

U.S. Department of Education
2017 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. F. Daniel Chick

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

Official School Name McClure Junior High School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 4225 Wolf Road

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

City Western Springs State IL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 60558-1453

County Cook County

Telephone (708) 246-7590 Fax (708) 246-4370

Web site/URL http://www.d101.org E-mail dchick@d101.org

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. Brian Barnhart E-mail bbarnhart@d101.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Western Springs School District 101 Tel. (708) 246-3700

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. Karen Gibbs
(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):
- 3 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 4 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
 - Suburban
 - Small city or town in a rural area
 - Rural
3. 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	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	87	83	170
7	81	86	167
8	88	71	159
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	256	240	496

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 2 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 92 % White
 - 2 % 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: 1%

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	4
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	3
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	7
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	503
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.014
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1

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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 1 %
Total number students who qualify: 8
8. Students receiving special education services: 8 %
42 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.

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

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 15
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 including those teaching high school specialty subjects	20
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	19
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	4
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 241:1
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%	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 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 No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2010

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

The current mission statement in D101 is "A Place Where Children Thrive."

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

Western Springs has been the home of McClure Junior High School since 1924. A thriving commuter community, Western Springs can best be described as an upper-middle class, southwest suburb of Chicago. For the past several years, the enrollment at McClure has fluctuated between 500-550 students. This year, we have 491 students in grades 6-8. With many of our parents and residents commuting into Chicago for their professional lives, McClure is filled with students who know and realize the importance of school and take their role as student very seriously.

In 2010, the mission of District 101 was “A Place Where Children Thrive.” Recently, our Board of Education has gone through a thorough strategic planning process and many things have been modified. “A Place Where Children Thrive” is now the District Motto. The new District Mission is “Engage. Inspire. Empower.” The new District Vision can best be described with the acronym GROW. This stands for the ability to Grow each child to his/her fullest potential to create inquisitive and reflective life-long learners. For our students to Reach beyond comfort zones to encourage responsible risk-taking and generate perseverance and resiliency in our children. We also want our students to Own and advocate for innovative and effective learning experiences to foster the development of positive academic, social, and emotional skills. Finally, to Work together to create collaborative, compassionate children who enrich our community. This recent process has also clearly defined the Values of District 101 as Academic Growth, Academic Achievement, Safe and Caring Learning Environments, Differentiated Instruction that Promotes Student Ownership, Attraction, Retention, and Development of Highly Qualified Staff, and Responsible Stewardship of Our District’s Resources.

In District 101, we work tirelessly around our three focus areas of Student Achievement, Student Growth, and Learning Environment. These three areas provide the backdrop for all decisions that eventually impact our students. In 2012, we determined that student ownership of learning would be our next focus to better serve our students. To do this, we committed to the delivery of quality formative practices. Our District Leadership Team created the Professional Learning Roadmap for staff to use and reflect upon their practices. This year as well as in future years, the District Staff will learn about and practice constructivist-teaching methods.

Since we won the Blue Ribbon in 2010, we have continued to learn and grow professionally, as the adults who are charged to get the most from our students. We have created clear tactical, strategic, and operational levels for decision-making throughout the District, which will be detailed later in this report. As will also be described later, our curriculum has changed drastically since 2010 to better meet not only national and State standards, but to better meet the needs of all of our students. In our continuing effort to provide a well-rounded experience for our students, we are currently in year three of offering our seventh and eighth grade students a multitude of elective classes. These elective classes range from the fine arts area to STEM opportunities. It is certainly our hope that we will soon be able to offer a set of different elective options under each of our curricular areas.

Simply put, the one consistent factor that makes McClure Junior High School special is the people. There is a strong feeling of pride that one can sense throughout McClure. We feel very strongly that students are more engaged and invested in their learning if they feel a strong connection to their school. It is a constant effort by all adults in the building to ensure that all students feel that connection. McClure offers a wide array of clubs and extracurricular activities that serve our student body. Our professional and extremely dedicated staff go out of the way to help our students grow both academically as well as socially. We are still incredibly fortunate to have the same three very dedicated parent organizations at McClure that work tirelessly to raise funds that directly impact all of our students. All stakeholders work as one to provide an atmosphere of mutual respect where all students promote positive behavior in an inclusive setting. It is our hope that we are able to foster a school environment of trust, which comforts students in their quest to individually grow. Judging by the many climate surveys, State-sponsored surveys, our students feel safe, appropriately challenged, and comfortable at McClure.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

McClure Junior High School offers a challenging curriculum centered on the premise -- and the promise -- that all students will own their learning and engage in meaningful, rigorous practice of critical thinking skills. Beyond the strong foundation of local and Common Core State Standards, the curriculum requires students to collaborate and engage deeply with material. The talented staff provides guidance, mentorship, and active encouragement as students endeavor to weave curricular understanding within their own experience, pushing learning beyond the classroom. Through innovative teaching and learning practices such as problem-based learning, gamification, simulations, Socratic Seminars, and myriad experiences for students to dive deeply into the curriculum, the staff set expectations high for student engagement, collaboration, and critical thinking. It is our hope that our curriculum produces young learners who are collaborative, intrinsically motivated, and inclusive of others.

For the past several years, each of our four academic areas of English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Sciences have gone through an extensive curriculum review process. Each area, working alongside an outside curriculum specialist, has adapted their respective curricula to hit all State and National standards. During these recent curriculum revisions, a committee of K-8 instructors represented each department. Each group developed learning outcomes as well as specific learning targets that fell under each learning outcome. This was completed at all levels. Common outcome assessments were also created as part of this extensive, multi-year process. As is always the case, we are currently reviewing, tweaking, and revising our curriculum as we see fit.

The Language Arts curriculum is a balanced literacy approach with an appropriate mix of fiction and non-fiction reading. We block our ELA classes; therefore students have language arts for 84 minutes each day. Our ELA staff recently adopted and now adeptly use the workshop model when instructing both reading and writing. Student choice with regard to novel selection has also been a recent priority. After having been trained by The Teachers College of New York, our teachers have integrated the Lucy Calkins Writing process throughout the entire curriculum. Vocabulary instruction is based upon the study of Greek and Latin roots, as well as a new focus on structured word inquiry skills. Students utilize both academic and curriculum-based vocabulary. Even though we've had some turnover in our ELA department, it continues to be a strong group as evidenced by the fact that in four of the past five years, we have had a student qualify for the Scripps National Spelling Bee. We continue to offer several levels of language arts options to meet the needs of all of our students.

Mathematics is an area of strength for our students, as evidenced by the consistent, outstanding assessment results. A math classroom at McClure is an arena for deep discussion and collaborative, creative probing of mathematical processes. Our students realize the real world connections that math provides and consistently reach their individual growth targets. During the recent curriculum review process, the decision was made to move away from the program that we had always used. While the new program wasn't deemed the absolute best fit, our instructors have expertly used the new program, along with supplementary items that they have researched, to continue our strong, upward trend in math results. There continue to be several levels of mathematics offered to best meet the needs of all students. Tiered instruction, as well as co-taught classes, help our math instructors better meet the varied learning styles of their students. The math departments works closely with not only our K-5 buildings, but also the high school to ensure students are obtaining the most out of their math instruction.

The Social Studies curriculum at McClure is grounded in the principle that students can better understand the world in which they live through meaningful experiences. There is a strong focus within the department to put students into relevant learning situations, either through a problem-based learning approach or through Socratic Seminars. Focusing first on ancient history and then delving deeply into the founding of our nation and historical events through to the present, the curriculum is designed to foster cultural appreciation and critical thinking about the patterns and practices throughout history. Our social studies department is one of the strongest, most collaborative groups at McClure as is evident by the number of our

students who annually qualify for the National History Bee. In addition to this focus on collaboration, our social studies department also maintains a strong focus on civic learning and engagement; from mock-elections and candidate speeches to volunteerism and community involvement, our staff ensures that students engage beyond the classroom.

The Science curriculum has evolved to envelope the Next Generation Science Standards in a hands-on, lab-based approach to learning. With full technology integration, our science classrooms are true laboratories. Our students build independence through inquiry as they move through the grades, becoming more sophisticated with data: first collecting, then analyzing, and finally communicating and building meaning around scientific data. The three-year program incorporates physical science, biology, chemistry, physics and astronomy. Another one of our departments that has seen a great deal of turnover since 2010, our science staff continues to be a collaborative, hard-working group of instructors.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

In our constant effort to provide a balanced, rigorous learning environment for our students, we offer many curricular opportunities outside the four main academic areas. Our goal is to provide students an opportunity to excel in whatever area their individual skills fit most appropriately.

Our physical education department focuses on both physical and mental well-being. All students take physical education daily. During the winter months, our students rotate between PE and Health class. Our physical education department strives to create students who will be active and health conscious for the remainder of their lives. We also continue to have a strong focus on collaboration while working well within a group setting.

Our Fine Arts department consists of student opportunities in the areas of music appreciation and participation, Visual Arts, and Family and Consumer Sciences. In sixth grade, students take a quarter class each of art, music, and FACS. It is our philosophy to give all sixth graders exposure to all of the areas of Fine Arts. In grades seven and eight, students are then allowed to sign up for whatever elective classes that they wish. Many of those elective choices lie within the realm of Fine Arts and range from various music classes, specific Visual Arts opportunities like painting, drawing, etc. We also offer specific elective classes with the FACS realm like Pastry Arts and Fashion and Design.

Our instrumental band and orchestra programs begin in the District in fourth grade. In grade six, Band and Orchestra becomes a students' 10th period class and they meet every day for thirty minutes. In grades seven and eight, Band and Orchestra is an elective offering for a semester, meeting every day for forty-two minutes. For the quarters that the students aren't in Band/Orchestra as an elective, they meet before school twice a week.

We offer Spanish at all three grades. In sixth grade, students can either take Spanish for one semester or a full year. In grades seven and eight, the students enroll in an articulated program with our local high school. In a nutshell, the students take the first semester of high school Spanish in seventh and the second semester in eighth. By completing our Spanish program, many of our students then take Spanish II as freshman.

Since 2010, we have begun to offer more "STEM-like" opportunities for our students through the previously mentioned elective offerings. As of this year, students can elect to take the following classes as a quarter-length elective: Robotics, Robotics II, Coding, Digital Photography, Drones 101, and Journey to Mars. As a District, we just hosted our inaugural D101 STEAM Night and this event was a huge success with over 500 parents and students in attendance.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Since winning the award in 2010, I thought it important to detail some of the incredible work that has been done by all District stakeholders. In 2014, our District identified Student Ownership of Learning as our main area of focus. While researching how best to have students own their learning, we realized that the number one driver would entail quality formative practices. For the last several years, there has been a District-wide

focus on improving our formative practices. In the summer of 2014, our District Leadership Team created the Professional Learning Roadmap. This quickly became an invaluable resource for staff. The PLR has become a living, breathing document that has become a part of all teachers' improvement and professional growth plans. The PLR contains our District's four driving targets: Student Friendly Learning Targets, Providing Exemplars to Students, Determining Present Levels of Performance, and Quality Formative Practices. This document serves as a guide for teachers to help them improve their instruction. After working on solidifying our formative practices, we then focused on descriptive feedback and have been working on that for the past two years.

We will continue to focus on student ownership of their learning and the staff has embraced the recent professional development offered throughout the District. McClure assesses the individual needs of each student and then focuses on the process needed to ensure that all students are successful. As students are all very different and possess a wide variety of learning styles, the staff needs to be cognizant of that and instruct appropriately.

As stated before, we have focused on quality formative practices as well as constructivist practices for the past few years. Daily lessons are developed with the students in mind. Lessons must be challenging and must also lead to specific, communicated learning targets. Students at McClure realize that the lessons that they are learning in their classes, all have some real-life application that will help them succeed in the future. Differentiated instructing is a must to meet the needs of our inclusive setting. We do however; have a Literacy Specialist as well as a Math Intervention to better meet the needs of our Tier II and Tier III students. While still a very low percentage of our students, we still need to provide whatever resources our students need to achieve success.

Data collection, review, and analysis are a daily occurrence at McClure. The formative data that teachers collect daily, whether formal or informal, is instrumental in guiding our instructional practices. We administer MAP assessments three times a year and this data is also used to help better meet the needs of all students. As we have focused on learning for the past several years, reaching mastery isn't an option at McClure, as all students must achieve mastery of our learning outcomes before moving on. In 2015, a District committee made up of K-8 representatives, created our District Re-Teaching and Assessment Handbook, which detail our philosophy on learning.

As stated earlier, the McClure Staff work tirelessly to hone their practices and have embraced a professional growth model of continuous improvement. Since last winning the Blue Ribbon in 2010, our school has adopted a 1 to 1 program and all students have Chromebooks to enhance their learning. The Chromebooks are simply one of our learning tools that enhance student engagement. The learning environment of mutual respect, safety, and rigor provided by the staff keeps our students on their toes, but also provides a safe place or risk-taking and experimentation.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

McClure is not an easy place to go to school as there are high expectations placed upon the school in general, including staff and students. Our greatest challenge has always been to provide our very able students appropriate academic rigor within a learning environment that understands that they are still adolescents. While this will always be one of our main foci, I am much more proud of how we have grown steadily over the past several years in our ability to meet the social-emotional needs of our students.

As stated earlier in this application, our focus on student ownership has greatly increased the engagement level of our students. Through the many opportunities that they have to choose their own learning paths during their school day, McClure students are keenly aware that they are an integral part of their educational paths. We challenge our students everyday, both academically and socially.

In our current master schedule, all students end the day with 10th period. Initially, this period was created as part of our RtI process and provided the time within our school day to better meet the varied needs of our students. It has morphed over the years but one of the most important roles of this period is to deliver our social-emotional learning instruction. Each 10th period is supervised by two certified staff, with one of those staff in 10th period for supervision. If not supervising 10th period, that staff member is then available to meet with their students for re-teaching, pre-teaching, or any other possible intervention. On the SEL front, each 10th period is divided in half and each staff member will then have a group of students that they will mentor throughout the year. We have quarterly check-ins as well as any necessary check-ins after any concerning Climate Survey results, which we administer three times each year. Based upon consistent survey results, our students feel safe, enjoy school, feel challenged, and most importantly, have an adult in the building that they can go to if they were in need.

For staff climate, we have a very professional, collaborative group at McClure. Contractually, the staff have two meetings each month before the start our school day. One of these meetings is principal-led while our Building Leadership Team leads the other. This year, the BLT has created Pods for staff members, which give the staff a chance to collaborate with staff that they wouldn't normally work with which has greatly increased our collaborative spirit and sense of collegiality.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

We are very fortunate to be able to work in partnership with the families of Western Springs. As stated earlier, there is a strong value placed upon academics by our families as they see school as a necessary step in the important process of their children's lives. Because of this, our parents and community are willing and able partners for us to access when needed.

We are incredibly fortunate to have three very dedicated parent organizations at McClure that work tirelessly to raise funds that directly impact all of our students. All stakeholders work as one to provide an atmosphere of mutual respect where all students promote positive behavior in an inclusive setting. It is our hope that we are able to foster a school environment of trust, which comforts students in their quest to individually grow.

Two recent examples of our partnership with our community are detailed below:

D101 STEAM Night – As we develop our curriculum and offer more opportunities for our students, we just hosted our inaugural STEAM Night. This K-8 event was hosted by McClure, but included all of our three other elementary buildings as well. We had multiple options for students and parents throughout the building. Most of the rooms offered hands-on opportunities including, coding, robotics, fossil digs, etc. The evening was coordinated by a group of administrators, teachers, and parents. The event was a huge success that brought in more than five hundred parents and students.

Screenagers Viewing – As a joint offering from many local districts, our local high school recently hosted a viewing of this documentary. We were asked to get three-four parent volunteers to assist prior to the showing. We communicated this need to our parents and we ended up with twenty-one volunteers...making the need for other Districts to bring volunteers unnecessary. At the actual showing, there over one thousand tickets registered with over 50% of those being from our District 101 parent community.

As you can see, it is this partnership that leads our students down a path of success. Working together, all stakeholders have a role in the academic and social development our students.

3. Professional Development:

As we continue our journey of continuous improvement, we then have to continue to reflect upon our professional practices and instructional methodologies. For the past several years, we have focused on both student and staff growth, and have created a clear pathway for teachers to grow in their practice. Teachers use the Professional Learning Roadmap in conjunction with our evaluation process as they set professional goals. Also, staff uses the PLR as a valuable tool to reflect upon their practice. The PLR also provides staff with not only what their next steps for growth are, but also what that looks and sounds like within the operational decisions that they make daily. We do most of our professional development in-house as we have found that our greatest resources are each other.

As previously stated, our District maintains a focus on Student Ownership for the past several years. All professional development has been laser-focused around formative practices, descriptive feedback, or constructivism. Using the PLR as a valuable resource, staff can reflect and grow in their practice. Since 2010, the District has also created a leadership structure, which clearly defines the roles of the following structures: District Leadership Team, Building Leadership Team, and Curriculum Committees. Also new since 2010, we have two Instructional Integrations Specialists, who work in the trenches with staff and assist greatly with the improvement of all instructional practices. Our IIS staff has created a valuable resource site as another valuable resource for all staff with regard to professional development and growth. The district provides a two-year mentoring program for all new hires. This process partners veteran teachers with new protégés. This relationship helps the new instructor immensely as the mentor teacher gives valuable time to assist the protégé in every capacity. This program is run through the auspices of our Assistant Superintendent.

The McClure Staff meets twice a month, before school. One of those meetings is principal-led; our Building Leadership Team leads the other. The focus of the principal-led meetings this year has been constructivist practices. The BLT-led meetings have worked on honing our formative practices and focusing specifically on descriptive feedback. Again, working within our Professional Learning Roadmap, staff has the opportunity to reflect upon their practices and continuously improve their instruction.

4. School Leadership:

From Central Office down, there is a District-side focus on continuous improvement. All leadership groups within our District focus on student ownership. Whether it be honing or editing our Professional Learning Roadmap, or creating the District Wheel, all stakeholders work off of the premise that all students and staff will continue to learn and grow.

Whether it is at the District or individual school level, our leadership goal and priority is to build capacity within our staff and foster avenues to promote leadership opportunities for others. We have created several different “layers” of leadership opportunities for staff which include, but are not limited to the following: Team Leaders, Curricular Chairs, Building Leadership Team, District Leadership Team, Digital Learning Corp.

Specific to building leadership, McClure has fostered avenues to promote leadership capacity in others. The building leadership team acts as the liaison between the administration and the staff in general. This group also leads one staff meeting per month focusing on District goals. There is also a great deal of

responsibility placed on our grade-level team leaders as they work collaboratively with their respective teams and act as the liaison between grade-level teams and building administration.

Distinct leadership is quite careful and uses taxpayers' funds to efficiently run the district in a manner that is fiscally responsible. Because of this, school leadership is constantly working with the community and parent organizations to secure additional funding for student needs, whenever necessary. Among all groups, there is a common theme focusing on student growth. All McClure students deserve the right to a challenging academic experience. It is the greatest challenge of the building administration to accomplish this goal, but also to provide a safe environment where all are included and treated with respect.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Because McClure has always had very talented students, wonderful parental support, and a professional, dedicated staff, success has simply been a wonderful result of the desirable combination. Due to that, it is difficult to point out one single aspect of McClure that stands out above the rest, as the work that our staff and students do on a daily basis is truly exemplary. Like all schools, there has been tremendous work in revising curriculum and improving pedagogical practices. Our District-wide work on Student Ownership as made each of our staff members a better, more reflective, and improved instructor.

If I were to pick one aspect, I would however select our growth in the area of social-emotional instruction and staff practices. As a staff, we realized the importance of a student need to feel a true connection to their school in order for them to perform at their highest levels. Our work these past several years during 10th period has helped to create a wonderful learning environment for our students. Students at McClure know and realize that the adults in the building care about them as people, not just as students in their classrooms. Every Tuesday, the students know that there will be some sort of social-emotional learning lesson that day. The staff has worked tirelessly on making these lessons meaningful and relevant for our students. More importantly, it is the relationship that is developed between the teachers and students that is key to our success. Whether it is a quarterly check-in with their student advisees or a follow up on an answer to a recent survey question, McClure Staff prove to our students that they truly care about them. Students quickly realize that there are many adults in the building to use as a resource in helping guide them through those very trying adolescent teen years.

As stated earlier in this application, we administer a Student Climate Survey to all of our students three times a year. We use this data to gauge the learning environment that is being provided for our students and make any necessary changes to that environment that we see fit. One of the questions that we ask the students is simply if they have an adult in the building that they can go to if they were in trouble/need. When we started giving this survey and prior to our work in 10th period, the percentage of students who answered, “Yes” to above question was below 50%. In our last survey administered last month, the percentage of students who answered, “Yes” to that question was 98%. Enough said!