

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 2018 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 2012 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: 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, or 2017.
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 (2017-2018) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 20 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 5 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 25 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
 - Rural or small city/town
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2017 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	206	199	405
7	207	214	421
8	198	227	425
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	611	640	1251

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 88 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 1 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 8 % White
 - 2 % 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 2016 – 2017 school year: 3%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain.

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, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	25
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	19
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	44
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	1298
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.03
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

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

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

Mandarin, Japanese, Hindi, Marathi, Korean, Russian

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 6%
Total number students who qualify: 69

8. Students receiving special education services: 5 %
67 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>17</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>19</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>20</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>11</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>9</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

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	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	36
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	14
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	17
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	6

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 25:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	98%	98%	98%	97%	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 2017.

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.

To provide a child-centered environment that cultivates character, fosters academic excellence, and embraces diversity. District families, communities, and staff join as partners to develop creative, exemplary learners with the skills and enthusiasm to contribute to a constantly changing global society.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

Students are enrolled at Miller via attendance area boundaries established by the District and School Board. The school is also the middle school location for the Cupertino Language Immersion Program. The Cupertino Language Immersion Program (CLIP) is an alternative school in the district, in which students are selected by lottery.

PART III – SUMMARY

Located in the heart of the Silicon Valley in the city of San Jose, Joaquin Miller Middle School is a three-year comprehensive middle school in the Cupertino Union School District. The largest school district in Northern California, Cupertino Union School District has 19 elementary schools, one K-8 school, and five middle schools. Miller is the second largest of the five middle schools with an enrollment of 1300 students in 6-8th grades. In addition to serving the students who live in the neighborhood community, Miller is also home to the Middle School Cupertino Mandarin Language Immersion Program (CLIP) and a two Special Day Classes.

The ethos of the school community is reflected in our vision to "Pursue Excellence in a Caring Environment." The Miller staff focuses on building a rigorous academic program, while providing a school climate where every child feels safe and respected. Our core beliefs include a the development of a caring, supportive community, risk taking in the learning process, student-centered learning, and developing skills that lead to lifelong learning.

Academic Achievement

Miller Middle School opened its campus in 1959 and celebrated its Golden Anniversary during the 2009-2010 school year. Over the years, Miller Middle School has earned prestige for academic achievement, but is also heralded locally for our robust elective, sports, and enrichment programs. In California, the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) measures student performance on grade level standards. Miller students consistently outperform their peer's county and statewide. In the 2016 assessment, 90% of Miller students scored at or exceeding standards in English language arts and 92% meeting or exceeding standards in mathematics.

Teachers identify and teach essential standards, differentiate instruction, and enrich classroom learning with experiential and performance opportunities. While maintaining academic expectations, students are also supported through teams, advisory dialogue and community building in homeroom classes.

A vibrant elective program is a signature practice at Miller. Students are offered both exploratory and advanced learning options. A range of elective offerings include academic support services, enrichment, and advanced levels of skill development. Students in 6th grade enroll in one elective, while 7th and 8th grade students enroll in two elective courses.

Enrichment Opportunities

Beyond the standard academic courses, Miller provides a variety of extra-curricular activities, including clubs, competitions and a competitive after school sports program. Our clubs include the Robotics Club, Future Business Leaders of America, Tinkercad, Red Cross, Girls Who Code, Chess as well as the Tuesday Lunch Club and Game Crew, which are designed to foster positive connections between students. The after school sports opportunities include both try-out and open access sports including soccer, basketball, volleyball, cross country, and track & field.

Instructional Technology

Technology experiences are embedded into lessons and daily instruction. To nurture digital skills and meet technology benchmark goals, Miller maintains a 1:1 setting for students utilizing multiple devices and platforms. Miller is committed to technological literacy and digital environments that are seamlessly integrated into instructional practice. To facilitate this, every classroom is equipped with a ceiling mounted projector and a smartboard. Applications and web based licenses meet the differentiated learning goals of students and enhance the instructional experience.

Instructional technology at Miller emphasizes digital citizenship. Taught in all three grade levels and across content areas, a digital citizenship curriculum builds the capacity in students to participate safely and act responsibly online.

A variety of elective environments focus on utilizing technology as a tool to create, curate and connect. In

SEARCH, students combine scientific research with business development, as they pitch their start-up concepts to prospective "investors". Communication Arts is a media production class that produces the morning announcements, commercials, and public service announcements. A new initiative, The Playground, is a "makerspace" environment with 3D printers, paper cutters, and other materials suited for tinkering. This initiative is in the early stages of implementation and will be included in the elective program in the upcoming year.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

The core curriculum includes a schedule of enrollment in science, mathematics, English language arts, and social studies. All content areas are aligned with the California Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

Science:

Students enroll in Earth Science (6th Grade), Life Science (7th grade), and Physical Science (8th Grade). Earth Science includes the application of convection currents to models pertinent to magma and weather patterns and how those movements translate to volcanic activity and earthquakes. Life science students research genetics and evolution as they learn about life on earth. Finally, a trifecta of chemistry, physics, and astronomy are all emphasized in 8th grade Physical Science.

Mathematics:

Multiple diagnostic assessments are utilized to place students into an appropriate math pathway. In the accelerated pathway, students enroll in Integrated 6th and 7th grade standards, CCSS Algebra and CCSS Geometry. An intermediate pathway allows students to progress from 6th Grade Common Core Math, 7th/8th Integrated Standards, and then CCSS Algebra. The grade level pathway is a sequence of enrollment in CCSS 6th, CCSS 7th, CCSS 8th.

Cupertino Union School District utilizes College Preparatory Math curriculum. Teachers focus on exposing students to the connections between concepts to increase both depth and breadth of knowledge. Students explore real life situations that are modeled by the current concepts being taught, including a bouncing ball that models exponential decay, and a wind-up toy that models the relationship of distance, rate, and time. These labs help students relate to the abstract with concrete examples so that they can make sense of problems.

English Language Arts:

The English language arts curriculum focus areas include domain-specific vocabulary, high-frequency spelling rules, small and large group speaking assignments, reading a variety of texts (poetry, research articles, novels, short stories), writing in three different genres (argumentative, informational, and narrative), and conventions.

To sequence effectively, teachers utilize pre-assessments and students' prior knowledge are considered to determine starting points and emphasis throughout the genre of writing unit. Monitoring students' oral and silent reading abilities throughout the year, allowing for a variety of levels and topics, gradually moving from less to more complex literature, and encouraging students to strive to read more advanced text, allows for flexible sequencing of reading.

Social Studies:

Students study Ancient, Medieval World, and early United States history. Students read, write, and analyze primary and secondary sources, engage in research, and active discourse about historical content. For example, students engage in inquiry to create their own assertions about why the Aztec empire fell and to what extent the American Revolution was revolutionary.

An annual student led Veteran's Day assembly is an extension of the social studies curriculum that has earned local news attention and accolades. Local Veterans are honored during a schoolwide assembly followed by discussions about National and Military service between the Veterans and small groups of students.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Cupertino Language Immersion Program (CLIP)

Students in the Cupertino Mandarin Immersion Program are enrolled in a core curriculum of English

language Arts, mathematics, science, physical education, mandarin language arts and immersion social studies.

Mandarin is the vehicle of instruction for 30% of the school day. CLIP students gain proficiency in the Mandarin language, preparing them for the highest levels of high school language classes and ultimately, to compete in a culturally diverse workforce.

Physical Education

Physical education focuses on four main components: fitness, learned skills performance, written work, and daily participation. Students set personal fitness goals and pursue their personal best in meeting grade-level standards. Students in sixth through eighth grade are exposed to volleyball, soccer, track & field, bowling, swing dance, tumbling, ultimate frisbee, juggling, rugby, personal fitness, floor hockey, and multicultural dance.

Elective Program

A vibrant elective program facilitates exploration, encourages curiosity, and sparks passion. Students choose from a variety of classes including, but not limited to: Woodshop, Band, Choir, SEARCH, Art, Photography, Foreign Language (French, Japanese, Spanish, Mandarin), Communication Arts, Drama, Leadership, Yearbook, Cooking, and Fashion Design.

Foreign Language is among the diverse elective offerings. Student may enroll in French, Japanese, Spanish, or Mandarin 1A and 1B, completing the first year of a language prior to high school matriculation. Culture and language are learned through studying traditions, holidays, and the associated foods, music and art.

The Miller Band and Choral programs often win accolades at local, regional, and state level competitions. The music program offers students beginner level, intermediate, and advanced levels. At all levels, advanced Band and choir programs offer foundational music instruction and incredible performance opportunities.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

A vehicle to support students, instructional methods across disciplines include clear communication, explicit description of purpose, collaborative learning, technology integration and opportunities for students to monitor, self-assess, and take ownership of learning.

Hallmarks of our math, science, writing, and elective classes include group settings and lab environments that support application of concepts, inquiry, and collaborative discussion. Group environments require students to tackle challenging, multilayered problems. Designated roles and teacher facilitation ensure that group work is effective and equitable. Over time, students mature so that they can work as a productive team. Teachers facilitate problem solving strategies, inquiry, investigation, analysis, construct evidence, and communicate to justify their thinking on a daily basis.

Assessment practices offer alignment to high quality instruction, as teachers utilize formative and summative assessments to guide instructional decisions and curricular pathways. Summative assessments, both nationally and state normed, in addition to district benchmarks in writing and math, provide data for teacher analysis and enrichment planning. Formative classroom assessments inform instruction and support student goal setting. For example, physical education courses require students to measure and track individual goals. By implementing self monitored assessments and goals, students gain the skills, knowledge and attitude necessary to lead a healthy and active lifestyle.

Currently a high performing school, Miller staff is engaged in ongoing professional development to refine and enhance classroom instruction to maintain student performance. In addition, teachers utilize differentiated strategies to support all learners. Current practices include software applications to engage students in mastery of foundational skills, multi-model approaches, and small group instruction. Learning skills elective courses, as well as an after school program called Miller Power Hour, are offered for intensive academic support.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Miller has a collaborative and positive school climate. Teachers, staff, parents, and students share common purpose in their dedication to student achievement and a camaraderie of mutual trust.

A culture of tradition drives programs, but innovation is also welcome. Miller teachers engage alongside students in quarterly homeroom competitions and an annual staff dance video where silliness and enthusiasm bring the community together. It is common to hear staff and students echo a popular phrase, "It's a great day to be a Mustang," emphasizing a contagious spirit of school pride.

A positive behavioral approach to student management, as well as a progressive disciplinary system emphasize proactive strategies to maintain a peaceful campus. Schoolwide expectations to follow the Mustang Way: Be Responsible, Be Respectful, Be Caring reinforce our strengths based school culture.

Our positive school culture provides an environment where teacher appreciation and awards are valued practice, both formally and informally. Teachers participate in the development of school goals and initiatives, facilitate the advisory of student organizations, and receive recognition from their peers through a monthly award given at staff meetings.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Parent participation, engagement, and support is a hallmark of the Cupertino Union School District. At Miller, parents are partners in education and offer a myriad of support including chaperoning field trips, co-advising clubs, supervising at dances, and organizing community celebrations.

The Miller Administration is also committed to providing parent education opportunities. By partnering with local professionals and organizations, education events are coordinated to support parents as they guide students through the developmental tasks of pre-adolescence.

Two parent organizations mobilize local support for the Miller educational program: The Parent and Teacher Association (PTA), and the Miller Community Educational Foundation (MCEF). The mission of the Miller PTA is to positively impact the lives of the children and families in the community by empowering them with information, education, programs, tools, and recognition. MCEF is a 501 (c) (3) public charitable organization that provides funding resources focusing on the elective program, technology support, and curriculum enrichment.

3. Professional Development:

Professional development focus areas are driven by student data, curriculum adoptions, and instructional initiatives. Professional development is, at times, personalized for the differentiated needs of teachers in their instructional practice, as well as the opportunity to deepen content knowledge.

In the past few years, all staff has participated in professional learning to enhance understanding of and best practices in support of English language learners. In addition, English language arts teachers have undergone extensive training to support the implementation of a writer's workshop model. These focus areas are based on student data as a comprehensive effort to enhance literacy and close achievement gaps.

Similarly, Math teachers have participated in a recent curriculum adoption, where student groups engage in mathematical discourse and problem solving around a core idea. Currently, science teachers engaged in aligning lesson plans to the NGSS framework.

In addition to professional development on site, our staff often collaborate with teachers from our partner middle schools in the Cupertino Union School District via content specific cadres and lab classrooms.

4. School Leadership:

Miller Middle School's governing structure includes a multilayered system of shared leadership. The Principal and Assistant Principal are site level administrators who have the support and collaboration of Central Office Instruction, Facilities, Business, and Technology Departments. The Principal and Assistant Principal provide the structure and formalized settings to support the involvement of all stakeholders through committees, advisory councils, teacher leadership teams, and forum settings to gather input and feedback.

Student leadership opportunities are embedded within a leadership course, a bevy of student run clubs, and a formalized Student Government with representation from each homeroom in 6-8th grade. Miller Student Council members are project managers, implementing student activities, dances, and spirit events. Advisors guide student leaders through project planning and implementation as they manage school wide events. Students leaders also focus on the local and extended community, serving not only their peers at Miller, but also the neighboring elementary school and global charities.

Committee structures, such as the School Site Council and CLIP Curriculum Advisory Committee invite all stakeholders to have voice in decision making and programs. These committees are comprised of parents, teachers, site administrators and students. School Site Council functions as an oversight committee to discuss school goals, student data, budgets, and curricular decisions. Similarly, the CLIP Curriculum Advisory Committee seeks to enhance, refine, and maintain a high quality immersion program.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

In keeping with Miller’s core beliefs, the one practice that has been most instrumental to the school’s success is prioritization of a caring, supportive school community for all students.

Upon enrollment, 6th grade students are welcomed into the community through the Where Everyone Belongs (WEB) transition program. Matching 8th grade leaders with groups of incoming 6th grade students, this partnership establishes a welcoming connection within and across grade levels.

The implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports aligns behavioral expectations, as well as incorporates acknowledgment systems that reinforce caring behaviors through Marvelous Mustang Moment Certificates, Golden Hoofprint Character Awards, and a daily on the spot recognition called the Golden Ticket.

The Intervention Strategy team, comprised of specialists, teachers, principals and counselors meet biweekly to address the needs of students. Recognizing that the dynamic needs of our students require a continuum of services, from a general homeroom setting that provides a home base for each student to more intensive onsite therapeutic support.