

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Dr. Ethan James Netterstrom

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

Official School Name Skinner North Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 640 West Scott Street

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

City Chicago State IL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 60610-1093

County Cook

Telephone (773) 534-8500 Fax (773) 534-8502

Web site/URL http://www.skinnernorth.org E-mail ejnetterstrom@cps.edu

Twitter Handle

https://twitter.com/skinnernorth Facebook Page _____ Google+ _____

YouTube/URL _____ Blog _____ Other Social Media Link _____

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Forrest Claypool E-mail FEClaypool@cps.edu

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

District Name Chicago Public Schools Tel. (773) 553-1000

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. Frank Clark

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

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

Date _____

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

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

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

Part I – Eligibility Certification

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

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

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 0 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 95 High schools
 - 422 K-12 schools
- 517 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

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

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	29	28	57
1	31	26	57
2	33	27	60
3	36	27	63
4	37	26	63
5	36	26	62
6	31	33	64
7	17	11	28
8	6	12	18
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	256	216	472

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 30 % Asian
 - 14 % Black or African American
 - 11 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 38 % White
 - 6 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2014 – 2015 school year: 9%

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	0
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	37
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	37
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	432
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.086
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	9

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
2 Total number ELL

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 14 %
Total number students who qualify: 66

8. Students receiving special education services: 6 %
26 Total number of students served

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

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <u>6</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>11</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>2</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>4</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>3</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>4</u> Developmentally Delayed |

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

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers	17
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	9
Paraprofessionals	9
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	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 30:1

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

Required Information	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	96%	97%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**
Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2015.

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

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

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

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

Our mission is to grow students into academically adept and socially-minded individuals within a collaborative learning community.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

Applicants for Classical Schools are selected based on their admissions exam score. Selection for all applicants is in accordance with the tier system.

Tier System Explained

The Chicago Public Schools uses socio-economic tiers as part of the selection process for Selective Enrollment schools. For the entry grade level for Selective Enrollment Elementary Schools, the first 30% of available seats are filled strictly according to the student scores – also referred to as the “rank” score – the seats are filled by the top-scoring students. The remaining seats are equally distributed among the four tiers and are filled by the highest-scoring students in each tier. There is no sibling or proximity consideration for these schools.

Classical Schools Admissions Exam

All age-appropriate students applying for kindergarten through grade 4 will be tested. In order to be eligible for testing, general education students and students with a 504 Plan applying for grades 5-8 must score at or above the 60th percentile in both reading and math on NWEA MAP. Students with an IEP applying for grades 5-8 must score at or above the 50th percentile in one subject (reading or math), and at or above the 40th percentile in the other subject (reading or math) in order to be eligible for testing.

PART III – SUMMARY

Skinner North Classical School is a K-8 public, selective enrollment elementary school located on the former site of the Cabrini Green project buildings in Chicago, IL. The school is currently in its seventh year of operation under the same leadership that opened the school. Skinner North grew gradually from a K-2 school of 104 students to a K-8 building with 472 students.

Skinner North students are diverse in many ways. Students come from many different racial and ethnic backgrounds, different income levels (the school enrolls students equally from four different economic tiers), and students come to school with a range of academic readiness. Geographically, the school draws students from all over the city and offers limited busing services. The school also has a small population with special needs.

While some may find it difficult to successfully operate a school with such a range of student needs, it has been a welcome challenge for Skinner North and an opportunity to build a broader school community. Each student and family is unique and has skills and characteristics that enrich the larger community.

While Skinner North is young; it already has an interesting history: Skinner North was originally meant to replicate the success of Skinner Classical School. Once the school moved sites and planned to mix Classical and Magnet programs several parents wanted to stay in the area and in a full Classical School (a school with 1 year advanced curriculum). They approached Chicago Public School leaders with the idea. Thus, the school was built on the foundation of parent choice and voice.

Once the school district approved the plan and hired a principal everything happened very quickly. In under six months, a full staff was hired; the school building was renovated; and students were recruited and enrolled. The original 104 families worked closely and collaboratively with the school to set traditions and agree on approaches that would support student development.

Many of these traditions were directly related to the climate and culture of the school. Examples include: International Fest (cultural presentations and celebration), June Jitterbug Jamboree (family dance), Starry Night (social and fundraising event), and a Musical Skinner Palooza. Each of these events served as an opportunity to bridge barriers and geographic gaps, and strengthen the school community through shared experiences.

Skinner North has been successful academically and in supporting students' social and emotional needs. The school's motto is "Working Together, Achieving Success" and it is reflected in the school's educational philosophy which posits that a student's growth and development as a full person is more important than simple academic attainment. The goal is preparing critical thinkers, caring individuals, and empathetic young adults, who also perform well academically.

Key Strategies that have encouraged and challenged all students to develop their full potential can be categorized a number of ways, each of which contribute to the success of the school.

Academically –Students work at a year advanced pace, and teachers scaffold and differentiate instruction for students using a workshop approach. Teachers continuously review formative assessment data to create flexible student groups. 8th graders take Algebra and students participate in district events such as Science and History Fairs, Spelling Bee and chess.

Physically –Students participate in daily recess (20 minutes), daily Physical Education class (30 minutes) and have movement breaks throughout the day. Skinner North is one of very few CPS schools to implement daily PE for a total of 150 minutes per week. Many students also participate in intramural and competitive sports after school.

Socially & Emotionally –Skinner North uses a Responsive Classroom approach. This includes morning meetings, advisory sessions and natural and logical consequences, teaching students expected behaviors and

teaching them to be accountable to themselves and their classmates. For example, students as early as Kindergarten are taught how to talk with peers to problem solve. It is not uncommon for students to use a “Name-Feel-Did-Do” approach or to hear them ask for a “cupcake apology” instead of a “bag of works apology.” It is important that students are able to work out issues with peers. The school counselor supports teachers in implementing a Second Step program which explicitly teaches social skills. There are also small groups that meet regularly and work on skills such as empathy, eye contact, and making friends. Supportive counseling groups are also in place for many needs.

Culturally –The school strives to make each student feel accepted and part of a collaborative effort. Students are encouraged to set individual goals, share their traits and interests and celebrate each other. For instance, Star Student is a classroom practice that provides each student a week where they share their interests and lives and have a special Friday lunch with an adult who has been significant in their lives.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Skinner North Classical School makes use of the Common Core State Standards as a basis for curriculum design and lesson creation. All students work a year ahead in Literacy and Mathematics as a standard for the school. Students are supported in small groups to foster their growth. Extra intervention and supports are available for students who are below the desired skill level and likewise extension work is provided for students above this level as well. While the vast majority of differentiation and scaffolding takes place in the classroom, a half-time interventionist also works with students in small groups. Similarly, the math lead teacher provides acceleration for students across multiple grade levels in addition to her regular teaching schedule. It is important that all students have their needs met and are challenged and grow.

Skinner North uses a teacher created, authentic reading and language arts curriculum. Teachers use the CCSS and place an emphasis on the use of authentic texts, as the school does not make use of any reading or literacy text books. Teachers at all grades K-8 use formative assessment data to determine student needs for small group instruction. Teachers use workshop models of instruction and a Daily Five rotation in primary graders, where students: read to self, read to someone, listen to reading, do word work and practice writing. In intermediate and upper grades, students work in groups to complete novel studies, examine a variety of text types and share their learning. All teachers make use of a writer's workshop format that includes peer editing and teacher conferencing.

Mathematics units and lessons at Skinner North are aligned to CCSS and based on Everyday Math and Connected Math materials. Teachers do not simply follow the pacing of these texts but use them as guides and resources. Student data may indicate that a lesson be skipped, extended or altered significantly. Other resources are also used to fill gaps in the curriculum. Math, like literacy in K-3, is taught in a workshop model which includes: work with teacher stations, work with partner (or individually), and math games or extension activities. This allows teachers to work with groups of 5-10 students at a time around similar skill levels.

In grades 4-8 small group work persists and students at all grade levels teachers use Math Talks which are a whole group strategy that emphasizes student ownership of problem solving. For instance, a teacher will pose a problem, students will agree upon an answer, and share as many different strategies as possible. The emphasis in this is to discuss, debate, and find multiple avenues to solve a problem, in a manner that deemphasizes having the correct answer, but instead emphasizes diversity of thought.

Science at Skinner North is aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards. STC (Science and Technology Concepts), FOSS (Full Option Science System) and SEPUP (Science Education for Public Understanding Program) are curriculum that are used and the emphasis is on hands-on experimentation and learning. Rote memorization of Scientific facts is meaningless in a world where Google exists. Students need to be able to solve real-life problems in a scientific manner that will serve them in examining complex problems. For instance, seventh graders this year worked on a water conservation project and created plans that would be of use in settings such as the Flint Michigan Water Crisis, which they investigated in small groups.

Social Studies/History is aligned to Illinois Standards and emphasizes learning about community, the history of the State and City at primary grade levels and expands into US and World History in intermediate and upper grades. At Skinner North it is important that the perspectives presented are diverse, like our student body, and reflect a variety of viewpoints. A unit which often provokes deep student learning is the fourth grade literacy unit around Perspectives of Children in War and combines historical fiction and nonfiction, as well as multimedia presentations. At the upper grades students select topics for deeper inquiry use the computer labs for research topics such as leadership and legacy. Students also participate in student-led class discussions and debates which require textual evidence and support. It is more important for our students to understand history and its many impacts than to memorize facts.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Skinner North Classical School, in addition to having strong core instructional programs and practices, is a Humanities focused school and offers all students, K-8, Music, Art, Spanish and Physical Education/Health classes taught by creative and innovative teachers. These content areas are essential to developing bright, inquisitive students and exposing them to a variety of experiences. Specials teachers work with core classroom teachers to provide cross curricular experiences and to align the use of common themes and vocabulary. For instance, the art and math teachers may both be exploring tessellations at the same time, or the music teacher may share a song tied to a particular time period or culture in conjunction with students learning in History classes. Students also use technology across all content areas and have access weekly to the school's library, which is run jointly by staff and parents.

Music and Art are both critical content areas for all students at Skinner North. All students have a total of 120 minutes of the arts (60 music, 60 visual art) each week. These classes, like all specials classes, are taught by certified teachers who care deeply about children and their content areas as well. In Music students learn to read notes and compose songs as well as play a variety of instruments, such as recorders and guitars. Students also perform their compositions and upper grade students have made music videos crossing multiple disciplines. In Art students learn about composers, how to recognize and create works in different styles and mediums. Students draw, paint, sculpt, and present their works as part of temporary displays throughout the school. Both of these subject areas are critical to the development of well-rounded and cultured students.

Physical Education, Health, and Nutrition are also areas that are prioritized at Skinner North. All students, K-8, participate in 150 minutes of PE classes per week. This is in addition to 100 minutes of recess per week. The two PE teachers at Skinner North emphasize teamwork, collaboration, sportsmanship and skill development. They create a variety of interesting games and activities that incorporate student choice. They do not simply play traditional sports. Examples include adventure games that are reminiscent of Amazing Race or Olympic challenges. Students also learn to create their own games by modifying rules and get feedback from peers on how to further refine them. This emphasizes creativity, community and being physically active, all of which are important life skills.

Skinner North students are a diverse group and many speak multiple languages. Spanish was selected since there are few native speakers at the school. During the school day all students are taught Spanish, K-8, for at least an hour per week. Upper grade and accelerated students are also provided further small group opportunities as well. For instance, six students are hosting exchange students from Spain this semester. Spanish class includes studies on different countries and cultures as well as conversational skills. Students also learn to write in Spanish and draw connections to their own lives. Activities include, reading, writing, singing, performing, creating videos, exploring maps, and other applications of language skills. While students will not graduate Skinner North fully bilingual they will be prepared to succeed in High School Spanish language classes.

Technology, while not a stand-alone class, is included across all content areas as part of CCSS implementation and in a weekly Library session. Students also participated in a week of coding activities across all grade levels. The school has 2 computer labs, a chrome book cart, and classrooms each have a SmartBoard and multiple iPads. Teachers take great care to include technology in their lessons as students are adept at using it in creative and novel ways to enrich their learning. Students are also taught to evaluate primary and secondary sources as well as credibility of documents found online.

Other programs and offerings at the school include free After School All Stars programs such as: yearbook, Lego Robotics, chess, games, book club, service-learning, Drama club, Spanish club and several different sports teams. These offerings vary each year and are created based on student interest.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

To meet the diverse and individual needs of all Skinner North students, it is essential that: teachers have access to formative student data, are taught how to analyze the data; and to make whole group and small group instructional plans. This has been an ongoing focus of professional development throughout the

school. Well informed teachers are best able to meet the needs of their students. Also critical, is an explicit emphasis on having a Growth Mindset. High attainment is not the end all. We expect every student to learn and grow, even those who are high performing.

In order for Skinner North to obtain and maintain high levels of student learning and achievement, including across all subgroups, as measured by NWEA, PARCC, and other district created metrics it is important to understand the needs of students and create structures that best meet these particular needs. This occurs both in core content classrooms and as push-in and pull-out support for students.

Instructional approaches that are universal across all classrooms include: workshop models of instruction, small group conferencing, intervention and extension work, exit slips for data collection and collaborative student inquiry. These structures allow for scaffolding and differentiated instruction. Special Education and Specials teachers also push-in to work with small groups.

To identify students who need extra support, primary and intermediate MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) Teams are in place. Their goal is to review academic performance, collected data and observational evidence. Once a case-study of a student starts, teachers are provided interventions to implement and data trackers to monitor progress. Needs can range from issues around math computation, reading comprehension, organizational skills and behavior modifications. It truly depends on the child. Technology-based support is also available based on student need and recommendations are provided to classroom teachers.

When the teachers and MTSS teams find that extra support is needed children are provided intervention services in small groups or individually. The school has a half-time interventionist who works on literacy and comprehension skills with students. She works with and supports students multiple times each week and provides feedback to the classroom teachers. The math lead teacher likewise works with students, but more often those referred to her due to exceptionally high abilities. She is able to provide small group lessons that extend classroom learning, pushing students to reach their potential.

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

Externally, Skinner North was ranked #1 in Illinois on the ISAT multiple years in a row and #2 overall in Illinois on the PARCC last year. It is also a 1+ School (highest level) in the Chicago Public Schools. In order to maintain these high levels of achievement, across all subgroups, Skinner North internally makes use of a range of assessment data to monitor school, grade level, classroom, and student performance.

Teachers assess student Lexical scores to determine reading levels. For Kindergarten students, this is done before the year begins. This allows teachers to better distribute a range of students across each classroom.

Once the year begins, students are given an adaptive test (NWEA) to determine RIT scores. NWEA is administered twice more each year to track progress and monitor growth. The assistant principal leads teachers in grade level teams in data analysis of these assessments as well as classroom assessments to create flexible groups of students based on needs and in differentiating instructional plans.

Teachers also use performance tasks each quarter (2 district created, 2 teacher created) to track student growth across multiple content areas. These are graded by teachers using student-friendly rubrics. Teachers also use pre- and post- assessment tests to measure student learning and to see if there is a need for remediation or acceleration. Teachers also create and use CCSS aligned unit assessments that mirror portions of the PARCC in format and complexity to better build student stamina and understanding of complex question types.

The school values transparency in data and keeps students, parents and the community informed on instructional practices and student learning. All students learn about growth Mindsets and goal setting. Teachers work one-on-one with students to set meaningful and obtainable goals, while students in turn describe actions they will take to reach their goals. Students are also encouraged to make non-academic goals such as making new friends or learning a new skill. This allows students to focus on more than just scores.

Student level data is provided to parents with clear descriptors and explanations. Teachers and school leaders also do school-wide presentations on NWEA data and a larger State of the School Address twice each year. These open forums serve as public benchmarks of the school’s work and as an opportunity to get feedback from all current stakeholders.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Skinner North Classical School emphasizes the importance of a positive school environment for students and staff. Happy, engaged and motivated teachers are able to better promote and encourage the same attributes in their students. This starts with the creation of a school culture that values and supports teachers.

When Skinner North first opened all of the policies, practices and beliefs were shaped through a collaboration between the principal and the founding teachers. This has resulted in a very grassroots feel. For instance, school administrators train and develop teacher leaders who take significant ownership over the school's instructional programs. Current teacher leaders facilitate all three professional learning communities: Literacy/Social Studies, Math and Science.

Teachers are also encouraged to seek out professional development and bring back new learnings to their peers. Internally, teachers lead workshops, coach and mentor peers, and lead the specials and special education departments. Staff members also serve as the sports coordinator, case manager and After School All Stars coordinator. Administrators support teachers through feedback cycles, coaching, mentoring, and resource allocation. Teachers know their opinions and ideas are valued and welcome.

Students, likewise, are engaged and motivated in many ways. Academically, students are provided with differentiated instruction and supports. They are challenged to explain their thinking, find supporting evidence for claims, and make use of technology, approach problems from different perspectives and grapple with real world issues and problems. They are encouraged to be active and collaborative learners, constantly questioning the world around them.

Socially and emotionally students are supported through the school's Responsive Classroom approach. Students are encouraged to fix their own mistakes, work with peers to reach compromises and shared understandings and learn to help and care for others.

Students, like teachers, are given meaningful ways in which to impact the school. For instance, students across grades 1-8 worked together to create our social contract, a set of school expectations and norms. Each class generated a list of ideas and representatives from each grade shared out with all 12 representatives. These students refined the list into the final norms and shared out in school-wide assemblies and in class presentations. This gave them true ownership of the school-wide expectations.

Other ways students' social and emotional needs are met include participating in student council, school-wide service-learning projects, and buddy classrooms (across grade level partnerships) and in other volunteer and leadership capacities.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Skinner North Classical School was born out of parent voice. This history, combined with the principal's prior experiences in a community school setting, has led to a very open door environment in which parents are welcomed and valued. As the school has grown so too have the range of communication and engagement strategies used.

Parents receive newsletters, calls and emails from teachers and school leaders. The school website and twitter page are also frequently updated. The school offers a plethora of events to bring parents and community members into the school, including: drama and music performances, content area and special event nights, parent/teacher coffee events each semester, various outings, an international fest, an end-of-year celebration and a summer picnic.

Communication at Skinner North is not only outbound. The school solicits feedback and collaboration through a variety of venues and means. Parent surveys, workshops and committees occur regularly at Skinner North. The Local School Council (made of 6 parents, 2 community members, and 3 staff members)

is responsible for evaluating the principal, monitoring budget and the continuous improvement work plan (CIWP). It meets monthly and has 4 committees that are for parents and staff. These are: principal evaluation, CIWP, Health/Wellness and Community/Communications. These functions are directly linked to and aligned to how the school achieves and measures progress and success.

In addition to the LSC which is more akin to a governing body, the school has a Diversity Committee, which helps to celebrate all families, and a robust Friends of Skinner North organization, which is focused on social events, community building, and fundraising. The FoSN Executive Committee and the school principal work together to determine budget needs that are aligned to the school Improvement plan. Past focus areas have been the purchase of chrome books, art programming and science materials. This organization also helps enhance the climate and culture of the school through family oriented activities and events.

Other partnerships Skinner North has had include local businesses, community groups, universities and government agencies, such as Loyola University, the Chicago Housing Authority and park district. Each of which has helped to expand offerings and/or services to students and families.

3. Professional Development:

Skinner North has a thoughtful and robust professional development plan. Each year the school's Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) comprised of teacher leaders determines and sets a scope and sequence for the year. In broad terms the ILT includes the Literacy/Social Studies, Math and Science PLC chairs, the specials and special education department chairs, the school counselor/case manager, and the health/wellness leads as well as both school administrators. Each member of the ILT is responsible for facilitating the implementation of part of the school's continuous improvement work plan and reporting back on progress. This includes creating and monitoring milestones that the ILT and Local School Council (LSC) monitor.

While there are few full professional development days on the district calendar, Skinner North has created a unique way to provide job-embedded professional development. Each quarter teachers are provided with grade-level release days. During each of these days, grade cycles of teachers are freed to analyze data, review student work samples, create and modify units and assessments and collaborate with peers. PLC days are also provided in a similar manner to allow for more frequent meetings. This work is carried over into weekly grade level meetings, as each grade band has a common preparation period daily.

ILT members also serve as mentors to new teachers and coaches to peers. In addition to this work, teachers are encouraged to participate at the network and district level in Teacher Leader Institutes and to share knowledge across schools. Skinner North also does four thematic sets of school-rounds (or walk-throughs) each year. The first focusing on climate/culture and the other three aligned to the PLCs. Other schools are invited to send teachers to these days as well.

The school principal has mentored other school leaders and interns including the current assistant principal. The two school leaders work in tandem and are very collaborative. They also serve on a professional development team for Network 4 (which includes nearly 40 CPS schools) that coordinates and provides workshops for school principals and assistant principals. Both administrators at Skinner North are part of the Urban Educational Leadership Doctoral program at UIC. The principal having graduated and the assistant principal completing her capstone currently. These experiences have helped both be reflective leaders who are focused on improving student achievement and meaningful school improvement.

4. School Leadership:

Skinner North thrives on collaboration and the school exemplifies a shared leadership approach. The school principal and assistant principal are humble, caring and focused on providing students with the best possible experiences. They are committed to student growth in terms of, not only academic performance, but socially and emotionally as well.

Collaboration and communication are also cornerstones of Skinner North. The school leadership team openly empowers teachers to make decisions and carry out implementation while being provided feedback,

guidance and assistance. The main criteria being that the work is aligned to the Continuous Improvement Work Plan (CIWP), which supports student growth and development.

The school leaders' roles include the creation and ongoing implementation of: a school improvement plan, robust curricular offerings, budget, staffing plan, professional development scope and sequence, and master schedule. To do this, they created a unified and well-functioning Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) that carries out elements of many of these areas. In addition, the school principal and assistant principal are ambassadors of the school's climate and culture and work with students, parents and teachers. They work to troubleshoot any issues, look for areas of growth (as well as areas of celebration), and to find new opportunities and partnerships for the school and the students it serves.

Leadership roles at Skinner North also extend to parents and community members who serve on the Local School Council (LSC) and Friends of Skinner North (FoSN) organization. These stakeholders help to review priorities, provide feedback and input, marshal resources, and promote the school's climate and culture through events and activities for students and their families. Their input and work are both coordinated with school staff and are valued as they enrich the larger school community.

Leadership roles are also evident amongst students at Skinner North. The Student Council, service-learning group, and the student-led creation of the social contract are all examples of student leadership in action at Skinner North. For example, this year, the Student Council has worked to change lunch and recess policies and procedures, to speed up transitions and provide more options in indoor and outdoor activities. They have worked mindfully, in conjunction with adults to impact these changes.

Overall Skinner North is not a school in which stakeholders can sit passively by. The school principal and assistant principal work closely with students, teachers and staff to run a community-minded school.

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The most influential practice that sets Skinner North Classical School apart from other high-performing schools is a constant and prevalent focus on the social and emotional needs of students. Skinner North was founded with the goal of creating well-rounded and adjusted students who could make positive impacts as both students and young adults. This aim was paired with the emphasis on a humanities based curriculum that is CCSS aligned.

The social and emotional focus at Skinner North is reflected in everyday practices that include: Responsive Classroom language and structures, morning meetings, advisory periods, and explicit social instruction as a part of Second Step programs. These approaches allow teachers and staff to guide students in their development and growth as individuals, not just in academic areas.

These practices are essential and impact all aspects of the school's climate and culture. Teachers are coached and mentored in Responsive Classroom language. They also model strategies for peers and participate in ongoing professional development during the summer and school-year focused on these areas.

The school's Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) also conducts walk-throughs focused on social and emotional practices to monitor the school's climate and culture. Observable evidence includes the use of Responsive Classroom structures, and the development of collaboratively-minded, student-centered classrooms. Staff work to identify trends and create action items as well as share "Warm Fuzzies" highlighting best and current practices.

Another part of these social and emotional practices involve building a great degree of internal motivation in students. The school does not provide students with accolades for meeting expected criteria and behaviors. There are no perfect attendance awards and no Honor Roll lists. Instead, teachers guide students in goal setting and in making meaningful contributions to classroom communities.

Students can not earn trinkets or rewards for good behavior. Likewise, when they make a mistake or violate a school expectation, there is no arbitrary detention system; instead there is a focus on natural and logical consequences. Students repair damage they have done (physical, or emotional) and strive to repair the relationships they may have damaged. For instance, if a student rips up a peer's paper he/she will need to apologize and repair the situation. This might mean rewriting the work, taping it back together or helping to write a new paper. It is for the students to work out collaboratively with adult supports as needed.