

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 Dr. Matthew R. Flannery

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

Official School Name Shiloh Hills Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 4 Cloister Court

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

City Sinking Spring State PA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 19608-1708

County PA

Telephone (610) 670-0180 Fax (484) 334-6443

Web site/URL http://www.wilsonsd.org/shilohills E-mail flamat@share.wilsonsd.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. Richard Faidley E-mail fairic@share.wilsonsd.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Wilson School District Tel. (610) 670-0180

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. Steve Ehrlich
(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):
- 5 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 8 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	34	82
1	40	46	86
2	48	41	89
3	60	52	112
4	46	42	88
5	39	47	86
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	281	262	543

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 3 % Asian
 - 5 % Black or African American
 - 13 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 73 % White
 - 5 % 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: 7%

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	14
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	27
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	41
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	568
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.072
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

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

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Abkhazian, Chinese(Mandarin), Creole & pidgins (other), Fulah, Mandingo, Punjabi, Pushto, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Telegu, Urdu, Vietnamese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 32 %
Total number students who qualify: 172
8. Students receiving special education services: 15 %
81 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.

- 16 Autism
- 1 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 0 Emotional Disturbance
- 1 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 17 Other Health Impaired
- 17 Specific Learning Disability
- 26 Speech or Language Impairment
- 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 0 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	25
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	20
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	16
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 231:1
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	96%	96%	97%	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.

Empowering our students to create their own future.

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

Shiloh Hills is one of five K-5 elementary schools in the Wilson School District, located near Reading in Eastern Pennsylvania. Shiloh Hills is nestled between the continual growth and development of Spring Township and the rural farmlands of Eastern Lancaster County. It opened its doors in 2000, but enrollment has increased drastically by 250 students over the past years as a result of redistricting efforts necessitated by the closing of two small neighborhood schools. The addition of new students and staff had the potential to disrupt the school community, but through the collaborative efforts of the principal, who was one of the new staff members, the professional staff and parents, the new additions to Shiloh Hills became part of an already proud community. Thus begun the journey and goal of transforming a good school into a great school.

The current enrollment of this Title I school is 540 students, with approximately 30% of our children receiving free or reduced breakfast and lunch. Shiloh Hills' top demographic populations include 72% Caucasian, 13% Hispanic and 7% African American. Fifteen percent of our children receive special education services, which include primary and intermediate classrooms focused on meeting the needs of students who require: learning support, autistic support, emotional support, speech, occupational therapy, physical therapy and vision support. Our goal is for all special education children to be integrated into the full fabric of our school while working towards their individual goals.

Shiloh Hills' students and dedicated staff members have led the way towards the district's lofty standards of educational excellence for the past five years. We truly believe in our school district's motto: Wilson's Pride...Our Children. According to SchoolDigger.com, our school is ranked as the 20th best elementary school (out of 1,551 schools) in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In 2015, Shiloh Hills was the 60th ranked school statewide demonstrating that the staff continues to meet the varied needs of their students through high expectations of learning and a challenging academic curriculum. Prior to 2016, School Performance Profiles (SPP) scores were last attributed to elementary schools in 2014. At that time, Shiloh Hills had the second highest SPP score in Berks County. This year, with an SPP score of 94.3, Shiloh Hills was the highest scoring school (K-12) in the county. Our SPP score and PSSA results have earned us the distinction of being named a Title I Distinguished School in 2014 and 2015. As a result of these honors, we were able to apply for and ultimately receive an Innovation Grant Award from the Pennsylvania Department of Education for \$47,000.

The funding earned through the Innovation Grant allowed the principal and district-level curriculum team to expand the offerings of the professional development opportunities provided to the staff members of Shiloh Hills. This collaborative effort and thoughtful planning, intended to further enhance the learning of educators, was the basis for the development of the Shiloh Hills Speakers Series. This endeavor brought award-winning authors and internationally renown speakers Frank Serafini and Lindsey Moses from Arizona State University and Carl Anderson from the Columbia University Teachers' College to Shiloh Hills. They worked alongside the students and staff members for several days of valuable professional learning and dialogue. These experts provided us with a unique and intimate learning opportunity intended to keep teachers thinking, growing and developing best practices as we challenged ourselves never to be complacent learners. Even though this grant funding was only for one year, we believed the Speaker Series was such a valuable and well-received initiative that we allocated building-level and district funds to bring back Frank Serafini to continue our progression towards a Reader's Workshop model throughout the elementary division.

At the request of the staff, a Reading-Learning Community (RLC) was developed in 2013 and implemented fully beginning in 2014. The initial goal of the professional learning community was to close the achievement gap of all students in the area of literacy for the entire building. The plan was to focus on the continued support of teachers' professional learning through a collaborative study of best practices of literacy instruction. As part of this work, the RLC conducted book studies on Nancie Atwell's *The Reading Zone* and *Notice and Note* by Kylene Beers and Robert Probst. This resulted in the adoption of an on-going school-wide independent reading initiative where every teacher, student, and employee in the building dedicates the last 20 minutes of the school day to reading for understanding. The principal makes it clear

that this 20-minute block of time is used for reading, throughout the building every day. This daily commitment has produced a school community that shares a love of reading and understands its importance in creating life-long thinkers and learners. The results of this initiative is evident in the staff, students and scores of Shiloh Hills and continues to this day as a true example of collaborative learning.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Shiloh Hills has transformed its core instruction in English language arts (ELA) over the past four years as a direct result of the staff self-starting a Reading & Learning Community (RLC) in 2013. The building now implements a balanced literacy approach to the PA Core Standards using a Reading and Writing Workshop. Instruction Whole group mini-lessons are used to introduce and teach specific skills through targeted strategies to all general and special education students. Teachers then use the rest of the block to work with small-groups, conduct conferences, or work with individual students to further development at their instructional levels. The ELA block includes shared reading or writing, read-a-louds, mentor texts, guided reading, skill/strategy based instruction, book clubs, literature circles, long-term writing partnerships, or other instruction tailored to the specific needs of the individual students in the classroom. Grammar, word study, spelling and other language components are embedded into the reading and writing workshop. In addition to the allotted time for PA Core instruction, all students and teachers have 20 additional minutes dedicated to independent reading for understanding every day.

Literacy does not end in the ELA block; rather it is extended into all other content areas. In mathematics, Shiloh Hills teachers encourage students to read, write and think like mathematicians. The math curriculum is adapted from enVision mathematics and addresses the PA Core Curriculum. After studying the work of Jay McTighe, Performance Tasks were developed by teachers added with all math units to increase the use of math practices across anchors. Teachers differentiate content and practice for their students using a guided math format in primary grade levels. Core teachers in the upper grades have also been trained in the Math Design Collaborative (MDC) and implement cornerstone tasks in inquiry in mathematics.

Our Science curriculum is unpacked and back-mapped from Pennsylvania Standards and Next Generation Science Standards. The curricular team customized the curriculum to implement an inquiry-based 5E curriculum (Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, and Evaluate) for our instruction platform. In science classes, students are learning to read, write and evaluate through the lens of science exploration. For example, one of our writing units addresses force and motion as an example of the cross-curricular connections of ELA and Science. Every student also receives STEM education in a makerspace environment in our unique special entitled Discovery. This course is self created and not associated with Discovery Education.

Social Studies curriculum is written by teachers based on the state standards in civics, government, economics, geography, and history. Units start from “About me and my family” in kindergarten to expand outwardly as grades progress to expand the view to the school, community, state, country, and world. Our social studies curriculum is paired with our writing and reading curriculum so that students are learning to read and write through the lens of history. Grade 5, for example studies the American Revolution as part of their Informational Writing Unit. Each grade also takes a field trip to further enhance the curricular content areas of social studies and science with trips to local businesses, museums, science laboratories, historical sites, and the state capitol. Additional work in civics is a school-wide initiative. To help students better understand their relationships with society and the world, Shiloh Hills has monthly hands-on learning experiences in the school, community, and region including work with Wounded Warriors, Stockings for Soldiers, the Berks County Food Bank, Easter Seals, Girls on the Run, Animal Rescue League and the Alzheimer's Foundation.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Our arts program involves music and art for every child a minimum of once a cycle. All students take general music class which can be supplemented with chorus, band, and orchestra. In these courses students explore the state arts standards in a performance based environment. Every student in every grade experiences an opportunity to perform for a live audience in vocal and instrumental music. Students have access to instruments, recorders, classroom percussion and music technology. Art is instructed in a variety of media in our school. Students experience painting, drawing, printmaking, weaving, sculpture and more

with our art curriculum. Whether it is a self-portrait study in each grade level or a class art mural for the building, our students love learning craftsmanship and artistic principles in this course. We feature an all building art show at the end of each year where students all display their portfolios for a public tour. Our arts experiences are extended for our students with artist-in-residence partnerships with local experts in theater, art or music.

Social citizenship, physical education, and guidance are the three components of our student wellness program. All students attend social citizenship and physical education once a cycle while guidance is taught as whole group once a month with small groups weekly. Social citizenship teaches students expectations for social behavior in a school setting. This course was developed by teachers and centers on a hero named "Super Flex" who exhibits a flexible mindset. Throughout the course, Flex meets other characters that he learns to deal with such as Rock Brain, Mean Jean, and other "Unthinkables" or fixed mindset characters. This is a responsive curriculum and can be adapted to meet the need of the school or class during difficult social situations. Additionally this course includes digital safety and digital citizenship components to ensure our students are learning about their cyber footprint. Our physical education department believes that active students are active learners. Our curriculum is written from the state curriculum and extends the amount of time students are physical at school while teaching them functions of balance, coordination, sportsmanship, flexibility, and overall wellness. Our physical education teacher also runs Action Based Learning (ABL) which combines movement with literacy practice as an additional part of the daily kindergarten ritual. We have data to show that ABL has helped our students improve our kindergarten literacy levels. The comprehensive guidance program addresses students' individual needs in academic, PA Career standards, and personal/social wellness and occurs on an individual basis, in small groups, and in classroom whole group lessons. This helps to establish a school environment that values relationships as well as supporting students to help them meet with success as they tackle the demands of the rigorous academic curriculum. On-going communication and collaboration with staff, students, families, and outside resources is an essential component of our school's mission statement and the guidance department.

Technology is imbedded in our teaching practices across the school as we are in a 1:1 computer environment where every child has a Chromebook in grades 2-5 and a Nexus Tablet in Grades K-1. We therefore changed our old "computer" special into something more impactful for students.

"Discovery" is a homegrown course based on the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) standards. This Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) course is a makerspace place for students to master the 4 C's (Collaboration, Communication, Creativity and Critical Thinking) in an inquiry lab for learning. Students design, create, try, fail, try again and succeed on a range of STEM projects and products. This course is the entry path to our 12-K STEM Academy. This class also teaches technology, digital literacy, and cyber safety.

Finally, our library is staffed with a full-time librarian and a library assistant. Students learn to research and utilize digital media in this course while furthering their overall literacy skills. Our library is used by students, teachers and community members as a true hub of learning. Students attend library as a class regularly while also using the facility for personal reading resources and research whenever needed. Our district won the Library of the Year award in 2016 from the Pennsylvania School Librarians Association (PSLA).

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Shiloh Hills Elementary School builds its instructional beliefs on the basis all teachers are responsible for all students' learning. Teachers of regular education, special education, specialized content (art, music, etc.) and skilled intervention all are involved in PLC's based on best literacy practices for all students. They take joint ownership of data and utilize a group approach to individually programming instruction and intervention for students.

The building completes benchmark assessments with all students three times a year to be able to evaluate the Tier 1 curriculum which must be at least 80% effective in order for interventions to be successful. Fountas and Pinnell, Study Island, Kindergarten specific assessments, and Common Writing On Demands are our

benchmark tools that are analyzed. Additionally, anecdotal notes and running records from reading, writing, and math are included in data team meetings. Specials teachers, interventionists, specialists, and administration make up the data team that analyzes data from the entire building on a minimum of a quarterly basis.

Initial benchmark data gives teachers a picture of what all students individually need to be able to be successful in their classrooms. Further support for Tier 1 instruction comes from a specific analysis of individual students reading behaviors that results in professional development targeting specific instructional strategies needed to meet those behaviors. Our Tier 1 instructional environment is flexible on a daily basis, where teachers can cross-group students based on strengths or areas of need in ELA and math. Data are further analyzed to build a plan for tier II and tier III support. Our Tier II model is based on Allington's work and focuses mostly on increasing the overall time students spend reading with focused instructional support. While skill-based groups may be an additional focus of students' programming, our Tier II students are paired with our most qualified specialists for guided time in text with either guided reading or Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI). Reading Recovery is utilized to remediate the lowest scoring first-grade students, one-on-one by two trained Reading Recovery specialists. Math intervention also occurs with push-in or pull-out support from interventions and can be basic fact practice, or supplemental math instruction in a small group setting.

Tier III students participate in many of the same targeted instructions from Tier II, but the frequency or duration is increased. In addition to the services described earlier, we do offer push-in and pull-out support, or even an alternate curriculum taught by a special education teacher. If an alternate is needed we use Wilson Reading, SRA Reading Mastery, and an alternate math curriculum, or even Verbal Behavior programming for our Non-Verbal students. Regular pull-out and push-in ELL programming is additional support for our non-native English speaking students. The goal of the above interventions is to move students towards performing on grade level with their peers. The students are provided with ample practice and re-teaching opportunities to help ensure mastery of skills and concepts. If there is a ten percent gap in any subgroup, our team does the same as it does for any student who is not at expected grade level. Our teachers meet as a team, determine an intervention plan, execute it and monitor the students progress regularly to ensure success.

Our above level learners also are targeted for support in ELA and math. Classroom libraries are stocked with books at each student's independent level. Reading inventories are completed to ensure book choices are high interest for all students. Our talented and gifted learners are grouped, coached through push-in or pull-out support and at times given access to a different grade-level curriculum to ensure that everyone is being pushed to make a year's worth of growth while being engaged in the classroom. Additional gifted support is provided to students with a content area of strength designated in their IEP.

Shiloh Hills has become highly achieving over the last several years and has recently won the Title One Distinguished Schools award grant two years in a row. We attribute the continued success to our intensive professional development training in best practices in literacy instruction, our strategic approach to intervention and our joint belief that the success of all of our students is all of our responsibility.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Upon entering our building, we want people to feel that this is a special place. The principal stresses the importance of working together to provide a caring, safe, educational environment for the students that is conducive to them learning and growing each day. In order to achieve this goal, all staff members including teachers, instructional assistants, cafeteria employees, custodial staff, and administrative personnel know they play a role in making Shiloh Hills a unique place to learn and to work. The principal has an open-door policy that encourages staff members to stop by and share thoughts, concerns or ideas with him pertaining to the school. Teachers are encouraged to acquire new knowledge, try new techniques and most importantly share with each other. The principal is quick to give credit to the hard-working employees of the building, using the word “We” not “I” when discussing the successes and achievements for which the school has been recognized on a consistent basis.

Through school-wide assemblies, social citizenship classes and small group opportunities with our school counselor, Shiloh Hills students are taught and reminded that they can be leaders in this school community regardless of their grade level. They are equipped with skills to share concerns during class meetings and resolve their differences. Students are recognized at assemblies for their hard work, effort and being a positive citizen in our school community. It is not uncommon for the principal to have children, who have been unable to resolve a dispute, eat lunch together with him in the office. They are given an assignment; interview each other as you eat together in the same room. The purpose of the activity is for the students to get to know each other better. Many times these children find out they have more in common with the other person and can begin to develop a better relationship since they can now discuss shared hobbies and interests. When students are taught expected behaviors and feel that they are a part of a safe community, they are able to reach their highest academic potential.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

In order to promote a strong home-school connection, Shiloh Hills incorporates volunteer opportunities during school, after school and in the evenings. One such program is our Watch DOGS (Dads Of Great Students). Fathers or male figureheads of students spend a day in the school as a positive role model for children and to provide assistance to teachers throughout the building. We have grown the program to have a different Watch DOG in the building most days of the school year. The DOGS most often say that they leave school tired but with a greater understanding of the school environment. Our Parent and Teacher Organization also is a wonderful support to the school for social events, fundraisers and initiative support.

Another way we pull parents in is with workshops that focus on topics such as how to read to and with your child or how to help them comprehend more rigorous text. These workshops are led by our reading specialists and classroom teachers who volunteer their time to build partnerships with parents. Many times, we provide parents who attend these sessions with a book or two to take home in addition to providing them with handouts or digital resources, so they have helpful materials at their fingertips.

To continue building our community outreach, we developed a partnership with Mohn’s Hill Church, which is located two miles from school. The church members converted one of the rooms in their social hall into a room filled with books, desks, and other school materials. The reading room at the church provides our students and their parents with another location to go read and discuss literature with guidance from trained adults. Our teachers, reading specialists and principal have volunteered their time to provide church members with professional learning opportunities in order to support their reading initiatives. In addition to school personnel sharing their expertise, Shiloh Hills has provided the church with hundreds of books to enhance their reading room and to show our appreciation for this valuable partnership.

Penn State Berks Campus is located approximately four miles from our school and has been a community partner with Shiloh Hills for the past five years. Education majors who are in their junior year of school are partnered with a Shiloh Hills classroom teacher each semester and work with the experienced educator for

at least five hours each week. An average of 15-20 Penn State students participate in this program each semester. The college students gain valuable experience working with our students in small groups, conducting whole-group read alouds and working with individual students. This partnership was developed to provide our teachers with additional support in their classrooms but also as a way for experienced teachers to help prepare future educators for the challenges that await them upon graduating from college.

3. Professional Development:

While Shiloh Hills students have achieved at a consistently high level, the principal and teachers believe they must always be learning and growing to meet the ever-changing needs of our learners. Our professional development (PD) is based on five pillars that are central to student success: 1) A commitment to ALL students and their learning, 2) Mastering content and pedagogy, 3) Managing and monitoring student learning, 4) Systematically examining teacher practice, and 5) Working collaboratively as part of a learning community. The more teachers learn in these areas, the more our students will succeed.

In order to grow in the aforementioned areas, our teachers are always looking for specific trainings locally or regionally, that will help us grow. We have had teachers selected for summer institutes at Columbia University's Teachers College, Reading Recovery training, Intermediate Unit workshops, and various other programs. Teachers return to our school to bring the learning to the greater community. In addition to staff resources, we have received grants that have allowed us to bring in nationally renowned partners to work with our teachers and students during active school labs. We maximize all available time by using district-wide PD, early dismissals, monthly faculty meetings, preparation periods and before and after school options to offer sessions that meet the needs of our Learning Community.

Our plan for staff learning is not haphazard, but rather based on data analysis and goal setting. Research shows the importance of a child's ability to read on level by third grade, but our data showed some of our diverse learners were missing the mark. Our previously mentioned Reading-Learning Community (RLC) is an example of a long term building goal tied to our district pillars surrounding a commitment to all students and their learning with teachers mastering their content and pedagogy in reading. Our RLC set the goal of closing the achievement gap in reading and have dedicated over three years of research, learning and practice to our initiative. The results speak for themselves in the work of our students continually improving. Our reading levels and state based tests are continually on the rise and the achievement gap is closing and our teachers are increasingly confident in their skills of teaching Reading.

4. School Leadership:

The principal has a strong belief in servant leadership and believes that a learner-centered school fosters an environment of shared responsibility for all students and adults at Shiloh Hills. The staff and students work hard towards our common high academic and behavioral standards for all students, and the successes and achievements for which the school has been recognized on a consistent basis are shared by everyone.

The shared-leadership is evident in the structure of the school. The principal supports the work of the formal and informal teacher leaders of the school. A staff leader, intervention specialist, and reading specialists work with staff on identifying short and long term academic, behavioral or climate goals for the building and or grade level. Through regular collaborative efforts, the team works on developing an implementation plan that includes accountability measures. Goals that are reached are celebrated by the entire school community, and if things fall short, the plan is redesigned.

The staff holds joint ownership of all students and their learning. The success of students who receive special education, english language learning, gifted or intervention support belongs to everyone, not just the specialist servicing that child. This is evidenced by how the extra 20 minute reading for understanding block is staffed. All staff are assigned to a rotating room or student who is in need of support of their reading during this time. They have been trained in comprehension strategies and are paired with a student based on the relationship they have with the child. Thus, the art teacher could work with a great art student who is struggling with metacognition, a custodian could pair with a student from their neighborhood, or a student who is back on track would read with the principal. This happens without fail, every day, with

every staff member and every student, for the entire year.

Upon entering our building, we want people to feel that this is a special place where all students can learn. The principal stresses the importance of working together to provide a caring, safe, educational environment for the students that is conducive to them learning and growing each day. In order to achieve this goal, all staff members including teachers, instructional assistants, cafeteria employees and custodial staff know they play a role in making Shiloh Hills a unique place to learn and to work. The success of our school is the direct result of this team approach to learning and accountability.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Shiloh Hills has been a successful school for years and we have continued to reach higher levels of achievement each year including the Governor’s Award for Academic Excellence in 2012-13, Title I Distinguished School in 2014 and 2015, the highest School Performance Profile score across all grade levels in Berks County and a ranking as the 20th best elementary school in the state of Pennsylvania. The recent history of achievement can be attributed to the building’s collaborative efforts and dedication to the study and implementation of best practices in literacy with a continued focus on professional learning and constant improvement.

The school’s Reading-Learning Community (RLC) started as a group of volunteer teachers who would come before and after school to study best practices. The group has maintained participation rates over 90%, despite the fact that it is outside of contracted hours. The group researches, reads, implements and discusses various approaches to improving reading instruction. The RLC was instrumental in developing the successful implementation plan of a school-wide independent reading initiative for 20 minutes every school day. This work, termed “Independent Reading 2.0” by the RLC was more than just silent reading time. Incorporating ideas from Richard Allington’s Every Child Every Day, Shiloh Hills has classroom teachers, support staff, specialists and the principal “push in” to engage in modeling, questioning, conferring, and discussing with students in all grade levels. A strategic cycle of spiraled training was used to coach all adults in instructional techniques that would bolster literacy learning. Professional learning sessions on best practices continue to be a focus of faculty meetings, early dismissal days and before/after school workshops with the goal of expanding the staff’s knowledge on the research behind implementing successful independent reading strategies in the classroom.

That work was just the beginning, as the focus of the last year has been changing the Tier I instruction for the ELA block to a Reading and Writing workshop to increase rigor and maximize time students spend working at their grade, independent and instructional reading and writing levels. The work of the RLC has shown signs of creating sustainable change and has impacted the priorities of the building in many areas including book selection criteria, budget priorities, improving classroom libraries, our Response to Instruction and Intervention structure and the focus of our literacy-data team meetings. Our student achievement results have increased each year for the students and we directly attribute our success towards this approach to community learning with a dedicated focus on closing the achievement gap.