

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Dr. Elaine Middlekauff

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

Official School Name Stevens T. Mason Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1640 Vernier Road

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

City Grosse Pointe Woods State MI Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 48236-1544

County Wayne County

Telephone (313) 432-4400 Fax (313) 432-4402

Web site/URL
http://gpschools.schoolwires.net/gpmason E-mail elaine.middlekauff@gpschools.org

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, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Gary Niehaus E-mail Gary.Niehaus@gpschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Grosse Pointe Public Schools Tel. (313) 432-3000

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 Mrs. Judy Gafa
(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):
- 9 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 3 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 2 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 14 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	25	18	43
1	20	20	40
2	32	17	49
3	22	25	47
4	25	23	48
5	36	34	70
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	160	137	297

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 3 % Asian
 - 16 % Black or African American
 - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 75 % White
 - 3 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

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

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	10
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	6
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	16
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	294
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.054
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	5

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 4 %
13 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Arabic, Bengali, Bisaya, Chinese, Dutch, Spanish, Tigrigna

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 22 %
Total number students who qualify: 66

8. Students receiving special education services: 18 %
54 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>8</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>3</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>6</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>34</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Mental Retardation | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>2</u> Developmentally Delayed |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 19
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	1
Classroom teachers	13
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	8
Paraprofessionals	5
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 23:1

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	96%	96%	96%	96%	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.

Promote innovation in teaching and learning, while maximizing potential, embracing a global community, ensuring every student has the academic, and social emotional skills for success.

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

PART III – SUMMARY

Stevens T. Mason Elementary School is located in Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan; a close-knit community nestled beside Lake St. Clair, ten miles northeast of downtown Detroit. Grosse Pointe Woods is one of five Grosse Pointe municipalities, comprising one school district with a renowned tradition of academic excellence. The development of our community and school district is closely entwined with the history and settlement of Detroit.

Named after the first governor of Michigan, Stevens T. Mason Elementary School opened in 1929 with 99 children and 6 teachers. Our historic building, with its rich heritage and community traditions, remains a source of pride for Mason families, who span generations in attendance at our school. Well attended Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) monthly family events and our local business partnerships attest to strong community ties. Uniquely, the majority of our teachers graduated from our district and returned here to teach and raise their families.

Mason is a “walking” neighborhood school, now welcoming 300 students daily. Over the last five years, the racial and socioeconomic diversity among our students has grown. Today, almost 25% of our children represent racial minorities. Approximately 20% of students qualify for federal breakfast and lunch programs. Students who receive special education services thrive in our inclusive setting.

We attribute our success to strong family partnerships stemming from a shared love for our children, alongside rigorous academic and behavioral standards. Our collective commitment to “each and every child, each and every day” ensures everyone is respected, nurtured, and valued. Greeting students by name, actively listening to their personal stories, and knowing their families creates a culturally sensitive, secure environment for learning and academic risk taking.

Providing quality differentiated instruction has been a district hallmark for over twenty years. Teachers utilize knowledge of their students, coupled with assessment data, to plan instruction for the entire spectrum of abilities and interests. In collaboration with classroom teachers, our Response to Intervention (RTI) team provides additional instruction. The team includes a Reading Specialist, Title I teacher, English Language Learner (ELL) and Special Education staff, and related arts specialists. Above grade level extension activities maximize the potential of high achieving students. Teachers become personal coaches and cheerleaders, encouraging students to persevere with Carol Dweck’s “growth mindset” when faced with a skill they have not “yet” mastered.

Dedicated time for purposeful collaboration guides teaching and learning. Block scheduling specials classes guarantees daily common planning time for grade level teachers. During weekly late start Mondays, our Professional Learning Communities (PLC) direct school improvement, address technology needs, and guide Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) and RTI. Staff participation in multiple professional development activities and conferences aligns with school and district goals.

Our PBIS “Mason’s Best” program is funded by a county school grant. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, students recite our Mason pledge: “I will do my best to be my best. I will be respectful, I will be responsible, I will always be safe. I will show my Mason pride.” This promotes student empathy and builds personal accountability within classroom learning communities. Our system acknowledges positive behavior changes throughout every student’s day. Students select their own reward activities for classroom compliment parties.

Our students are also 21st century digital learners, equipped to chart and document their own learning. With shared vision and leadership, and financial support from our PTO, Title I funds, and grants from the Grosse Pointe Foundation for Public Education, we increased our available technology (SMARTBoards, Apple TVs, classroom computers, a computer lab, and mobile options, including 45 iPads and 30 Chromebooks). By infusing technology into daily instruction, we expand student learning opportunities.

Multiple opportunities for K-5 students are offered to promote social and leadership skills including: Student

Council, Safety and Service Squad, Recycling Crew, Green Team, Video Announcements, Choir, Honors Band and Orchestra, Special Education Peer Pals, exercise clubs, and enrichment yoga and art classes. Mason is home to active Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops.

Part of students' character development is responding to the needs of others. Our students have: collected canned goods for Gleaners Food Bank, donated pajamas for Cozy Kids, raised money for Wigs for Kids, Jumped Rope for Heart, donated supplies to a local animal shelter, adopted animals at the Detroit Zoo, joined the Great Kindness Challenge by creating placemats for local assisted living residents, and donated bottled water to school children in Flint, Michigan. Mason earned Michigan "Evergreen School" status in recognition of students' Green Team initiatives.

Designated as a Reward School and rated in the top 10% of Michigan elementary schools, we are proud of our caring learning environment that celebrates our students' growth and achievements. As part of the greater school district and community, we ensure students have the social, academic, and critical problem-solving skills to succeed in a global society.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Grosse Pointe Public School System’s curricula are aligned to the Common Core Standards in Language Arts and Mathematics and to State Standards in other core content areas. The district has adopted an integrated approach to language arts instruction recognizing the interdependence of reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Teachers devote a minimum of ninety minutes daily to language arts instruction. Reading is taught with a workshop model, utilizing the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) units developed by Oakland Schools, combined with resources from Lucy Calkins, Cafe and Daily 5, RAZ-Kids and Reading A-Z. Our balanced approach to reading instruction includes whole group mini lessons with explicit instruction and modeling, independent reading of self selected “just right books,” guided reading groups to practice specific reading strategies, and conferencing with individual students and book clubs.

The workshop model promotes intentional differentiation for students at all reading levels. Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessments and formative data gathered from small group activities and conferences drive teacher instruction. Students are taught in their zone of proximal development for optimal progress. Supplemental materials from the Making Meaning program introduce common vocabulary and structure partner discourse. Additionally, teachers ensure all students practice comprehension strategies that facilitate close reading of complex text, and emphasize nonfiction reading skills to accomplish the goals of the Common Core.

Teachers provide daily writing instruction accompanied by spelling, grammar, and vocabulary exercises. The Units of Study for Writing compliment our Reading units. The Grosse Pointe Writing Assessment rubric provides formative data to facilitate differentiation. Mini-lessons and guided practice elicit student discourse and promote higher-level thinking including synthesizing, analyzing, and critiquing writing. Unit activities culminate with students producing informational, opinion, persuasive, and narrative writing pieces. Writing across the curriculum is accomplished through math and science notebooks, responses to literature, and research reports. Grammar skills are embedded in writing units. Spelling skills are mastered with practice using Words Their Way, FAST spelling, and Wordly Wise.

Teachers spend sixty minutes daily in Common Core math instruction using Chicago Everyday Mathematics in grades K-5, a spiraled program with concepts and skills revisited in various contexts, accompanied by differentiated activities above and below current grade materials. Using a workshop model, teachers present whole group mini-lessons followed by structured small group time. Math reviews, practice, and extensions correspond to the range of students’ skills. Rotational center activities include hands-on practice, math games, independent practice, and technology resources: FASTT math builds fact fluency, IXL and Front Row support skill mastery, and Think Through Math expands problem solving skills.

Full Option Science System (FOSS) and Delta Science Modules (DSM III) lay the foundation for our inquiry-based science instruction. Teachers facilitate students’ exploration and investigation of life, physical, and earth science concepts through hands-on activities, experiments and self-selected projects. From hatching chicks to designing controlled experiments that explore the impact of variables, our student scientists are highly engaged learners. Discovery Education videos bring science concepts to life. Science A-Z aligns with FOSS, offering leveled literature and resources that deepen conceptual understanding. A district committee is currently aligning our curriculum, instruction, and resources with the Next Generation Science Standards.

The Social Studies curriculum is based upon Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations and The Michigan Citizenship Collaborative Curriculum (MC3). MC3 units utilize multiple instructional approaches and modalities to promote student engagement and encourage collaborative and substantive conversations to strengthen their knowledge. Using an inquiry based approach, students study geography, civics and government, economics, and history through primary and secondary sources, leveled nonfiction text,

websites, and videos. Students add relevance to their studies by creating mini-societies, performing living museums of famous Michiganders, and taking field trips to community businesses and historical sites, the Museum of Natural History, and the state capitol building. Time for Kids and Scholastic News magazines expand students' understanding of current events.

RTI, reteach and retest, and project based learning address a continuum of student skills below and above grade level. Intentional cross curricular connections generate deeper critical and creative thinking, expand problem solving skills, create greater cultural awareness among students, and focus their lens on the interdependence of our world.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Grosse Pointe Public Schools has a long tradition of educating the whole child as an integral component of an enriched education. Our district uses Dr. Michael Rettig's Block Scheduling model for specials classes. By dividing the school day into six equal blocks of time, our students receive a 45 minute specials class daily, taught by specialists in that area. All K-5 students experience art, music, and physical education. Library/media is taught to grades K-2 and rotated with Spanish for grades 3-5. All students receive computer education. Fifth graders are offered an elective instrumental class, which meets twice a week for 45 minutes.

The K-5 visual arts curriculum consists of critical analysis, art history, aesthetics and creative expression. The artistic environment develops awareness and appreciation of both past and present, and includes aspects of multi-cultural heritage. Students gain an appreciation of major artists, analyze and interpret visual statements, develop personal judgments, learn artistic techniques, and put creative interpretations of their ideas into concrete forms. Individual student portfolios house a progression of projects and papers inviting self assessments. Hallway displays of student artwork showcase the range of skills and creativity with which students enthusiastically approach each unit of study.

Our general music curriculum develops knowledge and skills in music performance, music theory, and music appreciation. Students in grades 4-5 frequently join our enrichment choir to work on advanced singing and choreography, and are well represented in the district's Summer Select Choir. Mason's entertaining concerts feature culturally and stylistically diverse music performed by heterogeneous groups of students utilizing speaking roles, dancing, solos and ensembles.

The elective instrumental program for fifth grade students offers instruction in woodwinds, brass, and string instruments. Fifth graders join secondary instrumental students in special district-wide concerts, highlighting the vertical alignment of skills. More advanced students are invited to join our extracurricular Honors Band and Orchestra. The culminating elementary concert highlights students' mastery of skills with selections featuring each instrument family, as well as voluntary solos and ensembles.

The physical education program strives to teach children, regardless of ability, the value of physical activity. The comprehensive curriculum includes motor skills, movement patterns, fitness, value of safety and rules, cooperation, teamwork and good sportsmanship, while emphasizing the importance of maintaining an active, healthy lifestyle. Our Walk to School and Jump Rope for Heart programs contribute to our shared healthy goals. Field Day generates school wide enthusiasm for a day filled with structured activities. Fifth graders guide kindergartners' participation in this end of the year celebration. Students learn recess games, current dances, and introductory sports skills to promote engagement in physical activity beyond the school day.

Students in grades 3-5 receive Spanish instruction for half of each semester, where they develop listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, as well as an appreciation for the culture of Spanish speaking countries. Common expressions, vocabulary and grammar usage are presented at the novice level. Our Spanish curriculum initiates language proficiency through students communicating about themselves and their families. To lay the foundation for cultural understanding, students identify basic aspects of Hispanic culture and compare them with their own.

The Library/Media Program is based on the belief that informational literacy is fundamental to successful

lifelong learning. A love of reading and appreciation of books is acquired through read aloud, book talks, and author/genre studies. Students learn how to select and locate fiction and nonfiction texts from the library's extensive collection. Learning research skills involves locating information from print and digital sources, evaluating and analyzing information to support research, and demonstrating the ethical responsibility of authorship.

The purpose of the computer education curriculum is to promote the integration of technology throughout the educational process, using directed, independent, and cooperative activities. Teachers begin by guiding students' familiarity with computer keyboard functions to navigate the district website. As skills develop, students work independently and collaboratively to research, design, and develop digital presentations. We thoughtfully embed technology into daily teaching and learning through Google Apps for Education, and a plethora of educational apps and resources.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Teachers skillfully differentiate their instruction to meet the individual needs of our learners. Students actively participate in large group lessons, structured small group practice, cooperative partnerships, tiered center activities, challenging projects, and intensive individual instruction as part of the language arts and math workshops. Teachers use Depth of Knowledge to build Common Core Content skills, focusing on critical and creative thinking and problem solving. Students benefit from Visible Thinking strategies. Documenting students' wonderings, reasonings, connections and reflections links "deeper thinking" to substantive learning.

Daily use of technological tools (Interactive SMARTBoards, Apple TVs, computers, mobile devices) along with websites, computer programs, and apps engage our students in their own learning. Raz-Kids, Reading A-Z and a variety of apps increase students' skills in reading comprehension. FAST Math, IXL, Front Row, i-Ready, and Think Through Math, offer multiple paths to improved computational and problem solving skills.

Genius Hour, Ben Bache's Project Based weekly warm-ups, Innovation Day, student selected research topics, and technology presentations extend learning. Students working above grade level are clustered with learning partners to read complex text, build advanced math skills, and explore concepts in greater depth.

Fountas and Pinnell Assessment data qualifies students for reading support. Our full time reading specialist meets with students in grades K-2 for daily intervention. Service for students in grades 3-5 averages three days per week. Instruction using Steve Tatum's research based Fundamental Applications for Successful Teaching (F.A.S.T). Reading Intervention increases students' phonemic skills, fluency, and comprehension.

Our halftime Title I teacher provides math support for students in grades 2-5 with assessment scores below 30%. Intervention sessions are divided between intensive instruction and utilizing the i-Ready math program. Title I supports a weekly after-school Homework Club, with two teacher supervisors assisted by Junior National Honor Society students, providing additional one on one skills practice and support.

Our Tier 2 team includes a unique blend of content specialists: three instrumental music teachers, a physical education teacher, and a Spanish teacher. Cross-curricular connections, use of movement and brain research, and cultural instruction have strengthened students' skills and engagement.

Our General Education Student Support System (GES3) team (school psychologist, social worker, reading specialist, speech pathologist, Title I teacher, and Resource Room teacher) meets monthly with classroom teachers to discuss academic interventions for struggling students. After reviewing data, the team may consider programming support through special education services.

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

Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-Step) was first administered to students in grades 3-5 in 2015. Mason assessment results in Reading and Math, primarily above the 90th percentile, averaged 12% above our competitive district, and 40% above state scores. With subgroup data too small to analyze, individual student scores determined supports and interventions. For the 2016 M-Step, only fifth graders have a Language Arts performance task. Consequently, teachers focused explicit instruction and student practice on locating relevant details and evidence within complex texts. Additional writing practice in comparative, informational topics using exemplar texts has been provided. Students demonstrated proficiency in math concepts but performance tasks were challenging. Teachers now model strategies for multi-step problems, providing students with practice creating detailed written solutions.

Northwest Evaluation Association's (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) is administered to grades 1-5 three times a year, and used as a universal screener for progress monitoring student growth. Individual student, class, and strand data are analyzed collaboratively by a grade level and administrative team for RTI and advanced instruction. Both teachers and students carefully monitor individual growth goals.

Our 2015 NWEA scores continue to be well above test norms, with higher scores in math than reading. Reading support was reviewed to reduce a performance gap for boys in second grade reading. Data trend analysis is integral to refining school improvement strategies and research based interventions.

Fountas and Pinnell Reading Assessment is administered three times a year to evaluate students' instructional levels. This data, combined with NWEA scores, qualifies students for Tier 2 reading support. NWEA data also qualifies students for Tier 2 Title I math instructional support.

Teachers collect formative data through Grosse Pointe Writing Assessments, unit tests, workshop conferences notes, rubrics, exit slips, and student work samples to make immediate instructional decisions and design student interventions. When students lack mastery, teachers reteach and retest.

Teachers collaborate frequently with parents regarding student progress. Parents receive their child's comprehensive achievement report which interprets district and state assessment results. Fall student-involved parent conferences focus on goal setting. Work samples, data notebooks, portfolios and report card data are foundations for spring conference conversations. Report cards, aligned to the Common Core, are distributed in December, March and June.

Mason's assessment results are included in our annual report, shared with parents and the community, and posted on our school website. Our data is reflected in Mason's State Report Card.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

What makes Mason an amazing elementary school is the passion with which we capture the minds and hearts of our students!

We love our students first, and teach them second. Mason teachers' enthusiasm, positive energy, and unparalleled dedication to building caring, personalized relationships with students and their families is lauded by our parents. As we welcome students daily, we take time to inquire about their families, notice even the smallest details, and ensure each child feels valued. Teachers build relationships and classroom communities with high expectations that recognize each student's strengths, abilities, needs, and interests. This treasured knowledge is respectfully imparted to others, deepening our collective responsibility for our students' academic, social, and emotional successes. Student work is proudly showcased in every corner of our building. Students' lockers feature their latest writing samples, projects, and photographs, deepening connections between staff and students.

These rich relationships foster student achievement and minimize attendance and behavioral issues. Students witness staff interactions that model empathy, mutual respect, and compassion -- characteristics of a close-knit family. Strong connections between staff and students increase the effectiveness of our PBIS "Mason's Best" program. Common behavior expectations empower all staff to recognize positive choices by complimenting a class or acknowledging an individual student's behavior.

Teachers use their extensive knowledge of student interests to plan motivational activities which celebrate a love of learning and build a sense of community: Kindergarten Cafe, Bookmark Contest, spirit days, Halloween Parade, Reindeer Relay Games, Chinese New Year celebration, Lego Creation Day, Michigan Tastefest, Ancient Greece Research Day, March is Reading Month activities, Mystery Guest Readers, Reader's Theater, Arbor Day Poster Contest, Spring Author's Tea, Passion Project Presentations, You Be the Chemist Challenge, Living Museum, Global Read-Aloud, 5th grade Environmental Camp, 5th grade promotion celebration, and a Talent Show.

Beyond our professional commitment, is an indescribable bond we feel as a staff family. Our shared laughter, tears, joys, and challenges bring us together. Staff teams organize monthly luncheons filled with comradery. Our social committee coordinates milestone celebrations and extends sympathy. We organize meals for staff with medical leaves, health challenges, and bereavement. Additionally, the staff regularly donates gift cards to support our families in need. Teachers receive frequent appreciation meals and gifts from the PTO and principal. Mason's cohesive staff treats one another as family, collaborating and appreciating everyone's efforts on behalf of students and each other.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Mason's warm, welcoming culture envelops our families and the entire community. We attribute our high student achievement to our common expectations and the powerful relationships between students, staff, families, and the community as a whole.

We ensure communication flows daily between home and school through phone calls, emails, websites, newsletters, e-blasts, and Remind text messages. Spontaneous exchanges occur between teachers and parents during student arrival and dismissal. Students' home folders and assignment notebooks, with space for parent comments, promote accountability. Curriculum and Math Nights empower families to support and extend learning at home. Parents are informed of reading and math support programs available as academic interventions. Collaborative team meetings with parents focus on identified needs and services.

Parents, grandparents, and community volunteers are present daily in our hallways and classrooms. Dedicated volunteers assist students with foundation and enrichment skills. "Lunch and Learn" is a recess option for students to practice skills or receive support to complete assignments.

PTO sponsors monthly events that strengthen the bonds between our staff, students, families, and broad community. Events include Family Welcome, Fun Run, Fall Fest, restaurant nights, book fair, holiday breakfast, Red Cross Blood Drive, parent/special person and child dances, Tin Can Auction, and annual picnics.

PTO fundraising events draw volunteers from a large group of former Mason families. It's common to see students, now in middle or high school, return to run a carnival game or pass out hot dogs at our Spring Fest. Contributions and donations from local businesses are vital to the success of these fundraisers. Profits support student achievement through purchasing technology equipment and licenses, library books, current event magazines, and assignment notebooks. Additionally, funds are allocated to student scholarships, assemblies, recess and playground equipment, and field trips.

We launch our school year with the One Book, One School family reading project, underwritten by community businesses for four years. Providing one copy of the selected book for every family develops family routines and conversation around reading and cross curricular themes. This year, the number of area business sponsors doubled and generous individuals contributed via a Go Fund Me page.

Mason families access The Family Center of Grosse Pointe and Harper Woods for support in raising healthy children and navigating educational transitions. Mason also houses before/after school care, the annual district ELL family dinner, and hosted the 2015 Community Leaders Luncheon attended by over 80 heads of organizations.

3. Professional Development:

Our professional development activities are cohesively anchored in improving student growth and achievement. Mason teachers and our principal collaborate to navigate a rigorous curriculum, analyze student data, implement strategies to increase student engagement, and embed technology into the highest quality differentiated instruction. To build our capacity in using technology for teaching and learning, a team of teachers and the principal annually attend the Michigan Association for Computer Users in Learning (MACUL) Conference.

The district's strategic plan is the foundation for our professional development activities. Key instructional components are aligned to improved student learning (Target Goals, Increased Student Engagement, and Checking for Understanding). Instructional rounds within our school are a powerful tool for generating reflective, substantive conversations about instructional practices around district goals. Last year's PLC book study of Total Participation Techniques by Persida Himmele and William Himmele, diversified our student engagement strategies.

The district sponsors two full days of professional learning, featuring numerous faculty-led sessions related to instructional innovations and technology in teaching and learning. The second professional development day this year utilized NWEA trainers to maximize effective data usage to drive instruction.

Expertise of Mason's of thirteen classroom teachers is evident by their district curriculum leadership roles. Four teachers are Grade Level Content Leaders. They meet quarterly with colleagues to discuss curricular practices. Strategies for culturally responsive instruction is the focus of continued district conversations. A Mason teacher co-facilitated the district's Grosse Pointe Writing Assessment review. Five Mason teachers participated in the pilot of the writing rubric. Seven staff presented their practices in district workshop sessions on Visible Thinking, Data Notebooks, Reading and Writing Workshop, Interactive SMARTBoards, Technology Tools for Instruction, Brain Breaks, and Special Education supports. Team attendance at Michigan Reading Association (MRA) results in sharing best practices in language arts instruction. Our staff receives PBIS program training, resources for Tier 2 intervention strategies, and progress monitoring tools through county workshops.

Staff meeting presentations prompt thoughtful conversations about practices impacting student learning: Common Core Content Standards, Formative Assessment, Ron Ritchhart's Visible Thinking, John Hattie's

Visible Learning, Data Notebooks, Carol Dweck's Growth Mindset, and Mindfulness.

Professional Learning Communities provide staff time to analyze student data, determine enrichments and interventions, evaluate school improvement plans, and examine technological resources for staff and students. Mason teachers individually and collectively build capacity by engaging in research opportunities, and leveraging social media to collaborate beyond our district and community.

4. School Leadership:

The strength of our philosophy of distributive leadership and shared decision making is our collective responsibility for student achievement. Every staff member holds a leadership role and responsibility for student success. Central to every decision is the welfare and achievement of our students. The success of our decision process is attributed to the deep and diverse expertise of staff members building consensus in an environment of mutual respect and trust.

Fostering teacher leadership is a primary goal of our principal, resulting in a synergy of expertise, talents and passions. All student activities are sponsored by staff members. The School Improvement Leadership team, comprised of all 13 classroom teachers, builds leadership capacity and collaborative decision making. The PBIS team, intervention teams, and School Improvement committees are examples where decisions emerge from team consensus. Student behavior expectations, academic interventions, and School Improvement strategies presented by team leaders are discussed and implemented. The One Book One School team has total responsibility for the reading program. Individual teachers assume a myriad of responsibilities, from selecting school wide assemblies to organizing March is Reading Month activities. Mason staff have strong representation on district committees, serving as co-chairs of the writing assessment and math curriculum reviews. Three staff members lead elementary subject departments. Two are members of the Galileo Teacher Leadership Consortium.

As an instructional leader, our principal communicates high expectations for everyone. She respects, supports, and trusts teachers to make reflective instructional decisions. She reviews SMART goals and collaboratively analyzes student data with teacher teams. To promote continuous instructional improvement, technology integration was initiated by teachers. Their attendance at MACUL, thoughtful research and recommendations, collaborative lesson planning, and collegial professional development are responsible for innovative teaching and digital learning opportunities for students.

Our principal's visible leadership models our commitment to building strong relationships. Supervising our parking lot, greeting students daily, conversing with staff and parents, visiting classrooms, attending student functions, and writing detailed positive comments on students' report cards, creates meaningful connections.

Supportive leadership ensures all voices are heard and valued, creating leadership opportunities for parents and students as members of our school community. Through our PTO, parents serve on building and district committees for School Improvement, Title I, and hiring processes. Students' leadership occurs through our Student Council, Green Team, and Safety/Service Squad. Our unified approach to shared leadership and decision making creates a successful learning environment for all.

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The most influential practice for staff and students has been infusing technology into teaching and learning, resulting in high levels of achievement and growth for all students. By systematically embedding technology into our teaching, we differentiate to ensure our students' mastery of skills, facilitate collaboration, and increase student engagement in their own learning. All of our students benefit from personalized digital learning opportunities to build their 21st century skills.

Knowing curricular goals and the needs of our students, teachers strategically utilize tech tools to customize learning, providing resources for extensions and interventions. They use document cameras and interactive SMARTBoards to create engaging whole group lessons and structured small group practice. Apple TVs, Discovery Education video streaming, Google Apps for Education, virtual field trips, and augmented reality support our visual and auditory learners. Interactive whiteboards and iPads with drop and drag activities assist kinesthetic learners to connect their learning with physical movement.

Our math workshop model has been transformed by the prescriptive use of student programs such as FASTT Math (fact mastery), IXL, i-Ready, and Front Row (skill practice), Think Through Math (problem solving skills), and Khan Academy. These programs enable teachers to differentiate as well as monitor each student's mastery of skills. Our students eagerly access these programs at school and home to increase their skills, check their daily progress, and celebrate their success. The benefit of using targeted technology for differentiated student learning in math is reflected in consistently strong NWEA gain scores (target growth) over the last three years. A differential of 10% favoring our comparatively high math scores over reading scores occurs in Spring NWEA scores.

Noting the success of math workshop, and the increased technological skill and confidence of staff and students, systematically infusing technology into teaching and learning naturally extended to all content areas. Teachers have embraced technology as a tool to support all our digital learners as consumers and creators of knowledge. Daily logs of the computer lab, Chromebooks and iPads document student use for independent activities, cooperative partner and group projects. Reluctant readers seek online reading programs and hesitant speakers gain confidence when the focus is on their technological presentation rather than themselves. Advanced students act as peer coaches. Coding, Genius Hour, Passion Projects, Innovation Day, and Project Based Learning provide continuing opportunities for our 21st century learners to demonstrate content, communication, critical and creative thinking skills.