

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Dr. Dineen Seeley

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

Official School Name Sea Girt Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 451 Bell Place

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

City Sea Girt State NJ Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 08750-2599

County Monmouth County

Telephone (732) 449-3422 Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Web site/URL http://www.seagirt.k12.nj.us E-mail cfanslau@seagirt.k12.nj.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\*Dr. Dineen Seeley E-mail dseeley@seagirt.k12.nj.us  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Sea Girt Borough School District Tel. (732) 449-3422

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. Colleen Prior  
(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

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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

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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):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 0 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 1 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	10	3	13
K	4	5	9
1	7	6	13
2	8	7	15
3	8	8	16
4	15	9	24
5	4	10	14
6	10	6	16
7	9	4	13
8	6	5	11
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	81	63	144

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 5 % Asian
  - 2 % Black or African American
  - 0 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 93 % White
  - 0 % 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	1
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	0
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	1
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	153
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.007
(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: 0 %  
Total number students who qualify: 0

8. Students receiving special education services: 6 %  
9 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.

- 0 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 0 Emotional Disturbance
- 0 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Mental Retardation
- 1 Multiple Disabilities
- 1 Orthopedic Impairment
- 3 Other Health Impaired
- 3 Specific Learning Disability
- 2 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: 4
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	16
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.	3
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 16:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	96%	95%	95%	96%	95%
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.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
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. 2005

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

Sea Girt Elementary School nurtures creativity and imagination while empowering our students with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to think critically, respect themselves and others, and to achieve their highest potential as life-long learners.

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**

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Sea Girt Elementary School is nationally recognized as a Blue Ribbon School by the United States Department of Education. The Blue Ribbon recognition our school has enjoyed for over a decade has served as a source of tremendous pride in our community. It provides validation for the hard work and accomplishments by our faculty and students. This accomplishment is proudly memorialized at the front entrance of our school where the emblem is memorialized within the brickwork and throughout our means of communication including our school website and letterhead. The Blue Ribbon Award is often referenced as one of several reasons new families choose to move into our tight-knit community.

Sea Girt Elementary School was founded in 1970 to establish a local public school for its growing beach community. It remains the only school in the borough and serves students in grades Pre-kindergarten to eight. There is one class per grade level where the children grow to know one another so well, which contributes to the unique family atmosphere within our school. Faculty members enjoy long, successful careers in our school and many of them teach siblings from within the same families; so they get to know these families well. There are dozens of active civic organizations in the borough that contribute to the well-being of the community. Several of these organizations use the school facilities for various functions on a regular basis. The school is the cornerstone of the community.

As previously mentioned, in our small school setting, children become a part of an extended school family. Pre-kindergarten through fifth grade students are self-contained and students in Grades 6-8 are departmentalized during an eight-period day with an additional lunch/recess period. In addition to the core academics of language arts, mathematics, science and social studies, pre-kindergarten through eighth grade students receive instruction from highly-qualified faculty in world language, art, music, physical education, media and technology skills. Instructional aides are all certified and experienced teachers.

A rigorous instructional program is offered in a supportive, caring environment which promotes personal growth and achievement. The national and state standards serve as the baseline for locally developed curricula. Results of standardized testing indicate superior student achievement as measured against national and state standards.

Academic performance is a priority at the Sea Girt Elementary School along with the values of self-discipline, honesty, fairness, courtesy, responsibility and respect. Traditional family values are instilled by expectation and example, and the faculty expects the best performance from each student both in and out of the classroom. Social decision making classes are a part of the regularly scheduled weekly coursework for all students and team-taught with our counselor and classroom teachers.

The faculty is highly professional and committed to excellence in all areas. Teachers work collaboratively through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) for professional reflection, data analysis, goal creation and shared planning. The faculty enjoy a warm rapport with the students and their parents and actively participate in community events outside of the regular school day.

A diversified extracurricular program is available to students with over 90% of eligible students participating in one or more programs. There is long-standing commitment and support to the arts. The performing arts program consists of drama productions, class plays, chorus, band, and music lessons. We are proud that our students perform in a stage production annually from the time they are in the Pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. Athletic programs include soccer, basketball, baseball, softball, cheerleading and tennis. School teams are noted for their winning traditions, discipline and sportsmanship. Students may join the garden club, safety patrol, school newspaper, Peer Leaders and Model U.N. clubs. A variety of student service projects helps to develop a sense of social responsibility including students coordinating food and gift drives for the needy and preparing Thanksgiving and holiday baskets.

Strong ties between home and school enrich the quality of Sea Girt Elementary School as parents generously support school activities with personal commitment and involvement through the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). The PTO is involved through volunteerism, raising funds and scheduling school-wide

events and assemblies.

The Sea Girt Educational Foundation has coordinated large scale projects that include the South Grounds basketball and tennis courts, the North Grounds field projects, turf, playground and outdoor luncheon areas. The Booster Club organizes soccer, flag football, cross country, and basketball programs for Grades K-8 coached by parent volunteers. They have also donated team jackets, baseball and basketball scoreboards, equipment and uniforms in support of the school's athletic program. With strong ties between the home, school and community we are able to enrich the quality of educational life at Sea Girt Elementary School.

Sea Girt enjoys a sending/receiving relationship with nearby Manasquan High School. Sea Girt graduates have also earned placement to attend the prestigious vocational academies. All of these high schools are acknowledged for successful academic programs leading to college acceptances. Based on high school academic programs, extracurricular programs and standardized assessment scores, former Sea Girt Elementary School students are routinely accepted to some of the most highly competitive universities in the country.

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

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

The curricula at Sea Girt Elementary School is directly tied to the Common Core State Standards, New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards and Next Generation Science Standards. It is currently under revision to align with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards by the summer of 2017. Teachers develop the local curricula using a “backward design” process.

The academic program is exemplary and designed to foster a passion for life-long learning. Lessons across the disciplines incorporate the development of higher-order thinking and problem solving skills. Our classes provide students with differentiated instructional strategies to address individual learning styles and diverse student needs.

The balanced literacy program nurtures a love of reading and emphasizes comprehension, literary skills, grammar and vocabulary at all levels. Foundational reading and phonics skills are emphasized in the primary grades. Readers and writers workshop models, inclusive of guided reading and literacy center activities, are practiced in grades K-4. Leveled books and grade-level novels include informational and literary texts. Classroom libraries have tripled in size in the last few years to support the individualized approach to students reading at their “just right” levels. In grades 3 and 4, the focus transitions from phonics to vocabulary, as students focus on supporting ideas with textual evidence, synthesizing reading from multiple sources and analyzing texts. The writing program enables students to communicate effectively, coherently, and imaginatively through written expression. High performing students may participate in the Great Books program. There is an ongoing integration of literacy skills throughout the disciplines and our faculty acknowledges that we are all teachers of literacy.

The mathematics program follows standards established by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, often using manipulatives and cooperative learning groups to enhance problem solving skills. Students are sequentially taught concept skills and problem solving with a mastery level goal. The program is based on conceptual knowledge while stressing a strong foundation in basic facts and operations. Application of mathematical concepts to real life situations is used to create relevance. High performing students may participate in Algebra I and Geometry courses. Students in all grade levels also participate in financial literacy courses, following the Junior Achievement (JA) program. Through the JA program, students in grades 5, 6 and 8 participate in a culminating field trip to simulate the experience of serving as an entrepreneur to be successful in a global economy. The curriculum allows for remediation, enrichment and acceleration.

An inquiry approach is utilized in the science program. Students regularly engage in hands-on experiments at all grade levels. Our students annually raise chicks and virtually “tag along” with researchers in the field, this year in Antarctica. They raise butterflies from caterpillars. Students plan a trip to be a spectator at the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race and follow 5 mushers via GPS trackers and record their data on a spreadsheet to analyze afterward. To develop students understanding of ecosystem connectivity and foster conservation ethics, this year, we began to raise trout from egg to fry in the classroom to ultimately release them into the local river. At the middle school level, students participate in a design thinking unit of study and a longitudinal beach survey project. Other projects include creating blogs, resumes, memos, emails and reports. Classes connect with other classrooms via the Global Sun Temperature Project in which they submit an introduction letter and data about the number of sunlight hours, an example of literacy and science together. Through exploratory learning, students emerge with greater analytical and critical thinking skills. Students participate in STEM classes in the lab that are co-taught by the classroom teachers and the highly qualified middle school science teacher. STEM classes utilize the 3-D printer to develop prototypes for the solutions they create to solve real-world problems.

In the social studies program, students explore civics, world history, United States history, with an extensive study of the Constitution, New Jersey history, economics and geography. Primary grades focus on respect, democratic concepts and citizenship. Studies include national and statewide elections. The pre-high social

studies teacher coordinates a Mock Election student performance to coincide with the Presidential Election that is attended by the larger borough community. The students and teacher write the script and dress in character to provide a satirical yet informative performance that captures the spirit of the political process, including the national debates. Student projects emphasize individual learning culminating tri-annually in the Pre-high World's Fair.

The pre-kindergarten program at SGES focuses on children's educational, physical, emotional and social growth and designed to provide the best start possible for early learners to prepare them for school success. The program concentrates on positive relationships and productive learning opportunities. It provides differentiated instruction for all students and prepares them for higher level thinking using a cross curricular approach. Students lead the morning meeting activities, inclusive of songs for literacy and mathematics learning. The program is structured so that the children engage in learning through play in center activities. Students develop plans for self-directed play and also engage in two teacher-facilitated centers for language arts and mathematics each day. Students use math manipulatives, participate in science experiments and are exposed to strategies and skills for a strong reading foundation. The teachers maintain daily anecdotal notes of students' progress and also formally assess students' abilities in reading and mathematics three times per year. Progress reports reflecting students' achievement in mastering the learning standards and growth in social-emotional development are also shared with parents each semester. The pre-kindergarten students demonstrate exemplary performance on summative rating scales confirming they are ready for kindergarten at the end of each year. The pre-kindergarten teachers are members of the primary team of teachers that meet monthly for curriculum collaboration and professional development.

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

World language classes are taught in Grades PK-8. Beginning in the primary grades, students participate in Spanish classes multiple times per week. Some of the key skills that students master in Spanish are being able to describe themselves, their families, homes, school, pastimes, and sports in great detail. They are also able to describe their lives in Sea Girt, specifically about members of the community, places of interest and municipal services. The goal for our students is to graduate elementary school having mastered the standards of Spanish I and ready to enter into Spanish II in high school. Our eighth graders also have the opportunity to participate in a year-long Italian or French class before the regular school day at our local receiving high school, which is within walking distance to our school. World Cultures is part of the cycle program for middle school students, which supports their understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures and languages.

Information and Communications Technology Literacy helps students learn how to find, interpret, analyze, evaluate, and communicate in a variety of forms using technology and media. We recognize the potential of media and technology to empower educators and their students to be 21st Century learners to meet the challenges of a global knowledge society. There are networked multimedia computers in the Technology Lab and students have scheduled technology classes weekly, co-taught by the homeroom and media teacher at the elementary level. There are three computer carts and two iPad carts of 30 devices each available for teacher sign-out to utilize for class activities. Pre-kindergarten through third grade classes also have iPads in their classrooms to use daily. The Grades 3-8 one-to-one laptop program is designed for each child to have their own device for the school year. The laptops are an integral part of classwork as well as homework. Students utilize Google Apps for Education for collaboration and submitting their work electronically. We have a "Google Team" of teachers that were trained extensively and turn-key that training to our faculty. A wired and wireless local area network connects classroom computer stations with the resources of the school building as well as the Internet. Each classroom has Internet access and interactive digital whiteboards. Each morning, video announcements and news are broadcast to the classrooms. The library collection is available by way of a web-based computerized database which can be browsed in school as well as from home. Pre-high students are introduced to social networking, Google Classroom, Microsoft Office and apps that span the disciplines.

Our school has a demonstrated commitment to the arts. All students in grades PK-8 have music and art classes. Middle school students may select to participate in a semester long art clubs with specific focuses that change each cycle. Instructional methods in music include incorporation of technology through an

interactive online curriculum, Google Apps for Education and iPad applications, such as Tenuto and Garage Band. A variety of literature, including varied texts on composers and music theory and various performance methods, including Recorder Karate. Band and instrument lessons are offered to students in grades 4-8, with district funded small group instrument lessons continuing over the summer months. Pre-high students have the opportunity to participate in the sending district band concert for 3 years leading up to high school, which provides an opportunity to meet students from the 6 other districts that send to the same high school and overwhelmingly, our students in the band choose to participate. All of the students in the school perform in grade level musicals or choral performances annually. They also enter a regional competition to showcase their talents. Opportunities for performance provides the ability to be creative and expressive which develops an enhanced sense of poise, self-esteem and confidence.

Physical education classes are scheduled for all grade levels 2-3 times weekly in addition to a 25 minute recess for all grade levels. Personal fitness and lifelong sports are the goals for the classes. An archery unit has developed as a favorite for our students each winter. Health classes focus on health literacy and are co-taught by the physical education teacher and school nurse each week. In grade 5, students participate in the Law Enforcement Against Drugs (LEAD) program co-taught by a trained Sea Girt Police officer and the classroom teacher. Seventh graders participate in a suicide prevention program team-taught by the school nurse, counselor and physical education teacher.

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

The instructional program at Sea Girt Elementary School is exemplary. Classes begin with a warm-up or pre-assessment activity, guiding students to make connections with prior learning or serving as the anticipatory set for what they are about to learn. Teachers use a constructivist approach to lesson delivery, so the students are activating their prior knowledge or bridging connections to learn new material. Guided then independent practice activities are incorporated, and during this time it is customary for teachers to provide small group or individualized coaching to enrich or remediate students for those particular learning standards. Interactive, state of the art, active walls are installed in every classroom, and they work together with our teachers' and students' 1:1 devices for easy integration of surveys and assessments to provide information on the spot. The incorporation of meaningful technology provides teachers with real-time assessment information to help them to adjust their instruction or pacing during a lesson or unit of study. Additionally, exit cards and Google or other online assignment are commonly used as formative assessments and lesson reflection to close the lesson. Homework assignments may then be differentiated to meet and challenge the students at their mastery level.

Pop, and Middlebury Interactive Language for differentiating their language arts, mathematics, music, world language and science activities, inclusive of computer-based assessments, to support the learning standards. Teachers then review and analyze the data for their individual students as well as their classes to inform their lesson planning and instruction. Remediation and challenge assignments can then be assigned by the teachers to differentiate the experiences for the students. Teachers maintain anecdotal notes and engage in one-to-one student conferences regularly to discuss literature and writing as part of their formative assessment during literacy instruction at all grade levels.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

School climate and culture is important for all of the constituents of our school. Our students' success depends upon their enjoyment of a consistently safe and positive learning environment. Thus, we developed a commitment to the incorporation of weekly Social Decision Making classes for our students co-facilitated by our guidance counselor and teachers. Morning meeting practices were established for students to have a "soft landing" and transition from home to school each day. The morning video announcements also share notable events involving our faculty or students, a famous quote to inspire our students and a challenge of the day that is centered on character education. We have mixed grade level classes each week, such as art, physical education or media, for students to engage in meaningful, structured activities with peers from either the grade level above or below their class. The Peer Leaders program engages our Pre-high leaders to interact and serve as role models with the younger students. These experiences build relationships and trust between the students and for the students with their teachers.

Students are recognized for positively impacting their peers and/or teachers by the faculty who awards them a "Bucket Filler" slip, based upon the children's book that describes bucket fillers as those who fill others' hearts with warmth through kind acts or praise as opposed to bucket dippers who cause others to feel deflated with unfriendly acts or statements. We have "reading buddies" established between the first and fourth grades that meet bi-weekly. As the Sea Girt Patriots, bi-monthly we celebrate "Patriot Friday" school-wide, and our faculty and students wear school gear and colors. The morning video announcements also feature a handful of students each week who tell something notable about themselves for the entire school to learn about them, so that by the end of the school year, every child has been featured. These opportunities encourage our students and faculty to get to know one another beyond their participation in scheduled classes.

Our school prides itself on the family atmosphere enjoyed by all of our constituents, including our outstanding faculty. Personal events, such as marriages, child birth and birthdays are recognized and celebrated. The administrators foster a collegial atmosphere to promote and support faculty and staff. Team building days are planned jointly by administrators and teachers and are held on or off campus, including at the beach. The faculty has fun together, annually performing in the school talent show, dressing within a theme at Halloween, and providing comical "guest commentaries" on the students' morning video announcements. Various teachers are recognized and thanked by the administration in the weekly email announcements that are sent to faculty, staff and parents to celebrate the wonderful things that they do throughout the year. Teachers are encouraged to participate in professional development endeavors. They are also supported by the administration to purchase supplies and resources that they identify will best compliment the learning environment. They are respected for their expertise in their disciplines and knowing what will best support the students they know so well.

We also celebrate students' achievements in a variety of ways. Students are acknowledged at the monthly Board of Education meetings where the Superintendent of Schools announces the achievements and awards certificates for the students to proudly accept as their parents and siblings applaud from the audience. We acknowledge students' academic successes each marking period by announcing the honor roll recipients. Students are frequently featured on the district's website and in the local newspaper for their school related achievements across the disciplines.

Three years ago, the School Community/Climate PLC developed a goal to survey the three most important constituents to our school, the parents, students and faculty. So, one constituent was surveyed each year utilizing a research based tool developed by the New Jersey Department of Education. The survey questions and choices were keyed into an online document and the PLC added an open-ended option after every question for the survey participants to provide feedback regarding their answers. The PLC met after the surveys were complete to analyze the data and develop a summary as well as actions to be taken to address concerns or suggestions that the survey's communicated. These summaries were then presented at

faculty and Board of Education meetings. The Board of Education also recently engaged in a school culture audit by coordinating independent evaluators to interview community members, parents and faculty members, analyze the information and make recommendations for the school. Finally, a consultant from the statewide School Board Association facilitated the process this school year for developing a five-year strategic plan for the school district. The opportunity to participate in this process was widely advertised and the committee was comprised of community members, administrators, faculty and Board of Education members. Anyone that wished to participate was invited to be a part of this important process to develop the four main goal areas, including student success, fiscal/finance/facilities, community engagement and school climate/culture. The next step is for our faculty and administration to develop action plans to implement the vision and goals developed in the Strategic Plan which will cover the next three to five years.

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

The student management system is actively utilized by all teachers and maintains students' grades, completion of assignments, disciplinary infractions, progress reports and report cards that parents may access at any time. An online testing calendar in our student management system is regularly updated by the Pre-high teachers for our parents of middle school students. Additionally, notifications are sent electronically to parents that opt to be notified in particular areas. The district's website serves as the best resource for parents and the community regarding programs, announcements and means of communication with school personnel. All of the teachers update their webpages regularly. We have a school app for parents to download and utilize on their mobile devices. The school administration compiles and sends announcements and flyers electronically to parents every Tuesday and Friday. Additionally, there is a sign in front of the school which lists the dates for upcoming events. The Pipeline newsletter is mailed to all residents of our community twice annually to keep our neighbors informed about the achievements of our students and opportunities to participate in activities in our school.

In addition to progress and report cards every quarter, parent conferences are scheduled annually in the fall for all families. In addition, parents are invited into the classrooms to view lessons during American Education Week. There is an open door policy that encourages parents to confer with teachers regarding student performance. Parents may use voicemail and email to communicate directly with the teachers and administrators. The Superintendent hosts open agenda meetings quarterly for parents and attends all Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) meetings. Parent workshops are facilitated by administrators, faculty or consultants both during the day and in the evening. These workshops have included PARCC Parent Nights, Best Practices for Supporting Your Child's Homework, Cyber-safety, Using Google Apps for Education, and Apps to Support Your Child's Education. Whenever possible, we try to engage the parents in learning through hand-on experiences, so we will host these programs in the Technology Lab, provide devices for parents to use during the workshop or have students present to work with the adults to facilitate an experience that we are teaching to the parents that they have mastered through practice in school. We have conducted parent surveys to solicit their feedback in the topics for future parent workshops.

Parents and community members are invited into the school to events during the year. All grade levels perform on the stage each year for parents and community members to enjoy. Class parents help facilitate classroom celebrations and art enrichment several times per year. The PTO is very active and frequently coordinates activities to involve our students, faculty and families throughout the year. The PTO also demonstrates their support of professional development activities and innovative classroom projects through mini-grants to the teachers. The Sea Girt Education Foundation is comprised of administrators, parents and community members that meets to coordinate large scale projects to support the educational program of our students. The Sea Girt Boosters Program hosts dozens of programs annually to involve our students and children from the larger community in sports and activities to benefit the children and raise funds to support the school. The Board of Education, PTO, Educational Foundation and Boosters work hand-in-hand to support a well-rounded experience for our students and inclusivity of our school community.

### **3. Professional Development:**

The professional development program, formulated by the Professional Development Committee through surveys and administrative input, provides a stimulating work environment and meets the educational needs of our students by keeping staff abreast of current educational trends. District objectives and student performance data are shared with teachers at the beginning of the school year and discussed at faculty and team meetings throughout the year.

The district provides an on-going plan for professional development activities including in-district language arts professional development and participation in a tri-district cooperative Professional Learning Community (PLC) for balanced literacy that meets minimally six times throughout the year. Since our school has one class at each grade level, this cross-district PLC promotes collaboration and professional conversation with grade level peers.

Our district has several PLCs that our faculty are part of. These PLCs meet a minimum of quarterly and their work is shared at the monthly faculty meetings with the greater staff. Our PLCs include a Data Team, Green Team, Local Professional Development Committee, Technology Integration Committee, School Safety/Character Education Team, School Community/Climate Committee as well as Primary, Intermediate and Pre-high Teams comprised of subject area and specialist teachers. All teachers are participants on a minimum of two PLCs, and many choose to be on more.

Teachers are supported to attend district funded workshops and conferences related to their areas of subject matter responsibility sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Education, local or national organizations or regional experts. The district is a member of the county professional development consortium and the county curriculum consortium. The administration shares relevant research or subject matter information for professional conversation. Faculty in-service days and monthly faculty meetings are dedicated to include professional development. Our faculty regularly turn-keys information learned to their colleagues in either team meetings or at faculty meetings. Content area teachers at the middle school level have also presented workshops for teams of teachers specific to their discipline. Finally, our faculty is encouraged to pursue advanced degrees at the university level related to their job responsibilities. As a result of our dedication to the professional growth of our faculty and administration, our students remain enthusiastic about learning and continue to perform extremely well in the classroom and on the state and national assessments.

### **4. School Leadership:**

Sea Girt Elementary School's administrators, faculty, students, parents and community members all work together to lead to our success. High expectations among all the stakeholders contributes to the shared dedication and commitment to providing the highest quality, comprehensive educational program for our students.

The school's instructional leadership team is comprised of a Superintendent/Principal/Curriculum and Instruction Leader, a Supervisor of Student Services/Director of Special Education/Gifted and Talented/Supplemental Education/Testing Coordinator, a Part-time Business Administrator through a shared-service with a neighboring district, and three Team Leaders; primary, intermediate and pre-high. We actively engage in a shared leadership approach, with regularly scheduled meetings with the Team Leaders and administrators. The Team Leaders host monthly meetings with their teams that include administrators.

PLCs include administrators, teachers and support staff that meet at least quarterly. These meetings include agenda setting, development of minutes and collaboration among the teams, by way of Google Classrooms established by the Team Leaders or Administration and faculty meetings. All of this collaboration and communication is centered on student achievement. For example, the School Data Team has several members with time built into their weekly schedules to analyze and discuss student data then report out to individual or groups of faculty members with timely information to impact the instruction of the students that are currently enrolled in their classes. This commitment ensures our students success throughout the

year.

Students also contribute as leaders within our school. The Peer Leaders focus on building school spirit and mentoring younger students to develop scholarly habits and build their character. Through consensus building, they identify philanthropic organizations to raise awareness and funds for. The local Boys and Girls Club and Monmouth County Food Bank have frequently been identified by our student leaders to support. We have brought in representatives from those organizations to speak to our students and faculty about the important services they provide and why our students' efforts make a difference. The eighth grade class has elected officers that participate in making decision regarding school activities. The Safety Patrol is comprised of pre-high student leaders that turn-keys public safety information to our students as well as serve to monitor the safety of students as they arrive to school each day. These leadership roles help student gain confidence, responsibility and leadership skills.

The PTO, Educational Foundation and Boosters Club are the final extension of our leadership team. A collaborative spirit of mutual respect and enthusiasm for our students' development and achievements exists between our school administrators, teachers and leaders of these organizations. These groups host several meetings throughout the year to identify ways to support the educational experience for our students. They support field trips and assembly programs that enrich the curriculum to provide experiences for the children and foster real-world connections to their learning. They engage the parents and larger community in identifying activities or projects to enrich our students' enthusiasm for learning and overall achievement.

## **Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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The Professional Learning Communities and Leadership Team has greatly contributed to the academic success of our students. The frequent collaboration and communication regarding student success between the administration and faculty ensures that all children are experiencing success. The identification of differentiated learning tools to support individualized plans for students meets the students where they are to grow their learning. Teachers actively use data from their students' assessments, both formative and summative, local and state-wide, to inform their lesson planning and practices. Our faculty embraces professional development and innovative practices to challenge their students at the highest levels. Thus, our curricula and lessons are ever-evolving to meet the needs of a diverse learning community.

Teachers annually identify two growth objectives for the students based upon multiple data sources, including the Measures of Future Success rubrics they complete for every child they serve, standardized assessment data, and students' performance information from the previous and current school years. The teachers then monitor and assess their students' progress at least twice during the school year to share with the administrators, so that appropriate modifications or supports may be made if needed. Students' comprehension, phonics and mathematics levels are formally assessed and analyzed for measurable, grade level achievement in grades K-2. Additionally, students in grades K-4 are assessed three times annually for their reading comprehension and fluency.

Standardized testing assessment results are analyzed by the Data Team PLC, comprised of administrators, academic coaches and teachers, and the results are shared with faculty. Teachers also individually analyze the results of the students that they previously taught as well as those they are currently teaching. This data is part of multiple criteria that is used to identify students for remedial or enrichment programming. The consistent high achievement of Sea Girt students reflects the school's strong commitment to quality curriculum and outstanding instructional methodology.