

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mrs. Stephanie McKenna

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

Official School Name General George A. McCall Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 325 South 7th Street

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

City Philadelphia State PA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 19106-4139

County Philadelphia County

Telephone (215) 400-7840 Fax (215) 400-7841

Web site/URL http://www.philasd.org/schools/mcc
all E-mail sstover@philasd.org

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. William Hite E-mail hite@philasd.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name School District of Philadelphia Tel. (215) 400-4000

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 Ms. Joyce Wilkerson
(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):
 - 150 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 15 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 55 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools

220 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	48	42	90
1	53	43	96
2	39	57	96
3	49	41	90
4	33	53	86
5	30	34	64
6	36	30	66
7	32	27	59
8	30	38	68
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	350	365	715

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 56 % Asian
 - 13 % Black or African American
 - 4 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 19 % White
 - 8 % 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: 11%

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	43
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	39
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	82
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	715
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.115
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	11

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 20 %
143 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Arabic, Chinese- Mandarin, Chinese- Cantonese, Chinese- Minnan Fukinese, Creoles and Pidgins, French, Hebrew, Indonesian, Persian-Farsi, Spanish, Tagalog, Turkish, Vietnamese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 100 %
Total number students who qualify: 715
8. Students receiving special education services: 7 %
53 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.

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

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1
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	29
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	11
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	4
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	15

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 251:1
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%	97%	97%	96%	97%
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 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.
Providing all students with the academic, technological & social skills needed to be productive & contributing citizens in our society.

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

The General George A. McCall School is located in the heart of the Society Hill neighborhood of Center City Philadelphia. McCall touts one of the most diverse and highest performing student bodies in Philadelphia. Its 715+ students are comprised of 78 percent ethnic minorities and includes Chinatown's new immigrants, young professional families moving back into the city, as well youth who live with their families in Philadelphia's homeless shelters. McCall has been able to show success even when compared to special admission schools who serve only students that have been selected for admission.

McCall opened its doors in 1911. In addition to being a primary elementary school, it also served as a continuation school focusing on teaching trade skills for children up to the age of 16. It emphasized six hours of academics for every two hours spent in the trade shop. During the Great Depression McCall offered "Opportunity Classes" for men between the ages of 16-21. These classes were to make the students more appealing as job applicants and included subjects in bookkeeping, typing, and cost accounting.

In the 1950s, McCall served as a center for students who needed to learn English as a second language; this program was the first in the country. In 1953, there were over 200 children in the English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program from over 20 countries. The school was referred to as a mini United Nations and had welcome signs from 14 different languages. In 1965, a major addition was built, including an auditorium and gymnasium. McCall has always had a diverse student community with children from many different socioeconomic backgrounds and multicultural influences.

The school now proudly welcomes all children, drawing from one of the most diverse and multicultural catchments in Philadelphia. Currently, McCall is one of the most highly regarded kindergarten through 8th grade public schools in the City, ranked #1 out of 138 city-wide K-8 schools on the School District of Philadelphia School Progress Report. McCall's educational mission is to provide all students with the academic, technological and social skills needed to be productive and contributing citizens in our society.

In respecting the community's diverse multicultural population, the school celebrates specific traditions including Chinese New Year, Black History Month, the Silk Road Project, Women's Career Day and Thanksgiving potluck gatherings. One of the challenges that McCall faces is its large number of students with limited English proficiency. The ESOL program teaches English and supports content area learning. It also promotes cultural understanding and provides outreach to parents and community. The purpose of the program is to facilitate student achievement of English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing and the State academic standards. Our Special Education department also works to address the needs of individual students by providing scaffolding to support instruction in grade level content as well as targeted lessons on each student's level in order to close the achievement gap. McCall also hosts an Autistic Support teacher who works directly with autistic children in the regular education classroom to support their integration into the least restrictive environment.

The School District of Philadelphia has faced some difficult financial circumstances in the last 10 years. Despite massive cutbacks in funding, McCall has been able to maintain a full time librarian, bilingual counselor, and nurse to support our community.

The McCall Home & School Association exists to support the teachers and administration and acts as a liaison between parents and teachers of the McCall. Their aim is to improve their children's learning facilities, resources and community relationships through open communication and support from both the parents and community. The Home & School Association raises funds to improve school resources; such as funding for improvements to the physical campus, new books and supports to the cyber-library, and extracurricular activities such as field trips, social activities and programming. The Home & School Association consistently helps fill in the funding gaps to ensure that the students and teachers receive what they need to succeed.

Despite these challenges, McCall has made significant strides in closing the achievement gap. While there is still plenty of work to be done, McCall was able to help the lowest performing students make progress in

improving their scores on standardized tests in recent years. McCall's support of its lowest achievers works towards its mission of helping all students.

McCall's location in the heart of historic Philadelphia enables our students to have the ability to expand their learning out of the classroom and into notable sites and many museums within our neighborhood. Classes take multiple field trips a year to take what students learn from their curriculum studies and make it come to life.

The McCall community which is made up of students, teachers, staff, families and community members gives the school its strength. Each person's contribution comes together to create a nurturing environment in which all children can succeed.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

McCall's rigorous curriculum is aligned to Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Students are encouraged to have a global perspective and real world scenarios and connections are a cornerstone of the curriculum. The integration of technology and development of 21st Century Skills is ingrained in every subject at McCall.

The research-based instructional strategies that McCall teachers use that have been instrumental in the success of the school include: cooperative learning, scaffolding and individualizing instruction, and reciprocal teaching/peer coaching. Two primary methodologies for instruction focus on inquiry/project based teaching and a hybrid/ blended learning rotational model. Each of these two methodologies for implementation of instructional strategies focus on their delivery within a technology rich classroom setting.

Every student in grades K-5 receives 120 minutes of literacy daily. In grades 6-8, block scheduling is used and students receive 75 minutes daily of literacy. Teachers practice a balanced literacy model and includes modeled, shared and guided reading, vocabulary study and writing. Explicit and direct vocabulary instruction is also important, especially for McCall's English Language Learners (ELL) students. Teachers use a variety of methods to present vocabulary to students, including using picture, videos and direct translation programs to make vocabulary attainable to all learners.

McCall focuses on using data to drive instruction during the guided reading period. Teachers keep detailed records of individual student progress and use an array of formal and informal assessments to plan their guided reading lessons. McCall takes care to use a variety of genres and texts from different cultural backgrounds to engage all learners and promote diversity. Modeled, shared, guided and independent writing are all essential to take a student through the writing process.

McCall's mathematics curriculum is aligned with the CCSS. Students in grades K-5 have 90 minutes of mathematics instruction a day and 75 minutes in grades 6-8. McCall teachers are trained to focus on individual student needs in mathematics. McCall teachers have a number of resources available, including Math Expressions, Big Ideas and Singapore Math that they may use to craft a mathematics curriculum that addresses the core standards and a variety of learning modalities. A core foundation of the mathematics program is an early focus on number sense and fact fluency. In eighth grade, students have the option to elect to take ninth grade algebra course for high school credit. Last year, McCall students had an 88% passing rate on the 9th grade Algebra Keystone Exam.

In mathematics, teachers follow an instructional plan that includes modeled, guided and independent instructions. Teachers use data from classroom assessments to direct instruction and to form small groups to address every learner. McCall teachers differentiate within the room by providing one on one support for students who are struggling, while allowing more advanced students to tackle complex problems or in independent study and testing of mathematical concepts.

The School District of Philadelphia has invested efforts to align eligible content and standards to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The initiative to update the science standards taught within The District and at McCall, allow for continued improvements to the differentiation of the science curriculum. Hands-on laboratory experience is integral to the nature of science and is included in every science program for every student. McCall has made the commitment to science programming by providing a supplement to the science curriculum taught by the classroom teachers with a weekly Science Lab course. Every student in K-8 cycles through one additional science lab period a week, in addition to the core instruction in science.

The Social Studies curriculum at McCall is supported by extensive use of informational texts as well as historical fiction. Students are taught to cite primary and secondary sources and to create annotations and bibliographies of sources. McCall takes care that teachers are presenting multiple perspectives on historical

events and that many different cultural groups experiences are addressed. Service learning and civic engagement is an essential component to the Social Studies curriculum. Beginning in third grade, students are facilitated in the creation and implementation of a year-long service learning project centered around a social issue. Students plan and engage in community service and reflect on the outcome of their initiative. McCall also participates in the annual National History Day competition. Many of our students have been awarded top honors for their creation of projects and their artful presentation of primary and secondary source information.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The Visual Arts program at McCall supports the core curriculum in math and literacy. Every student has Visual Arts for 45 minutes a week in Grades K-5 and for 60 minutes a week in grades 6-8. Every art lesson has a language arts and mathematical component. Students present their artwork and analyze their art in writing. Measuring, symmetry and graphing are core math components that are consistently utilized in Art class. Teachers have common planning time across disciplines to plan together and ensure that the art curriculum bolsters what is being taught in the core classes. Students in Grades 4-6 also participate in an ongoing partnership with the Barnes museum.

Students receive music instruction once a week for 45 minutes in Grades K-5 and for 60 minutes a week in Grades 6-8. Students may also enroll in an hour of Instrumental Music lessons or Choir weekly. K-2 focuses on singing, movement and performing. In Grades 3-5, orchestral music, the use of instruments and note reading is the central focus of instruction. In Grades 6-8, musical history and theory is stressed. Lessons are supported by trips to local venues to view performances. McCall also has an ongoing partnership with the Arden Theater. Students in Grades 3-5 view a series of productions at the theater and teaching artists from the Arden present lessons to classrooms. McCall has an active Musical Theater program that puts on yearly productions. This helps build confidence, encourages team building and creates a sense of community. Teachers have a common collaboration period that is used to support the common core curriculum within the music classroom and encourage multi-disciplinary lessons. The Rock School ballet program is also utilized for 1st grade and 5th grade participates in the Koresh dance program.

Every student at McCall has Physical Education weekly for 45 minutes in Grades K-5 and 60 minutes in Grades 6-8. The Physical Education curriculum at McCall focuses on building a healthy individual and stresses the idea of being “fit for life.” Grades K-1 focuses on social engagement. Grades 2-4 focuses on developing motor skills and teamwork. In Grades 5-8, the history of sports is stressed. Playworks is a program that McCall uses for all grades that encourages team building and socialized recess. Each class has a 45 minute Playworks time twice a month. Students have the opportunity to demonstrate leadership skills in Grades 3-5 by becoming a Playworks Junior Coach. McCall also has a monthly nutritional program in the classroom in Grades K-5 through the Eat Right Now! Program.

Spanish is offered to classes in grades K-5 once a week for 45 minutes. The instructional focus is on immersion during the class and on teaching students the culture and history of Hispanic people. Instruction centers on hands-on learning activities, games, and songs to make language accessible for younger students. DuoLingo is also used as an online component to support language acquisition. Italian is also offered to four middle school classes twice a week.

McCall has a fully functional Library, staffed by a certified librarian. Students visit the library once a week for a lesson related to either literature or research that is supported by the PA curriculum guidelines. The library also houses a WHYY Media Lab with 8 video cameras, assorted technical equipment and 15 computers. A WHYY media specialist comes several times a week to work with students on the creation of original film media. McCall also participates in Reading Olympics, a competitive reading program to bolster comprehension.

McCall incorporates technology throughout the learning experience. Students need to develop 21st Century technological skills and have access to well designed, blended/hybrid STEM learning experiences as part of their learning. Interactive Whiteboards in all classrooms, iPads are being implemented in Kindergarten through 2nd Grade, and one-to-one Chromebooks in grades 4-8 infuse and improve learning. McCall also

has a state of the art technology lab with 33 computers that is accessible to all students and a media lab with video cameras and editing software.

Students in grades 6th through 8th have the ability to take home Chromebooks; extending the learning past the school day and offering computing to disadvantaged and underserved students and their families. Students have fully integrated the Google Apps for Education (GAFE) suite for much of their collaborative and individual work products. GAFE allows the students to work collaboratively with documents that automatically save and are stored in the cloud. This technology allows teachers to incorporate data driven and self-paced curriculum enhancements for students of various levels.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

McCall works to address the individual learner and their own unique needs. Every student is nurtured through differentiated instruction and a system of supports that identifies and engages all students. High expectations are a hallmark and student achievement towards individualized goals is valued by staff. Our goal is to provide all students with the academic, technological, and social skills to needed to become productive and contributing members of our society.

Technology is utilized in every grade to reach every student. Teachers use SMART Notebook to present engaging lessons and differentiate instruction. In the early years, students have access to iPads to use on self directed programs, such as Redbird Math and Reading Eggs that presents individualized content. In grades 4-8, McCall has a 1 to 1 Chromebook matchup for students. Students are able to utilize Google classroom and the interactive gradebook, Jupiter Grades to increase their technological literacy and agency in the classroom.

Teachers at McCall begin specializing by content in fourth grade. Content specialization allows teachers to dig deep into their subject matter, provides for specialized professional development, and provides students with multiple perspectives. Teachers collaborate during biweekly grade group meetings to design instruction and work towards cohesive units that support comprehensive instructional goals. These meetings are also used to analyze small group and individual student data from formal/ informal assessments and standardized tests and provide scaffolding for students who are struggling. Teachers use data to drive instruction and planning time is used to analyze learning content and objectives and tailor how each child will make progress. Teachers across grade levels also cross plan quarterly to ensure cohesiveness in instruction across the grade levels. Classroom teachers also work in a team with Special Education and ESOL teachers. Teachers work together to flexibly plan for push in and pull out models depending on a student's needs. All of McCall's ESOL teachers are bilingual in Chinese to accommodate our ELLs and to provide a strong home-school connections by communicating with parents in their native language.

McCall has a system of universal screening tools that are given to every student to identify at-risk learners for MTSS (Multi-Tiered Student Support) interventions. In reading, students are assessed quarterly using Aimsweb and the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) in Grades K-4. In the upper grades students are assessed biannually using the Gates and DRA 2. Students are also assessed on a pre- and post uniform assessment for reading and math that are created by grade groups of teachers. In MTSS Tier One, Teachers create flexible groups of learners based on the results of the data to provide targeted instruction for each student. Teachers track group and individual data and collaborate about student progress on a biweekly basis. McCall also uses Adaptive Curriculum, Reading Eggs, Redbird Math, and ThinkCerca as Tier One instructional tools. These online programs present individualized lessons based on student needs that are determined by an initial screening. ELLs are also serviced by a bilingual ESOL teacher who presents explicit instruction in vocabulary and language acquisition.

Students in need of a research based interventions are placed in Tier Two MTSS. Students are placed in an intervention group whereby they receive Lexia, Corrective Reading, Corrective Math, Quick Reads or targeted small group instruction, from an Intervention Specialist teacher. Students in Tier Two have their results monitored on a weekly basis and teachers meet to discuss and plan for these students biweekly. Students who are in need of additional help are given a more extensive battery of assessments, such as the Woodcock and Key Math, to determine specifically what instruction is needed to remediate any

learning gaps or deficits.

As McCall is a high performing school, great pains are taken to address students who are high achievers. Differentiation and self motivated learning is a hallmark of instruction. Students are encouraged to research topics that interest them and create authentic products of their learning for an audience. McCall hosts and attends a number of city-wide, grade level and school wide events that allow students to showcase their learning. In all grades, service learning is required. Students participate in school wide beautification projects, plan and care for the school garden, and facilitate a school-wide recycling program. Many classrooms also participate in Need in Deed, a student directed service learning program whereby students delve deep into a social issue and devise their own year-long project around one topic. In eighth grade, students may elect to take Algebra I for high school credit and the opportunity to participate in the ninth grade Keystone Exam.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

The culture of McCall is one of high academic and social expectations for students and lays the foundation for the development of lifelong learners who will lead, serve and achieve in their communities. Our staff takes seriously the responsibility of providing the best education possible to the students in their care. There is a collective expectation that all members of the McCall community have a responsibility to educate our children academically, socially and emotionally.

Our school has a safe, civil, healthy, and intellectually stimulating learning environment. Students feel respected and connected with the staff and are engaged in learning daily. Students believe that adults in the school care about them and will provide the support essential to their success. As we have a significant population of ELLs, teachers deliver linguistic and culturally relevant instruction in order to equip these students with the necessary skills to successfully engage in the classroom and through social interactions with their peers.

There is a high level of teamwork among teachers across all grades and with other staff. Everyone is involved and connected to each other, including parents and members of the community, to identify problems and work on solutions for the betterment of the school. Each classroom teacher implements a system for recognizing positive behaviors and provides incentives to students who exhibit the behavioral expectations. In the middle school, grades 6-8, our teachers integrate the Ursa Major program into their weekly schedule. Ursa Major affords the students the opportunity to participate in a number of self-selected enrichment activities and clubs such as Yearbook, Art, Fitness, Morning News, Yoga, Sports, Green Recycling Team and Tutoring. Students ability to choose an elective helps them develop independence and nurture unique skill and talents which contributes to the overall positive climate of the school.

When you walk the halls of McCall, authentic student writing and projects are displayed and reflect the learning that occurs in our classrooms. Students and teachers also dedicate time to preparing our students to participate in a number of assemblies and events for Chinese New Year, Black History Month, Women's Career Day, Carver Science Fair, National History Day, etc.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The partnership between the McCall staff, families and community partners has been pivotal to the ongoing success of the school. Our Home and School Association (HSA) works closely with staff to enhance the educational experience. Its purpose is to promote communication between the school and parents in order to support student growth and to provide opportunities for families to participate. The HSA also supports the school financially with money earned through fundraisers throughout the year, with the biggest event being the annual Casino Night. The HSA also helps to plan and organize school events throughout the year such as monthly tours for parents, Back-to-School Night, Kindergarten Open House, Movie Nights for students and parents, Scholastic Book Fair, a school-wide skating party, and teacher appreciation and recognition events. Apart from HSA, McCall currently has 215 volunteers that assist our students and teachers in various ways such as chaperoning trips, tutoring in the classroom, helping teachers with material preparation, and serving as classroom parents. Volunteers can be seen daily in our hallways dedicating time to helping our children and teachers.

Parents also have the opportunity to attend monthly 'Coffee with the Principal' meetings where they can ask the principal questions and provide input on school-wide initiatives. Parents are also invited to the annual Back-to-School Night to learn about what their child will be doing during the school year and then each quarter can attend parent-teacher conferences. Professional development sessions are offered for parents throughout the year on various topics such as 'How to support your child on the PSSA', 'Homework Help', 'How to support literacy in the home', 'How to navigate the Jupiter gradebook system', etc.

Community partners have also been integral to the success of McCall. Recently, the Society Hill Civic Association made a donation of \$11,000 for the school to purchase a keyboarding lab for our music program. We offer placements for future educators from Temple University and Drexel University to provide practicum experience. Need in Deed supports service learning projects at McCall. The Federal Reserve offers our first and second grade classes instruction on financial literacy. The National Law Review Board and Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) provides volunteer support to the school. The Goldenberg Group and Starr Garden both partner with McCall on projects such as neighborhood clean ups. McCall also maintains a relationship with the Arden Theater and Young Rembrandts that foster student engagement with the Arts. The NELSON Group also partnered with McCall to beautify the school and construct an outdoor classroom with the assistance of McCall staff and students.

3. Professional Development:

At McCall, we believe it is critical for teachers to have ongoing professional development that keeps them abreast of the latest research, emerging technology tools for the classroom, new curriculum resources, and more. We have a vision for adult learning that is collaborative, continuous, embedded in daily practice and focused on student achievement. We strive to strengthen this culture that supports adult learning and affords each educator the opportunity to enrich his/her practice.

Professional development is offered each year to teachers prior to the start of the school year and is aligned to focus/need areas based on data from the previous school year. Content specific professional development is presented to teachers during half-day professional development days. Throughout the year, teachers are encouraged to engage in professional development opportunities that will be valuable to their growth as an educator. Some teachers conduct peer observations in a colleague's classroom either in our school or in others schools in the School District of Philadelphia. Teachers review data and share instructional strategies during grade group meetings every other week. Through this analysis of data, the teachers identify students who are in need of targeted instruction. Teachers then share best practices and develop action plans to increase student achievement through differentiated and targeted instruction.

Last year, McCall, along with Bache-Martin School, was awarded a collaboration grant through the Pennsylvania Department of Education in which the two schools are to engage in collaboration among teachers to share best practices. A number of McCall teachers also attend and/or present at the yearly 'Collaboration of Teachers' professional development (PD) days where they share innovative practices with other teachers in the School District of Philadelphia. McCall teachers also voluntarily attended an Early Literacy PD for one week this summer. This allowed McCall to receive shipments of materials and a Children's Literacy Initiative (CLI) coach to work one-on-one with teachers in honing their instructional skills in literacy.

We urge teachers to communicate to our School Based Teacher Leader (SBTL) if there is training needed on a certain topic. The SBTL coordinates professional development sessions for the school and taps into the wealth of talent and expertise among our staff to organize and facilitate relevant training, including differentiation of instruction, motivating and interactive lessons, interdisciplinary collaboration, using interventions effectively, and utilizing technology to improve instruction.

As teachers participate regularly in professional development opportunities, it has inspired a high degree of engagement that has led to more productive professional learning and in turn, has contributed to a more positive and effective learning environment for students.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership at McCall believes that it is critical to have a shared vision that motivates the school community to collaboratively work towards achieving the established goals. In order to be successful, school leadership teams must develop trust with all members of the school community and to motivate each individual to perform to his/her maximum potential. It is critical that the principal create a positive, supportive and safe learning environment for all students and staff. Our leadership promotes a respect for the culture diversity of the students, families, and community.

Effective leaders understand that school leadership cannot be done in isolation and it is crucial to listen to multiple perspectives, distribute responsibility and develop leadership capacity throughout the building. At McCall, our leadership team consists of the principal, school based teacher leader, the dean, counselor, special education liaison, nurse and two classroom teachers. As a team, we are determined to provide each and every one of our students and staff with the resources and conditions that they need to be successful.

We also focus on nurturing a high quality instructional program and school culture conducive to learning and professional growth. The principal serves as an instructional leader who takes responsibility for guiding the school to better teaching and learning through a combination of high expectations and support. By affording teachers the opportunity to collaborate during grade group meetings and to plan together during common planning times, they are able to engage in open dialogue about best practices and how to support struggling learners. There is a wealth of knowledge among our staff and one of the most valuable resources to which our teachers have consistent access.

McCall's Home and School Association consists of parents, community members, teachers, and the principal and advises the principal and school leadership team on recommendations for school improvement, analyzes student performance data and how the budget is allocated to support the various needs and priorities of the school.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

At McCall there is an atmosphere created whereby teachers want to teach and students want to learn. The McCall community is often described as the McCall Family because the students, staff, administration, and parents all support and believe in each other. This support allows all the stakeholders to work at their highest level. Students from very different backgrounds work side by side learning together and teaching each other. Teachers collaborate and feel that their efforts are appreciated. Parents work with teachers to accomplish the common goals of the community.

A well established system of high expectations for academic rigor and for respectful behavior helps students shine. A positive climate encourages good attendance for both students and staff and engagement of students. Once a foundation of support has been laid this encouraging climate allows everyone to flourish. The supportive atmosphere improves teacher retention rate, which in turn contributes to the stability of the school.

Teachers are the facilitators and models for students in inclusive practices. Teachers are the caretakers of climate and support their students in making connections among other students in their classroom. This supportive environment challenges the highest achievers academically but also fosters a caring community in which high achieving students assist and encourage lower achieving students. This enables lower achieving students to succeed with high expectations but appropriate supports. This also cultivates whole students, not just their academics but their growth as kind, caring individuals in society.

Lower achieving students are helping high achieving students gain perspective and kindness for others. Everyone learns from each other in this comforting and close community. Different diverse groups working together prepares students for real life in our increasingly small world. Our model and mission encourages each child to reach their full potential.

From a student's first day, even if they cannot speak a word of English, each child works alongside other students who all have something to teach and something to learn. The supportive cultures permeates all the grade levels. By the time students reach the middle school, they have been learning alongside diverse groups of students since kindergarten and are able to navigate the difficult middle school years with a grace and maturity beyond their years. With each year of attendance at McCall, students layer perspectives which in turn allows them to reach developmental milestones, not just in academics but encourages growth as a human being.