

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. Brian Tokar

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

Official School Name Greenville Junior/Senior High School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 9 Donation Road

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

City Greenville State PA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 16125-1799

County Mercer County

Telephone (724) 588-2500 Fax _____

Web site/URL http://greenvillejrsrhigh.pa.gah.scho
olinsites.com/ E-mail btokar@greenville.k12.pa.us

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Mark Ferrara E-mail mferrara@greenville.k12.pa.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Greenville Area School District Tel. (724) 588-2500

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. Dennis Webber
(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):
- 2 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 3 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

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

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	54	49	103
8	42	45	87
9	62	62	124
10	68	52	120
11	55	54	109
12 or higher	59	50	109
Total Students	340	312	652

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 3 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 93 % White
 - 1 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2015 – 2016 school year: 16%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	48
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	53
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	101
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	635
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.159
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	16

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: 41 %
Total number students who qualify: 267

8. Students receiving special education services: 16 %
104 Total number of students served

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

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <u>10</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>19</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>54</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>7</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>5</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>7</u> Mental Retardation | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>0</u> 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:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	25
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	21
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	9
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 26:1
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	93%	92%	91%	92%	92%
High school graduation rate	96%	96%	92%	95%	94%

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	100
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	58%
Enrolled in a community college	5%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	4%
Found employment	4%
Joined the military or other public service	8%
Other	21%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.
Yes No X
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.
Establish and maintain a positive school climate that prioritizes high expectations for all students, supported by outstanding instructional leadership.
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

Greenville Area High School is dedicated to the mission that every child is a candidate for greatness. We are a small high school of approximately 680 students, grades seven through twelve, located in rural northwestern Pennsylvania. The borough of Greenville boasts a population of approximately 5,900 inhabitants. The median household income is 37% below the state average making 41% of our students eligible for free and reduced lunches. Greenville was founded on heavy industry, but by the mid 1980s, most of those large companies pulled out leaving an economic hole which has led to the loss of over 30% of our population of both white and blue collar workers. Despite these hardships, Greenville High School continues to offer increased opportunities both academically and extracurricularly that allow our students to achieve future success.

The backbone of our success is steeped in traditions that are fully supported by the faculty, students, and community members. For over 30 years our sophomores have attended the annual Sophomore Retreat held at McKeever Environmental Center where students bond through team-building, risk-taking, and shared experiences. The seventh graders attend the annual Seventh Grade Happening. Our athletic programs are perennial powerhouses. Musically, we offer four different bands including the state recognized Steel Drum band, and three different choirs. Our annual art show draws in over 500 people from the community, allowing our art students to showcase their talents. In 2001, our Technology and Engineering program was named Program of the Year for Pennsylvania by the Technology and Engineering Education Association of PA and the International Technology and Engineering Education Association. A major renovation completed in 1999 updated six modern science labs, five computer labs, a media center, a multi-faceted art center including a dedicated ceramics studio, a musical wing, and a renovated technology and engineering suite highlighting a progressive shift from industrial arts to technology and engineering. All of these traditions and milestones have helped to establish our school as a beacon of positivity and success in an otherwise distressed community.

GHS has been able to close the achievement gap and address the emotional, physical, social, and cultural needs of our students by providing multiple key strategies that have challenged our students to succeed. Academically we offer 15 College in High School (CHS) and Advanced Placement (AP) courses in association with tier-one universities, allowing students to graduate from high school with, realistically, enough credit to encompass their freshman year of college. Independent studies coordinated by teachers, students, and parents have allowed our students unique opportunities in advanced studies. We offer Business Week and the Entrepreneurship Academy which introduces students to relevant business opportunities. We also offer a comprehensive modern Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) program that promotes critical thinking and problem solving beginning in seventh grade. Our after-school tutoring program, staffed by rotating faculty members, along with our math and science remediation and mastery, has facilitated the opportunity to target struggling students. We offer a custom-tailored, parallel curriculum, punctuated by a transitional program into a post-secondary environment for our learning support students.

A recent cultural shift to our school has been the inclusion of the American Scholar Group which allows students from other countries to attend GHS and participate in our programs. It has allowed our students to serve as International Mentors. We are also partnering with the Meten Group from China where students in China participate in the 2 + 1 program, allowing students to take two years of our curriculum in China and then matriculate to GHS as a senior.

We offer programs such as GATEWAYS (a life skills program serving severely emotionally, physically, and cognitively impaired students), an Autistic Support class, and Little Buddies (a program pairing a senior high student with an at-risk elementary student). Additionally, faculty and school clubs support the “Reason for the Season” campaign by annually donating over \$3,000 at Christmas time to share good will for those with less. Socially, our students can serve as mentors in the GATEWAYS program, as well as junior and senior mentors to underclassmen. Our Blue Crew, a student-run spirit group, is a highly regarded, energetic, and inclusive student section at athletic events.

Greenville High School's physical plant serves as a centerpiece and source of pride for students, faculty, and community members. We recently updated our gymnasium with new bleachers, lights, and a restored playing surface. Turf was added to our athletic stadium, along with a track re-surfacing that hosts multiple county-wide events. Upgrades to school security with a new secure entrance vestibule, and a plethora of cameras have created a safer environment for everyone. Technology upgrades to our wireless system, in addition to interactive whiteboards in every classroom, affords students and teachers the opportunity to incorporate the latest technology in their daily lessons.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

The core subjects offered by Greenville High School in the fields of mathematics, science, social studies, and English/Language Arts (ELA) were all developed in alignment with the Pennsylvania State Core Standards.

The mathematics department's mission is to graduate students who are confident thinkers and empowered learners. Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System (PVAAS) benchmark data is used to identify when students are ready for Algebra I candidacy. Student readiness and a rigorous Algebra I program has resulted in a 100% success rate for seventh graders and over 90% success rate of eighth graders on the Keystone Algebra I Exam. The curriculum offers multiple tracks for each student to pursue. The accelerated track begins with Keystone Algebra I in seventh grade, progresses through courses such as CHS Statistics, CHS Precalculus, and CHS Calculus I, and culminates with CHS Calculus II. The practical track starts with seventh grade Common Core Math and terminates with a consumer/career course called Math for the Modern World. The district has provided staffing to offer students additional math courses called Math Mastery and Algebra I Recitation to galvanize preparation for state-mandated Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) Math and Keystone Algebra I Exams.

All grade levels of science instruction are centered around an inquiry based, hands-on approach to learning science. Seventh and eighth grades focus on the scientific method and teaching students how to think critically and scientifically. The foundation set forth in junior high prepares students for success on the PSSA science assessment, as well as laying a strong foundation for their high school science courses. The freshman class is homogeneously grouped for their biology instruction and preparation for their Biology Keystone Exam. Instructors use a wide variety of instructional techniques, including a strong focus on laboratory experience, highlighting cooperative and collaborative learning strategies to prepare the students for future courses and success on the Biology Keystone Exam. Any students not achieving proficient scores on the exam are offered remediation in the form of after-school tutoring sessions and biology remediation classes. This past year, PVAAS data in student growth showed an achievement of 100% in closing the achievement gap in biology. In tenth through twelfth grade, students are offered a wide variety of science classes to choose from, including specialty courses like Marine Biology and Woodland Ecology. CHS classes include biology, chemistry, and anatomy and physiology.

In order for students to acquire foundational skills, our social studies students are grouped heterogeneously, allowing the staff to focus on higher-order thinking skills, reading analysis and writing skills, and applying historical learning to modern situations. Additionally, we emphasize the principles that help students to understand and productively engage in social, political, and community issues. For our accelerated learners we offer two CHS courses through the University of Pittsburgh: Psychology and American Political Process. Cross-curricular learning opportunities abound, especially with the English and Art departments.

Our seventh and eighth grade ELA classes offer three tracks to accommodate for the various needs of our students. Our courses are team-taught for a double period: one period focuses on reading skills, and the second period focuses on writing, grammar, and literary analysis. Our accelerated junior high students participate in the Youngstown State University English Festival and we offer the unique course of Great Books. At the high school level, our students are able to take accelerated, college prep, or practical levels of English, as well as AP English Literature and Composition and AP English Language and Composition in their junior and senior years. We also offer CHS Argument and Performance which sponsored a debate with research scientists from the University of Pittsburgh and Clarion University and Pymatuning State Park allowing for a cross-curricular learning opportunity with the science department. Our high school students can take Newspaper and Yearbook Journalism classes, and our yearbook has won awards for excellence in journalism. The English curriculum meets the standards for reading, writing, speaking, and listening while exposing students to a wide variety of genres and cultures including American, British, and World literature. Students participate in discussion, group work, and challenging writing exercises that focus on foundational skills as well as teaching empathy, anti-bias, tolerance, and celebrating the individual. The writing process

is stressed at every level and is reinforced through state and district rubrics which provide consistent evaluation. Research paper writing is required in both ninth and twelfth grade, providing other core subjects with a consistent writing style.

Students can choose from 15 CHS courses where they can earn college credit while attending high school. We hold a career fair in both eighth and tenth grade. Juniors and seniors attend a college fair at Thiel College, as well as meet with the many colleges representatives who visit our school. Field trip opportunities to various trade schools and job shadowing are offered to students as well. GHS hosts a Careers in Mathematics and Statistics Panel Discussion with professionals from several colleges and companies. Students may choose to attend the Mercer County Career Center or the Entrepreneurship Academy.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Students have the opportunity to become well-rounded individuals through all of our other course offerings. All seventh graders complete a 12 week rotational block of Innovation and Invention (STEAM), Computers, and Math Mastery. This exploratory voyage continues in eighth grade with an additional rotational block in Family and Consumer Science, art, and music. In eighth grade students complete an 18 week rotational block of Engineering All Around (STEAM) and physical education. Integrated into this block is a career awareness component so students can begin to discover opportunities for career success. A noteworthy addition is that the seventh and eighth grade advanced ELA students have the option to take high school level elective classes in the curricular areas of media, art, and computer science. All of these exploratory options provide our students with focused opportunities that allow them to explore and determine their path for myriad elective options at the high school level.

The Wellness curriculum is currently required at every grade level and focuses on creating a culture of students who make healthy decisions, both mentally and physically. A key component of this area is the Safety Ed, Test Prep, and Life Prep classes, offered to our sophomores with a focus on career awareness, exploration, and individual accountability. Students have elective options in Discovery and Creative Foods and Sports Medicine. Overall, the Wellness department provides direct instruction in content essential for a student's well-being.

We offer upwards of 40 non-core elective courses at the high school level, with our students averaging over three elective courses per year. Our foreign language program offers Spanish I-IV daily, with an opportunity to take CHS Spanish III and IV. The Spanish Club sponsors an annual Foreign Language Week, collaborating with Rotary International to host several exchange students for cultural immersion. Traditionally, students wanting to explore other foreign languages can take distance learning classes.

The Computer Science curriculum is a comprehensive study program that emphasizes the foundations of algorithmic and logical thinking. It utilizes game making techniques to teach programming concepts as a way to get the computer to carry out an algorithm. It is important to note that students have the potential to earn one math credit toward graduation for the successful completion of both the Introduction to and Intermediate Programming course. Furthermore, the media production students learn to use video cameras and video editing software to efficiently and creatively communicate a message to an audience. Students collaborate to produce videos that are broadcast on the school's closed-circuit television station and across the web.

Our district has a tremendous amount of pride in our applied arts. The music curriculum provides numerous opportunities for our students to explore the areas of theatrical performances, vocal, and instrumental performing groups. The art curriculum provides avenues for exploration in art history, elements and principles of design, drawing, painting, sculpture, and ceramics. Students in both of these areas showcase their talents through community performances. Most noteworthy is the district leadership role in the Empty Bowls Project where students create handmade ceramic bowls that generate donations to fund the international fight against hunger.

The Technology and Engineering program is an integrated activity based program designed to meet the

needs of all students in a technological society. Our Technology and Engineering program emphasizes the practical application of academic skills and novel problem solving experiences. The goal of the program is to encourage students to approach research and development with innovation and invention in mind rather than duplicate what has already been developed. Teachers create an environment for students to think like a scientist, communicate and design like an engineer, and build like a technician. Most significant is a curriculum change that now provides our students with an engineering class that is team-taught by a technology and engineering teacher and a physics teacher. The students are able to earn a math / science credit for taking this course.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Teachers utilize a variety of instructional methods that set high expectations for students and ensure growth and mastery of the material. In ELA courses, team-teaching and leveling students has resulted in 100% of our accelerated students being either proficient or advanced on the PSSAs. By leveling our students in either fundamental, practical, college prep, or accelerated courses, we are able to target the specific needs of each learning group through differentiated instruction. The focus on guided practice and text-dependent analysis in writing has led to an increase in writing scores. In science courses, teachers use hands-on experiments, collaborative learning, and expert speakers, along with a variety of real-life applications resulting in 100% growth on science test scores. Other instructional methods incorporated into daily instruction include direct teaching, large and small group discussion (social studies and ELA courses), and inquiry-based learning, which is integrated into all subject areas. Teachers use all of our available technology in their daily lessons including interactive whiteboards, computer carts, 3D printers, computer labs, interactive online programs, and graphing calculators.

One of the most significant interventions GHS has recently instituted to help close the achievement gap is the use of a web-based, artificially intelligent assessment and learning system into both our junior high and high school math program. It is a successful blend of differentiated instruction, intervention, and assessment in that each student designs their own path to achievement by their solutions to the pretest and knowledge checks along the way. Our seventh grade math students are also enrolled in a Math Mastery class that provides a comprehensive review for the state-mandated PSSA Math and Keystone Algebra I Exams. Remediation classes in Algebra I and Biology are required for students who do not pass the Keystone Exams. We have incorporated a Yellow Card system created by the junior high teachers and principals as an intervention for at-risk students which provides the opportunity for five extra hours of academics per week. These students stay after school and are assisted by teachers to work on closing the achievement gap. Furthermore, student data analysis provides supporting evidence to identify low-achieving and at-risk students for intervention purposes. For students who struggle in class, we provide a more structured environment in our academic support classes.

A variety of assessments are offered to help prepare our students for the state-mandated PSSAs and Keystone Exams. In ELA, teachers design tests to mirror PSSAs with objective, analytical, and essay questions. PVAAS benchmark data is used to identify the proper mathematics course for junior high students. Diagnostic testing highlights areas of greatest focus. By utilizing strategic formative assessments to check for student understanding and summative assessments to assess mastery, teachers are able to ascertain who is struggling, what areas need to be addressed more specifically, and how to better prepare lessons that suit everyone's needs. The amalgam of student assessment data determines where to level students in math and ELA. The Keystone Exam in Literature is given at the culmination of tenth grade, and the Keystone Exams in Algebra I and Biology are given after successful completion of those courses. If students do not pass the Algebra I and Biology exam, they are supported with an intensive remediation class the following year. Students enrolled in CHS courses are required to take rigorous teacher-created and university exams.

We have been successful in closing the achievement gap particularly with two key subgroups: financially at-risk students and special education identified students. Every student has the opportunity to earn college credit through the benevolent support of our university partners and the generous commitment of GHS stakeholders. We offer full or partial scholarships which has increased CHS enrollment for students with demonstrated financial need in our courses by 55% in a two-year period. Students qualifying ahead of

schedule to take Algebra I through PVAAS data has also contributed to closing the gap. Our special education and academically at-risk students have greatly benefitted from our after-school tutoring program, where students have logged over 6,000 hours in one-on-one instructional support. Additionally, the number of students completing district remediation modules and demonstrating growth has led to an increase in scores on the Keystone Exams in Algebra I and Biology.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

At GHS, every student is treated as an individual who is unique and important to the school community. The faculty is encouraged to form close bonds with the students to foster their personal, social, and intellectual growth. Over 50% of our student body is involved in a sport or marching band alone, not to mention the score of extra-curricular and service organizations. For the vast majority of our teachers, the day does not end at the final bell. At the end of the school day, our teachers change hats to work as coaches, advisors, directors, and leaders for our students outside of school. The students get to know the faculty as “real” people who genuinely care about the students’ happiness, well-being, and success.

In our economically depressed community, school faculty strive to give back. Teachers volunteer their time to work at all athletic events. The money that would have been earned by the teachers is donated to a scholarship fund for the students. Last year, over \$6,500 was donated by our teachers to act as scholarships for our students. The “Reason for the Season” fund-raising campaign realized \$3,000 in faculty donations to be distributed to 25 of our most disadvantaged students.

The idea of school unity is supported by programs such as the Seventh Grade Happening and the Sophomore Retreat. Both of these events get students together outside of school to form lasting relationships among classmates and faculty. Junior high students are honored for positive behaviors with our Junior High Student of the Week program. Senior high students are recognized for their academic success with annual honor roll breakfasts. At the Top-Ten Dinner, our ten highest academically ranked seniors select an influential teacher and both are honored at this prestigious event.

The relationships between our faculty is a huge contributor to the positive climate of our school. Our faculty is consistently supportive of each other and work together to ensure we never become stagnant. Our social club sponsors faculty and staff luncheons on in-service days and holidays and donates monthly to a community organization. The relationship between our faculty and administration is truly extraordinary. Our school board, superintendent, and principals are consistently supportive of our faculty, and maintain an open line of communication that fosters unity in our faculty as a whole. Everything we do as a faculty strives to put the students first.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

When you work in a small town like Greenville, you realize just how important the high school is in creating an identity for the town. We do everything we can to build a strong bridge between our building and the members of our community. Our online grading and reporting system provides parents with a “real time” way of keeping track of their child’s grades and attendance. Additionally, teachers post online lesson plans as well as important announcements and documents for each class. Parent phone calls and emails are a regular occurrence for staff members. Our seventh grade teachers host an orientation for parents and students to help familiarize our families with high school staff and support, along with a “move up” video. In tenth grade, the Life Prep class conducts interviews with sophomores and community members/mentors. Our annual Business Week for seniors draws in local businesses that work closely with students. Our Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) honors a Student of the Month for each grade with a luncheon.

Aside from academics, our building is open to the community. Over 50 area veterans participate in our annual Veteran’s Day program. At Christmas time, our Student Council members serve local senior citizens a holiday lunch, accompanied by our steel drum band and choir. Special athletic events such as Pink Out nights and Meet the Trojan Nights bring in community members. Annual plays, concerts, talent shows, and musicals draw large crowds. The senior class sponsors several blood drives where students and community members can donate to a life-saving cause. Additionally, our facilities are donated for use to local organizations such as midget football, Elks and Lions Clubs, and Thiel College.

Several of our student organizations actively participate in the community. Our Key Club participates in a

Rake ‘n Run where they drive around neighborhoods asking homeowners if they would like their leaves raked. They also sing Christmas carols at St. Paul’s Nursing home, as well as pack food at The Good Shepherd Center, a local food pantry. The Rotary Club of Greenville has hosted numerous student exchanges from all over the world, offering our students the chance to travel globally. American History classes place flags on our veterans’ graves for Memorial Day. Our Greenville Education Association (GEA) sponsors a local “Adopt-a-Highway” clean up twice a year. Finally, our annual “Spring into Action” takes our junior high students out to clean and beautify local schools and parks.

3. Professional Development:

Within the past decade, the educational community has undergone major changes in its view of curriculum, instruction, standards, and assessment. The most significant transition is the Pennsylvania Department of Education’s shift to common core standards with a corresponding focus on rigor and relevance. In light of these changes, a greater emphasis has been placed on professional development. GHS provides in-house professional development opportunities to all teachers. In-service days and Access Hours provide teachers with the opportunity to earn upwards of 40 Act 48 hours per year. The district also encourages and funds outside professional development opportunities for all teachers. Instructors have networked with several schools in the surrounding area to establish a network of resources for teachers. The district is committed to providing opportunities for professional release time for instructors to network, attend training sessions, and grow professionally.

Competitive grant work has also propelled our professional development. Teacher training and consistent one-to-one implementation of colored graphing calculators through the Actuarial Foundation of America was given to all math teachers. The Pennsylvania Department of Education Expanding Excellence grant provided expert training to blend reading and English as a mainstreamed, purpose-driven ELA block period. The Sprout Foundation grant allowed us to execute a community outreach initiative with a local extrusion company, the Chamber of Commerce, and Rails-to-Trails for students to design, manufacture, and install park benches and bike racks.

Each year our faculty and staff actively participate in professional development centered around analyzing student data, and using longitudinal data to benchmark and drive instruction. By employing strategies that are largely based on concrete data, instructors can individually tailor the educational process for our students. Writing across the curriculum training has encouraged teachers to focus on text-dependent analysis and the importance of non-fiction texts in all curricular areas. Our staff has been instrumental in the planning and execution of a STEAM summit that was hosted on site and attended by representatives from 11 school districts, two colleges, and one technical school. Two of our science staff are working researchers collaborating with universities and ecological organizations on significant academic projects. A number of our teachers are part of professional learning communities that provide unique, specific, and efficient professional development.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy of our building is one of trust, collaboration, and empowerment. Our superintendent trusts that our building principals will make the right decisions that benefit students and faculty alike. Our principals empower teachers as experts in our respective fields. Our guidance counselors and department chairs work collaboratively with the principals to ensure fidelity in all our endeavors.

Our principals lead by example. While the co-principal structure has one principal focusing on grades 7-9 and curriculum, and the other on grades 10-12, both principals work collaboratively to handle all aspects of building leadership. They remain visible throughout the school day and are in attendance at every after-school event, whether it be sports, arts, or academic related. Similarly, our faculty has high attendance rates at extra-curricular activities. The principals have started multiple initiatives including international student programs and CHS articulations with the University of Pittsburgh and Seton Hill University, which has broadened our school both academically and culturally. Additionally, even in financially challenging times, our principals have pushed to add one math position and a dedicated study hall monitor, thus

allowing teachers to better address student needs. Finally, our principals empower our teachers to make independent decisions in their classrooms. This allows teachers to push students to greater heights by utilizing the latest methods, technology, or pedagogy in their classrooms.

Teachers are led by department chairs who attend regular monthly meetings with the principals. Department chairs work with the principals to foster ideas that are passed on to teachers in each department. We hold bi-monthly grade level and department meetings where student-specific issues are addressed. Out of these meetings our math department devised several programs to help close the achievement gap: Math Mastery and Keystone remediation classes for Algebra I, as well as providing calculators for all pre-Algebra I students and graphing calculators for all other math students. The principals encourage active expression so teachers feel confident that they will be treated with respect. Our two guidance counselors work in partnership with the principals in scheduling, standardized testing, and supporting students. Teachers feel comfortable bringing student concerns to the counselors, knowing matters will be handled expeditiously. All of these stakeholders facilitate a positive school environment while setting high expectations and supporting rigorous programming for our students both in class and in life.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The one practice that has continued to ensure our success at GHS is the development and implementation of our three “Pillars of Excellence” that are proudly displayed on posters throughout the building. They are: positive school climate; high expectations for all; and instructional leadership. These three tenets are the basis of what makes our school exceptional.

Essential to our positive school climate, students’ work is displayed throughout the hallways. Unique to Greenville, student work is displayed on our in-house video distribution system. This system provides digital display of the students along with their work in several key areas of the building. To ensure that students have every opportunity to achieve at a high rate of success, teachers provide students with at least one graded opportunity per week. This provides a solid baseline so that students can accurately monitor their progress and celebrate success or build from adversity.

At GHS, school administrators set high standards and empower teachers, who, in turn, empower and set high standards for students. In an economically declining community, our students’ academic trajectory is not defined by their socio-economic status. We continue to support students to “Rise Above,” as our junior high Student of the Week t-shirts promote. In light of the shift to common core standards and, more importantly, the testing of those standards with the Keystone Exams, a greater emphasis has been placed on the practical application of science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics (STEAM). By developing hands-on coursework that demonstrates this integration, students will be empowered with the tools and skill set to be successful in an ever-changing world.

Strong leadership fosters strong individuals. Unique learning opportunities are cultivated when teachers are empowered by administrators. Subsequently, students are the beneficiaries of this effective facilitative leadership. This approach to leadership encourages students to become independent, free-thinking leaders themselves. Our highly effective after-school tutoring program, instituted through a collaborative effort between teachers and principals, has ensured that no child is left behind.

When a positive school climate with high expectations is enforced by strong leadership, we feel every school and student can achieve academic success. These pillars of excellence all work together to make Greenville High School a place we are very proud of - a place where every child is a candidate for greatness.