

U.S. Department of Education
2017 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 Ms. Kelly Dorman

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

Official School Name East Millsboro Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 29346 Iron Branch Road

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

City Millsboro State DE Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 19966-1199

County Sussex County

Telephone (302) 934-3222 Fax (302) 934-3227

Web site/URL http://www.irsd.net E-mail kelly.dorman@IRSD.k12.de.us

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 Mark Steele E-mail Mark.Steele@irsd.k12.de.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Indian River School District Tel. (302) 436-1000

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 Charles Bireley
(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. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2017 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. 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 2011 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: 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016.
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 has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.
12. 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 (2016-2017) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 8 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 3 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 2 High schools
 - 1 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, 2016 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	16	6	22
K	75	61	136
1	49	55	104
2	83	87	170
3	63	70	133
4	87	56	143
5	62	55	117
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	435	390	825

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 2 % Asian
 - 17 % Black or African American
 - 18 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 55 % White
 - 7 % 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 2015 – 2016 school year: 16%

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, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	77
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	48
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	125
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	771
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.162
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	16

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 14 %
113 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Spanish, Akan, Arabic, Turkish, Urdu, French, Chinese, Mandarin and Tagalog

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 57 %
Total number students who qualify: 487

8. Students receiving special education services: 14 %
115 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.

- 1 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 3 Emotional Disturbance
- 1 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 2 Orthopedic Impairment
- 15 Other Health Impaired
- 43 Specific Learning Disability
- 4 Speech or Language Impairment
- 1 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 2 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 43 Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5
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	3
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	51
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	7
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	13
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	8

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.

Required Information	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	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 2016.

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 X No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2008

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

We the staff of East Millsboro Elementary in partnership with parents and the community are committed to providing students with the behavioral and academic skills required to reason, communicate and fulfill their

responsibilities as world citizens. Our staff seeks to provide instruction that allows ALL students to realize their fullest potential. 'll of E.M.E.'s students with the support from the staff, parents and community will strive to become world citizens reaching their fullest potential. #LearningNeverStops;WeNeverQuit!

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

East Millsboro is located in a small, rural town in Millsboro, Delaware and is one of seven elementary schools within the Indian River School District. Our school and community embraces the challenge and goal of ensuring that all 825 of our students reach their fullest potential, becoming life-long learners who have the necessary skills needed to reason, communicate as well as master the skills needed to become productive citizens. East Millsboro defies odds with 57.2% of our school population qualifying for free/reduced meals and our 45% minority population. The local community consists of employment opportunities centered on the goods and services industry with major poultry companies representing the larger businesses located within the community. Over the years, the commitment of our community, parents and staff have contributed to the success of our school and to the increase in student achievement. Since the start of Delaware's School Rating system in 2003-2011, East Millsboro has received the rating of "Superior" due in part to the percentage of students who have met or exceeded the Delaware Standards. From 2012-2015, East Millsboro met Adequate Yearly Progress according to Delaware's Accountability System. In most recent years, Delaware has changed its accountability system and since its change East Millsboro has been recognized as a "Recognition School" in 2013, a "School of Continued Excellence" in 2014 and a "Reward School" in 2016. These awards recognize schools for their commitment to student growth and the percentage of students who are proficient or advanced as measured by standardized assessments in Reading, Math, Science and Social Studies. Engaging families and the community in student learning is recognized as important components for student success. East Millsboro has been recognized as a school community where parents, teachers and the community collaborate for the benefit of all students. East Millsboro works to maintain a positive atmosphere by having an open door policy where all members of the school community feel comfortable and welcome. Our Parent Teacher Organization is actively involved within our school and supports school initiatives and goals. Our PTO is part of the decision making process and helps to make decisions that will not only help to improve student learning but also recognize and celebrate student successes. We have created community partnerships. These partnerships help to support students' academic, social and emotional needs. We have a mentoring program, foster grandparents program and have also created partnerships with the American Legion, Kiwanis and Wilmington University. East Millsboro Elementary staff has been committed to helping all students to learn and grow as well as increase the level of student achievement. Over the last few years, we have taken the time to develop and strengthen our Professional Learning Communities in order to meet the needs of all students, whether students are on grade-level, below grade-level or above grade-level. Within our PLC's we focus efforts on designing lesson plans, rich in effective instructional strategies and best practices that meet the diverse needs of all students. East Millsboro's PLC's are focused on data through a PLC Data Process approach where common assessments are scored together as grade-level teams. This ensures that all students are assessed and scored with the same criteria and expectations as other students within the same grade-level. Once the data is collected and analyzed, our teachers collaborate to prioritize students' needs as well as design lessons and activities that address those needs. Our framework for lesson designs is the Learning Focused NextGen lesson planning format and within this lesson format, our teachers work to develop activities that include "Challenge" and "Struggle" activities. The "Challenge" activities that are planned require teachers to think about extending and refining the learning for those students, who according to the formative data, have met or mastered the standard, content or skill being addressed within the lesson. The activities for the "Challenge" require students to apply, problem solve and think critically. Another key component of the lesson planning is developing activities for those students who "Struggle." The activities planned help those students who, according to the formative data, are struggling to understand the standard, content or skill being taught. It is not uncommon to see teachers planning small group lessons that are differentiated to meet the needs of all students, whether the students need to be "challenged" or activities that help those students who may "struggle." The small groups are flexible and change according to the data that is collected throughout the student learning. At each PLC, you will find grade-levels collaborating to score common assessments, analyzing the data in order to make informed instructional decisions that meet the needs of all learners, helping all students to learn and grow. This approach has helped move teachers from being isolated within their own classroom to a community of collaborative learners, planning and working together for the benefit of all students.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

At East Millsboro Elementary, teachers are collaborating to plan English Language Arts lessons that are aligned to the Delaware Content Standards using the Benchmark Advance Curriculum. This is a balanced literacy program that is vertically aligned from Kindergarten to Fifth Grade where students are focused on reading, writing, listening and speaking as well as language instruction. Each Benchmark Unit has three weeks of instruction providing an intensive comprehension workshop that moves students from modeling and guided practice to independent application and transfer of strategies during independent practice. Within the three weeks of instruction for each of the different Units, there is a gradual release of comprehension instruction, allowing within week one for teachers to model and provide guided practice opportunities within the whole group instruction and the mini lessons which are designed to introduce students to the new skill, concept or standard. During small group instruction, students are applying the newly taught skill using anchor texts. In week two of instruction, the whole group instruction and mini lessons are focused on students reading more complex texts and closely reading those texts while applying text dependent strategies and then during small group instruction students continue to practice and apply the strategy using anchor texts that are leveled depending on students' needs. Then finally in week three of instruction, whole group instruction and mini lessons are focused on collaborative reading of more complex texts while building fluency and applying not only the skill that has been taught but also integrating previously taught skills. Small group instruction is now focused on students applying new and previously taught skills through Reader's Theater. Throughout the three weeks of instruction, students build foundational skills such as phonics, word study, and fluency in order to produce proficient readers. In addition, while engaged in closely reading texts, for multiple purposes, students annotate the text and are provided the opportunity to develop collaborative conversations using text evidence to support their thinking and ideas. In addition, there is also an opportunity for students to develop into writers by teaching the writing process and requiring the students to write to different and multiple sources. Response to Intervention or RTI, is an additional forty minutes of targeted instruction focused on specific reading skills. Students are grouped according to ability and either provided opportunities to extend their learning or provided interventions, to address areas needing improvement. In Mathematics, the Bridges Math Program has been implemented in all classrooms from Kindergarten through fifth grade. This program is fully aligned to the Delaware State Standards and focused on developing students' deep understanding of mathematical concepts, proficiency with key skills and provides students with the skills needed to solve complex problems. As teachers plan, there is whole group instruction, structured investigation and an opportunity for students to explore, providing an opportunity for students to develop their mathematical thinking and reasoning abilities. There are three key components of the Bridges Math Program and one is the visual models that help students to construct, understand and apply mathematical ideas and skills that are part of the core instruction. These visual models are introduced in Kindergarten and become increasingly more complex as students' progress throughout each grade-level. Another key component is Number Corners, which revolves around a classroom calendar, providing daily practice which introduce, reinforce and extend skills and concepts related to the standards within each grade-level. Each day, new pieces are added to the calendar, providing starting points for discussions and problem solving. Bridges Interventions, is used as part of the Math RTI process. During this small group opportunity, the instruction is targeted and students work with models and manipulatives to deepen their understanding of the standards and skills for the grade-level. Science standards are addressed with the use of the Smithsonian Project Science Kits. The use of the kits allow teachers to address the NextGen Science Standards through a hands-on approach, where students hypothesize and experiment to draw conclusions. Throughout the learning, students in Kindergarten through fifth grade, explore, investigate and experiment to test their hypothesis. Social Studies Standards are addressed and integrated into the English Language Arts Program, students are exposed to the Social Studies Standards through informational texts which require students to think about the world. In order to promote civic learning, students are required to complete Performance Tasks. These Performance Tasks require students to apply what they have learned to conduct research and think critically to solve real-world problems. Often students are seen in classrooms conducting research and then having classroom debates which require students to support their thinking with the research and evidence.

Early childhood education is important in building the foundational skills needed to be successful learners and at East Millsboro Elementary we have two early childhood programs. One is the traditional Pre-K, within this program four year olds are screened and must qualify because of language or developmental delays. The other program, Project VILLAGE, Verbally Intensive Literacy and Learning Activities for Growth in Education, is a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate early childhood program for economically challenged four year olds. Both programs provide students with the math and language readiness skills that will ensure their academic success in Kindergarten.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

East Millsboro Elementary students expand their learning in multiple formats including art, music, physical education and technology. Each one of these content areas have their own Content Standards which guide teachers to develop lessons that address those standards. All students from Kindergarten to fifth grade participate in each of these related arts program, one time per week. During this forty minute time period, students are able to apply newly acquired knowledge and demonstrate their knowledge by either creating an art project during art, performing a song in music or participating in a structured physical activity during physical education. During these particular classes, students learn to collaborate, strategize as well as work on the listening and speaking standards. During technology, students are taught how to navigate the internet safely as well as how to use various technology applications such as Schoology. Schoology is an online program where students are able to post various questions and/or responses and other students are able to respond to that post or build upon someone else's thoughts via technology, blending traditional learning with technology. In addition, students are taught how to conduct research, using multiple sources to form opinions or to gain knowledge. Along with these four classes, students also go to the library each week. One week, students check out books, fostering and encouraging a love for reading however the next week students are engaged in hands on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics or STEM activities. During these activities students are required to manipulate, problem solve and investigate using their knowledge of Science, Technology, Engineering or Math to solve problems and make sense of how the world works.

In addition, East Millsboro Elementary students have the opportunity to enroll in our Spanish Immersion Program, starting in Kindergarten. Spanish Immersion gives young learners the opportunity to acquire a second language in a developmentally appropriate format. Kindergarten students spend half of each school day learning in English and the other half of the day learning in Spanish. Each year, the program will continue to grow as we add a Spanish speaking teacher to each grade-level, through fifth grade. This will allow those students who enrolled into the Spanish Immersion Program to continue to learn the Spanish Language as students benefit from the instruction of two highly-qualified classroom teachers. The English-Speaking teacher will teach English Language Arts as well as select elements of science and social studies from the Indian River School District Curriculum and select elements of the Mathematics Program, all which are aligned to the Delaware State Standards. The Immersion-Language teacher will teach Language Arts for the immersion language, Mathematics based on the Delaware State Standards, science and portions of the social studies curriculum. World Language Immersion students follow the same standards-based curriculum in all content areas that non-immersion students would follow. In our fourth year of implementation, students are on a pathway to read, write, speak, and listen in another language while developing greater problem-solving skills as well as an enhanced understanding of their first language.

Identified students are also challenged in a gifted program called ExCEL, Exceptional Cognitive, and Enrichment Learning. This program is designed for students in grades four and five who demonstrate or who have the potential to demonstrate, superior intellectual abilities and academic aptitudes. The program provides a differentiated educational program in the area of general intellectual ability. Participating students engage in small group instruction that provides enrichment opportunities to foster the development of higher mental processes, independent study and problem solving. The program is designed to provide students with the opportunity work collaboratively in group discussions and activities that require them to interpret, apply, evaluate and think critically. Students are encouraged to conduct research and communicate their ideas using a variety of formats.

In addition, East Millsboro has an English Language Learner or ELL Program. This program is offered to

the 113 students whose primary language is not English. This pull-out program, links to the core Benchmark Advance Reading Curriculum. During this time, the content is previewed, with additional scaffolds and explicit language development. Students have access to shorter chunks of texts pulled from the core's complex text with enhanced visual supports as they continue to navigate the English language.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Assessment Data is what drives all instructional decisions and teacher planning at East Millsboro, whether it is introducing the new skill, concept or standard through whole group instruction or planning for the differentiated, small group instruction or whether teachers are planning for the Response to Intervention or RTI for either Reading or Math, which supports students in the learning process, whether they are on, above or below grade-level with specific, targeted instruction. As teachers' develop lessons using the Learning Focused Strategies NextGen lesson planning format, they begin with the end in mind. With this planning framework, teachers purposefully focus on how students will meet grade level standards, how they will increase the use and application of Higher Order Thinking, how to apply research-based and evidence-based strategies as well as how teachers will engage all students in the learning process and how they will assess students understanding throughout the learning. This distinct lesson format begins with teachers thinking about the standard or standards being addressed and then using the standard to develop the learning goal, which is established through unit and lesson essential questions. These essential questions (EQ's) are shared with students and allow students to remain focused on the goal for learning. EQ's are posted within the classroom and referenced throughout the different learning activities, keeping the learning goal as the focus for all learning activities. As teachers continue planning using the LFS NextGen framework, teachers plan activities that activate students learning, introduces key vocabulary as well as incorporates collaborative opportunities, in order to engage all students. Most learning activities begin with the introduction of the skill, content or standard being taught during whole group instruction. During this time, teachers are modeling, thinking a loud, providing students with the skills needed to think and apply independently. There is a gradual release, as the planning continues. Next, teachers purposely plan for the "We do and you do" portion of the learning process. The "We do" portion allows for a more guided approach as the class works through deepening their understanding of the content being taught and progressing towards the "You do," which requires students to apply the content or skill that was taught to problem solve and think critically independently. As students move throughout the different learning opportunities, various assessment prompts are planned, these assessment prompts allow students to demonstrate their depth of understanding throughout the learning process, not just at the end. Assessment prompts are formative in nature, these assessment prompts are quick and not graded, instead these assessment prompts allow teachers to collect data which inform future instructional decisions as well as help to form the groups for small group instruction. Within the framework for planning, teachers purposely plan activities for those students who need to be "challenged" and for those who may "struggle." Students participate in these activities during small group instruction, each small group is flexible depending on the student data from the assessment prompts, given to students at various points throughout the learning. Before students demonstrate their level of understanding on a summative assessment, students summarize their learning. This summarizing activity requires students to write or apply the newly acquired knowledge to problem solve or to think critically. Finally, a summative assessment is given to students, allowing students to demonstrate their depth of understanding at the end of the unit. Once the summative assessment is complete, teachers analyze the data, to plan for the "Re-Teach" opportunities, allowing for the needs of students to be addressed whether the students are on, above or below grade-level according to the assessment. With the blend of differentiated instruction and collaborative learning opportunities, students are active participants in the learning.

In addition to the Core Instruction which includes whole group and small group instruction for both reading and math, there is also an opportunity for students to receive targeted, skill specific instruction during Response to Intervention. In reading students receive an additional forty minutes of targeted instruction and in math, students receive an additional thirty minutes of targeted instruction. During this time, student data is used to form the groups as well as determine the focus for each of those small groups, allowing for the needs of all students to be met.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Creating a positive learning environment where both students and staff feel valued is vital to a school's success and growth. At East Millsboro we have an established Positive Behavior Support Plan that is used school-wide. This plan focuses on teaching the expectations for various areas throughout the building, providing students with examples and non-examples of appropriate behaviors and expectations. Students are acknowledged for following the expectations and can receive incentives for being responsible, respectful and ready. In addition, we have school-wide rules, there are six total. Each classroom introduces the six rules to students as well as the motions that go along with each of the rules, allowing all students to know the rules. The rules are also posted in all classrooms as well as throughout the hallways to remind students of the rules/expectations. In addition, a "Clip-Up, Clip-Down" classroom management system is used school-wide. With this behavior management plan, students start each day on "Ready to Learn" and have the opportunity to move up and down a behavior chart each day. If a student works hard and follows the expectations then he or she can move up the chart, allowing him or her to be acknowledged for their hard work and effort however if a student works his or her way down the chart, they have the opportunity to work hard and move back up the behavior chart. In order to promote and encourage a culture focused on learning and growth, East Millsboro has established incentives for both students and staff which encourage all those involved to be acknowledged for their efforts and successes. Each marking period, an awards assembly is held for each grade-level. This celebration acknowledges students for their academics, behavior and attendance. Each summer, East Millsboro team members are encouraged to read a book that is focused on the importance of building positive relationships. This past summer, the book "The Positive Dog" by Jon Gordon which focused on the power of positivity was read by all team members and was a great way to help support our motto that all students can and will learn in a positive learning environment. After reading the book, professional development and activities are developed that focus on the book and used throughout the year to build positive relationships. Teachers are celebrated at each Professional Development Faculty Meeting and on the weekly bulletin through a "Shout-Out" which acknowledges and emphasizes what is valued. In addition to "Shout-Outs" our teachers are part of our Instructional Leadership Team. This team is comprised of members of each of our grade-level teams as well as support staff. This team meets monthly to problem solve around topics such as scheduling, RTI, Positive Behavior Support as well as Professional Development opportunities to name a few. This team seeks input from their grade-level teams and then shares those ideas with the entire Instructional Leadership Team. This process allows all teachers to feel as though their ideas and opinions are valued and important to the both our students' growth as well as the school's growth as a whole. This process also allows everyone to feel part of the decision making process and that they are valued.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Engaging families and the community is vital to the success of all students. We have a variety of Parent/Family Nights each year. Parents are invited to attend various workshops about both reading and math. During these Family Nights, families attend sessions, which are student led at each grade-level. Students teach their families how to annotate a text in reading or how to use a particular math strategy to name a few. Within these learning opportunities, families leave with a make and take or a resource that they can use at home to support their child's learning. In addition, we provide support to our families through community outreach. At the start of the school year we deliver school supplies, visiting different communities to provide families with the appropriate supplies needed to start the school year. We had a bus driver donate their time and bus to drive staff members around to drop off school supplies to needy families. In addition, during the holidays we do our "Christmas Joy" project. We have local community members and business owners adopt families and supply these families with gifts and food for the holidays. We also have PTO Meetings. At PTO meetings information is shared and decisions are made that will help to improve student learning. Fund Raisers are done that allow us to supplement and support learning goals. A parent or community member is also invited to attend our Title 1 Meeting. During this meeting, we analyze school-wide data, discuss strengths and areas of improvement. The committee makes decisions about the upcoming school year. We also encourage both families and the community to engage in student

learning through our open houses at the beginning of the school year. This gives us the opportunity to share pertinent information with our families and inform families about our goals. In addition, teachers are required to have all parents come in for parent/teacher conferences each year. This allows families to stay informed about their child's progress in school. We have also created community partnerships. These partnerships help to support our students' academic and social needs. We have a mentoring program, foster grandparents program and have also created a partnership with Wilmington University. Each year we have Wilmington University student teacher interns for an entire school year. This provides these interns with an opportunity to learn and grow as well as will provide extra support to our students.

3. Professional Development:

The idea of being life-long learners and continually growing is part of the culture at East Millsboro Elementary. Each month, there are two faculty meetings which are considered Professional Learning Meetings because these meetings are designed to help our teachers to learn and grow professionally. The meetings are designed to provide professional development around a school or district-wide focus or topic. Each of our faculty meetings are designed using the LFS NextGen format, which is the model that our teachers use when planning their own lessons. An essential question is used to establish the goal, an activator, a teaching component, collaboration and discussion opportunities as well as an opportunity for teachers to summarize their learning. During this time, we try to provide staff members with the opportunity to discuss, reflect and analyze not only as a grade-level but to also use this as an opportunity to do cross grade-level articulation. As we plan, we hope to not only provide a valuable learning opportunity for teachers but also provide teachers with more tools for their instructional toolbox. One of our most recent Professional Development opportunities was around "Effective Discussion Techniques." Teacher leaders provided the professional development infusing discussion techniques, reading articles as well as technological resources to build a deeper understanding of the content. Teachers then worked together to revise an upcoming lesson plan and determined where they could implement one of the new discussion techniques into their lesson design. In addition, we recognize that teachers learn best from one another. Each year, teachers participate in at least three Learning Walk opportunities. Often times, we visit each classroom within the building or sometimes, we visit the grade-level above and below. The conversation around instruction both school-wide and at each grade-level has proven to benefit not only staff but our students as well. Team members discussed common vocabulary, what the standard looks like at each grade-level and the resources being used to address the standards in the two content areas. Staff members have been able to see the progression of the standard at each grade level and the importance of ensuring that the rigor is in place so that the activity does not look the same at each grade-level. The opportunities for collegial learning whether as a whole staff or within grade-levels allow our teachers to learn, share and talk about effective instructional strategies that help all students to be successful learners.

4. School Leadership:

As school leaders, we believe that all students can learn and that we will do whatever it takes to ensure that students have a rewarding school experience. We want teachers to feel supported as we work to ensure that students are learning and growing. As school leaders, we have a positive attitude and believe that if you establish clear expectations then both staff and students know what is expected. We believe that you should focus on the positive which helps to build confidence and it encourages others to do the same. We model what is expected, "leading by example." Learning Walks are used to support teachers, allowing us to acknowledge positive strategies being used within the classroom and it allows us to share ideas that will help improve student learning. Not only do we focus on the positive within the Learning Walks but we have also started to pose questions. The questions require staff to reflect on instruction. Learning Walks are used as tools to communicate with staff on effective teaching practices as well as opportunities to have staff reflect. Lesson Analysis and Summative Evaluations are used to have the staff reflect about their teaching practice. We use the evaluation process to talk with staff members about the progress made towards goals and any obstacles that might have impacted progress towards the established goals. Pre and Post Conferences concerning lesson analysis and summative evaluations allow for open dialogue with staff members about effective instructional strategies and student growth. Teachers are also expected to establish goals with students and this allows students to know what is expected of each of them whether it is building reading fluency or improving scores on Assessments or the DeSSA state-wide assessment.

These goals are established, discussed and monitored, establishing a culture of continual growth. As school leaders, we also meet individually with each 3rd, 4th and 5th grade student to establish goals for the spring state assessment. During this meeting, we look at where they were and where they need to be by the end of the testing window. This allows us the opportunity to emphasize the importance of this assessment as well as discuss strategies for success. This helps to establish the idea that we have school-wide goals not only individual or grade-level goals and we must all work together to reach the established goals, supporting the growth of all students in the process.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

At East Millsboro Elementary, we have a Data Process Cycle that guides all instructional decisions. The “Big Ideas” of this systematic approach to data analysis is having a focus on learning as well as a collaborative culture among teachers where all teachers are focused on results. This Data Process Cycle starts before the planning of any Math or English Language Arts Unit even begins. Teachers start with the end in mind and take the student summative assessment themselves. This helps our teachers to know what standards are being addressed and how students will be assessed on these standards. Once the assessment has been taken and analyzed, each grade-levels’ Professional Learning Community begins the process of planning lessons that address the standards. As our teachers collaboratively plan, they ask themselves four guiding questions “What is it that we want students to learn,” “How will we know if each student has learned it,” “How will we respond when some students did not learn it” and “How do we extend and enrich learning for those students who have demonstrated proficiency?” As our teachers begin the planning process, they develop lessons infused with effective instructional strategies as well as opportunities for students to demonstrate their level of understanding through formative assessments. These formative assessments allow our teachers to analyze data throughout the learning process, allowing teachers to provide students with effective feedback and it also allows our teachers to make informed instructional decisions and adapt lessons accordingly. At the end of each unit, students apply what they have learned to a summative assessment. This summative assessment requires our students to demonstrate their level of understanding by applying their learning to an assessment which requires them to think critically and problem solve. Once the summative assessment is complete, our teachers collaboratively score and analyze the data, doing an item analysis of each question. Based on the data our teachers think about which standards warrant more time for whole class instruction, re-teaching, and/or review and even which standards warrant small group instruction and/or the re-teaching to individual students. This process requires our teachers to create a “Re-Teach” Plan. Within this plan, teachers think about why students did not learn the standard, what technique or strategy will be used to address these standards and how will students demonstrate they have learned what has been taught. This Data Cycle Process is continuous and ongoing throughout the learning process.