

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):
- 92 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 29 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 21 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 142 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	54	51	105
10	49	46	95
11	41	45	86
12 or higher	40	49	89
Total Students	184	191	375

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 2 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 4 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 25 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 66 % White
 - 1 % 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	12
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	10
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	22
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	361
(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: 0 %
1 Total number ELL

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

Japanese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 22 %
Total number students who qualify: 82

8. Students receiving special education services: 8 %
29 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>2</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>5</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>17</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>1</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	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	21
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	2
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	2
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 18:1

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	97%	98%	97%	97%	96%
High school graduation rate	93%	90%	90%	86%	85%

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	85
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	67%
Enrolled in a community college	25%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	2%
Joined the military or other public service	4%
Other	2%

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.

East Mountain High School uses best practices to engage students in curricular programs, involve students in the community, and prepare students for success after graduation.

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

An open enrollment period is established each year. During this time interested families fill out enrollment paperwork. At the close of this period, a public lottery drawing is held. Siblings of current students receive automatic acceptance.

PART III – SUMMARY

East Mountain High School (EMHS) is located in Sandia Park, New Mexico - approximately 30 minutes east of Albuquerque in a rural, mountainous community. The close-knit community is quick to volunteer and assist the school in a variety of ways. There is a unique partnership between Vista Grande Community Center and EMHS. With the help of local legislators, the county and the school partnered to build a gym and weight room that is shared. The 26-acre school campus is located on the Turquoise Trail National Scenic Byway and is home to breathtaking views of the Sandia Mountains. Founded in 1999, EMHS is one of the first charter schools established in the state of New Mexico. From the beginning, the founders envisioned a local school that would truly challenge students and engage them in hands on experiences while providing a rigorous college preparatory curriculum. Students are encouraged and challenged to put inquiry at the heart of learning and to think independently and creatively.

The school embodies the word community. Students are accepting of their peers and a culture of looking out for one another is established. With a low student-teacher ratio, relationships between the staff and students are rich and provide students with a strong support system. Many students return for visits years after graduation and many become involved in the community and school. On any given day, visitors might find students sitting on the front lawn composing music for recording arts, sketching part of the idyllic scenery, or warming up for drama with yoga. The Student Council is extremely active and provides a structure for increasing school unity and community. Between community building "lawn wars", Quidditch matches during spirit week, and ice cream socials the first week of school - the student body is engaged and connected. The well-developed traditions, that tie one year to the next and provide the continuity as we move forward, include all school barbecues on the first and last day of school, December light displays, Discovery Projects, and Senior Week.

The mission of our school is to prepare students for success after graduation, including college and career. Each staff member is invested in this mission and students respond to the high level of expectation. The school operates on a block schedule which allows for in-depth inquiry, discovery, and learning. This type of schedule also provides an opportunity for struggling learners to concentrate on 3-4 classes instead of 6-7. Our school is committed to the premise that we want to meet student needs on a one-on-one basis. Our Gifted program includes the opportunity for internships and summer programs. We offer Advanced Placement classes as well as meet the needs of struggling learners with a Special Education Department and an Intervention Program. Students have the opportunity to earn dual enrollment credits in-house, online and at the local community college. Our tutoring program mimics what students will find in college - with all teachers posting "office hours". A Writing Lab is in place for students to seek help with essays or assignments from their specially trained peers and "Homework Club" is offered 3 days per week after school. We ask students to take ownership of their education and learn to self-advocate. Staff members help to navigate that process and teach the associated skills. By the end of senior year, students are required to present a comprehensive Senior Exhibition that showcases their journey through high school.

EMHS offers an extensive menu of sports and activities. From soccer to basketball to golf, the school has more athletic offerings than any other public charter school in the state. Approximately 75 percent of the student body are involved in an extracurricular pursuit. East Mountain High School has earned distinction in a number of areas. From state athletic championships to national Speech and Debate awards, students have represented EMHS well. We are proud to hold eight state championships in bowling. Students at East Mountain have competed in International Public Policy Forum for a number of years. Students from around the globe compete in written and oral format to debate matters of public policy. The finals are held in New York and the top 8 teams in the world debate in person. EMHS is excited to have made it to this level four times.

East Mountain High School has earned an "A" rating from the New Mexico Public Education Department every year the system has been in place. In addition, we have been recognized by Newsweek and U.S. News and World Report as one of America's Best High Schools. Students, staff, administrators, parents, and community members are all invested in seeing our school and students be successful. The vision of our school is it to provide outstanding learning experiences which engage, challenge, and inspire each individual

to achieve excellence. We work on this every day. With a foundation of family and caring, students and staff alike respect what everyone brings to the table. All stakeholders make EMHS a remarkable institution.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

East Mountain is committed to creating a culture of effective teaching, rigorous curriculum, and progressive skill development. While the focus of our school is college preparatory, we believe in helping all students determine their next steps and how to get there. The graduation requirements for the state of New Mexico are set at 24 credits. At EMHS we require that students earn 28 credits to graduate. We ask that students take 2 of those credits in a focused area of study of their choosing. Students who fulfill this requirement earn a Timberwolf Diploma of Excellence. In addition, at EMHS we do not recognize a grade of "D". Students must earn 70% or better in order to earn credit.

EMHS offers challenging and rigorous courses in the core that are designed to allow students to probe, question, and explore. The curriculum for our school is centered on addressing the New Mexico State Standards. The New Mexico model is based on Common Core Standards in Language Arts and Mathematics. The state has developed standards in all areas of core instruction. Teachers are offered the autonomy to create innovative curriculum within the framework of the state standards.

The Language Arts and Social Studies department collaborate extensively to form a Humanities based approach. Classes are tiered and teachers discuss alignment and vertical articulation throughout the year. The Humanities Department closely collaborates to encourage student growth across grade levels; working to equip students with crucial reading, writing and research skills that will prepare them for college. Great books from Homer to Shakespeare to more modern texts, guide much of the curriculum; students are exposed to a variety of perspectives through literature. The Humanities Department course offerings include both Advanced Placement and Dual Credit offerings. Students take two dual credit courses their senior year - one in writing and the other in literature. In addition, seniors are required to present a comprehensive portfolio in the spring.

The math curriculum is characterized by flexibility as students are given the option of both semester courses as well as year-long intensive options. EMHS is on a block schedule and as such all courses are completed in a semester. The exception is in the math department. Students who struggle in mathematics can take both Algebra I and II over the entire year, thus allowing additional time to master content. The course sequence consists of Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II. From this point students choose from Trigonometry, Calculus, AP Calculus or Financial Literacy. Dual credit options to ensure college readiness are College Algebra and Statistics. Math teachers engage students in college preparatory activities by including ACT style questions in the weekly curriculum.

Since the beginning, EMHS has focused on incorporating the beautiful surrounding area into the curriculum. At our backdoor is some of the vastest representation of life zones in New Mexico, and biomes and geology in the entire country. As such, EMHS includes Environmental Science as core curriculum. Students enroll in physical science as freshmen and biology in their sophomore year. Juniors enroll in a required Honors Environmental Science course. Intended to be college preparatory, the course focuses on global to local curriculum, technical writing, data interpretation, and ACT preparation strategies. Dual credit options in chemistry and physics area also offered.

Incoming 9th graders are given a pre-assessment in the spring of their 8th grade year. This assessment evaluates their readiness for high school Algebra I and English. If students are found to be off track or have knowledge gaps, they may be required to take an Intervention class that is designed to augment the core curriculum.

East Mountain High School offers a number of Advanced Placement courses in the Humanities and Math. These courses offer students a rigorous and challenging curriculum coupled with the opportunity to engage in thought provoking discussion. Students participate in engagement with primary source documents, advanced writing strategies, and math problem solving techniques. EMHS has dual credit agreements in place with Central New Mexico Community College, Eastern New Mexico University and the University of

New Mexico. Students are provided with the opportunity to earn college and high school credit. These courses are offered on site, online, and at the college. Students are able to earn an Associate's Degree while in high school.

Students attend a 25-minute advocacy period 4 days per week. Advocacy classes consist of 15-17 students and one teacher. Students and advocates use this time to develop relationships with one another. During this period, class meetings are held and students are given the opportunity to work on homework and ask questions. In addition, students work on 4-year plans, college and career exploration and registration for the next year.

Student engagement and character education remain at the forefront of curriculum design, where students are exposed to global perspectives. The faculty is committed to educating the whole person, giving EMHS graduates an appreciation for science, the humanities, art, literature, and culture that will serve them well into adulthood.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

At EMHS we are devoted to recognizing that the entire curriculum is essential to fully developing our students and helping them to realize their potential.

The Physical Education program is based on teaching physical skills, the acquisition of health and fitness knowledge, and a positive attitude towards self and others. PE courses emphasize effort, respect and strong team work at all times while allowing each student to progress at their own pace. A focus on teamwork and improvement instead of competition and perfection gives students room to grow and enjoy physical activities.

The ultimate goal for the Health Program is to give students the knowledge and skills required to make healthy choices throughout life. The course focuses on the ability to analyze influences, access valid information, develop interpersonal communication skills, set goals, practice health-enhancing behaviors, and advocate for personal, family, and community health and well-being.

The Music Program is a composition based field of study. Students focus on how to read and write standard notation as well as compose music. The program is divided into three courses. Music one incorporates notation basics, music theory, and fundamentals of writing a melody. Music two focuses on composing for multiple instruments and elements of music performance. Recording Arts is the flagship of the music program. Students write and record their own songs in a fully equipped recording studio. Students receive an introduction to recording technology and learn how it impacts the sound of their original creations. At the end of the course, the class has produced and recorded a full CD.

The art program strives to straddle the divide of emerging technology while maintaining and respecting the art of making art. The focus is on skill building in drawing and learning to use tools. Students are taught how to critique art and provide constructive feedback to their peers. The art program takes a multi-disciplinary approach. Writing and research are incorporated into classroom assignments. Students are challenged with rigorous media choices such as lithography and bookmaking. The music and art program partner for a monthly art show/concert at a local restaurant.

Students in drama focus on acting techniques, movement for stage, directing, design, and critique. An ensemble approach is emphasized to create a productive and positive performance environment. Students are exposed to both professional and amateur performances.

The Spanish program at EMHS consists of Spanish I, II, III, IV and a conversational based Spanish V. The focus of the Spanish program is not only on teaching the language for functional conversation purposes, but also teaching students to embrace the cultural attributes of this wonderful language. New Mexico is rich with vibrant cultural heritage and thriving Spanish communities. Students are able to make connections to the world around them every day.

Technology is an evolving program at East Mountain High School. While we have offered skill-based technology classes such as Photoshop, much of the integration of technology has been in the classroom. We attempt to stay current with the ever-changing technological world, and, as such, will be offering a new course next year based on engaging students in the many facets of content generation - audio, video, and print with a focus on design for business applications.

All students take College Success during their sophomore year. The course is designed to introduce students to academic and personal skills essential for college success. Students have the opportunity to explore possible majors and careers, develop a personal statement essay, research college choices, and develop a support network to assist with the college application process. This course also assists students in developing career skills such as writing resumes and cover letters, applying for jobs and navigating a job interview.

While seniors are getting ready to graduate at the end of the year, the rest of the student body is engaged in Discovery Projects. During Discovery students are able to choose an area of concentrated study and focus. Each teacher designs and plans a unit focused on experiential learning. Projects are designed to be hands on and help students bridge the gap of learning outside the classroom walls. Students are able to explore the history of downtown Albuquerque on a bicycle, travel to see the Great Wall of China first hand or experience the physics behind a roller coaster.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

East Mountain High School has a highly educated staff. Of the 29 certified faculty and staff members, 8 hold a Bachelor's degree, 20 hold Master's degrees, and one holds a PhD. Five teachers on staff have National Board certification. The staff is innovative, creative and collaborative. Numerous strategies are employed to maximize student success for a wide diversity of students.

Tutoring is available through each department. Faculty members have posted "office hours," however, students can access assistance from any member of the department. Specialized tutoring sessions are available on an as needed basis, an example of which is a session that helps particular students prepare for required state exams.

Faculty members employ differentiated instruction strategies in the classroom. This is seen in classroom projects that incorporate multi-disciplinary components. This practice allows for elements of student choice and the opportunity for students to play to their strengths. The hallways are filled with examples of student work that demonstrate components of art, history, science, math, and culture. Assessment takes many forms at EMHS from performance based to research projects and essays. The Environmental Science classes produce a multi-page book that incorporates reading, writing, research, scientific method, and presentation. Students leave EMHS with a clear understanding of how to conduct academic research and how to plan large scale projects that are required for college.

Alignment is used to provide consistent instruction within departments. Cross-curricular cooperation exists especially with the larger projects that support core instruction. An example of this is 9th grade inquiry. All students are required to complete a research project in 9th grade English, and other departments support this project depending on the topic chosen by the student. In 11th grade, juniors create a "Decades" project in which they develop a multi-layered presentation about the latter half of the 20th century. Students utilize extensive research methods, graphic design, video design, reading and writing strategies, and presentation skills.

The administration monitors standardized testing results over time. Faculty are asked to consider and brainstorm educational programs to address gap areas or trends. For example, several years ago it was determined that students were not mastering Algebra I in the traditional semester long block due to gaps in knowledge. The math department created the Algebra 1A and 1B model that spreads instruction over an entire year. It was expanded to Algebra 2 as well in order to address student need. Results of high stakes testing prompted the English department to focus on writing for this year.

The Intervention Program offers support for students who are at risk of failing classes. The team consists of 6 staff members working across all grade levels. The team is further split into a 9-10 focus group and an 11-12 group. The teams meet every week to monitor grades, discuss intervention strategies, consider schedule issues, schedule parent meetings, and model organizational practices. There are a multitude of reasons why a student may struggle - some school related and others due to outside forces. Each struggling student is assigned a faculty member or administrator as caseworker for one-on-one check-ins on academic progress and planning. Students in this program may have additional supports such as intervention classes in math or English. These classes are designed to support core instruction while providing additional skills to address gap areas in knowledge. Intervention classes also provide a space for struggling learners to prepare for high stakes testing - which has helped close the achievement gap. Struggling students are assigned to Structured Study courses which focus on helping students learn to take responsibility for missing work, learn how to negotiate with teachers for work/credit recovery opportunities, address skills in organization and learn time management strategies. The Intervention Team works closely with both the Student Assistance Team and 504 team for the benefit of individual students.

A strong working relationship with the local community college affords every student a variety of dual credit opportunities upon which to build. To prepare for college, every student takes both the SAT and ACT during their junior year, with the cost covered by the EMHS Foundation. The diversity of programs and offerings at EMHS demonstrates our commitment to creating an instructional environment where all students can thrive and achieve success. The diverse instructional strategies, strength of our Intervention Team and data driven decision making has helped raise overall scores without diminishing the quality of instruction and academic rigor at EMHS.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

From its' inception, East Mountain High School has worked to create a school culture that embraces engagement, involvement, and encouragement. Programs and support structures assist students in becoming well-rounded individuals and independent, successful adults. The school culture is one of inclusion and acceptance. Students, staff and parents understand that we are a family, a culture of looking out for one another is established.

One of the tenets important to the founders of East Mountain High School was small class size. Classes range in size from 6-7 students to a maximum of 25. The student teacher ratio is 18:1. The goal for staff is that each student has at least one adult on campus who they feel connected with to help deal with concerns and stressors, be it academic, social or outside of school.

Teachers and staff members are dedicated professionals that give enormous amounts of time and energy to help ensure that our students are successful. The parent organization, "The Pack" supports the staff with special events. From meals to gifts and prizes, their support is evident throughout the year. The parent organization is an integral part of the culture.

EMHS focuses on the development of the student through sports and extra-curricular activities. The athletic department strives for excellence and skill building. We have won state championships in several sports. Extra-curricular activities at EMHS speak to a variety of interests. From Anime Club to MESA and Model UN, students find their niche at EMHS. Teachers, advisors, and coaches are supported in their endeavors to help students grow and succeed. The Speech and Debate team has won state and national awards. Youth and Government and Model UN are both active forces on the state level. Students in the music program have engaged in workshops from world renowned music producers.

As incoming freshmen navigate challenging classes and new structures, teachers, administrators, and support staff work together to make sure that the student has the best chance for success. These strategies include: curriculum that addresses varying learning styles, tutoring, one on one interventions, Homework Club, and parental involvement strategies. Support for academic achievement is an integral part of the EMHS experience.

As students advance, there are a variety of avenues to support college and career exploration. The dual credit program is robust with both core and elective offerings, including Philosophy, Financial Literacy and Physics. Working with local community colleges and universities, EMHS has built a program that supports student exploration of post-secondary options.

EMHS is a unique school in which all students can grow and thrive.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

East Mountain High School is a community school. While our students come from a large geographic area, there is a sense of community that permeates the campus. We enjoy a partnership with the Vista Grande Community Center whereby facilities are shared. This partnership creates an even greater connection to the community at large. From the origins of EMHS, families and community members have been an integral part of the school. From serving on the Governing Council to helping with coaching or car-pooling, parents and community members are often seen at the school. Governing Council members and parents serve on the Finance Board. Our parent organization - "The PACK" plays an integral part in school events. On the first and last day of school this organization prepares an all-school barbecue. In addition, the PACK sponsors fall Open House, December "Light the Night," and Senior Week in May. The parent organization in conjunction with administration plans evening parent meetings on a variety of topics from cyber safety to the teen brain. Student Council reaches out to the local community by sponsoring a "First Responders Breakfast".

There are many means of communication with families at East Mountain. Teachers use newsletters, Remind App, Google Classroom and Schoology to communicate classroom happenings and assignments. PowerSchool is the Student Information System used at EMHS. Families can access grades, attendance and other information online and on their phone at any time. Special Education case carriers communicate with families via email, phone and in-person meetings. The Intervention Team serves as a conduit between the school and families of struggling students. Progress reports are mailed to families every six weeks. Families are involved in student registration and 4-Year Plans.

Administration communicates with the entire school community through the Timberwolf Times. This weekly newsletter is full of information that ranges from upcoming events, to athletics, safety concerns, scholarship opportunities and testing information. In addition, School Messenger can provide immediate emails or voicemails regarding school closings or special announcements. The school maintains an active presence on social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter and via a local podcast recorded on campus.

Athletic meetings are held three times per year corresponding to each season. These meetings address eligibility, participation requirements, scheduling and safety concerns. Coaches are introduced and sports specific smaller meetings are conducted.

Students are required to perform 20 hours of community service every year. Many of these hours are conducted in our local community. Students are encouraged to work within the community to complete a job shadow in the spring of their senior year.

3. Professional Development:

All staff and Governing Council members participate in professional development in one form or another. The focus of training is a mix of state and local required components and staff requested topics. Training for the entire staff has included areas, such as emergency protocols, safety concerns, child abuse reporting, signs of suicide, blood borne pathogens, CPR training, and instruction in fire safety by the local fire department. The College Board has provided training to the teaching staff as have representatives from Special Olympics. Various members of the staff have attended state provided training in the areas of testing, Student Assistance Team, 504 procedures, Special Education, state reporting and health initiatives.

The teaching staff is comprised of 23 dedicated educators. Approximately two-thirds have Master's degrees. There are 5 teachers who hold National Board Certification. At East Mountain High School, we believe there is much to be learned from one another. Our staff members have expertise in a wide array of areas. The state of New Mexico evaluation system, NM TEACH, supports the notion of learning from colleagues. The evaluation rubrics cite the value of sharing with and mentoring colleagues. A structure has been developed that supports and encourages individual teachers to share from their toolbox. Staff members have presented on a variety of topics that include technology advances, educational programs and apps, gifted strategies, intervention strategies and communication with families. In addition, we have created "Strategy Shares" where teachers are asked to share specific techniques or strategies that have proven successful in their classroom.

Local site professional development has included Discovery Projects, discussions about response to tragedy, and security measures. In addition, professional development includes time to discuss strategies related to individual student interventions. EMHS has developed a year-long mentoring program to assist new teachers with the first year of teaching. This program consists of monthly meetings and required components of study.

Teachers and staff members are encouraged to engage in professional development outside of the school. Support and funds are provided to attend state, regional and national conferences. Upon return, teachers are asked to share what was learned with the staff. We have had teachers attend National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, National Council of Teachers of English and National Council for the Social Studies conferences. In addition, our Spanish, music and health teachers have attended national and/or state events.

Financial support is provided for teachers to obtain National Board Certification, pursue Master's degrees or add an area of endorsement. This support is provided in partnership with the EMHS Foundation.

4. School Leadership:

School leadership at EMHS has many facets. Leadership on the Governing Council, which is our school board, consists of a Chairperson, Vice Chair, and Secretary. The Finance Team is comprised of 3 Governing Council members, the Principal, Business Manager, and a parent representative. This team oversees monthly budget reports, expenditures, and audits. The Facilities Team is chaired by the Principal and comprised of three staff members, a Governing Council member, and a representative from the Foundation. The responsibilities of this team are to oversee building maintenance and to plan and coordinate new projects on campus. Within the school are several committees that are chaired by members of the faculty. These committees include: a service committee, hospitality committee and safety team. Department leaders serve on the newly formed Data, Accountability, Sustainability and High Achievement Team (DASH). This team was recently formed as result of a new state initiative focusing on school improvement.

The Principal and Assistant Principal work in close collaboration - sharing some responsibilities and having other distinct duties. Of prime importance to both Principals is serving on the Intervention team. The Principal works with the 9-10 group and the Assistant Principal works with the 11-12 team. The school leadership can be characterized by having an open-door policy. Students and staff alike feel comfortable dropping by with questions or needs. Frequent meetings occur with parents and other stakeholders to discuss a variety of issues ranging from individual student interventions to school safety. Both the Principal and the Assistant Principal have a "hands on" approach to leadership. The Principal serves as the golf coach and the Assistant Principal conducts countless meetings with students and families to discuss college choices and opportunities. Both Principals can be found tutoring students and offering intervention support.

The school actively encourages students to take leadership roles. Students have an important role on 8th grade day. They are responsible for leading teams of 8th graders through an orientation meeting. Members of the speech and debate team completely plan and execute many facets of the multi-school tournament held at EMHS. We also ask that students take a leadership role in the classroom by leading discussions and taking responsibility for group learning tasks.

The philosophy of the Leadership is to provide the best possible learning environment for each student. It is the firm belief of all leaders in this organization that every student can achieve at high levels. The Principal and Assistant Principal are devoted to creating the best possible environment for all stakeholders to realize their potential.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

When considering the answer to this question, members of the staff were asked to respond with what they thought the single most successful strategy should be. What emerged was not so much a strategy, but rather a core belief. We believe that building and maintaining strong relationships is the single most effective practice that we engage in. Relationships are built day by day in the small, quiet moments and in the overarching times of school unity. Building that foundation can be as simple as stopping to ask a student if he or she is okay to planning and implementing a strong Intervention Team.

Small class size has been at the heart of EMHS since the early days. Administration makes every endeavor to keep true to that core principle. Small class sizes result in strong support systems where individual connections can form and student needs are met. In small classes, students will more likely ask and answer questions. The "teacher" is not as intimidating. Individual attention occurs both in the classroom and outside the classroom. Students are afforded the opportunity to interact with and receive guidance from caring adults. This comes in the form of dedicated teachers, coaches, staff members, advisors and principals taking the time to connect with students every day.

It is critical to all staff at East Mountain that we provide a nurturing environment where students are free to be themselves - whether that means being a dedicated athlete or a member of the Doctor Who Club. We find that the students generally accept one another and everyone finds his or her place at EMHS. The staff encourage and promote a feeling of family that in turn provides a sense of belonging. It is important to us that students feel safe. In that place of safety, they are free to explore who and what they want to be. We don't see the traditional cliques at EMHS, but rather a blending of students occurs at the top of our picturesque mountain. When conflicts do erupt, we intervene and try to teach students how to work through them.

In summary, our most effective strategy is being a family. Success is a community celebration and tragedy becomes something we share. When something needs to be accomplished we do it together - whether that means raising test scores or conducting 8th grade orientation. At East Mountain High School, relationships and people form the foundation upon which we build year after year.