



## **Part I – Eligibility Certification**

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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

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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
<b>PreK</b>	0	0	0
<b>K</b>	13	9	22
<b>1</b>	12	9	21
<b>2</b>	12	12	24
<b>3</b>	6	16	22
<b>4</b>	9	15	24
<b>5</b>	12	11	23
<b>6</b>	12	14	26
<b>7</b>	0	0	0
<b>8</b>	0	0	0
<b>9</b>	0	0	0
<b>10</b>	0	0	0
<b>11</b>	0	0	0
<b>12 or higher</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	76	86	162

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 0 % Asian
  - 2 % Black or African American
  - 0 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 98 % 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: 4%

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.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	2
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	4
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	6
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	150
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.04
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	4

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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 42 %  
Total number students who qualify: 68

8. Students receiving special education services: 15 %  
24 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>1</u> Autism                  | <u>2</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>1</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>11</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>8</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</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: 3
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	7
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	3
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	3
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	5

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.

<b>Required Information</b>	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	95%	97%	97%	97%	97%
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.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
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. 2008

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

In partnership with the community, East Lycoming School District is committed to excellence, and strives to inspire and empower all students to reach academic success and live with integrity.

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**

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Ferrell Elementary School is secured in the heart of Picture Rocks. It is a small community in rural Lycoming County. The students and families served by Ferrell Elementary are indicative of students and families served within the East Lycoming School District.

The East Lycoming School District is located in rural Lycoming County and encompasses an area of 147.6 square miles. The school district has a population of 10,245 residents according to the 2010 Federal Census.

During the 2017-2018 school year, the East Lycoming School District is educating 1673 kindergarten through twelfth grade students. The district also provides a PreK program that provides instruction for an additional 40 students. The district employs 11 full-time administrators, 110 teachers and over 50 full-time and part-time support personnel. Special Education services are provided by the district and by BLaST Intermediate Unit 17. Vocational and Technical training is provided through the Lycoming County Career and Technical Center.

We are a small district with a reputation for quality; and, school and class sizes that allow for a personal approach to instruction. An innovative curriculum challenges all students to excel as thinkers and learners.

Ferrell Elementary's reading curriculum is based largely on the findings of the National Reading Panel (2000), with additional research from Clay, Fountas and Pinnell, Harvey, Calkins, and Cunningham, and the Pennsylvania Core Standards. The elementary school utilizes McGraw-Hill's Wonders program and both students and teachers have access to online content and activities. Ferrell Elementary's math curriculum is also a McGraw-Hill program, Every Day Math and is grounded in an extensive body of research in how children learn (The University of Chicago School Mathematics Project) and on the Pennsylvania Core Standards. Both teachers and students have access to online content and activities in Every Day Math. Professional Learning Opportunities are available to teachers in an on-going basis. In the 2017-2018 school year, Ferrell implemented the Inspire Science Curriculum in Kindergarten through grade five. Teachers in sixth grade worked with their colleagues to create an innovative science curriculum based on the Next Generation Science Standards.

Teachers at Ferrell meet weekly to discuss data, instructional strategies and the overall culture of the elementary school in their teaming meetings. The Ferrell staff is involved in extensive data analysis throughout the school year to help shape their teaching practices. Across the school district the message has been to look at the data and ask: what does it tell you about your children, your instruction, and what are you going to do about it? The teachers receive assessment results in the summer for their current class and the class they had last year. School goals are also established at the beginning of the school based on the data. Student results are shared and explained to children and their parents early in the school year through child and parent conferences.

Due to the unique infrastructure of Ferrell Elementary School, one classroom per grade level, teachers are able to build strong connections and relationships with all students. Students know very early in their school careers all the teachers in the buildings and it is not uncommon to have the fifth or sixth grade teachers address younger students by name in the hallways or on the playground. Students and teachers collaborate to make Ferrell Elementary School a very positive learning community.

Ferrell Elementary School was a National Blue Ribbon Award of Excellence winner in 2008. Ferrell Elementary School has a long-standing proud reputation of providing a high-quality educational experience for all students. The community of learners work together to maintain this level of pride. The school has implemented and operates a Schoolwide Positive Behavior program, Science Learning Night, and many additional events and activities that promote life-long learning and a caring, positive culture.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum:**

Ferrell Elementary's reading curriculum is based largely on the findings of the National Reading Panel (2000), with additional research from Clay, Fountas and Pinnell, Harvey, Calkins, and Cunningham, and the Pennsylvania Core Standards. The elementary school utilizes McGraw-Hill's Wonders program and both students and teachers have access to online content and activities. McGraw-Hill Wonders was chosen as the program of choice because of the research base as well as the quality of the content. Wonders also provides teachers with resources to reach a variety of learners. Leveled readers help to support emerging readers and to stretch the experiences of high-level readers. McGraw-Hill also offers an online component for both teachers and students. Students can access reading materials as well as support and extension activities to create personalized literacy experiences.

Ferrell Elementary's math curriculum is also a McGraw-Hill program, Every Day Math and is grounded in an extensive body of research in how children learn (The University of Chicago School Mathematics Project) and on the Pennsylvania Core Standards. Both teachers and students have access to online content and activities in Every Day Math. Professional Learning Opportunities are available to teachers in an on-going basis. Like Wonders, McGraw-Hill's Every Day Math was chosen because of its proven results and the spiraling curriculum to revisit learning as students progress through the scope and sequence. Every Day Math also provides teachers with resources for a variety of learners. The online component allows planning resources for teachers and content and skill activities for students.

In the 2017-2018 school year, Ferrell implemented the Inspire Science Curriculum in Kindergarten through grade five. Teachers in sixth grade worked with their colleagues to create an innovative science curriculum based on the Next Generation Science Standards. Teachers in Kindergarten through grade six provide hands-on learning experiences in science for their students.

Many of these subjects are integrated within the Wonders Curriculum. Inspire Science was chosen for the quality of content and the inquiry-based learning sequence. Teachers have access to online content, planning, and resources for a variety of learners. Students have online access to the text, science content, interactive videos for learning and a STEM career component to explore career options. The sixth grade teachers have utilized professional learning time to develop a rich science curriculum based on the Next Generation Science Standards. They have also utilized professional learning time to develop a scope and sequence that engages students in a variety of topics and through a variety of resources. Discovery Science interactive website and videos is a valuable resource for the sixth grade science curriculum.

Ferrell Elementary uses the PA Academic Standards in Civics and Government, Economics, Geography, and History to guide instruction in the Social Studies Content area. Teachers take opportunities to integrate these standards into their literacy instruction as well as stand-alone instruction. Students have many opportunities to learn the social sciences through authentic educational experiences.

### **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

Because the East Lycoming School District has three elementary buildings, the building principals spend a great deal of time in the summer to develop a viable schedule for the curriculum areas of art, physical education, library, and music.

The specialist teachers follow the appropriate standards. They work closely with the classroom teachers and with the building principals to ensure quality instruction to the students.

At Ferrell Elementary, students in Kindergarten through grade six have access to physical education, music, art, and library at least once a week.

In art, students are exposed to art history and to a variety of mediums to create their own masterpieces. In

the spring, K-12 students participate in the Art Festival. The district transports students from the elementary schools to the high school to view the art displays. All students have work displayed in the Art Festival.

Students in Kindergarten through grade six have access to music instruction at least once a week. Besides music instruction, students in grades three through six have access to choral instruction and to instrumental instruction. In the 2017-2018 school year, students were afforded the opportunity to learn to play ukuleles through a grant written by the music instructor.

Students in Kindergarten through grade six receive instruction in the use of the library. The elementary librarian not only provides students with instruction in library and media science, but also in technology. The librarian is Google Certified and instructs all students in Google Classrooms. She also provides supports to classroom teachers by providing after school learning sessions and supports their own instruction by providing them with technology resources.

Students in Kindergarten through grade six have physical education at least once a week. Due to the location of Ferrell, when the weather permits students have physical education outside. They are guided through a variety of fitness activities as well as sports and games.

### **3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:**

Instructional practices at Ferrell Elementary provide students with the best possible opportunities for learning. The core curriculum is followed; however, instruction is differentiated for readiness and interests of the students. Explicit instruction is provided to students and interventions are provided when needed. As mentioned previously, all core content areas are supported with technology-based support. East Lycoming is one-to-one in grade three with iPads and in grades four through six with Chromebooks. iPad carts are available for Kindergarten through second grade.

Ferrell Elementary uses the assessments provided in the Wonders Curriculum and in the Every Day Math Curriculum. Study Island is also used to provide computer-adaptive instruction in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science. Ferrell utilizes Study Island Benchmark Assessments. These assessment results as well as DIBELS in K-3 are utilized to create data profiles for students. Teachers meet quarterly to discuss the data and to discuss trends, progress, and deficiencies.

Classroom teachers utilize this data as well as their classroom observations and instructional time to make decisions about student needs. Ferrell Elementary utilizes paraprofessionals to cover lunch duty and resource duty so that classroom teachers can use flexible grouping to provide interventions to their students on a daily basis. The interventions are chosen based on data discussions and progress monitoring.

A tutoring service is provided after school from January until April for students who are struggling in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Tutoring is provided after school by classroom teachers on Monday and Wednesday for English Language Arts and on Tuesdays and Thursdays for Math. Ferrell has a history of being a high-performing school. Ferrell teachers are proud of this reputation and they work hard to maintain high levels of achievement. The demographics of the school allows for teachers to develop positive relationships with students. The teachers are collaborative and collegial in discussing data and particular students and strategies that have worked to make improvements. There is a positive and caring culture at Ferrell. The teachers and the students are proud of their school and they strive to maintain high levels of academic performance as well as positive school-wide behavior.

Teachers care about their practice and they constantly work to improve their instruction. They seek counsel of their colleagues and administrators. They develop positive relationships with parents and therefore hone parental and family engagement. The educators at Ferrell are focused on high-quality instruction and they remain focused throughout the year to provide their students with standards-based, relevant, and fun educational experiences. They utilize data to make decisions and to inform their practice. They maximize intervention time to provide all students with support - both to struggling students and to students who require enrichment.

Ferrell Elementary school is a family of teachers and students working together to demonstrate excellence.

## **PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS**

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### **1. School Climate/Culture:**

Ferrell Elementary has a unique climate and culture. Due to its size, it is possible for every teacher to know every student.

Teachers greet students as they come into their rooms in the morning and the positive interactions continue throughout the day. Support staff and specialists encourage positive climate and culture by engaging in the learning community; and, they are treated as part of the community.

Students at Ferrell Elementary are able to develop deep relationships with teachers and also with their peers. Students are with the same group of students from Kindergarten through sixth grade. They grow and learn together. Positive peer relationships are encouraged through Schoolwide Positive Behavior. Not only are these positive relationships encouraged, they are modeled by the teachers. Teachers at Ferrell are collaborative and collegial. They meet weekly in small teams to discuss instruction, data, as well as challenges they are facing.

Students are encouraged to reach their full potential academically, socially, and emotionally. They are encouraged to make positive choices and to support each other. Ferrell teachers eat lunch with their students and encourage positive dialogue and good manners. They engage in rewarding their students at the end of the week by playing basketball together in the gym if they have had a good week.

Teachers at Ferrell Elementary spend their planning time providing support to students who are struggling or those who need enrichment. The teachers work together to create a positive environment for each other and for students. They support each other and students in all endeavors.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

The Ferrell Elementary school staff works hard to develop positive relationships with the families of the students.

Again, due to the size of the school, families become familiar to the staff. At the beginning of the year, Ferrell hosts a Back to School night to welcome students and their families. Throughout the fall, teachers work to cultivate relationships with their students and their families. They try to make positive connections with parents and establish a line of communication. Many teachers utilize Classroom Dojo so that they can help parents track their students progress, both academically and behaviorally. Classroom Dojo also allows teachers to share information about upcoming events or special happenings in their classrooms.

Ferrell holds a Fall Fair or Festival for its students and its families. There are activities and games for students and their families. This is another opportunity for teachers to interact with Ferrell families. In November, parent/teacher conferences are held and parents are encouraged to attend. Teachers send out invitations for conferences and then follow-up with phone calls.

Throughout the school year, teachers continue to build their relationships with students and families. Teachers maintain communication with families for both positive feedback as well as feedback about behavior and/or academic challenges that their students may be facing.

In the spring, the second round of conferences are held; however, for this conference, teachers work with students to lead their own conference. Several other events such as the Learning Fair are opportunities for families to celebrate their students.

The Parent/Teacher Organization is active in not only fund-raising for Ferrell events but also in supporting the teachers and the school learning environment.

### **3. Professional Development:**

Our Professional Development approach is parallel to our students' needs. We align all professional development days with our academic standards, state requirements, and student and teacher needs. Our impact is always directed towards the needs of our students and teachers.

The Director of Curriculum works with principals to analyze data and an annual professional development survey to plan and design professional learning opportunities for teachers. Ferrell teachers participate in all professional development and professional learning activities.

The East Lycoming School District believes in engaging teachers in high-quality professional learning opportunities that allow collaboration. The administrative team plans high-impact professional development. The team tries to personalize the professional learning to meet the needs of teachers and more importantly the needs of students.

Professional learning is handled in-house or through the BLaST Intermediate Unit (an outside group of educators and staff that support the public and private schools in Bradford, Lycoming, Sullivan, and Tioga counties) when it is appropriate. The East Lycoming School District also uses outside agencies for topics that are of interest and meets the needs of the teachers and students of the district. Evidence-based strategies and techniques are shared with all professional staff. Teachers are encouraged to be active learners and to personalize the learning by being reflective and to provide feedback through surveys and questionnaires.

Classroom support is provided by teachers in new strategies by administrators. Teaming is also an essential component of professional learning activities. Teaming time allows teachers to improve their skills and strategies and it provides them with a community to dialogue about instructional practices.

Frequent classroom observations and walk-throughs are facilitated to provide feedback and support to teachers.

### **4. School Leadership:**

The administrative team of East Lycoming School District consists of the superintendent, the building principals, the director of curriculum, and the special education director. The administrative team meets monthly to discuss data, successes, and challenges. Following the administrative team meeting, the superintendent facilitates an elementary principal meeting with both elementary principals and the director of curriculum. The superintendent also facilitates a meeting with the secondary principals and the director of curriculum. Building-specific data and needs are discussed at the principal meetings.

At the heart of these discussions are the interests of students. The meeting agendas include data discussions, achievement data, safety issues, and the professional growth needs of the faculty. The administrative team works closely together to solve problems and to create positive solutions for all students.

The superintendent has an open-door policy with the administrative team as well as the teachers. The superintendent communicates frequently and openly with the administrative team. The administrative team communicates all events, happenings, challenges and successes to the superintendent.

Student well-being and student achievement are at the heart of the conversations within the administrative team. Every decision that is made is made with students in mind. Curriculum materials, instructional practices, resource management, and technology decisions are made for the well-being of students. As mentioned previously, the district has a one-to-one initiative. In its early phase, the district purchased iPads for students. Many of the high-quality curriculum resources that have online components were not accessible on the iPads. Instead of pushing forward with its original plan, the administrative team went back to the drawing board and purchased Chromebooks for students in grades 4-12. The iPads were recycled to younger grades and to the preK classrooms on carts for educational purposes. This is a clear

example of how the administrative team ensured that the best possible decisions were made based on student achievement and curriculum access.

## **Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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The most compelling academic strategy at Ferrell is our teachers' ability to drive our students towards success. They spend a great deal of time developing relationships with our students and their families to believe in our curriculum. Our staff reaches out to all students and understands personal life issues that all are dealing with currently and beyond. Past students frequently visit their Ferrell teachers. The respect level on both ends is measurable and remarkable. It makes the difference in the students being successful in life.

Ferrell is a model school in the way that teachers work together for the betterment of their students. They spend time, energy, and their own resources to ensure that students are successful. The teachers work tirelessly to help their students grow and make progress. It is evident that the teachers care deeply for their students.

The distinctive factor at Ferrell is that teachers build strong relationships with their students. They motivate their students by making personal connections and making learning authentic and personal. The students at Ferrell know that their teachers care for them and they are motivated to succeed. The teachers and students celebrate all successes.

To say that Ferrell is like a family is an understatement. The climate and culture is indicative of a happy place where students and adults learn together. Adults in this building are not afraid to not be the expert and they learn alongside their students. This pervasive practice promotes lifelong learning. Student achievement is celebrated; but, more importantly, student growth is celebrated. Students track their progress alongside their teachers and celebrate progress and growth.

Students are made to feel special by their teachers and the support staff at Ferrell. Students want to do well and they want to be successful. They are proud of their accomplishments and they are proud of their school.

It takes incredibly special people to create an environment like the environment at Ferrell Elementary. It does not happen by accident. It happens by purposeful planning for student success. It happens when the professionals work tirelessly to meet the needs of each student. It happens when those teachers are supported by their building principal and by the district administrative team. It happens when teachers care about their students and their success, both in school and in life.