

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)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 5 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	58	66	124
10	45	50	95
11	33	44	77
12 or higher	60	54	114
Total Students	196	214	410

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 3 % Black or African American
 - 4 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 88 % White
 - 4 % 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: 12%

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	20
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	31
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	51
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	415
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.12
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	12

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
2 Total number ELL

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 35 %
Total number students who qualify: 145

8. Students receiving special education services: 7 %
27 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>2</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>9</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>8</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>5</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: 2
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.	18
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	17
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 23:1

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	95%	95%	95%	95%	94%
High school graduation rate	95%	94%	95%	96%	92%

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	96
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	80%
Enrolled in a community college	2%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	16%
Joined the military or other public service	2%
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.

Prepare our students to become contributing, responsible citizens and lifelong learners with the ability to adapt and to succeed in a competitive world.

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

The town of Bloomsburg grew just outside the reach of the anthracite machine that controlled the world from the mid-1800s through the mid-1900s. The impact of coal on surrounding mining communities followed a very general trend: populations exploded in the mining towns, forcing many schools to be built for the children of the blue-collar workforce; community institutions were developed by the upper echelon's money supporting and helping the children to grow; and the communities enjoyed a run of decades where they thrived. Eventually, the coalmines dried up and the coal towns were left with a dwindling population and empty and abandoned school buildings.

Bloomsburg's dependence on the cloth and carpet mills through the same time of the growth and decline of the coal industry has provided the Bloomsburg Area School District a different legacy. Bloomsburg has not had a total collapse of industry and income, so the entity of the Bloomsburg Area School District has seen a general consistency in what it offers to its students. Even with the definable decline in the mill industry, the offset by the growth of the local state college has maintained the level of income of the Bloomsburg School District throughout the decades.

The growth of what is now Bloomsburg University in the community has had both positive and negative effects on the school district. Where the overall cultural impacts are positive, the spread of the college footprint has had one negative: the school population. During the heyday of the mill era, a family filled every house in Bloomsburg. For the past three decades, many homes that had been family structures have been sold to individuals and businesses who rent to college students, seeing the graduating classes of the high school drop by half of what the graduating classes were when the current high school was built.

Geography has also affected population within the district. Given its placement along the Susquehanna River, the town of Bloomsburg has known the devastation of flooding. In the past 150 years, the town has seen five major floods, two of which occurred within the last 12 years (2006 and 2011). The impact of the repeated damage with little time to rebuild has led some longtime families to leave town altogether. In response, the Town of Bloomsburg is nearing approval for a \$12 million flood mitigation system, which would protect the secondary complex and many of the surrounding homes.

Regardless of population or facilities, our school embraces its traditions. From the playing of Barbara Ann at all sporting events to the yearly senior charity event, Bloomsburg Area High School has many longstanding traditions. Whether it is the athletic rivalries with our neighbors or the very popular school musical, our student body is supportive of each other's efforts. During the fall, Bloomsburg High School embraces our Homecoming celebrations in conjunction with Bloomsburg University. We participate in the annual parade and our students take pictures in front of the town fountain in their Homecoming attire. Even our school breaks are unique to our community, with a week off for the great Bloomsburg Fair and the inclusion of the first day of deer season as part of the Thanksgiving break.

Academically, our students have a wide variety of opportunities in regards to scholarships offered to them, a variety of curricular opportunities such as robotics and a number of Advanced Placement (AP) courses for such a small school. Following graduation, alumni are recognized through our Graduates of Distinction program, which is, in essence, an academic hall of fame.

Our strategies towards student success include offering a range of diverse courses and a wide variety of student clubs and extra-curricular activities. Bloomsburg High School has expanded student opportunities through partnerships with Bloomsburg University and the Pennsylvania College of Technology. Our students have been supported in their student-led initiatives such as Environmental club, Students for Social Awareness, and the Outdoor Club. There are also a variety of faculty-sponsored clubs such as Interact club, Fly-tying club, and National Honor Society. The mantra of Let Yourself Bloom is shared daily with the students to remind them to expand their experiences by taking part in these offerings. Most importantly, these activities and academics are supported by an excellent faculty and staff who establish great rapport with our students to provide a positive emotional connection to our school.

Ultimately, the Bloomsburg Area High School, graduating students since 1888, has provided great stability and support for those 130 years. Certainly, the changes in our culture of technology has led to changes in what happens within the classroom, but the supporting structure behind the scenes has been generally unchanged...being a Panther meant something then, and it continues to mean something now.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

While the goals of core curriculum are clear- produce students who can read critically, write effectively, and understand math fluently and conceptually, secondary education allows teachers and students to expand upon those skills. Because students entering the Bloomsburg High School have received a quality educational foundation through our elementary and middle schools, we have the ability to provide specialized courses, even within our core content areas.

The English Department at the Bloomsburg High School is much more than just reading and writing; it is filled with a standards-based curriculum that encourages critical thinking, college and career readiness, and metacognitive skills. Our course selections offer a differentiated experience based on students' individual needs and interests. All students learn and practice academic research skills while studying a combination of fiction and nonfiction texts to develop cognitive habits such as curiosity, engagement, and persistence. Students write for a variety of audiences and purposes, ranging from critical analysis of literature to technical writing in both persuasive and informational modes. Students develop necessary reading and writing skills to excel on the Keystone exams and SAT/ACT exams. Additionally, students have the opportunity to earn college credit through Advanced Placement (AP) Literature coursework.

In the mathematics department, there are three major avenues of study. Students who require the most student-teacher interaction have block scheduling for Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry. In these courses, students receive a double period of instruction every day or every other day. This area of our curriculum was designed to meet the standards in a supportive classroom environment without sacrificing rigor or material. These courses also provide better preparation and remediation for the state standardized exams.

Students in our main academic courses receive instruction in a traditional setting with rigor that prepares them for any college-bound study. Our Honors and AP courses are best suited for students that seek the most demanding, competitive, and fast-paced instructional setting. This progression allows students to reach the most challenging mathematics courses that we offer. AP Calculus AB is currently offered and we are considering expansion to AP Calculus BC for those who qualify. Additionally, probability and statistics is available for students who may require that in their chosen post-secondary path.

The science department has a very high standard for achievement. The branches of science we offer are biological, physical, and chemical in nature. Our top-notch lab facilities and lab equipment allow our students to accomplish advanced investigation, promoting a higher level of understanding. The science curriculum offerings are divided into two separate programs. Both paths are designed to provide students with a rigorous and relevant educational experience.

Our course offerings encourage career readiness in fields including healthcare, engineering, and environmental applications. The honors path is designed for college-bound students. It prepares students for success beyond the classroom through inquiry-based learning, practical applications, exploration, and hands-on learning activities. Students have the opportunity to take advanced classes in every discipline: AP Biology, Organic Chemistry, Physics II, and Anatomy & Physiology. We have begun to incorporate elements of a STEM program. The non-honors curriculum focuses on the real world examples of scientific concepts. This path helps students who do not plan to pursue science as a college major. Courses including Foundation of Biology, Chemistry, and Physical Science provide students with a fundamental understanding of scientific concepts.

The social studies department works towards building tomorrow's citizens. It is our hope that we shape students who have an appreciation for various cultures; create citizens who are aware of the past in order to make better decisions for our future; and produce contributing members of society. Students learn through multiple means such as project-based learning, group activities, and lecture in order to accommodate multiple learning styles. Students are encouraged to think for themselves and engage in political dialogue throughout America's past, present, and even future issues. Multiple themes are covered in these courses

such as political history, cultural appreciation, social influence, economic theory/history, political philosophy, and many others. Course offerings include civics, American history, world cultures, and current issues. Students interested in even more challenging coursework have the opportunity to schedule AP US History.

Our guidance office focuses on the individual student. They help students discover how their passion and abilities can be utilized to have a successful and fulfilling career. By working collaboratively with the students, parents and classroom teachers, they help to accomplish this goal. Counselors meet individually with each student every year to develop a tailored career plan. Through a series of presentations, assessments, activities and events, students create a career portfolio, which assists them in making decisions about their future.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

In addition to the core curriculum, students have the opportunity to pursue many other curricular areas. While many schools are reducing staff in non-mandated areas, the Bloomsburg Area School District continues to support them, allowing our students to expand beyond the core.

Though not required of all students, the music department provides an opportunity for interested students to develop musical skills and be part of a performance ensemble both within the school day and outside of it. Within the performance ensemble, students develop teamwork and gain an understanding of how their part in the ensemble relates to the entire composition. Through band, chorus, and voice class, students develop instrumental and vocal techniques that will prepare them to pursue a career in a music field. Advanced students are given the opportunity to audition for select performance ensembles through Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA). Additionally, student musicians have the opportunity to perform for the Marching Band, Fusion Group, and a well-attended annual musical. Nearly 30% of the school population participates in some music-related course or activity.

The available visual arts courses give students many opportunities to grow as individuals that will prepare them for future experiences including college and careers. In the ceramics course the students go through a series of boot camps where they learn the basic techniques for working with clay, and they practice how to make pinch pots, coil pots, and slab pots. After they learn all of the foundational skills, they select a topic for their projects. They must then apply the techniques and skills to create them. This teaching style, which gives the students an opportunity to plan, create, and problem solve, is replicated in other visual arts courses as well.

Family and Consumer Sciences is a discipline that prepares students for living in today's world as well as tomorrow's future. Though not required of students, many schedule at least one FCS class within their four years. The program is comprised of several courses aimed at preparing students by developing skills, which will guide them toward independence. All of the offered courses follow the guidelines based on the Pennsylvania Academic Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences.

All students are required to schedule seven classes within the physical education department (four PE classes, two health courses, and driver's education) prior to graduation. Our curriculum provides the opportunity to improve skills and encourages utilization of these skills by active participation in individual and team sports and lifetime activities. Our program also focuses on developing the intangibles, such as sportsmanship, self-confidence, cooperation, responsibility, discipline, and perseverance. Opportunities in team and individual sports, physical fitness testing and goal setting, health and wellness activities, team building activities, aerobics and dance activities, and lifetime activities will enable the student to lead a full energetic and productive life while in school and afterward.

World language courses offer students instruction in the target language in order to promote communication with native speakers and other language learners. Four years of Spanish and French instruction are offered to students, though it is not required for all students. Introductory-level language courses provide a review of English grammatical structures by comparing them with the structure of the target language. In addition, these courses encourage students to speak the target language in the classroom with some attention to

correcting errors but more focus on naturally producing the language. Upper-level courses, while still focusing on communication in the target language, offer students additional avenues of inquiry into literature, history, and art as they relate to the language and culture of a given region. Advanced courses feature more in-depth cultural conversations, analysis of current events, and more project-based work.

Technology & Engineering provides students with the opportunity to develop higher order thinking and problem solving skills through the practical application of science and mathematics. Students are provided creative opportunities to develop hands-on skills in a variety of technical areas, making them more competitive in future career opportunities after graduation. Technology & Engineering Education courses also deliver skills and practical knowledge that could lead to further study in engineering, manufacturing, STEM-related careers and vocational professions. Students involved in the Technology and Robotics program have traveled to regional, state and national competitions challenging students to excel in their field of expertise.

The goal of Business and Technology courses is to provide the foundation to prepare students for college or the workforce. In addition to taking business or technology classes, students can choose to participate in the Cooperative Education program, join Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) or participate in other school-sponsored activities. The co-op program provides goal-oriented occupational education to students desiring a real-world experience in a potential career. Students who choose to participate in FBLA have the opportunity to learn more about a particular business topic to prepare for competition against students from around the region. Students also have the opportunity to compete in other business and college sponsored activities such as the Stock Market Challenge, Entrepreneurship Challenge, and the Husky Dog Pound Competition.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Bloomsburg High School offers a variety of instructional approaches to provide our students with a demanding and relevant education that will prepare them for success beyond its walls. Courses include various levels of rigor to allow us to make information accessible to each student and encourage constant intellectual development. Foundational courses provide students with opportunities to engage with concepts using real world examples, hands-on activities, and practical applications. These courses give students introductory content knowledge, helping them succeed after graduation. Academic courses allow students to gain understandings of concepts on a deeper level and encourage inquiry-based learning to prepare students to use the information in their professional or collegiate career. The highest level of rigor is found in our honors and AP course offerings. Rather than dictate an instructional framework that all teachers must use, our teachers are provided autonomy when it comes to instructional methods.

Analysis of assessment data occurs using students' historical Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) scores, Keystone Exam results, SAT/ACT scores, Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDT) results, Pennsylvania's Value-Added Assessment System (PVAAS) data, AP scores and projections, and additional learning support assessments. Preliminary testing completed by students in middle school helps us determine which courses will provide students with the appropriate level of rigor and help them continuously grow intellectually. Within the high school, we use a variety of informal and formal assessments, which include formative, summative, standardized, and diagnostic. Depending upon the type of assessment given, teachers respond with instructional interventions for classes and individual students. CDTs are used throughout the school year to determine student progress toward achievement in Keystone-tested courses. Results inform teaching practice and enable us to provide students with the necessary supports to help them succeed.

Since 2016, all high school students receive a Microsoft Surface Pro computer. Having unlimited access to technology gives students the exposure they need to succeed in a society that is becoming increasingly dependent on technology. The most innovative learning management software from Google and Microsoft give students the opportunity to work with technology and become competent with resources that they will need to use beyond high school, whether in college or career. With our one-to-one initiative, each student has the opportunity to become proficient in multiple technological platforms with the support of classroom teachers and a library/media specialist who is well versed in instructional technology. Based on the success of the one-to-one initiative in the high school, all middle school students will now be afforded the same

access to technology, although their devices will remain on campus.

For those students who are eligible for special education services, the learning support faculty and staff provide students with a personalized learning experience that extends beyond the classroom by including career exploration. Students are given an annual reading assessment to measure growth for their Individualized Education Program (IEP). The Grey Oral Reading Test (GORT) requires students to read passages aloud and then orally answer comprehension questions without text support. These scores can be expressed in either age or grade equivalencies. For the purposes of the IEPs of our students, the grade equivalencies approximate the grade level to which each student is performing in that subject. This data is used in a variety of ways to assist our students within the general curriculum, such as choosing an appropriately leveled book selection for Independent Reading or choosing material to use for progress monitoring of their IEP goals. Students are also administered an annual math assessment, KeyMath, which consists of several subtests. The scores for each of the subtests can be interpreted as age or grade equivalencies. For the purpose of the IEP, grade equivalencies are used to estimate the grade level of proficiency for the student.

Evidence of our devotion to students receiving special education services is our low student-teacher ratio. With three full-time special education teachers and four paraprofessionals serving the 27 students receiving services, our student-teacher ratio is 9:1, which is significantly lower than the 23:1 student-teacher ratio for all students.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Bloomsburg Area High School provides an environment in which students can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Our faculty works closely with the students to ensure successful completion of courses required for college and career readiness. Additionally, teachers utilize digital tools outside of regular school hours as we continue to transition into a culture of connectivity that allows access to educational tools wherever and whenever a student chooses to utilize them. Many of our teachers also coach or advise extracurricular activities, which provide students opportunities to make connections within the school and community. There is a strong sense of pride in school and town identity, which is encouraged through school spirit activities and community outreach that takes place within and outside of the school day. Another way students' emotional needs are met is through the efforts of the faculty to connect with them and demonstrate a genuine interest in their lives outside of the classroom.

Teachers at Bloomsburg Area High School also feel valued and supported, which is evident in a low turnover rate and strong sense of pride in our school climate. Most of the faculty lives in the town of Bloomsburg or in the immediate surrounding area, and we see the positive effects of our professional efforts in the community. Teachers at Bloomsburg Area High School are more than colleagues- we are an extended family. Our students see the connections within the faculty, and the environment of cooperation and respect that models positive engagement with peers. Furthermore, the communication within the faculty allows for collaboration and cross-curricular planning, which provides our students with a more connected educational experience.

That connection is evident with our historically high graduation and attendance rates, which both average nearly 95% in the last five years. Our students are extremely involved in both extracurricular activities and athletics. Nearly 30% of our students take part in band and/or chorus and more than 50% compete with at least one athletic team. When clubs are included, more than 75% of our students are involved in some extracurricular activity. This participation leads to increased attendance and greater academic success as a result.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Like many school districts, we struggle to engage families at the secondary level. While the main cause of this is unknown, it appears that families of high school students are less likely to volunteer and/or participate in their children's education. Keeping this in mind, we have increased our parent and community outreach in recent years.

In addition to the annual Open House in September and Parent/Teacher Conferences in November, we have added a Parent Scheduling Night each spring. This event is designed to not only inform parents of the scheduling process, but also inform them of the opportunities available to their children. In the past two years, we have held two separate presentations, one for parents of incoming freshmen, which is very well attended and another for the parents of upperclassmen, which is not well attended. In an effort to increase participation this year, we will have representatives from our postsecondary partners (Bloomsburg University, Pennsylvania College of Technology, and Luzerne County Community College) available to discuss student opportunity. The rest of our Branches of Study will be represented by BHS teachers as well. Finally, we have invited advisors and members of our many high school extracurricular clubs to set up displays in our cafeteria that evening. The objective for the evening is to exemplify what it means to Let Yourself Bloom at our high school.

Besides the information nights listed above, our school presents a Senior Honors Banquet each spring as well as a Senior Scholarship Evening in order to celebrate the academic achievements of our upcoming graduates.

For parents and community members who would like to share concerns, we held six Community Forums in the 2017-2018 school year. The first forum topic was school safety based on community concerns. For

three consecutive Thursdays in November and December, parents and community members came together with school leaders to discuss suggestions for making our schools safer. The second forum included conversation about the proposed capital project and spanned three consecutive Thursdays between January and February. In both cases, all presentations and recommendations were shared via the school website in order to provide transparent communication with all interested parties.

Moving forward, we will increase our community engagement efforts and continue to encourage active participation from our parents and community.

3. Professional Development:

The Bloomsburg Area School District's Act 48 Committee, an assembly of teachers, administration, and community members, has been a cornerstone of systematic, long-term planning of professional development for nearly 20 years.

From the emergence of technology to its everyday use within the classroom, the committee has constructed trainings for teachers to utilize our available technology and knowledge of best practices to inform their instruction. The committee formed professional learning experiences on formative assessment, reading and writing in the content areas (including peer editing strategies), metacognitive instruction, project-based learning, and other practices, as well as methods of delivery including blended learning and flipped learning approaches. Instructional technology tools, including G-Suite and Office 365, were offered to support teachers' implementation of these strategies and approaches.

Nurturing a safe school environment has been an ongoing thread in professional development as it has been, and will continue to be, a challenge for all schools. Workshops have been presented on recognizing signs of addiction, abuse, and neglect as well as fostering supportive environments for students battling these and other issues. At the secondary level, state experts on gangs, youth violence, and drug activity have provided faculty with concrete information including recognizing slang, and gang symbols, identifying drugs and paraphernalia, and reasons students may engage in such activities. State and local law enforcement have also provided presentations to faculty and students on safe online practices.

In efforts to understand and educate the whole child, specific workshops have provided insight into challenges our students face. The entire faculty attended diversity workshops at Bloomsburg University that focused on race, gender, religion, and sexual orientation. In conjunction with AGAPE (a local support agency), a highly effective poverty simulation provided faculty with heightened awareness of challenges faced by students and their families. To emphasize the point that faculty teach children and not content, highly engaging guest speakers like John Perricone have impressed upon faculty that students will be shaped by, and remember, more about how they are treated and respected than the content of any course.

The Bloomsburg Area School District has long provided a variety of quality experiences for its teachers in order to keep the staff current on best practices. These experiences have been, and will continue to be, planned to enhance professional development that is responsive to student and staff needs in order to create a high-quality learning environment that fosters an atmosphere for continued student success.

4. School Leadership:

Until recently, the school leadership was extremely consistent within the Bloomsburg High School. Prior to the current principal, who was hired in January 2016, only two principals served the Bloomsburg High School in the last 25 years. Both of those previous principals served more than a decade in their roles. Even the prior Assistant Principal served for 12 years before leaving just this school year. This consistency provided a strong foundation for the faculty, staff, and students. Because the most recent administration offered extensive autonomy to teachers, veteran teachers have always known the ability to make instructional decisions without administrative interference.

While that philosophy of teacher autonomy has not changed, the current Principal and Dean of Students have created systems for ensuring that the high level of instruction and adherence to policies and

procedures continue as new faculty and staff are hired. Additional assessment data through PVAAS projections and CDT results are now used in order to appropriately schedule and instruct students within the Keystone-tested courses.

The mantra, Let Yourself Bloom, was part of the current Principal's entrance plan. Having served as Principal of a nearby school, she recognized the high level of opportunity that remained in Bloomsburg despite its small size. Rather than reducing staff, Bloomsburg maintained great diversity in course offerings. During her tenure, additional opportunities have been added in order to define the Branches of Study that now exist for students. Those include partnerships with local colleges and universities as well as programs available on campus. A partnership with the Pennsylvania College of Technology allows students to earn college credits while taking high school courses taught by high school teachers. Additionally, the School Board of Directors approved the ability of students to receive credits toward high school graduation by enrolling in courses at Bloomsburg University and Luzerne County Community College. These partnerships were supported by the Superintendent, who was hired in August 2016. His educational philosophy, which consists of three facets: Success and Connection, Opportunity and Access, and Teaching and Learning, reinforce the need for increased partnerships.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Programming, processes, and people each serve as pillars to support a school system. Each one is essential for the its seamless operation, and each one represents a different question. Programming answers the question of what; processes answer the question of how; and people answer the question of with whom? While it may seem cliché in writing, the most important pillar of Bloomsburg High School’s educational system is its people.

When examining the success of the Bloomsburg Area High School over an extended period, there is no one school-wide instructional strategy or data analysis practice that has led to it. There is, however, a consistency of success due to the experience and longevity of its faculty. Based on its 2016-2017 School Performance Profile (SPP), the average years of total educational experience of our teachers is 13.39 and the average years of educational experience of our teachers in the Local Education Agency (LEA) is 13.26. This suggests that most of our teachers have spent their entire careers here. Additionally, the department heads have over 186 years of combined experience, with an average of 23 years each. Having seasoned veterans in positions as teacher leaders helps build capacity throughout the school.

Our district administration understands the importance of this capacity building. Just last year, the district leadership team read *Boundaries for Leaders* by Dr. Henry Cloud. On the first page of the book, he expressed the importance of people: “Everybody out there is trying to figure out the right plan. They meet, they argue, they worry and they put all of their energy into trying to come up with the ‘right’ plan. But the truth is that there are five right plans. There are a lot of ways to get there. The real problem is getting the people to do what it takes to make the plan work. That is where you win or lose. It’s always about the people” (p.1).

Our leadership strategy is not novel, nor is it new. It requires supporting teachers in a way that allows them to focus on student learning. Rather than moving from program to program or initiative to initiative, this district has relied on the expertise of its teachers to meet the ever-changing expectations of others while remaining true to the curricular goals of producing students who can read critically, write effectively, and understand math fluently and conceptually.

The goal of the Bloomsburg High School is to provide a supportive and flexible environment in which our students can flourish. Ultimately, this desire holds true for all stakeholders. Whether you are a student, a parent, a community member, or a teacher, the message is the same- Let Yourself Bloom!