140 in a class and 35% economically disadvantaged. While our population had changed, our course of study had not.

Three major steps occurred at that point to fix the problem. First, we mapped our curriculum to the state standards, assessed students to the standards, and used data from these assessments to adapt our instruction to meet student weaknesses. Secondly, we identified the students in subgroups that were at a higher risk for not achieving proficiency and identified methods to assign relevance to the curriculum so that the standards we were shooting for made sense to their needs. Thirdly, we did not accept failure. We adopted a “success is the only option” philosophy and developed “prescription plans for each student who was in danger of failing a course which in turn led to failing to attain proficiency on the state assessments.

The results in our chart speak volumes to that plan’s success. We have cut the achievement gap in the economically disadvantaged group to less than 10 percent and our iep subgroup is seeing proficiency rates as high as 40%. This has changed our climate in our school. Our students see our success and our most recent results continue to climb. This model is adapted every year based upon student data as we shoot for 100% proficiency for all students.

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

At North East High School, assessment is used in all courses. We have two purposes for assessment. One, we want to verify that a student is proficient in the skill that is being taught. This is true for all courses from physics to art. The second reason that we assess to find student weakness in the proficiency of skills is so that we can adjust our instruction to better serve students in the future or to give us information on skills that we need to reteach now before we move into the next content area. Our curriculum is not simply “stand alone” topics; it is built upon a progression of skills where prior knowledge is used in the next phase. The assessment data tells us areas that may need to be retaught prior to moving on to the next topic or skill.

Several forms of assessment are used at North East High School. First, in all classes, teacher-made assessments that model the content of the state standards are developed to assess student learning in each subject. This past year, teachers developed “SLO’s” (student learning objective plans) for each course they teach that gives pre and post data for the content and skills of their course. Goals were incorporated in each SLO that prescribed a degree to which the students would demonstrate those skills. We would call these “Local Assessments”.

The second form of assessment would be characterized as “benchmark assessments” for our Keystone Exams. These benchmark assessments are administered each quarter in algebra, literature, and biology. We use an online provider, Study Island, to accomplish this. Every student who has not yet achieved proficiency on any one of the three exams completes the quarterly benchmark assessment. The teachers utilize the benchmark data to adjust instruction in their respective courses to strengthen the weak anchors identified on the benchmark. We have made this an essential practice for the last six years.

All of this process and information is relayed to students, parents, and the school board through various means. Students know their results immediately and the teacher makes a plan to use assessment data with the student to improve weak areas. Parents receive information via Edline for benchmark and local assessment data which keeps them abreast of the their student's progress toward proficiency. State assessment data reports are mailed home to parents with a letter that explains the level of proficiency and the plan we will use to improve their performance if necessary. Our district also presents assessment data in an annual public report to the school board where we outline the past year's performance and plans for improvement in the current year based upon the prior year and current benchmark data. This process keeps all stakeholders in touch with our assessment data and the plan to address the identified areas of weakness.

## **Part VI School Support**

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

The mantra at North East High School would best be stated as “Mutual Respect”. No one group of students deserves more credibility than another. We are a school that does not contain many “cliques” that have power or respect over others. Our academic classes contain heterogeneous groups in the sense that the honors classes are not just the wealthy students. Our students in the technical tract are not just the economically disadvantaged students. Athletes are not superior to musicians; those from higher incomes do not sit in special areas at lunch. Our students blend well and support one another to create an environment that fosters growth, support, spirit, and a sense of responsibility to do what is right for the whole school rather than a particular group.

This idea starts at my office. As principal, I offer the same respect for the Advanced Placement teachers as I do for the Special Education teachers, the same respect for the football coach as the school drama director, the same respect for the superintendent and the custodian. This modeling and expectation level is required from the professional and support staff as well. We stress to everyone that each person is important and no one has a reserved parking spot.

Many student groups support one another as well. The boy’s basketball team may go as a group to support the school play. The members of the band may be the “cheering section” for the volleyball team. When a school spirit day is announced, ninety percent of our students show their support with the wearing of school colors. Groups also take students who may be loners and “adopt” them into their activity. I rarely see a student sit at lunch by himself. I have on several occasions witnessed students go to that person alone in lunch and invite them to their table.

We celebrate successes together with assemblies and activities that are designed to acknowledge the talents of many diverse groups so that everyone feels part of the success of the whole school. Our student assistance team of teachers, our building level team meetings, our school counselors all strive to identify students who are not thriving in our culture and provide solutions to that lack of success. Our school also has a school culture club called “INSPIRE” that educates the school on issues of bullying, social pressures, etc through buddy lunch program, school code of ethics, and motivational speakers to encourage the student body to stand up when someone is being put down and solve the issue rather than looking the other way.

The staff and students of North East High School are the backbone of our culture. The standards and expectations for how they should act is established and maintained. It is truly amazing.

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

As stated earlier in this application, the schools are the center of the community which enables us as a school to engage families through the activities that occur here. Although at the high school level this becomes more difficult as students move from adolescence to adulthood, the desire for family connection is not always as easy as it sounds. At school, several opportunities exist for communication with families. We can start with the internet. Our website provides several key resources for parents to use at any time to understand and assist with their child’s educational process. In addition, our school uses EDLINE as a tool to reflect academic progress, upcoming assessments in classes, resources, notes, or syllabi for families to know at anytime what and how their children are doing in school. We also use One Call Now as a method to get information via phone or text to parents regarding upcoming events, community meetings, guidance initiatives, etc for their students. These two technology tools speed up communication and allow parents to be aware of events that their students might not share or forget to share.

In addition, our guidance department communicates monthly through mailed newsletters to each grade level with important information, upcoming events, career awareness activities, etc. These newsletters add a personal touch.

Community engagement begins with the invitation to local businesses to be a part of the school's educational process through many avenues. "Business Leader's Breakfasts" occur quarterly where business leaders present their business to the group of administrators and counselors and inform us of what they are looking for in employee skills and habits that we can facilitate through our practice. We have a branch campus of Mercyhurst University within our community which has fostered several partnerships and articulation agreements with our high school. Not only can our students take dual enrollment college courses within walking distance of the high school, our students can graduate from North East High School and already accumulate up to twenty four credit hours at Mercyhurst through completion of our courses at the "B" level. This partnership continues to grow and provide additional educational opportunities.

The key to this engagement is trust and excellence. Our community knows what our school expects of the students and what they achieve. The community knows that students from our school are well-rounded adults who have skills and character that makes them employable or gives them the ability to succeed on post-secondary endeavors.

### **3. Professional Development**

Two themes seem to mold our professional development efforts and offerings at North East High School.

First, changes at the state level directly impact our practices at North East High School from a legal standpoint. Each year for the past twelve years, we have experienced several changes in Pennsylvania education law and expectations that we have earnestly attempted to provide in-service activities for our professional staff to ensure that we are in compliance with these new laws. There are several examples that have guided much of our professional development. These include but are not limited to teaching and assessment strategies to help students to achieve Adequate Yearly Progress as defined by prior No Child Left Behind legislation. We took that initiative seriously at our school and made valiant efforts to align our curriculum, learn about standards and how to assess them, learn how to adapt textbook assessments and local assessments to mirror more of a standards assessment model, and most importantly, how to use and interpret student achievement data to expose weaknesses in our curriculum. These activities happened over a series of years and involved outside professionals, our Intermediate Unit, teachers and administrators "train the trainer" in-services, and teacher initiated programs. This was especially crucial when in 2009; we did not make AYP at North East High School and went through the state mandated "Getting Results" planning. Again, the state changed in 2013 from the AYP model to the SPP (School Performance Profile) which combined both student achievement and student growth at the eleventh grade level as well as other factors which now grades your school on several educational measures instead of just two tests in a given week. With this change brought new curriculums and assessments that have now become our focus. In addition, the state mandated new teacher evaluation guidelines which have created consistency in Pennsylvania but has brought about several days of in-service training to employ the new system.

The second way that professional development is determined is through our "Comprehensive Plan." This plan was completed three years ago and one of the areas the team explored was professional development. These topics are determined in several ways. Teacher need for specific courses, special education needs, etc are determined with a "needs assessment" completed by all staff so that we can identify areas that the district staff feel are lacking, and curricular weaknesses identified through our state assessments.

Between state and district needs, we find it difficult in the allotted professional development time (five days during the school year) to get everything done that we need. We do not choose professional development activities unless they meet the criteria above. I would classify our professional development as organized and effective, but we would love to have more time.

### **4. School Leadership**

At North East High School, the leadership philosophy is somewhat unique compared to other schools in our area and even to the other schools in our district. Leadership philosophy originates with the principal

based upon expectations from the community, the board of directors, the superintendent, the professional and support staff, and the students of the school. At North East, that philosophy is very diverse from building to building. This limits our district at times due to the absence of consistent leadership styles as a student progresses from kindergarten through grade twelve.

Leadership starts with the building principal. Their actions, demeanor, and attitude set the tone for the entire building. They cannot lead alone; however, they must be willing to assume responsibility when the system is failing. Humility and accountability are two key factors to our leadership philosophy. A leader does not deflect their mistakes to another party; they embrace them and learn from them. This ideal is fostered from the principal down to the student as the main tenant of leadership philosophy is to inspire others to be leaders themselves. A lone leader becomes a dictator, not a leader. This philosophy must be modeled by all in the organization for it to succeed.

The professional staff must be given the tools, example, and opportunity to lead as much as the principal. This model allows teachers to take chances on new methods and researched strategies when their student data indicates the need to do so. Support from the principal inspires these actions and often leads to success. When the principal acknowledges that his staff are the trained professionals to present and assess the curriculum, their confidence grows.

The students must be given the opportunity to model this philosophy as well. They are the final product of the mission statement. Their ability to go into the world with confidence and advocate for their personal goals is critical to their success. As students are inspired to lead themselves and their classmates through the model demonstrated by the principal and the staff, they become part of the success of the building.

The leadership philosophy at North East High School is founded on accountability, tenacity, integrity, and most importantly, collaboratively inspiring all stakeholders to seek success and lead together.

## PART VIII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

### STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Math</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>PSSA Math '10-'12, Keystone Algebra I '13-'14</u>
<b>All Students Tested/Grade:</b> <u>11</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>N/A</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>DRC</u>	

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Testing month	May	May	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above	86	74	71	78	69
Superior academic performance	53	44	35	50	42
Number of students tested	119	123	136	142	144
Percent of total students tested	99	99	99	99	99
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment			0	0	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above	78	63	64	74	59
Superior academic performance	32	28	27	37	23
Number of students tested	36	41	34	38	39
<b>2. Students receiving Special Education</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above	30	22	35	36	9
Superior academic performance	3	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	10	14	8	8	9
<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					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Number of students tested					
<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	86	73	70	77	69
Superior academic performance	50	46	34	52	43
Number of students tested	104	115	123	130	139
<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
performance					
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>Reading/ELA</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>PSSA '10-'12, Keystone Literature '13-'14</u>
<b>All Students Tested/Grade:</b> <u>11</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>N/A</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>DRC</u>	

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Testing month	May	May	Apr	Apr	Apr
<b>SCHOOL SCORES*</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above	90	81	80	81	72
Superior academic performance	49	40	46	45	39
Number of students tested	119	124	137	142	146
Percent of total students tested	99	99	99	96	99
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above	89	78	79	71	54
Superior academic performance	40	36	39	37	17
Number of students tested	36	41	36	38	41
<b>2. Students receiving Special Education</b>					
Satisfactory academic performance and above	40	29	35	36	18
Superior academic performance	10	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	10	14	9	8	11
<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>					

School Year	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
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	91	81	82	83	72
Superior academic performance	55	42	47	46	39
Number of students tested	104	115	124	130	141
<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>					

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

**NOTES:**