

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 Mr. Jon David Acton

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

Official School Name Cascade Senior High School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 6565 S. County Road 200 W

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

Clayton IN 46118-4908
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Indiana (IN)

Telephone (317) 539-9315

Fax (844) 303-1905

Web site/URL http://chs.mccsc.k12.in.us

E-mail jacton@mccsc.k12.in.us

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Jim Diagostino

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail jdiagostino@mccsc.k12.in.us

District Name Mill Creek Community School Corporation Tel. (317) 539-9200

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. Jim Bryant

(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):
- 2 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 4 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	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	64	55	119
10	56	49	105
11	57	60	117
12 or higher	62	57	119
Total Students	239	221	460

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 2 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 94 % 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: 6%

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	6
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	22
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	28
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	460
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.06
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	6

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 2%
2 Total number ELL

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

Chinese, Spanish, Punjabi, Vietnamese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 28%
 Total number students who qualify: 127

8. Students receiving special education services: 12 %
54 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>1</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>2</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>11</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>24</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>9</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>14</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>8</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: 4
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	3
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	27
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	3
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	5
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 17:1

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%	97%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	99%	97%	99%	97%	95%

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	106
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	52%
Enrolled in a community college	13%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	4%
Found employment	19%
Joined the military or other public service	7%
Other	5%

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 prepare students for college and career readiness in the 21st century.

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

Cascade High School is located 26 miles west of Indianapolis, Indiana, with a population that consists of a mixture of suburban and rural lifestyles. Cascade High School has a student population of approximately 500 students, with 45 certified and classified staff/family members. Cascade High School is a part of the Mill Creek Community School Corporation of Hendricks County in central Indiana. The Mill Creek Community School Corporation has an enrollment of just over 1500 students and is comprised of one high school, one middle school, and two elementary schools. Our high school's student population is 93.9% Caucasian, with a representation of 27.6% free/reduced, 12% special education, 7% high ability and routinely boasts over a 98% graduation rate. Furthermore, our district's community advanced degree level is 28.1%, while our median household income is \$56,700. (sources - www.doe.in.gov and <https://statisticalatlas.com/United-States/Overview>) Cascade High School has the highest free and reduced rate and our community has the lowest advanced degree rate in Hendricks County. However, our students consistently outperform schools across the state with more socio-economic advantages. Cascade High School has been a highly successful school, earning "A" ratings and Four Star designation by the Indiana Department of Education during each of the past five years. Cascade High School has also received recognition by the Indiana Department of Education for AP and Dual Credit pass rates and a Champion's Partner award with Ivy Tech Community College.

Cascade High School is a 1964 consolidation of Coatesville, Amo, and Stilesville High Schools. The original building housed 34 classrooms, and one varsity gymnasium/auditorium combination facility. Additions to the school in 1992-93 added industrial technology classrooms, auxiliary gyms and a fine arts auditorium. The Jon Mitchell Senior Academy was established in 2015 as an Early College and Career Center utilizing and repurposing existing space. Facility improvements will begin the spring of 2018 with security camera enhancements, heating and cooling upgrades and resurfacing football/soccer, baseball and softball fields to synthetic turf.

Traditionally, Cascade High School (CHS) has been the academic, athletic and social center of our community. We use best instructional practices guided by The Teach Like a Champion model. We focus on literacy across the curriculum, higher order thinking and process skills aligned to Indiana State Standards. (<https://www.doe.in.gov/standards>) Our use of school wide and individual student data analysis, coupled with intentional reflection, has allowed for both school and individual student growth. A school-wide focus on growth mindset has challenged our students and staff to "Always Compete" in all areas with peers and schools all across the United States and globe. We are a 1 to 1 digital convergence school utilizing Chromebooks and the Trudacot philosophy to enhance our instruction. Students learn skills that benefit them after graduation such as inquiry, creating authentic work, critical thinking, communication, collaboration and reflection. CHS offers rigorous academics with 10 Advanced Placement and 12 Dual-Credit courses. Just over 75% of our students participate in at least one of our 18 extra-curricular clubs, 17 varsity sports or 6 co-curricular fine-arts opportunities. Students and staff support civic and charity groups, such as Riley Hospital for Kids, United Way, Leukemia Foundation, Special Olympics as well as local food pantries and shelters for families in need.

Cascade High School has a proud tradition of success and a continued expectation of excellence in academics, fine arts, and athletics. Cascade High School has won six spell bowl state championships and proudly boast two prestigious individual Indiana Academic All-Stars. Over the past four years, we have led the six Hendricks County high schools as the top overall performing school in state ECA/ISTEP testing. The Band and Choir programs have combined for over forty Gold Medalist distinctions by the Indiana State School Music Association (ISSMA). Our boys and girls' athletic programs have combined for over thirty Indiana High School Athletic Association (IHSAA) Sectional Championships and three Regional Championships in various sports. Embodying the growth mindset over the past four years and the school wide "Always Compete" mantra, Cascade student-athletes have become individual IHSAA State Finalists in Golf, Diving, and one IHSAA State Runner-up finish in Track and Field.

"The" Cascade High School has successfully created an identity of excellence and achievement in our school and community. Our dedicated staff and student body are committed to high standards of academic,

fine arts and athletic achievement, community service and continual reflection toward total school improvement. We humbly believe “The” Cascade High School is worthy and deserving of the honor of being named a National Blue Ribbon School!

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

The core curriculum at Cascade High School is standards-based and literacy-infused. Each student has an individual plan aligned to a curriculum that helps ensure every student is challenged and prepared for life after graduation. Students at Cascade High School earn diplomas in categories that best suit their academic abilities such as General, Core 40, Academic Honors and Technical Honors. Cascade High School has created a family feel which helps form the learning environment. Students are pushed with rigorous academic content and instruction, but also learn to be active and civic minded.

Students enter Cascade High School understanding this is their school, and their time to leave their legacy. Our students and staff embody our slogan, “Many have come before you, many will come after you, but now is your time.” This helps create an environment where learning is accessible and challenging. Each student and staff member has a vested interest in making themselves and their school great.

The English Department at Cascade High School offers a comprehensive curriculum that ranges from courses that build foundational reading, writing and speaking skills to Advanced Placement and Dual Credit courses. All English courses are vertically aligned grades 9-12 to create seamless integration of the standards based curriculum. Across all English courses, students read and write daily to help increase critical thinking and composition skills. Each student’s reading level is monitored with Pivot benchmark reading comprehension assessments in order to track progress and provide differentiated supports throughout each school year. Learning gaps are closed utilizing double block English Labs for students in need of extra assistance for college and career English readiness skills. Whether students are on a college or career path, content vocabulary is broken into foundational skills, academic and content specific vocabulary that helps students with 21st century soft skills communication development.

The Math Department at Cascade High School offers 22 courses that range from Algebra I to Dual Credit College Algebra and AP Calculus BC. Students may take Algebra I courses as early as 7th grade, and most students are required to take three years of mathematics courses. Similar to our English Department, students in need of extra assistance in mathematics have double block opportunities to help create success for College and Career Math readiness skills. At each level, focus is given to foundational skills for success at the next level. To help prepare students for college and career readiness all math courses have embedded critical thinking, problem solving, reasoning, interpretation and synthesizing information. In addition, as part of our cross-curricular literacy focus, our math classes also read 15 minutes each week and focus on 50 content specific vocabulary words.

The Science Department at Cascade High School offers 20 courses that range from Integrated Chemistry-Physics to AP courses in Environmental Science, Biology and Chemistry. Course sequence is chosen to give students a foundation of problem-solving and math skills to support cross curricular areas. Each class is infused with similar 21st century skills as mathematics but also includes best science practices, lab work, scientific writing, and inquiry learning. To meet the needs of all students, Cascade High School teachers use a variety of instructional methods to make lessons relevant, rigorous, and to provide real-world skills.

The Social Studies Department at Cascade High School offers 18 required and elective courses. Social Studies classes use multiple classroom activities, such as project-based inquiry, current events integration, and self-exploration to provide students with differentiated instructional strategies and to accommodate multiple learning styles. Students start their high school careers with either World History or Pre-AP Honors World History. As a junior or senior, students have Dual Credit options in Criminal Justice and Psychology and AP options in Microeconomics, US Government, and US History. An array of elective courses include: Sociology, Ethnic Studies, Indiana Studies, Topics in 20th Century Global Conflicts and Sports History. As part of the cross curricular college and career readiness, social studies classes embed civic, economics and global awareness literacy. Students work on communication skills similar to English classes in order to communicate thoughts and ideas effectively as an individual or collaboratively as part of a group through project based learning opportunities.

Cascade High School puts our students in position to be successful with their college and career pathways. The academic rigor and cross curricular focus on literacy, higher order thinking, and communication skills allow our students to be College and Career prepared. Our Early College and Career Center through our Jon Mitchell Senior Academy prepare students for life after high school. Our students benefit from college and career experiences such as our College and Career Application day. Senior students meet with over 40 colleges, universities, businesses, apprenticeships and military representatives to create immediate opportunities for college admissions and job interviews. Every senior student participates in mock job interviews with corporate business executives (Walmart logistics). This opportunity provides interview feedback and suggestions to help students compete with peers across the globe for future career opportunities.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

A school-wide focus on literacy, including content vocabulary, writing, and reading extends to the other curricular areas as well. With approximately forty elective courses on campus, and thirty courses with Area 31 Career Center, students have a multitude of choices to expand their educational experiences.

Our fine arts department provides opportunities for student expression in visual, musical and performing arts. Students in grades 9-12 may take courses in both two and three-dimensional arts that include drawing, painting and ceramics. In our performance arts pathway students may take choir from beginning to advanced or intermediate concert band to jazz band. The fine arts department strives to develop a knowledge and appreciation for the arts regardless of course or opportunity selected.

Our physical education/health courses provide opportunities for students to grow their minds and bodies. Students may complete required physical education courses in the middle school and high school or by successfully completing a sports season. Students in grades 10-12 may also take additional elective physical education courses, such as advanced physical conditioning, yoga, or team sports. Health is also required of all students.

Students have the opportunity to study five years of Spanish or French. Students can begin world language instruction during their 8th grade year for high school credit, after completing an intro to World Language class in 7th grade. Sixty percent of students take at least three years of a world language during their high school career.

The media center serves as a learning hub to support the core curriculum. Students learn how to determine credible sources for research, provide guidelines for evaluating sources, and receive training on various databases and website research. The media center provides innovation opportunities with a makerspace area and collaboration with book studies and reviews. The media center also hosts, monitors, and supports online credit recovery courses.

Business course offerings are all elective based but provide valuable options. Students may pursue computing pathways, such as Digital Applications and Computer Illustrations or traditional Business pathways such as Introduction and Advanced Accounting. Students may also take a specialized Sports Marketing course or as a Senior take an off-campus Business Internship course that helps further prepare students for career readiness.

Our Engineering and Technology courses through Project Lead the Way (PLTW) such as Principles of Engineering provide students with opportunities to apply math and science knowledge. In so doing, their skills are strengthened as they see real-life applications to their knowledge. PLTW classes are open to grades 9-12 and are truly STEM because they blend all aspects of STEM and allow students to synthesize and integrate their knowledge. Students develop problem-solving skills and strengthen process skills. These courses also provide vocational training and support college and career readiness. CHS offers a course in which students can earn dual credit and industry-recognized certificates in partnership with Conexus.

Additional Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses are available for students grades 11-12 with a

partnership through the Area 31 Career Center. Thirty CTE courses are available that range from Advanced Manufacturing to Welding Technology. Students may earn Dual College Credits from Ivy Tech Community College or Vincennes University.

Family and Consumer Science (FACS) are available for students grades 9-12 to prepare students for real life experiences. Our FACS courses include: child development, nutrition and wellness, and education professions all as electives. The curriculum can lead to many different careers. Within these courses, students can also strengthen their literacy and math skills as they apply classroom objectives to real life situations.

Agriculture is available for students grades 9-12 and is the newest addition to the curriculum at Cascade High School. One of the best ways to ensure that students stay interested in their coursework is to make learning relevant to them. Students add new scientific knowledge with an agricultural focus. This real-life setting gives students applicable learning experiences and an introduction to careers in the field agriculture. Students progress through Introduction to Agriculture, Agriculture Power, Agribusiness Management and a culminating Supervised Internship.

Higher order thinking skills are present in these courses as well as core curricular areas. These courses stress creative thought and creative and practical applications of the essential skills. Students develop process and applied skills in these courses which support learning in the core curriculum. Cascade High School strives to offer as many elective courses as possible to meet the diverse needs and wants of our students.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Cascade High School has defined our curricular, instructional and professional development plans with our “Pyramid of Success” and our “Pedagogy Playbook.” These documents define and focus the implementation of our school plan and philosophy of putting every student in the best position possible to attain success. Our “Pyramid of Success” is based upon seven levels of progression for students and staff that either directly or indirectly impact our curriculum, instructional strategies and overall success for each student.

The first level and foundation of our school is our intentional and consistent climate and culture development. We focus on the FISH! Philosophy to help create the positive attitudes and mindset that drives the entire school. Level two focuses on attitudes, relationships, high expectations, safe school environment and student-centered instruction by using inquiry centered, teaching learning skills, reflection, shared control of the learning process and collaboration. Level three focuses on literacy across the curriculum, higher order and process thinking skills, state standards and content vocabulary mastery. We insert the three highest levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy into lessons and assessments focusing on analyzing, evaluating and creating. Level four includes data analysis and reflection, quality daily instruction and digital convergence utilizing the Trudacot Philosophy. We analyze and reflect upon eight pieces of data for each student that includes, reading level, credits earned, GPA, attendance, discipline, state English and Math assessments as well as remediation efforts. We use instructional strategies from the Teach Like a Champion model to enhance and focus daily instruction. Our 1:1 digital initiative uses the Trudacot Philosophy based on the premise that technology is a tool and must have a purpose to enhance the instructional strategies in every classroom.

Level five uses a growth mindset, pathways for college and career readiness success, and the Jon Mitchell Senior Academy to assist students in their journey beyond CHS. We reinforce the growth mindset philosophy by consistently teaching our students words we no longer say such as, I can’t, We can’t, We’re just, and We’ve never. Our pathways for college and career readiness have expanded from our original college, career, military, and missionary paths to include guidance on new graduation pathways created by the Indiana legislature. A unique portion to our overall curriculum and instructional strategies is the Early College and Career Center with the Jon Mitchell Senior Academy. This senior-focused concept helps students as an early college and career exploration facility. Students can take up to twelve dual credit courses through Ivy Tech Community College with a visiting professor in our academy wing. Within the Senior Academy, core teachers focus on monthly themes and vocabulary to assist students in the transition from high school student to post-secondary student or productive workforce employee. Level six is a final

check to make sure students are college and career ready with 21st century skill sets needed to “Always Compete” in a global market. Our expectation is that every student earns a diploma from Cascade High School. Students graduate from Cascade High School consistently at over 98% with diploma types that best fit the needs of each student. Level seven, the top of our “Pyramid of Success” model, is putting every student in position to have success in the real world. Students leave with the skills and confidence to take on and make a difference in the world.

Every high school student takes a grade level beginning and end of year benchmark assessment using PIVOT Formative reading and math benchmarks assessments. This data along with ISTEP, Accuplacer, PSAT, and ASVAB scores are given to each student’s teachers to help with classroom instruction and differentiation. These test results are also shared with parents and reviewed during grade level semi-annual parent nights.

Teachers at Cascade High School utilize various formative assessments to drive instructional strategies, as well as many formal and informal assessments to monitor student progress toward mastery of the learning objectives. Teachers engage in data-driven decisions based on assessment outcomes. Teachers lead monthly Professional Learning Communities in the core content areas with guiding questions to improve instruction and student outcomes.

At risk and/or credit deficient students meet frequently with their mentor teacher, school counselor and school administrators. Student classroom schedules and four-year plans are individually assessed to help meet needs in deficiencies or to expand or advance their learning. Remediation is aligned to specific needs and content in order to reach academic success with state required assessments. Students may track their progress in courses utilizing our Canvas LMS, and attend study sessions with specific teachers.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

The climate and culture of Cascade High School has created a foundation for our educational excellence. Our staff and students enjoy being a part of an atmosphere where they feel welcome and supported. Our model for our school's climate and culture is a combination of the FISH! Philosophy and the Disney Way. We have focused on creating positive relationships between students, staff, parents, and the community. We work hard, have fun along the way and dare to Dream Big!

Our students enjoy Friday passing period music selected by staff members, Friday's humdinger joke by the Principal, holiday door decorating contests, and over a dozen holiday inflatables placed throughout the school at various times throughout the year. Students participate in holiday costume contests with donations made to Riley Hospital. Our Jazz Band performed during a Candlelight Valentine's Day lunch in our cafeteria during February Funapalooza which also included a free ice cream day, teacher topics day, and a motivational convocation.

Anti-drug convocations offer motivational speakers and musical acts. Each Spring our students enjoy an anti-drug and alcohol program, called Prom Preview presented by our staff to promote the idea that students do not need drugs or alcohol to have fun. Simple every day messages are posted around the school about positive attitudes, monthly character traits, and weekly motivational quotes tied to the traits are used in classrooms as discussion topics or writing prompts. The intentional focus of staff members interacting in positive way with students by smiling and saying hello helps make every student feel a part of "The" Cascade High School Family.

The staff also enjoy multiple activities as well which include Fish committee awards, such as our traveling fish award, the staff member of the month award, and character trait award winner. Staff receives random "humdinger" surprises throughout the year from CHS administration intended to generate smiles!

We have been a Riley Miracle award school for four years and a Riley Reg Wagon Sponsor. Additionally we have held very successful Riley Dance Marathons, Holiday toy drives for Riley and participated in the Pennies for Patients program for the Leukemia Foundation the past fifteen years. We have also conducted drives to collect toys, food, and water for various needs in our community and communities affected by tragedy or natural disasters. We have partnered with IHSAA for a "Champions Together" program working with the Special Olympics, and sponsored several holiday parties for the youth in our community.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Cascade High School has multiple activities for engaging our families and community. One example would be our four times a year, Student of the Quarter Ceremony. Staff nominates students for great efforts and growth in academics, attitudes and civic responsibility to recognize students who represent "The Cascade Way." An awards ceremony and breakfast is held before school for students and families to attend and be recognized.

Picture displays and social media are used to connect with community members and alumni to promote senior students. Upon acceptance to a college, branch of military, or is career employed, the student's picture is displayed in the school's foyer with the appropriate designation. Additionally, students are recognized on Twitter, our school website and our school video announcements.

Students believe they are ambassadors for the whole school and community when they take high stakes exams. A week before graduation qualifying exams (ISTEP), the entire school changes its schedule to support these students with an ISTEP Blitz week. A motivational academic convocation starts off the week with video good luck messages from staff members, alumni, and even celebrities. Our Parent Teacher Organization provides breakfast for our students during the second window of ISTEP Testing during our Breakfast Blitz. The extra time and efforts send a message that everyone in the school and community cares

about each student's success. This extra preparation and support has led to our students being the highest overall performing school on state assessments in our county the last four years.

Each of the past four years, Cascade High School has put on a Veterans Day assembly. This program has expanded to the creation of a Veterans Memorial placed at the main entrance of campus. Six flags fly the appropriate branch of the military surrounding the American flag. This memorial celebration and dedication brought almost one thousand Mill Creek students, veterans and visitors to the Cascade High School campus.

A partnership with the Optimist Club offers a variety of community-related benefits. They promote and sponsor many activities, including, but not limited to, Teacher of the Year recognition, Top Senior Banquet, and various youth sports programs.

An annual Hall of Fame induction was designed to honor exemplary graduates or faculty members of Cascade High School who have achieved distinction, outstanding accomplishment, or significant contribution within their professions and communities. The Hall of Fame will serve as a model of excellence for current students of MCCSC and Cascade High School.

3. Professional Development:

When developing a positive climate in addition to beliefs and behavior, the number one attribute is building relationships. Our relationships between one another have been fostered during our unique, collaborative, educational and fun professional development meetings. Staff members have opportunities for professional development each morning for forty-five minutes. Weekly professional development opportunities include: staff collaboration within departments, committee work, technology integration practices, and/or to provide additional student support sessions. Furthermore, blended into the planned professional development have been guest speakers on climate and culture in the classroom and school, Hattie's instructional strategies, and alumni on the historical connections of the school to the community. Our focus points in the creation of our "Pyramid of Success" and "Pedagogy Playbook," include the Trudacot technology integration, and the continual climate and culture enhancement for students and staff. To create staff buy-in and ownership, three committee areas were developed to assist with in our changes toward success.

During our Professional Learning Communities, the Cascade High School administration leads the planning and dissemination of data analysis. The Pedagogy Playbook committee focuses on best practice instructional methods as well as the techniques incorporated by the Teach Like a Champion model. The Fish committee focuses on promoting and leading positive climate and culture within the building, district and community. The Technology committee incorporates the Trudaot framework as well unveiling.

To expand a bit further, our Pedagogy Playbook committee has studied the Teach Like a Champion techniques and have developed lessons to assist each teacher grow in their respective field. Specific techniques are modeled for staff to incorporate into lessons. This committee also leads discussion, reflection and modeling of the Pyramid of Success instructional strategies.

Our technology committee has been vital to the success of our school becoming an e-Learning school. We are a 1:1 district, and this committee models technology infused lessons, troubleshoots any problems teachers may have, and/or assists with our learning management system. This committee has been instrumental in 1:1 teacher and student success moving from textbooks to a digital curriculum.

We focus on building relationships and positive school climate within our Fish committee. In an effort to build staff morale, we have instituted various awards, prizes, as well as provide breakfasts, holiday parties and celebrations. Additionally, we provide positive messages of encouragement and staff birthday celebrations throughout the school year.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership team at Cascade High School consists of a Principal, Assistant Principal, two Guidance Counselors, one Teaching Learning Coach, and one Athletic Administrator. The administrative team, often referred to as the “A” team, meets regularly to collaboratively discuss and reflect upon best practices and strategies for all aspects of the students and staff. The overall leadership philosophy stems from the belief that positive relationships, motivation and encouragement drives the school. A vision of high expectations is established with a continual focus on what is most important in a school, the people.

The Principal serves as the instructional leader and has helped set the vision of the school. He works collaboratively with the administrative team and staff to establish and ensure effective instructional programming. He sets the tone for climate and culture while maintaining high expectations for the entire school.

The Assistant Principal oversees student services and behavior interventions. He serves as a positive role model, mentor, and rule enforcer if necessary. His positive relationship building skills extends beyond students and staff to the entire community.

The Guidance Counselors split academic responsibilities by looping with alternating grade levels. This allows for relationship building and effective college and career planning. Counselors lead all state testing, training and implementation, and oversee college and career preparations, including college visits and college and career app day.

The Teaching and Learning Coach helps develop and lead professional development programs and promotes best practice strategies which cultivate growth in all of our teachers. The coach’s valued relationship as a member of the administrative team has served to benefit teachers and students alike.

The Athletic Director develops and maintains all facets of our department which offers 17 athletic opportunities through the Indiana High School Athletic Association (IHSAA). He has added a coaches' leadership committee and student athletic leadership council to help instill positive sportsmanship throughout the entire athletic program. He has continued the growth mindset with a school wide athletic vision surrounding the school athletic mantra: Always Compete, Expect Victory and Win Championships.

As a leadership team, a consistent focus on growth, improvement and increased opportunities for students and staff permeates all decision making. One example of a program that has emerged are Peer Family Visits. These provide teachers and staff opportunities to observe great teachers during their instruction of students in a non-evaluative setting. Positive collaborative reflection and communication are cornerstones of the program’s success.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

We believe the magic ingredient to our school's success lies in the positive school climate and culture that we have built together at "The" Cascade High School. The success with any of our instructional methods and programs first starts with positive attitudes. We set high expectations for our students and staff. We challenge our students and staff to "Compete" on a local, state, national and global scale. However, we also believe that it is imperative to smile and have fun along the way. Being intentional to create a positive climate and culture takes planning, preparation and commitment. Climate and culture building activities are planned for the entire school year and broken down by monthly actions for both students and staff. Some brief examples for students include dress up days for special weeks, costume contests for charity, ice cream sandwich days, and a Valentine's Jazz Band at lunch. Brief examples for each staff member include handwritten notes/letters of encouragement and praise at least twice a semester, Valentine's flowers, candy snack packs, and staff luncheons at holidays.

No isolated activity has created our positive school climate and culture. An intentional daily commitment to the process and constant focus on relationships has allowed us to create a very special place. This process began with a simple re-branding of our school name by adding "The" to the name. Our school, our students, and staff suffered from inferiority complexes. The belief that we could "Compete" with schools across the nation, let alone schools in our own county historically did not exist. A new administration changed the mindset four years ago that started with the unofficial re-naming of the school to "The" Cascade High School. A vision was created based on positive motivation, climate and culture development, and a belief that our school, our students and our staff were capable of accomplishing things never before dreamed. We have embraced a school wide growth mindset and have dared to believe: why not our students, why not our school, why not now? We don't just say we are a family at "The" Cascade High School, we believe that mindset. We will also not take what we have built for granted. We will continue to invest each day in our students, in our staff and in our community. We will continue to dream big dreams and put students from "The" Cascade High School in position to make a positive difference in the world!