

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. Jason R. Reid

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

Official School Name Piñon Hills Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1479 Stephanie Way

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

City Minden State NV Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 89423-9058

County Douglas

Telephone (775) 267-3622 Fax (775) 267-3846

Web site/URL http://phes.dcsd.net E-mail jreid@dcsd.k12.nv.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*Mrs. Teri White E-mail twhite@dcsd.k12.nv.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Douglas County School District Tel. (775) 782-7177

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. Thomas Moore
(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):
- 7 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 3 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 4 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 14 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
 - Suburban
 - Small city or town in a rural area
 - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2016 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	17	27	44
1	21	20	41
2	21	28	49
3	38	32	70
4	27	26	53
5	41	39	80
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	165	172	337

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 12 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 85 % 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: 12%

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	29
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	18
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	47
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	378
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.124
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	12

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 3 %
10 Total number ELL

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

Spanish

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 19 %
Total number students who qualify: 64
8. Students receiving special education services: 17 %
54 Total number of students served

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

- 0 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 0 Emotional Disturbance
- 1 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Mental Retardation
- 1 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 7 Other Health Impaired
- 13 Specific Learning Disability
- 28 Speech or Language Impairment
- 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 1 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 3 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	1
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	15
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	8
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 21:1
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	97%	96%	95%	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.

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

Piñon Hills Elementary parents, staff and community encourage all students to actively use their minds and bodies in striving for excellence in academics and citizenship.

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

Piñon Hills Elementary School is located in a small rural community with a diverse population of both working class and stay-at-home parents. We have very strong parent and community support. PHES has a low transient rate with consistent attendance. We are a 5-star school with 337 students at all academic levels. Our mission statement reflects our strength within our community.

The Piñon Hills Elementary School students, parents, staff, and community encourage the use of active minds and bodies in striving for excellence in academics and citizenship.

Twenty years ago, PHES launched its opening due to a population increase in Douglas County. We are known for our welcoming and open-door policy which encourages families to work with teachers and students alike. We have found great success in connecting with our students through many of our special programs and events.

Historically, our school hosts special family nights. Parents come with their children to learn, work on activities, and spend time with staff. Students and parents make their learning experiences a family affair. During monthly Parent University nights, reading strategies are taught to parents to use with their children.

Our Parent-Teacher Organization is strong and supportive. One of the more popular events is our annual Ice Cream Social. Families and community members are invited to come for a night of food, games, raffles, auctions, and fun. Our school has benefited from this fundraiser with technology support, assemblies, field trips, playground equipment, literacy materials, and other school needs. Since 2010, our school staff, students, and families have participated in our Annual Walk-a-Thon. This takes place at the beginning of each school year. Students earn pledges for laps walked and the funds directly support the classrooms.

Our student council believes in giving back by promoting our community food drive. This group also plans our special student fun days as well as staff appreciation week. These students are solving real-world problems as they diligently gain experience with their work.

At PHES, we empower our academically gifted (GT) students by providing enrichment so they may grow and thrive in a challenging classroom community. These students are then able to share their learning with their peers in the regular classroom. With their initiative and self-direction, our GT students are role models and assets as leaders.

We have school-wide proactive behavior expectations. Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) is our behavior model that helps students understand expectations in all areas of the school which include Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Kind, and Be Ready to Learn. Our strategies include defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behaviors. In 2012, we were designated the Kindest School in America by thinkkindness.org.

PHES students learn how to apply their academic abilities by participating in our yearly science and invention fair. Participants read, think logically, write, and use math skills, technology, statistics, and data analysis to create their projects. Students build confidence as they promote scientific inquiry and participation. Our guidance counselor teaches monthly lessons to all grade levels. Strategies in personal and social development are taught including: identifying and solving problems, making friends, communication, and listening. She supports all staff members and parents as well.

We believe imbedding creative arts into education is an integral part of the development of each human being. The arts promote self-esteem, group and self-motivation, creativity, and artistic expression. Our music program leads to yearly concerts for the community to enjoy. Our art program showcases each students' artwork and promotes diversity and harmony. A valuable learning experience we offer our students is a differentiated reading incentive program. For over 15 years, our school has implemented Reading Counts or Accelerated Reader in grades K-6, and more recently, grades 2 – 5. We consistently have between 80 – 90% of students reaching their monthly goals. Our PTO financially sponsors prizes to

encourage students to become successful, independent readers.

We are honored to be considered for the National Blue Ribbon award. Without reservation, we believe our success can be directly attributed to the strong relationships we build with our students. Every staff member is dedicated to the strategies of building character and enabling learners to reach their personal potential by connecting with each and every child on campus. We have high expectations with relevant and rigorous curriculum, assessments, and goal-setting. We provide a safe and supportive learning environment in each classroom as well as throughout the entire school. Our teachers are highly qualified and participate in innovative professional development. We communicate, collaborate, and are productive and accountable. Our data shows that learning outcomes at PHES are indicative of caring professionals knowing and understanding that all students can achieve regardless of race, ability, or socio-economic status. Teachers exhibit expertise, enthusiasm, and instill a love of learning in their students. Our administration works diligently with each and every teacher to assure strong instructional practices and provide opportunities to learn from each other. We improve through self-monitoring and professional feedback, and adapt to the ever-changing world of education with innovation, creativity, and compassion.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

At the heart of literacy instruction at Pinon Hills Elementary School is the strong-held belief that all students can become independent and proficient readers and writers and learn to read and comprehend literary and informational text of appropriate grade-level complexity. Literature used with students includes poetry, drama and narrative, history/social studies, science and technical texts. Our commitment to literacy begins in kindergarten and offers support for students in all content areas through fifth grade. The Nevada Academic Content Standards, aligned to the Common Core, provide the framework for “what” students need to be able to demonstrate, and the balanced literacy instruction explains “how” the teachers will ensure instruction meets the needs of all students. All teachers at PHES are expected to follow a balanced literacy approach to literacy instruction that is rooted in years of research. This allows teachers to provide a tier instruction and supports for all students based on strong core instruction, regular frequent monitoring of all students, and interventions and instructional supports for students not reading at or above grade level.

Our teachers integrate reading, writing, listening, and speaking instruction throughout all content areas. They rely on assessment to drive the instructional approach in the classroom. As students advance through the grades, they are expected to learn the skills and strategies necessary to be literate and transfer them to their own reading of text and writing across content areas. Each classroom provides a balance of quality grade-level informational and literary complex text materials to support instruction and learning. All teachers afford opportunities for students to take part in a variety of rich conversations related to important grade-level content and text that include listening attentively, building on others’ ideas and persuasively expressing their own ideas supported by citations and references to the text. All classrooms have a variety of books, resources, and reading materials are displayed and readily available to students.

PHES Mathematics instruction follows Nevada Academic Content Standards. Our curriculum focuses on balancing fluency practice with deep problem solving and developing the eight mathematical practices for all students. The practices include engaging students in making sense of problems and persevering in solving them, reasoning abstractly and quantitatively, constructing viable arguments and critiquing the reasoning of others, modeling with mathematics, using appropriate tools, strategically attending to precision, looking for and making use of structure, and looking for and expressing regularity in repeated reasoning. PHES has been utilizing Eureka Math materials. These materials are aligned to the Nevada Academic Content Standards in mathematics and carefully sequence instruction into modules. With a heavy emphasis on understanding the process of math, students learn the “why” of how math works.

Our science instruction is based on Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The NGSS framework requires students to operate by incorporating three dimensions of learning: Science and Engineering Practices, Crosscutting Concepts, and Disciplinary Core Ideas. Our district teachers create inquiry-based science kits that are used as the primary instructional source to provide students with hands-on experiments and activities to understand and meet the NVACS while investigating, experimenting with, and learning about the scientific process. Teachers integrate informational text, literature, videos, field trips, projects, and our school garden. Science is taught both in isolation and as an integrated part of other subject areas to provide a deeper understanding of concepts. Students also keep science notebooks with focus questions, observation notes, data, and reflections of their learning. Additionally, Scholastic News/Weekly Reader magazines are used for students to learn about plants, animals, famous scientists, and many other scientific concepts.

Social Studies instruction includes the study of history, geography, economics, and civics and is integrated throughout subjects in the form of thematic units including projects and research. In kindergarten, we focus on self, home, family, and the school. First and second graders learn about people and places. In third grade, we teach about our community and in fourth grade our instruction focuses on Nevada History and culture. Fifth graders are exposed to curriculum surrounding the United States. Grade levels engage in field trips and learn from presenters from local civics and historical groups to develop an understanding of the world around them. Students also learn social studies through Scholastic News Weekly reader magazines.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Our students are provided opportunities to acquire and develop essential skills through additional non-core subjects throughout each school year. We are fortunate to be in a district that values visual arts, general music and fifth grade band, physical education, comprehensive counseling and guidance, and technology for all students at the elementary level. The skills developed and acquired through these programs are communication, oral presentation, social emotional, self-discipline, goal setting, listening, adaptation, language, spatial logical reasoning, pattern recognition, stage presence, gross motor, teamwork, sportsmanship, connection to community, and literacy.

Our visual art curriculum is based on Nevada State Art Standards. All students have the opportunity to learn about art during one hour of visual art class each week. Students are exposed to various types of art beginning in kindergarten and consistently through fifth grade. The art curriculum supports the acquisition of essential skills in a number of ways and reinforces the regular core subjects. Some of the most outstanding skills include literacy processes, spatial awareness, and visual literacy. Spatial awareness is an essential life skill. Coordination of vision, muscle control, and movement planning are developmental milestones for students. Art class gives students time to understand spatial relationships through active exploration. For example, students work with dough or clay to make 3-Dimensional objects that need to stand or fit together which helps students see them from different perspectives. In fifth grade science class, students made human skeletons and used spatial relationships to make the spine appear behind the ribs on a 2-Dimensional surface. Visual literacy is an essential skill that draws connections to the core curriculum. The ability to interpret, negotiate and understand images is imbedded in the art curriculum. Understanding American symbols in fourth grade history is supported when they are expected to create symbols of their own. Students use visual literacy when considering why symbols include certain objects. Students need to have visual literacy in order to communicate in school and the rest of the world. Deliberate cross curricular assignments and support by teacher collaboration forge a meaningful program with a clear purpose. The shared experience of learning about different perspectives and finding new ways to collaborate with each other has an impact on student development and translates in all content areas. They consider details and talk about things that are important to them through art. Finally, they learn to appreciate and tolerate differences which generates positive attitudes towards school because of the connections they make through our art curriculum.

Performing arts instruction is accomplished through general music classes for all grades kindergarten through fifth grade as well as beginning band as an elective for fifth graders. Our music curriculum addresses all national and Nevada State Music Standards as well as provides performance opportunities for all students. In addition to vocals, students are introduced to harmonic/melodic instruments including glockenspiels and hand chimes. Additionally, third grade and fourth grade students are provided instruction on how to play the ukulele and guitar respectively. Finally, in band students choose to learn to play the flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, trombone, percussion, or bass guitar. An example of how music instruction supports all reading foundational skills is through the phonological skill of rhyming. The ability to recognize and produce rhyming words is a foundational phonological skill in understanding word structure and its role in reading and writing music. In music class students identify, say, and sing rhyming words.

Physical education at Pinion Hills Elementary is provided thirty minutes a week for all students in kindergarten through fifth grade. Our PE curriculum addresses all Nevada State Physical Education Standards. This curriculum incorporates muscular strength, muscular endurance, cardiovascular endurance, flexibility, skill acquisition and development, and most importantly, fun. Using a variety of games and activities, grade levels work on developmentally appropriate skills. Kindergarten through second graders develop gross motor skills, spatial awareness, loco-motor skills, movement patterns, and appropriate personal and social behavior during physical activities. Third through fifth graders learn skills necessary to participate in organized activities such as soccer, basketball, tennis, and volleyball. They build confidence in their ability to develop new skills.

Our school counseling program follows the American School Counselors Association National Model and provides a comprehensive guidance program for students in kindergarten thru fifth grade. All students have

access to whole class, small group and individual counseling. The guidance curriculum focuses on self-control, social/emotional growth and academic success. Students have monthly lessons on self-control, following school expectations, respecting differences, bullying, managing stress, how our behavior impacts others, working cooperatively, career, and peer pressure. Furthermore, students learn about expressing feelings, making good choices, safety, effective communicating, anger management, tattling versus reporting, and personal space. Appropriate grade level literature is utilized to support all areas of study.

Students develop computer skills through engaging lessons utilizing both our computer lab and our mobile chromebook carts. Our staff provides technology instruction sharing nine Chromebook carts and one computer lab. In addition, to learning computer skills, students practice core subject skills using our technological devices. For example, students create writing projects linked to classroom writing instruction. Google classroom is readily utilized in fourth and fifth grade and sporadically utilized in kindergarten through third grade. Finally, all teachers have been trained in teaching computer coding using the code.org curriculum. Coding is taught in all grade levels at least once per month.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Our philosophy with regards to high quality instruction is to be deliberate and systematic about meeting the needs of all students. We truly believe that we do an exceptional job of accomplishing this through hiring and retaining exceptional professionals, using data to inform all planning and instruction, utilizing high quality instructional methods, and designing targeted interventions based on data.

Our professionals have a global perspective to ensure that all students demonstrate growth. Staff cohesion and collaboration about meeting the needs of all students for the current school year begins within the last month of the previous school year. Upon completing our integrated system of assigning students to classes, we provide release time for teachers who are teaching the students in the current year to meet with the teachers who will be receiving the students in the subsequent school year. The purpose of this process is to strategically and efficiently meet all students' needs as they matriculate through the grade levels. Through this process we have successfully supported students using data, targeted skills and specific instructional practices in planning for differentiated learning. While ongoing data collection and instructional adjustments are critical throughout the school year, these spring meetings allow teachers to begin meeting the needs of all students beginning the first day of school. During kindergarten registration in the spring, our reading specialist administers a one on one readiness assessment with each incoming kindergartener. Therefore, precious time is not lost and we can support early intervention more efficiently. We believe this process serves three very valuable purposes. First, we share the results with parents immediately and provide them with resources and strategies to support the development of specific skills prior to the start of school. Second, our kindergarten teachers use the data to design instruction to best meet the needs of these new learners. Finally, our school is well informed based on the data to create class rosters that are truly heterogeneous. As a result, we are able to provide the best well-rounded positive first educational experience possible for all students.

When designing instruction, teachers craft learning objectives targeting specific standards that are linked to previous learning, and clearly communicate purpose and relevance. Students participate in creative learning tasks that require high cognitive effort while differentiating and enriching to support all levels of learners. Teachers incorporate opportunities for students to make meaning through discourse, non-verbal representations, and utilizing prior knowledge. In addition, students are provided opportunities to reflect on their learning, self-monitor and take specific action to ensure mastery. Finally, teachers use summative and formative assessment data to plan for future learning. These various instructional methods are intertwined with balanced literacy, mathematical practices and word study. These strategic approaches guarantee that differentiated instruction is taking place throughout the day. Effective instruction balances the elements of literacy to specifically target the unique needs of all students. All teachers implement high-yield content reading strategies such as read aloud, shared reading, guided reading, directed reading and writing, and independent reading and writing as part of their primary instruction. Our math curriculum provides teachers with a comprehensive outline that utilizes the eight mathematical practices. The activities within each module include math fluency, direct instruction, guided practice, problem set, exit ticket, and summative assessments. All classroom teachers administer a word study assessment to determine each students' stage

of spelling development. Teachers use ability grouping for word study instruction in order to ensure that students acquire all phonics patterns. As a result our students have increased success in reading, spelling and writing.

In order to ensure that every student is excelling in all skills, we use a variety of assessments to design instruction. In all grades we administer a computer based adaptive assessment in math and reading called the Measure of Academic Progress Assessment in the fall, winter and spring. We also administer this assessment anytime a new student enrolls in our school. This is one of our district assessments that teachers use to design differentiated lessons, and measure student growth and teacher effectiveness. We also administer the Developmental Reading Assessment to all students in grades kindergarten through third grade in the fall and spring. Again, new students are assessed using this tool upon enrollment. This assessment has a progress monitor component that we administer at the end of the second trimester. We use the results of these assessments to design differentiated reading instruction, targeted reading interventions and literacy enrichment activities. For example, teachers will design both heterogeneous and homogeneous groups based on the results. At each testing juncture, teams of teachers and specialists analyze the data to determine the effectiveness of the instruction, interventions and enrichment. They examine root causes of both positive and challenging results. Instruction, interventions and enrichment are redesigned as a result of this ongoing analysis of data and teacher collaboration.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Our school's culture and climate operates in a manner where student engagement and motivation are involved in our everyday actions. Our overarching mission is to create and maintain such a positive, engaging and supportive learning environment that all students and staff are excited to come to school every day. All teachers promote growth mindset and apply Maslow's hierarchy of needs to support social and emotional growth on a daily basis. We strive to support student's academic, social, and emotional growth in a variety of ways. Additionally, several key stakeholders and peers play a part in ensuring that teachers feel valued and supported.

To help us engage, motivate, and teach students, we are currently implementing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports or PBIS at our school. Our PBIS team includes a parent, teacher, administrator, counselor, kindergarten aide, playground aide, custodian, and secretary. Discussions and actions include supporting academic, social and emotional engagement of our students. We collectively celebrate student birthdays weekly by giving a birthday card and bracelet, and announcing their names over the intercom to the whole school. Finally, all staff acknowledge students for exhibiting positive behaviors, random acts of kindness and being actively engaged in learning with "Be Kind Like Josh" bracelets, Positive Behavior Cards, weekly acknowledgements in front of peers, monthly Horseshoe Hero awards, and monthly celebrations. Academics are supported through our reading incentive program in which students earn prizes and movies for meeting or exceeding reading goals. We provide ice cream socials for students who have earned a place on the academic honor roll and display student work in the hallways and classrooms. Students also earn academic awards each trimester for attendance, effort, improvement and high achievement. Socially, we involve parents and community members throughout the school year. For example, our annual walk-a-thon and ice cream social are two community events in which our Parent Teacher Organization coordinates all stake holders to raise money for academic, social, and emotional programs and activities. Emotional growth is supported through weekly student acknowledgement during lunch, a bulletin board showcasing photos of students, class photos at the entrance of the school, and student artwork in the hallways. Additionally, our school counselor regularly teaches lessons to all students concerning emotional well-being and social skills.

Teachers being valued and supported is ingrained within the heart of our school culture. Teachers receive weekly positive feedback from administrators in regards to their teaching. Catered lunches are provided by administration for accomplishing academic and social benchmarks. Several staff bulletin boards are creatively maintained to celebrate staff and display staff positively interacting. Likewise, teachers and staff recognize each other at monthly meetings by telling a positive story and giving recognition to their peers. Teachers also model teamwork by partaking in staff building activities at monthly assemblies in front of our students. Our staff leads by example, and continues to strive for excellence in making our school an exciting place to learn and work.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Our family engagement philosophy is focused on building relationships and equipping families with information, tools and resources to foster a well-rounded positive learning experience for all students. We provide families with learning opportunities, encourage involvement during school, and continually seek feedback. As a result, our families have a connection with the school and our students are successful learners.

As a beginning step to building valuable relationships, our principal provides all new families with a school tour and communicates that our school expects to create and maintain an exceptionally positive and engaging learning environment. We also offer a new family orientation prior to the start of school each year. At this event, our principal, counselor, teachers, reading specialist, and parent teacher organization members provide valuable information to parents. Back to School Night is also a key component to involving parents. This is an opportunity for parents to learn specific information such as teaching methods,

content standards, expectations, and effective communication strategies to better support their student. Each grade level plans an additional family engagement night. Prior to planning, the teachers use surveys to provide parents with discussion options for the evening. The program is then designed using the feedback from the surveys. Kindergarten is a particularly important orientation for our families. As part of the registration process, our reading specialist administers a readiness assessment to each student. Parents are provided with the results, and suggestions and resources for improved skill acquisition prior to the start of school. To support readers at all levels, five presentations entitled Parent University are conducted throughout the school year. These sessions provide valuable information for parents on topics such as recommended reading resources, phonological awareness, comprehension strategies, phonics, and summer reading suggestions.

All school staff explicitly encourage parent involvement during the school day. We value volunteers and as a result, are fortunate to have a high percentage of parents, grandparents, and community members on campus every week helping in the classrooms and supporting small group instruction. This involvement makes our students feel supported, safe and provides a lasting model for participation and empowerment. Communication between school and home is a high priority. Our teachers and staff connect with parents regularly using email, telephone and in person conferencing.

Our goals regarding community involvement are to teach our youth to value character and service, and to explore opportunities for all stakeholders to support those in our community who are less fortunate. First, we partner with the Josh Stevens Foundation and its mission to promote kindness around the world. Second, our student council has partnered with our local fire district's participation in the annual Scott Firefighter Climb. This worldwide event raises funds supporting the mission of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Finally, we donate a portion of funds raised from our annual walk-a-thon to our local food closet.

3. Professional Development:

PHES teachers are incredibly motivated to learn and grow in ways to best support all students. Our professional development plan is directly linked to curriculum, research-based instructional practices, growth mindset, computer coding instruction, and positive behavior intervention supports. All professional development is outcome based, and our trainers or facilitators model best instructional practices during each session. All ongoing training is designed based on the needs and professional aptitude of our staff. Staff members provide valuable input and feedback that is used to plan each training session. We utilize district PD staff, administrators, grade band coaches, literacy specialists, and identified exceptional classroom teachers as facilitators to provide a variety of avenues for teachers to learn and apply high quality instruction. Following each session, teachers are expected to identify specific strategies, ideas, or practices that they will implement with their students.

Our instructional approach to professional development is to provide comprehensive initial training for all current and new staff. Next, teachers engage in monthly cohort sessions to model and share effective ways to implement the various initiatives and techniques. During these sessions, teachers also discuss ways to enrich curriculum for advanced students as well as how to provide interventions and differentiation for students who require additional support. Additionally, we assign grade band coaches who provide monthly professional development and are readily available to support the specific learning needs for each teacher within the grade band. Coaches provide workshops, model instruction, and facilitate peer observations. Peer observation is one of the most powerful approaches that we utilize to build capacity in order to accomplish effective implementation of all professional training. Teachers have the opportunity to observe effective practices, methods and techniques as well as debrief with the teacher they observed for clarification and understanding. During the debrief session, teachers engage in collaborative professional learning. Our teachers actively seek to observe others as well as welcome the opportunity to be observed. In order to ensure fidelity, PD staff, administrators, grade band coaches, and literacy specialists monitor instruction through weekly observation of all teachers. Teachers are provided written and verbal feedback for reflection and growth.

Throughout this process, we continue to successfully build capacity among our teachers in the areas of

literacy and math instruction, data collection, intervention and enrichment design, coding instruction, growth mindset and positive behavior intervention supports. As a result of our focus on continual instructional improvement, our growth in student achievement has sustained a positive trajectory. We expect through exceptional instruction, will we meet our annual goal to have 100% of our students demonstrate expected growth or greater on our district MAP assessment in both math and reading. Based on our data, an average of 83% of our students have met this goal annually during the past five years, which is a direct reflection of the effectiveness of our staff.

4. School Leadership:

Our leadership philosophy focuses on providing a well-rounded positive learning experience while maintaining a culture of continuous improvement for all students and staff. Our administrators view their role as being visible, accessible, responsive, and supportive in order to allow our amazing staff to do the great work that they do with our students and families. We engage in shared decision making, utilizing structured opportunities for teacher feedback and reflection, and incorporate growth mindset into our instructional practices to effectively achieve our philosophy.

Our principal and assistant principal, continually collect both formal and informal feedback from all staff, parents and students. They value shared decision making in which grade level teachers, specialists, classified staff and parents have input in all site decisions through structured teams. Our Site Governance Team, analyzes a variety of data using our school performance planning process to establish and monitor progress toward our major goals and objectives for the year. This process informs all decisions regarding instructional programs, family engagement, and professional development. Our Data Based Decision Making Team, supports classroom teachers in our tiered instructional intervention process. Our Positive Behavior Intervention Supports Team, establishes school-wide behavior expectations, processes for teaching and reinforcing expectations, designs professional development and analyzes behavior data for school-wide adjustments and re-teaching. Our Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics Team, makes decisions regarding initiatives to provide our students opportunities to enhance and enrich their learning experience as well as develop 21st century skills. This commitment to work together as a school community has proven to yield exceptional results.

Our principal and assistant principal structure opportunities to engage teachers in reflecting on their practice and taking action to improve student learning through weekly informal observations in every classroom. Within this structure, they provide systematic feedback, both written and verbal, that is linked to research-based best instructional practices. During monthly professional learning communities, teacher teams analyze both observational data and student learning data to plan for successful outcomes for students. This process also reinforces clear and explicit expectations for high quality instruction throughout all grade levels and programs. The results of this ongoing feedback, reflection, and instructional adjustments proves improved instructional practice and academic excellence.

Our staff utilizes Dr. Carol Dweck's research to promote growth mindset in students and Maslow's hierarchy of needs to provide a positive learning experience. We intentionally engage students in difficult tasks and explicitly teach them that through their effort and struggles, their intelligence will increase. In addition, we maintain environments in which all students feel safe taking risks and are encouraged to make mistakes. As a result, our students more effectively retain concepts, utilize strategies, and develop skills for future success in life. In addition, our students demonstrate increased self-esteem and experience self-actualization.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The most significant influence on our school success is our efforts to successfully maintain an exceptional climate and school environment. In addition to providing high quality instruction, our staff is extremely motivated to create a positive, engaging and supportive learning environment. This is evident by student and staff excitement about coming to school every day. We accomplish this through responding to data from student surveys and employing practices, interventions, and strategies that yield a high effect size or standardized gain with regards to student achievement. From our annual student survey, 92% of our students report that they are happy at school. In addition to the strategies described in our climate narrative, we achieve our exceptional learning environment through building sound relationships from day one, while making connections with students and families, and ensuring a safe and respectful environment.

Sound relationships yield almost two years of relative student growth at a 0.72 effect size. Our staff focuses on making all students their number one priority, and ensures that each individual feels that they are an integral part of our school. All students appreciate that our staff knows them by name and respects them as individuals. In addition, our staff takes the time necessary to build genuine relationships, and learn important details about our students. Staff members continuously make efforts to attend student events outside of school like recreational sporting events, concerts and drama productions. Our annual theme is, “Every Student Matters and Every Moment Counts to Make a Difference.” As a result, 93% of PHES students report that staff make efforts to build relationships with them.

Connecting and making our students have a sense of belonging motivates them to achieve at school, which has a relative effect size of 0.48. Survey results indicate that 87% of our students have strong feelings of acceptance and belonging, and report that they get along well with other students. We provide opportunities for our students to take ownership of their learning and become responsible individuals. Our PTO funds Be Kind, Walk-a-thon, and Coding t-shirts for all students making efforts to support unification and belonging for all students. These shirts are worn on spirit days each week. All staff actively engage with students during recess, passing time, and lunch on a daily basis. Our principal focuses on making personal contact with all students and staff every day. As a result of these strategies, our students experience increased motivation and heightened student engagement.

Maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment is the foundation of Maslow’s hierarchy of social and emotional needs. Our students report that their peers like and respect one another. We focus on creating an environment that we would all want for our own children and grandchildren. Through clear communication, modeling, and enforcement of behavior expectations, our students experience safety, respect, kindness, responsibility and learning. Our students report at a rate of 96%, that they feel safe at school and 88% report being in an environment where they are respected and treated with kindness. In addition, 86% of our students report that they have not been bullied, and likewise attempt to prevent bullying while at school.