

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):
- 3 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 3 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 7 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	199	222	421
5	205	220	425
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	404	442	846

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 5 % Asian
 - 52 % Black or African American
 - 1 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 41 % White
 - 0 % 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: 9%

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	33
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	41
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	74
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	817
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.09
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	9

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

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

Arabic, French, Chinese, Turkish, Vietnamese, Spanish, Punjabi, Hindi

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 48 %
Total number students who qualify: 406

8. Students receiving special education services: 9 %
77 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>16</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>22</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>29</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>11</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: 13
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.	16
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

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 24:1

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%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 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.

Eastside believes that all students can learn and works to produce successful individuals by guaranteeing challenging learning experiences in a unified, caring community committed to excellence.

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

Eastside Elementary School opened in 1975 as a public school in Clinton, Mississippi, a suburb of our state's capital. Clinton boasts a picturesque community of diversity and inclusion. The city's core principles are based around a pursuit of excellence and are deeply rooted in the unique Clinton Public School District. Made up of seven different schools, CPSD has been divided into community schools since its inception, creating a rare and inclusive learning environment. Eastside is home to the district's fourth and fifth grade students. With a student population of 52.1% African American students, 41.4% Caucasian students, 5.1% Asian students, and 1.4% Hispanic/Latino students, and nearly half of students on free and reduced school meals. Each passing year results in an increasingly diverse environment with a variety of socio-economic, cultural, and family backgrounds; learning capacities and styles, and needs and interests.

Once located in the Easthaven subdivision for which it was named, Eastside was relocated to the city's renowned Arrow Drive to accommodate its growing population and provide state-of-the-art facilities for its students. At the heart of the school is the arrow (our district logo) and a compass, signifying the importance of excellence being spread throughout the school. Adorning the doorways throughout the atrium are the words generosity, gratefulness, sincerity, patience, and orderliness, traits all necessary in developing self-driven, lifelong learners and productive members of society. From there fan out four halls of classrooms which are home to 854 students and 54 teachers--all held to the school district's motto that "Excellence is the ONLY option." Holding this motto to truth, teachers ask themselves daily, "Is what I'm doing, or about to do, going to improve student achievement?"

Eastside is committed to the educational philosophy that all students can learn and works to produce successful individuals by guaranteeing challenging learning experiences in a unified, caring community committed to excellence. The school remains an academic leader in the state year after year. With a proficiency rate of 52.5% in English/Language arts, 64.7% in mathematics, and 89.3% in science, Eastside Elementary earned the title of an "A" school under the state's accountability model, growing from a "B" the prior year. This includes a growth of 62.3% in English/language arts and 76.5% in mathematics, a result of the hard work and dedication our teachers have to fine-tuning student-centered curriculum. Instruction at Eastside is data-driven, based on the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards, and tailored to the specific needs of students. A variety of resources are utilized to promote student achievement and meet the needs of learners with unique learning styles in multiple ways. A specialized tutorial period allows for gifted students to attend gifted classes, students with academic deficits to attend intervention classes, and teachers to work on enriching and remediating other students in small groups--all with the focus of closing the achievement gap.

Within the halls of Eastside, one may see fifth grade computer science students coding robots on our 1:1 iPads, or fourth grade gifted students creating their own candy. Melodic sounds of a culturally inclusive music program and a selective strings program reverberate through the halls. Fifth graders conduct hands-on experiments to solidify concepts learned in science class. The outdoor classroom area is filled with students reading a novel with their class, the teacher merely the guide for an investigation on the reality of human nature. Students challenge each other with questions about race and humanity, defending their own opinions and learning to listen to others with grace. They learn to positively face challenges posed by the school's growing diversity.

Local organizations and groups are often the talk of the school, especially during our yearly canned food drive that is planned, promoted, and run by gifted students. Other partnerships are more evident to smaller populations, including adventure-based counseling provided by our local Camp Down Range, which focuses on recognizing and supporting students who might be at risk for drop-out or potential behavior issues. Activities sponsored by Eastside are the talk of the town. Our annual Zumbathon, Artsy Arrows, Punt Pass Kick contest, and Health Fair promote parental involvement and fun in a healthy way, leading to greater involvement at school, thus greater student success. Close proximity to other schools on Arrow Drive allows for collaboration between students of all ages. Clinton's kindergarteners and first graders are frequently visited by Eastside students to read or work on coding projects. Senior football players from the high school are partnered with a class at Eastside throughout the school year, giving our students the opportunity to

encourage seniors through their last year of high school, as well as be inspired to graduate themselves.

The Eastside community is unmistakably unique and inspires students, school faculty and staff, parents, and the community to strive for excellence in all they do.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Eastside Elementary employs highly-qualified teachers and sets high expectations for students and staff. Eastside’s staff believes that setting and holding students to high expectations develops an environment essential for all students to achieve excellence in all areas of academics. Eastside Elementary uses the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards (MS CCRS) for mathematics and language arts, the Mississippi Science Framework (MSF), and the Mississippi Social Studies Framework (MSSF).

In the area of math, MS CCRS identifies the concepts and skills that students should understand and be able to apply at each grade level. Using their knowledge of age appropriate sequencing in conjunction with MS CCRS, Eastside’s math teachers develop their own pacing document to guide instruction throughout the year. Envision Math and other supplemental resources are used to promote the development of conceptual and procedural understandings, as well as an analytic framework from which students can begin to see patterns in the way operations function. Understanding the importance of timely, meaningful feedback for students, math teachers use technology integration for student responses. This allows teachers to give almost instantaneous feedback on students’ correct or incorrect understanding of concepts, and allows teachers to use data to immediately drive instruction, while keeping students informed of their achievement and progress.

In the area of English/language Arts (ELA), MS CCRS are scaffolded by grade level to provide students with the skills they need in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Knowing that students learn and grow through repetitive practice and exposure, Eastside’s teachers take a spiral approach to ELA instruction. Each grade uses teacher-selected, high quality texts that increase in complexity throughout the school year. The Macmillan/McGraw-Hill Treasures program is used as a supplemental resource, in addition to novel studies and paired informational texts, based on the needs and interests of particular groups of students. In order to provide quality, high-interest materials for students to develop new skills and build on skills learned in previous grades, teachers use carefully chosen resources through which they can teach and reinforce standards. Teachers use novel studies as an opportunity to incorporate informational texts and poetry, which provides an abundance of sources and materials for student responses, allowing students to grow as writers. Students reflect on what they read through authentic writing, focusing on content and understanding, in addition to writing fluency and stamina. Students practice speaking and listening skills through collaborative group work and presentations, which build a sense of community and confidence in students.

In the area of science, Eastside teachers take a hands-on approach to engage students in learning scientific standards for earth and space, life, and physical sciences, as outlined in the MSF. Teachers use knowledge of vertical alignment and the standards to develop pacing of instruction. In addition to guided classroom instruction and student-centered learning, students explore through inquiry and experimentation, which leads to a deeper understanding and better acquisition of scientific concepts. Eastside uses Sheldon Laboratory Activity work tables and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) activities to enhance the hands-on learning experience. Teachers plan these hands-on experiments and activities on a weekly basis to actively involve students and promote creative thinking through student discussion. Students use iPads to record and present data collected during experiments. All activities require student investigation and analysis of science objectives to communicate and support answers for inquiry.

In the area of social studies, Eastside’s teachers use the MSSF to drive instruction. Teachers choose high-quality texts that transcend subject areas to provide students with an opportunity to relate what they are learning in social studies across content areas. Teachers create unit studies in the areas of gender and racial equality and civil rights, the American Revolution, and the fifty states. Students generate questions and use iPads to research topics and create presentations to share with one another. Applications such as Canvas (our learning management system), Nearpod, and Google Suite are used to collaborate on discussions and share ideas.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Traditional academics are only part of what makes Eastside such a successful and outstanding school. The development of well-rounded students is encouraged through various activities including library, art, music, physical education, and independent reading. All students rotate through each 45 minute activity every six days. The highly valued activity period provides an outlet for every student that enhances the daily rigor of the general classroom. Like every other teacher at Eastside, activity teachers hold their students to a high standard of excellence, allowing every student a chance to develop to their full potential.

Students are engaged in a structured physical education class twice a week. During this time they learn and practice appropriate stretching and warm-up techniques before participating in a variety of physical activities that promote hand-eye coordination, muscle strength and endurance, cardiovascular endurance, and flexibility. All students participate in the American Heart Association's Jump Rope for Heart fundraiser, and fifth graders participate in a state mandated fitness test. Students are also exposed to different health and nutritional related activities, and nursing students from nearby Mississippi College come and conduct classes on health and nutritional topics throughout the year. The physical education curriculum proves that staying physically active promotes longer attention spans, greater amounts of energy, improved cognitive activity, and positive attitudes, thus leading to greater academic achievement.

Eastside students utilize a variety of mediums to explore and experience the world of art. Students participate in lessons that compare and contrast different artists, being encouraged to give objective criticism and express their feelings. Picture books are used to enhance lessons and encourage dialogue, reinforcing content-specific vocabulary. The annual Spring Art Show allows students the experience and reward of completing a work of art for the purpose of a competition. Winning pieces are displayed in the school library, providing a sense of ownership and celebration of accomplishment.

The library serves as an extension of the reading classroom. The activity period is used to enhance the reading curriculum, improve fluency and comprehension, and increase vocabulary. All students use the Accelerated Reader Program, which allows students to self-monitor their progress, goals, points and optimal reading levels. Students integrate technology to conduct research on historical and current events, author studies, and virtual field trips.

Enriching previously learned math, reading, and social skills, music class allows students to use and broaden their knowledge through various musical pursuits. Students learn to read music, count beats by using fractions, listen acutely to variances in tone, focus on melodic presentation, speak clearly, and project their voices. Interested students can audition for honor choir. From these students, twelve are chosen based on vocal performance and teacher recommendation. These students practice weekly and participate in the Mississippi All-State Honor Choir Festival and audition for the Mississippi All-State Honor Choir. Students also put on a production from what they have learned twice a year.

All fifth grade students attend a daily computer science class that requires students to take initiative in building critical thinking and problem solving skills. Lessons are formulated to implement robotics, digital citizenship, typing, and coding. Work with Dot and Dash, robots from Wonder Workshop, supports what students have begun learning in math, science, and language arts. Lessons using Common Sense Media support efforts of effectively growing students as responsible digital citizens. Typing skills are practiced on Typing Club where students must type proficiently throughout the school year to prepare for state testing. Code.org is employed to introduce concepts of coding at the beginning of the school year. As the year progresses, students take part in more challenging coding projects using various platforms and programs, including robots. The annual Hour of Code offers fifth graders a chance to teach their newly learned skills to fourth graders.

The Robotics Club provides select students with the opportunity to discover and learn the functionality and uses of robots. Students are eligible to apply for the club on the basis of grades and teacher recommendation. Twenty-eight chosen students participate in building robots, programming them, and competing with peers to solve multiple challenges. Students work in teams of four to use VEX IQ curriculum, which embraces the model of explorative STEM learning. As a result, these students develop skills in teamwork, critical

thinking, project management, and communication, all of which lead to students becoming innovative problem-solvers.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Eastside's highly-qualified teachers use an array of instructional approaches and methods to meet the needs of diverse learners and achieve instructional goals. English/language arts teachers use research-based strategies, including close reading, explicit vocabulary instruction, power writing, think-pair-share, and cross-curricular instruction. The school-initiated program "Arrow Affix of the Week" highlights affixes throughout the year to help students decipher unknown words while expanding student vocabulary. Math teachers use problem-based, hands-on methods of instruction and capitalize on the integration of technology for instruction and practice. Science teachers use student-centered methods of instruction to actively involve students in their own learning. Science is made tangible with hands-on experiments and projects to engage students and aid in the learning process.

During our tutorial period, teachers focus on areas that need improvement for individual students and the class as a whole. Needs are determined by data gathered through Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP) scores and STAR tests, as well as classroom and benchmark assessments. Research-based technological resources such as Front Row Ed and Reflex Math, are used to allow student access to standards-based practice and instruction on individual levels. Teachers use peer tutoring during this time to allow high-achieving students to help others below grade level. Students who are still struggling, despite additional support, are referred to our Teacher Support Team (TST) for Tier interventions. Gifted students are served during this time through our Academically Challenging Creative Education Needed Today (ACCENT) program.

Eastside uses the Response to Intervention model to ensure high levels of student learning and achievement. When students are referred to the TST program, grades are evaluated, and students are screened using national norm-referenced assessments, including AIMSweb and Renaissance STAR assessments to determine the level and area(s) of needed intervention. Certified intervention specialists work with small groups of students for 30 (Tier 2) to 60 (Tier 3) minutes daily. They focus on predetermined deficits to close the achievement gap. Intervention teachers tailor instruction for students through technology with Achieve 3000, which identifies areas of growth and provides appropriate instruction and practice.

Students who are identified as gifted and often perform above grade-level are served by our ACCENT program. Students work at an advanced level, challenging their minds and improving learning and achievement. The program includes opportunities for growth in leadership skills, career skills, problem solving, creative thinking, and social and emotional awareness. Through project-based learning, students develop skills that help them become critical thinkers, problem solvers, and innovators.

Eastside participates in the state-mandated MAAP testing. Our 4th and 5th graders are assessed yearly in the areas of language arts and mathematics. Fifth grade students are also assessed in science. To involve students in the assessment process, teachers provide students with MAAP scores from the previous year. Throughout the year students are administered two benchmark tests to gauge student growth and proficiency. Students track their progress and set goals using charts and graphs to give them a visual guide for how they are performing.

Teachers form professional learning communities (PLC) to analyze data. As a team they review the school's performance from the previous year in their respective subject areas. PLCs look at how students performed on each standard to set data-driven goals that improve standards-based instruction, achievement, and assessment. Each PLC tracks progress weekly to ensure students are meeting state standards and maintaining high levels of achievement.

There are two subgroups of students with at least a 10 percentage point achievement gap. Our low socioeconomic population is made up of students who qualify for free and reduced meals. These students qualify based on a number of factors including Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines, participation in government assistance programs, children in foster care, etc. English Learners (EL) are students whose

primary home language is one other than English. The lack of language acquisition can hinder them academically and/or socially. Ninety-seven percent of these subgroups are served through our intervention program and EL programs. To maximize student potential, we strive to educate parents of these students on how to help their children. Parent Nights for these two subgroups allow for direct communication with parents and opportunities to teach them strategies to encourage and help their children with the standards in which they have the most potential to grow.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Eastside uses a variety of methods to engage and motivate students academically, socially, and emotionally. Academic growth is supported through in-class celebrations and school-wide activities. This promotes top-notch academics and encourages intrinsic motivation. Students are also given the rights to visit and “brag” to another teacher about achievements. Social growth is supported through Oops cards, ARROWS (Awesome Rewards Received Only With Success) Rewards, and praise parties. Oops cards are given to students during the first quarter to help transition from summer break back into the school community, allowing students to understand the value in learning from behavioral mistakes. ARROWS Rewards celebrations are awarded to students who have demonstrated good behavior each quarter, and students attend Praise Parties quarterly for receiving zero marks on behavior charts. Encouragement and motivation for academics and behavior build relationships and trust for students, thus supporting them emotionally. These methods of engagement and motivation support the needs of teachers by providing students with incentives for teachers to use as reminders for students throughout the school year.

Our Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is a crucial part of Eastside’s culture and supports teachers by being fully involved in our reward programs, hosting reward parties, and creating a culture of excitement for students built around academic excellence and positive behavior. They financially support Eastside’s students and teachers by providing new playground equipment for students, which promotes social and emotional growth and leads to higher levels of physical activity, resulting in cognitive growth and positive student behavior. The PTO shows appreciation to our staff by providing lunches, snacks, and celebrations monthly for teacher birthdays.

Eastside has a supportive and uplifting culture encompassing students, teachers, parents, and support staff, and is rightfully referred to by our principal as “The Disney World of Schools.” Our school’s counselor addresses social and emotional needs presented by teachers. He hosts Red Ribbon Week each year, providing activities focused on making positive lifestyle decisions. Eastside nominates one representative for the Superintendent’s Advisory Committee, which allows teachers to voice ideas, recommendations, and/or concerns to district administration, giving value to staff members. Our professional learning communities meet weekly to address areas of concern, collaborate, and plan quality instruction.

At Eastside, everyone is valued, honored, and recognized for working hard and achieving goals, creating a positive atmosphere that is contagious and keeps all stakeholders motivated and encouraged to be the definition of success.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Eastside understands the correlation between schools and parent and community involvement: thriving schools are a product of prosperous communities, and flourishing communities are a direct result of successful schools. Eastside sees the impact that family and community involvement has on student achievement and capitalizes on such opportunities.

Eastside works diligently to increase health awareness among students, families, and the community. We hold an annual health fair where students and their families interact with community partners to learn healthy tips, tutoring strategies, and about community resources that support health and learning. Eastside added a walking trail around our school to be used during physical education classes, but also for community enjoyment. This has created excitement among our students about exercising and improving overall health, which we know leads to increased student achievement.

Eastside strives to connect with families of our students to positively impact our local community and beyond through outreach efforts. This past year, our students and families donated over 1,000 pairs of socks to hurricane victims in Houston, TX. We also donated book fair profits of \$11,000 to a school in Houston. Students organize an annual canned food drive, donating thousands of food items to feed families

in our city. Students have the opportunity to deliver and organize these items at a local community agency. Such outreach benefits our community, but also involves families and promotes well-rounded social growth of students.

Eastside teachers incorporate community resources to connect to academic content areas. From having a New York first responder who served during 9/11 visit our school, to having a local meteorologist introduce a unit on weather, students learn roles of community members and relate that to what they are learning in school. Gifted students visit the state capitol and lobby for gifted education in public schools yearly. These students also attend TOPSoccer Jamboree where they play soccer games with special needs students from the community, including students from our own special education classrooms.

Teachers establish communication with families through regularly inviting parents to be a part of the learning process. Our intervention teachers sponsor a night for parents to receive tailored information on how to help their children in core curriculum areas. Classroom teachers often ask parents to be a part of classroom activities, which welcomes parents and allows for opportunities for students to showcase their work. Teachers find that these experiences create excitement among students and help them perform better in the classroom.

3. Professional Development:

Eastside's teachers, administrators, and staff strive for excellence in all aspects of education. Due to the dynamic nature of education and ever-changing student population, we must be dedicated to the continual professional development (PD) of school employees. These opportunities are based on current needs of students and educators, considering advancements and changes within the educational realm.

The district's Annual Needs Assessment gauges current needs for PD. Stakeholders are given role-specific surveys, allowing leadership in the district and in individual schools to provide valuable PD. Our administrators use this data to develop a PD plan each school year. This plan is tentative, due to factors such as academics and specific needs of students and teachers, changing as the year progresses.

Academic data from state and benchmark testing helps guide Eastside in determining specific needs of students and how those needs can be addressed through PD for teachers. Facilitators are brought in to train teachers on techniques to better serve students. Our own master teachers guide others in their specific areas of expertise, leading one another to remedy deficits identified in data. Teachers attend conferences to gather ideas and collaborate with others, bringing back information to expand our repertoire of instructional practices and ideas. Collectively, these practices help build Eastside's faculty and staff as better educators to grow students.

Professional growth among school employees is a priority. During the 2012-2013 school year, Eastside experienced a high turnover in faculty and staff. Administrators wanted to ensure that all teachers felt to be a valuable part of our team. The school year started with a trip to local team building facility, Camp Down Range, where various team-building and physically demanding challenges encouraged a sense of trust and built lasting relationships. As the year progressed, a distinct difference could be seen in teacher collaboration and relationships, which continues to positively influence the school community, thus leading to greater student achievement.

Eastside is a 1:1 digital device school. In the fast moving world of technology, continual PD is crucial. Teachers are provided opportunities for PD as groups and individually in the areas of implementing technology with students, integrating technology into instruction, and helping students become productive with technology in specific subject-areas. Digitally-driven students are motivated and more interested in the subject-areas they are studying.

Eastside is actively and deliberately focused on providing the best opportunities for professional growth for everyone, and its effectiveness is evident in the continual success of students in academic, social, and personal areas.

4. School Leadership:

An always-engaged administration sets the climate for Eastside. The culture of the school is focused on student achievement, maintains a growth mindset, and establishes an open-door policy for all stakeholders. This vision for the school has come to fruition thanks to the tireless work of Eastside's leadership, who strive for excellence in every facet.

School administrators encourage teachers to be leaders in their own classrooms as well as in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Administrators frequently attend these meetings, discussing best practices with teachers to further enhance student achievement. School leaders push teachers to take risks through flipped classrooms, flexible seating, or the development of new curriculum, as with our recently developed computer science class. These are just a few of Eastside's many new adventures that have shown positive impacts on the school and its students. Teachers continually seek improvement with the full support of school administration.

A family-style atmosphere offers a truly unique work environment at Eastside. Teachers frequent the administrator's office with concerns, success stories, and even personal matters. This open-door policy extends beyond office doors and into the school's larger community. Parents are welcome to come observe their children's classrooms, which develops another layer of trust between teachers, administrators, and families. It also reassures parents that students are learning and that the school has their best interests at heart.

School leaders work to ensure that the faculty/staff are a single unit working toward the same goal: excellence in student achievement. Peer observations and reflection journals promote relationships and communication amongst administration and teachers alike. Faculty meetings are times to celebrate personal and professional goals, as well as encourage each other when frustrations set in. Teachers develop a strong school culture that reflects in the success of its students; they are trusted as professionals and are supported by school administration in the choices they make to guide students and strive for success. This creates an effective institution of learning, opening teachers to innovative and creative thinking within the learning process, which results in an enjoyable school climate and greater student success.

Retaining and growing quality faculty/staff is a key factor in what makes Eastside great because each teacher/administrator shares the same vision, is passionate about teaching and children; and seeks innovative opportunities to grow students.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Eastside is built on a foundation of sound and impactful instructional strategies. While many research-based, data-driven strategies contribute to Eastside's success, there is one hour a day that proves to be the most instrumental in the growth of students. Tutorial is a one hour block each day when teachers focus on remediation and enrichment. This hour is the single most effective strategy used by the entire school community. During this time, Tier and gifted students who leave the classroom for intensive instruction do not miss quality class instruction. They also get a chance to immerse themselves in unique learning experiences tailored to their needs, leaving time for teachers to work with the remainder of the students on specific skills in a small group setting.

ACCENT is our gifted program where students showcase creativity through project-based learning. Because of tutorial, these students are not missing any new material, but are being challenged to become innovators through problem-solving and critical thinking.

Intervention teachers who work with Tier 2 and Tier 3 students are a highly-qualified team who specialize in the Tier process. These teachers work one-on-one and with small groups to close academic gaps in math and language arts. The intervention teachers use many resources and strategies to grow these students. Utilization of quality research-based programs, enhanced by 1:1 technology, allows students to prove growth across subject-areas. Students are screened often, and data is used to drive collaboration and planning by intervention and general education teachers to suit the specific needs of each child.

Students who are not identified as gifted or at-risk academically work with subject-area teachers to improve their deficits. Smaller class size allows teachers to focus on teaching and practicing skills not mastered during previous years and work on skills with which specific students are struggling. During this time, teachers use data from state testing, benchmarks, and weekly assessments to group students according to their needs.

Every student enrolled at Eastside benefits from the daily hour of tutorial. Implementation of this practice consistently proves to benefit student growth and performance, as seen through academic data in the areas of growth and achievement. After seeing its effectiveness and how it sets us apart from other schools, this scheduling technique, developed by our administrators, has been adopted by other schools within the district and surrounding area. We pride ourselves in being among the top schools in the state year after year as we drive toward excellence for our students.