

U.S. Department of Education
2018 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mrs. Carol Westley

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

Official School Name Hynes Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 9000 Belleforte Avenue

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

Morton Grove IL 60053-2019
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Cook County

Telephone (847) 965-4500

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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. Beth Flores

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail bflores@golf67.net

District Name Golf ESD 67 Tel. (847) 966-8200

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. Richard Toth

(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 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):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 2 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	20	15	35
K	31	34	65
1	40	35	75
2	34	25	59
3	39	30	69
4	39	37	76
5	0	0	0
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	203	176	379

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 38 % Asian
 - 2 % Black or African American
 - 10 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 2 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 45 % White
 - 3 % 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: 2%

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	7
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	0
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	7
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	374
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.02
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 21 %
80 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
English, Spanish, Greek, Assyrian, Romanian, Urdu, Gujarati, Malayalam, Bengali, Telugu, Polish, Slovak, Korean, Arabic, Hindi, Mandarin, Turkish, Vietnamese, Russian

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 26 %
Total number students who qualify: 97

8. Students receiving special education services: 15 %
58 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>3</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>3</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>22</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>7</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>23</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>1</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 15
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	4
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	17
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	6
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	7
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

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

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	96%	95%	92%	94%	95%
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.

Hynes Elementary School believes in an inclusive environment, that promotes equality, values diversity and enhances learning and a social environment in which the rights and dignity of all its staff and students are respected.

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

Hynes Elementary School is located in the Village of Morton Grove, Illinois, thirteen miles north of downtown Chicago. It is one of two schools that make up Golf School District 67. Hynes enrolls approximately 379 students in Pre-Kindergarten through fourth grade who reside in Morton Grove and Niles. The Hynes community is culturally diverse mirroring the neighboring districts in Niles Township. More than nineteen languages are represented at Hynes with 15% of students coming from households who speak a second language. Approximately 25.6 % of students are on free or reduced lunch and the school participates in the National School Lunch Program.

Hynes Elementary School was built in 1957 as a result of population growth in the district and is named after former district teacher, principal and superintendent Irene E. Hynes. Through the years, students, staff, and parents have enjoyed a genuine partnership that has resulted in a positive environment in which to learn and grow. Through stability in school leadership, there has been a continued focus on cultivating and maintaining relationships. Hynes administrators, teachers and support staff demonstrate commitment and consistency as they work together as one team. There is an overall culture of respect and trust for students and staff which has been key in shaping the traditions and milestones that Hynes continues to celebrate.

The traditions at Hynes are grounded in the school's value of supporting and educating the whole child. Showcasing student work in academic areas brings our families together as partners. Family literacy nights have been held to encourage parents and students to not only read together, but also to provide parents with strategies and resources to support their children at home. The annual Science Expo is an opportunity for students to work through the scientific process to solve a problem. Parents enjoy an evening of viewing students' projects and engaging in student demonstrations and dialogue around a specific topic. Physical Education teachers take the lead in coordinating the annual "Jump Rope for Heart", "Field Day", and Wellness Fairs. These activities are essential as we promote health and wellness as an important component of educating the whole child. Fine Arts is showcased throughout each year as the general music classes, chorus and band perform for their families. The administration and staff strive to meet the social emotional needs of every child. To that end, each year, staff members facilitate the "Rainbows" program which helps children grieve and grow after the loss of a family member. Additionally, it is a priority to promote kindness and unity through "Unity Day" and "The Great Kindness Challenge."

In August 2014, Golf School District 67 entered into a ten-year Intergovernmental Agreement with Niles Township High School District 219 referred to as Classrooms First Collaborative (CFC). Skokie- Morton Grove Elementary District 69 had entered into this agreement with District 219 in 2013. The three districts' Boards of Education have committed to achieving agreed upon goals over the next ten-year period of their agreement. These goals include establishing a guaranteed and viable curriculum assessment program through an aligned K-12 scope and sequence in STEM and literacy, using data to monitor student growth and achievement to identify need for academic interventions and enrichments as early as possible, redirecting resources to classroom instruction and services that support students to be ready for high school and college, developing parent/school partnerships by inviting, supporting, and encouraging parents to become active participants in their children's education, and expanding teachers' instructional capacity by providing all school employees with the skills to help students succeed.

Hynes teachers participate in extensive professional development opportunities in STEM related subjects and literacy provided by content area specialists. These specialists are employed by District 219 but are solely dedicated to the CFC initiative. Three Hynes teachers serve as STEM leaders and three Hynes teachers serve as literacy leaders. Meetings are held throughout the year with STEM and literacy leaders from District 69 to research and evaluate curricular resources and plan engaging, high quality lessons for their students. Leaders then share their knowledge with their grade level team members.

Hynes administration and staff believe in developing parent/school partnerships by inviting, supporting, and encouraging parents to become active participants in their children's education. Kids Can Code evening sessions are held throughout the year that allows an adult family member to learn alongside their child about the skill development taking place in STEM areas including the basics of coding and engineering design.

Kids Can Engineer evening sessions were also held at Hynes for students and an adult family member where they designed and tested an arcade game or a balloon race car.

As a result of the collaborative partnership with our High School District 219 and Skokie/Morton Groves School District 69, Hynes Elementary School students are benefiting from a rigorous, high quality curriculum taught by teachers who engage in continuous professional development by content area experts. Parent partnership opportunities have increased and provide additional support for students and their parents.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Teachers utilize a balanced literacy approach to guide their teaching. During the 2016/2017 school year, Literacy leaders worked to build their knowledge through facilitated professional development. As part of this work, they presented to groups of teachers, to strengthen their own leadership skills. We believe that it is important to understand in depth what the Common Core State Standards ask of our students.

All K-4 teachers are using Jan Richardson’s model of guided reading, a differentiated reading instruction model that is designed to meet the needs of the range of learners in the classroom. They use “The Next Steps Forward in Guided Reading” by Jan Richardson as a resource to implement guided reading in the classroom. Guided reading is a differentiated reading instruction model that is designed to meet the individual needs of the range of learners in the classrooms.

Teachers continue to investigate evidence-based instructional practices in literacy instruction, review current instructional practices and materials for alignment to CCSS and determine if these practices and materials should continue in the curriculum. Grade level common assessments are being developed to include in the overall balanced assessment plan.

Writer’s Workshop is a framework for writing instruction that aligns with Common Core State Standards. The Workshop model includes a predictable pattern of mini-lesson, independent writing, conferencing, and sharing. During the mini-lesson, the teacher models a specific writing strategy or technique. These short lessons are teacher-led, and typically utilize a “mentor text”, or piece of exemplary writing. The exemplary writing may be from a book, article, teacher-written, or student-written. It is carefully selected to illustrate the strategy or technique which is the lesson for the day. A mini-lesson takes less than 20 minutes. Students are then given time to write independently, to practice this strategy or technique to enhance their writing. The students may be reviewing a piece they have already written to identify that technique in their own writing or be asked to work that technique into an existing piece. Sometimes the students will be starting a new piece.

While students are writing independently, the teacher engages in conferences with individuals or small groups. This allows the teacher to differentiate, either reteaching skills or introducing something new for which students may be ready.

Finally, students have the opportunity to share their writing in a variety of ways. This reinforces the idea that we write for an audience and our writing needs to clearly communicate our ideas.

Eureka Math is used in grades PreK – 4 and provides students with opportunities to solve rigorous problem sets using varied strategies such as tape diagrams, arrays and place value charts. Students not only learn the process for solving a problem, they also understand why that process works. Our math curriculum builds students’ knowledge logically and thoroughly to help them achieve deep understanding. The alignment of content and strategies positions students to master the levels of application, synthesis and evaluation found with the Illinois Math Standards.

Our science curriculum focuses on having students learn concepts and content specific information within the context of solving problems and engineering solutions. Science units are based on situations and problems that all of our students can relate to and understand. Our curriculum is driven by the Next Generation Science Standards, whose main focus is on developing students' ability to understand and explain the scientific world around them.

Hynes teachers use various strategies during social studies instruction including, teaching concepts and skills, teaching with inquiry, asking good questions, and teaching with cooperative learning groups. There is always a literacy-social studies connection to improve text comprehension and to help students make sense of what they read. Leveled trade books are used to examine multiple perspectives. Technology is integrated to enhance lessons and engage students. Democratic values are taught through the school rules, and

classroom rules established by both the teacher and students. Current events are taught and discussed using age appropriate text.

Hynes offers a blended preschool program for three and four-year-old children who are district residents. The program uses as its foundation the research-based Creative Curriculum. Our program's objectives are to foster language and literacy development, provide math readiness activities through Eureka Math, offer inquiry-based social studies and STEM experiences, provide art, music, and drama activities, build gross motor and fine motor skills, and nurture social and emotional development. The preschool teacher utilizes a language rich approach to teaching that is aligned with the elementary curriculum, which helps to provide a smooth transition to kindergarten.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Our general music teacher shares her love of music with our children. She holds Orff certification and uses the Orff method in the music classroom. This encourages children to learn the way they naturally do, by moving, performing, and creating music. The teacher-created music curriculum outlines content standards specific to each grade level. The standards begin with the fundamentals of music such as steady beat in the lower grades and culminate in music reading and composition in the upper grades. Many different learning experiences such as listening, performing, reading, and creating are provided to address each unique learning style of the students. Our hope is to inspire a love of music in our children, as well as develop their musicianship skills. PreK4 and kindergarten students attend class once a week, while students in Grades 1-4 attend three times a week during the first two academic quarters. Each year the students participate in an evening music fest, where they perform selections highlighting their music skills as well as their love of music. In addition, we have a 3rd and 4th grade chorus which has a 30-minute rehearsal once a week during recess. The Hynes chorus performs at both a winter and spring concert.

Our band program at Hynes continues to grow and flourish. Students have the opportunity to begin a band instrument in fourth grade. They have a 30-minute small group lesson during their recess period once a week, and a 1-hour ensemble rehearsal every Tuesday after school. Within the first three months, the students perform at an evening concert, and by the end of 4th grade, they are playing a full sheet of music at the spring concert.

The Hynes art program focuses on creating and appreciating art using a variety of materials. The students study famous artists, art periods, and styles of art that inspire their learning and creativity. Students work in both two-dimensional and three-dimensional media using drawing tools, various paints, and sculptural materials. Hynes Pre-K 4 and Kindergarten students receive art class once a week for 20 minutes. PreK4 and kindergarten students attend class once a week, while students in Grades 1-4 attend three times a week during the last two academic quarters. Each year we have a school-wide Celebration of Art that features a piece of art from every Hynes student. It is a wonderful evening event for students, parents, staff and community members to gather together and enjoy the beautiful artwork our students have created over the school year.

Hynes students in Grades 1-4 participate in a daily physical education class, kindergarteners twice a week, and preschoolers once a week. As lifelong athletes, our teachers have a passion for the health and wellness of both body and mind. They use their talents and experiences inside and outside of the classroom to recognize and address the unique genius of every student at Hynes. At the elementary level, there is no one size fits all physical education. Our teachers work to challenge their students through developmentally appropriate progressions to ensure motor competency. This encourages and prepares all children to make positive lifelong decisions about physical activity. Physical education activities include low organized games (chasing, fleeing, and dodging), gymnastics, rhythm and dance, parachute, cooperative team-building, sport cup stacking soccer, football, basketball, volleyball, tee ball/softball, bowling, health, nutrition, and fitness testing using the FitnessGram program. This year, our parents, staff and community members will be invited to our first Wellness Night featuring students demonstrating their learning, as well as health and nutrition support from community professionals.

Technology is fully integrated into the students' learning activities. Each classroom has an interactive

whiteboard, document camera, and mobile teacher workstation; all are used extensively in teaching and learning. Students in Preschool-Grade 2 use iPad's, while the 3rd and 4th graders use Chromebooks. All students progress through an age-appropriate technology "boot camp" to learn about internet safety and digital citizenship. Our technology coach works with teachers to introduce new software programs and applications which challenge students to modify and redefine their learning tasks and products. In addition, the students have scheduled time twice a week to access the technology lab and the media center to practice their skills, perform research and circulate books.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Instruction is planned and delivered to be developmentally appropriate, challenging, and engaging. Teachers collaborate with the literacy, math, and science directors from our high school to ensure that curriculum, instruction, and assessment are well-articulated and rigorous.

In literacy, teachers use the structure of the Daily 5 (read to self, read to someone, listen to reading, word work, work on writing) to assist students in developing habits of reading, writing and working independently, as well as increasing stamina. Students select their tasks from the five and work toward their personalized goals. This structure allows for whole group and small group instruction, as well as partner and independent work. It allows teachers to meet individual needs through guided reading groups and individual conferences. All students have a subscription to RAZ-Kids, an online application that allows students to read self-selected, authentic literature at their independent level.

The Hynes writing program employs a writing workshop model. Students work through the writing process to produce many pieces, some of which are published and placed in their individual writing portfolios. Teachers use a common grade-level rubric to support peer evaluation and guide their student conferences. At the end of the year, portfolios are collected and passed on to the teacher at the next grade level. In this way, teachers and students can review and reflect on writing progress made throughout the students' elementary years.

In math, whole group, small group, and individual instruction allows for a high degree of differentiation. Students collaborate with their table groups or shoulder partners to work through a daily application problem, as well as the problems in the concept development segment. Students also have access to Zearn, a math application that is aligned to Eureka Math and allows for students to work at their own level and at their own pace. Early finishers use Zearn in class; students also use it at home to accelerate or to reinforce.

Teachers use a variety of formative and summative assessments to identify students' strengths and needs. Preschool students are assessed with the Individual Growth and Development Indicators of Early Literacy and Numeracy (IGDI's). In fall, winter, and spring, all students in kindergarten and first grade are benchmarked in early literacy and numeracy using AIMSweb, while second through fourth graders are benchmarked in literacy and math using AIMSweb's curriculum-based measurements.

Fountas and Pinnell's Benchmarking Assessment System (BAS) is administered to kindergarten through second grade students to assess comprehension. In addition, teachers use oral reading records in kindergarten through second grade to monitor progress in reading fluency and to assist in guided reading placement.

The Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) is given three times a year to second, third, and fourth graders to measure student growth in English language arts and math. In spring, our third and fourth grade students take the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) to measure whether students are on track for success in college and careers.

Regular classroom assessments include "sprints" to develop fluency in math facts, vocabulary and grammar quizzes, spelling dictation, mid and end of chapter/module tests in reading and math. Assessment in science is through the use of STEM modules and in social studies through collaborative projects.

Small group pull-out interventions are provided for students making less than expected progress, or those

struggling in specific skills or strategies. The reading specialist sees small groups of students two to four times a week to work on decoding, fluency, and comprehension strategies. Students are progress monitored every two to three weeks, and groups are flexible. Benchmark and progress monitoring data is regularly reviewed, and students move in and out of reading support, as indicated.

A teacher assistant provides additional sessions for students using the Lexia Core 5 intervention. This is an online application that offers practice and reinforcement in the five core pillars of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Students' progress through the levels, earning certificates of achievement.

The math support teacher sees small groups of students two to three times a week to work on math fluency, concept development and problem-solving strategies. Students are selected based on benchmarking and classroom assessment data. They are progress monitored regularly and the results are used to inform math instruction in the classroom and in the intervention groups.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Hynes is a warm and welcoming school. Parents, community members, university supervisors, and educators from other districts remark about the warmth they feel when visiting. Staff take a personalized interest in each member of the Hynes community. They demonstrate respect and camaraderie in their interactions, and they show genuine care and concern to students, parents, and visitors. The principal and staff are readily available to all stakeholders to listen, problem-solve and support. A culture and climate of kindness and positivity is valued. Safety is a top priority; the vigilance of staff and parents allows our students to feel safe and comfortable at school and focused on their academics, social needs and emotional growth.

Teachers form close working relationships with their team members, and regularly work across grade levels and disciplines, to plan activities or share ideas and resources. Each staff meeting begins with a teaching and learning segment where staff members share ideas, strategies or resources for the benefit of all. At the beginning of the year, we hold an assembly to introduce our new students and staff and to welcome everyone back to school. New students each have a classroom buddy, and new teachers receive a mentor. The guidance counselor meets with each new student and staff member. She creates a newcomer bulletin board in the hallway, complete with pictures and personal statements.

Throughout the year, we participate in activities to foster kindness, unity, support and empathy. In many classrooms, teachers and students recognize and celebrate a student of the week or month. Through this activity, the specialness of students' traditions and cultures is acknowledged. Our school has participated in the Great Kindness Challenge, as well as Unity Day and Safety Day.

Relationships are nurtured through Friendship Groups where students can model and learn pro-social strategies, as well as Reading Buddies which fosters relationships across grade levels. In Peer Buddies, each volunteer helps another child develop new friendships and friendship-making skills, and CUFFS (Cardinals United for Friendship and Song) links our special needs students with their peers. Our Volunteer Service Club members support military members, share valentines with local seniors, raise funds for hurricane relief, and make birthday cards for hospitalized children.

On the last day of school, at a farewell assembly, we acknowledge our students and staff who are moving away, going to middle school or retiring. There are hugs and tears among students, parents and staff as we wish all a fond farewell.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

As a building principal, I pride myself on being a servant leader who continues to build and sustain positive relationships with families, community leaders and organizations to prepare the groundwork for creating partnerships and engaging the community. Building partnerships is always based on addressing the needs of students and improving learning outcomes. The involvement of teachers, staff, and parents is reflected in the positive school climate and staff morale at Hynes Elementary School. I work collaboratively with teams to ensure that systems are in place to help create the conditions for staff and students to work effectively together and with the community. Simple, clear goals and effective processes for community engagement are effectively communicated to provide for a measure of consistency in approach and action. I believe it is the people that make a difference in a school. Active listening, communicating, and engaging stakeholders builds community support and increases student achievement and success.

Frequent communication and engagement with parents is key. Our website provides school and class information, and our online portal has updated student progress information. Phone calls, notes, and meetings keep parents informed of their children's achievements and challenges. Parents and community members are welcomed as classroom volunteers on a regular basis. They help monitor literacy centers, listen to individual children read, quiz students on math facts and spelling words, as well as assist at class

parties and on field trips. Our Open House, parent-teacher conferences, and Science and Art Expos are well attended by parents and community members. Parents and students also participate in our Kids Can Code evening series. Our English Learner Family Night was a great success. Ethnic dinner dishes and prizes were donated by several local restaurants, as well as the public library.

We have many partnerships with entities in the community which support our students' growth and development. We partner with our high school for the "That's My Story" event. Hynes students write stories which the high school drama students perform at an assembly for our students. Our second graders invite the mayor to visit and speak about his role in government. All grades partner with the Junior Achievement program to learn about financial stewardship and entrepreneurship. The public librarian, police officers, and firefighters are regular visitors, as are "Mystery Readers", which are parents, staff or community members. All of these activities broaden our students' experiences and enrich their learning.

3. Professional Development:

Professional learning for teachers is an essential strategy for supporting the skills students need to be successful in school. For students to develop the 21st Century skills of problem-solving, communication and collaboration, and self-direction while developing mastery of challenging content, teachers must learn and refine the principles and methods of instruction required to teach these skills.

The professional development approach for Hynes begins by analyzing data through the school's grade level teams. The team looks through data to identify needs in core subject areas and performance from specific groups of students. Recently the teams have been using Tableau data visualizations to identify the areas for growth within the organization. This analysis leads to long term and short term professional development planning for staff.

Literacy leaders and STEM leaders at Hynes study the research with grade level leaders alongside curriculum directors. Leaders dive into the research to understand the best practices in instruction and make recommendations to the building and district administration. The next phase of professional development embeds teaching strategies that are content focused to support teacher learning within the context of their classroom. Through our partnership with our high school, content area specialists provide coaching and modeling for Hynes teachers. They offer valuable feedback to individual teachers with the understanding that teacher training must be differentiated just as instruction is for students.

Teachers participate in active learning which provides them with the opportunity to design and try out new teaching strategies. Frequent collaboration with their grade level teams allows for sharing of ideas and time to reflect on and plan future lessons. Teacher Institute days are designed to meet the needs of specific grade bands and content areas; they are planned to review models of effective practice. During these days, teams may also have the opportunity to plan units of study. At Hynes, teacher training is ongoing with adequate time to learn, practice, implement and reflect upon new strategies. Faculty meetings provide another time for sharing with peers and celebrating success. As the principal, I am mindful that change takes time, and I am intentional about communicating this message with my teachers. Hynes has seen much success in student achievement as a result of supportive and dedicated professionals who strive to be the best they can be. Improving teacher practice never ends, and at Hynes, we are driven by our district's vision, Inspiring Learners for Lifelong Success.

4. School Leadership:

I believe that a school's vision, mission and goals must maintain its focus on student learning. All students must have the opportunity to acquire a quality education in a school that is safe, nurturing and productive. School administrators must provide the tools and resources for teachers so that all students achieve at the high levels needed to prepare them to lead fulfilling and productive lives, to succeed in academic and employment settings, and to make a positive contribution to society. My philosophy of education has matured throughout the years. I have experienced the perspective of the teacher who strives to meet the diverse needs of each student in a classroom, as well as the principal who collaborates with teachers and families to provide opportunities for student inquiry within the framework of a clearly articulated,

developmentally appropriate, child-centered curriculum.

Hynes has experienced a unique opportunity for leadership. Teacher leaders were offered the chance to work with our high school's math, science, and literacy directors to research and help guide decisions in curriculum and instruction. We currently have three STEM leaders and three Literacy leaders. Each leader group meets four to six times a year to receive professional development, as well as to articulate with a neighboring district's leaders. Our leaders return to school and share their learning with the Hynes teachers in their team meetings and at our staff meetings. Sharing responsibility for leadership has encouraged more open dialogue and collaboration as well as increasing ownership for changes in teaching and learning.

My educational philosophy is rooted in a belief that the leadership in the school will directly influence how students are taught in the classroom. As the building principal, keeping the district vision alive and energized is a priority. Providing the leadership required to effectively articulate the vision and mission of the school district is essential. I believe that as a principal, I must lead by example, put students first in all decisions and actions, build relationships through trust, utilize fiscal and human resources with great stewardship, and conduct all interactions with truth, transparency, and collaboration. In summary, students deserve and should be provided a high-quality education that is rigorous, enables them to think critically, and fosters a respect for personal and cultural diversity.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The practice that is most influential in our school's success is hiring the right teacher for each position. Research indicates that teacher quality is the most important determining factor in student success. Effective teachers are selected by an intentional hiring process. There is no substitute for the information that can be learned through an in-depth dialogue with a potential teacher or staff member.

Hiring the right candidate requires a global understanding of a multitude of school factors, but with priority placed on hiring those with exemplary character who will work to uphold our school district's mission and vision and who will most effectively impact student success in our school's climate and culture.

Most of the hiring process takes place between principal and candidate. The principal reviews all applications and supporting documents to screen for the necessary credentials. Attention is given to formative experiences, evidence of relationship-building, and listed accomplishments. For a school that is very diverse in language, culture, and socio-economic status, it is also important to be aware of diversity that candidates may offer.

Candidates are selected for possible interview; each is called and invited. The first interview with the principal is in-depth and lasts at least an hour. During the interview, which is more dialogue than interview, candidates are encouraged to talk about themselves: their background, college program, teaching experiences, interactions with colleagues, students, and parents. Their strengths, interests, and areas for growth are explored. Often candidates bring a portfolio that helps guide the conversation. Questions that require opinions are shared, and candidates are given the opportunity to ask questions of the principal. At the interview's conclusion, candidates are thanked and told the expected time frame for hiring.

After all selected candidates have been interviewed, potential hires are asked to return for another interview including current staff members or the superintendent. Then, a discussion ensues to determine the best candidate for the position. Once the decision is made, the candidates are called, and the hiring is formalized.

The most important qualities sought in a candidate for Hynes School continue to be a love of children, the commitment to excellence in teaching, openness to change and learning, ability to collaborate with every stakeholder as a member of the team, a strong work ethic, and most importantly, an exemplary character.

Remaining true to this process and maintaining a focus on these qualities have allowed us to develop a staff that continues to be effective in promoting academic success, as well as social and emotional growth for all of our students.