

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):
- 25 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 9 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 10 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 44 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	58	54	112
1	54	64	118
2	77	61	138
3	81	69	150
4	64	73	137
5	71	71	142
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	405	392	797

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 2 % Asian
 - 2 % Black or African American
 - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 89 % 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: 2%

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	9
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	6
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	15
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	794
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.02
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1%
5 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Afrikaans, Chinese, Kannada, Persian, Spanish, Tamil

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 0%
Total number students who qualify: 2

8. Students receiving special education services: 1 %
8 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>5</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>11</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>7</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>3</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>33</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>2</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.	38
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.	16
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	6

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 211:1

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%	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.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

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

At Scales Elementary, we promote a balanced education to help us be lifelong learners.

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

Scales Elementary School opened its doors in 1977 to a growing community that valued education. From the beginning, Scales offered innovative ways to meet the needs of individual students by offering a rigorous curriculum and a variety of programs and activities that support the emotional, physical, and social needs of all students. The Scales faculty and staff work hard each day implementing best practices to plan, differentiate, and deliver valuable lessons. The school and community have a strong, cohesive relationship. Our community is philanthropic in nature, having developed a value system that revolves around education, service, and family. Many parents have advanced degrees and all see value in blending financial responsibility and investing in our community. Having set the example with their personal educational background, our parents cultivate an environment that fortifies and energizes the importance of education and service. Scales and the community are committed to developing confident, well-rounded students who can look back on their elementary school experience as a foundational building block for life. The support of our Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) is unmatched, with parents contributing volunteer hours tutoring, working in and around the school, financial donations, and emotional support. Indeed, Scales has become a multi-generational school for our community, as a number of our parents are also Scales alumni.

Our students come from families who are involved in all aspects of the Brentwood and Greater Nashville community. Students regularly participate in academic, athletic, artistic, and philanthropic activities. Parents ensure that their children are prepared for school. Teachers work closely with families to create an environment of trust and open communication. The teachers and staff are comprised of highly qualified educators with differing backgrounds and experiences giving students valuable lessons and skills needed to succeed in life. Our high TCAP (Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program) and benchmark scores are influenced by instruction, support services, parental involvement, and student effort. Educators follow Williamson County Schools' Scope and Sequence. Ninety-minute reading and math blocks provide a myriad of educational opportunities for students. Our instructional strategies incorporate whole group, differentiated small groups, and independent practice activities. Another method of differentiation is our unique approach to Response to Intervention (RtI). Data meetings are held monthly to review benchmark scores, reading levels, diagnostic assessments, and writing samples. Students are then provided with a network of support, allowing them to make academic gains.

To enhance the daily educational rigor, teachers plan educational experiences and projects that stretch and challenge learners. Teachers work outside of regular school hours offering a variety of clubs and activities, as well as participating in PTO activities and school-wide events.

Once a year, financial donations from parents are coupled with community and staff contributions to support our main fundraiser, "Invest in Your Child," a longstanding Scales tradition. The students and staff enjoy a week of daily in-school activities, culminating in Friday evening's family-focused "Invest Fest." Some of our other long-standing school traditions include a welcome back to school ice cream social, Grandparents' Day, 5th grade Winter Olympics study unit and class competitions, Mustang Closet for our partner school, Kindergarteners and Parents Valentine Banquet, Family Math Night, STEM fair, Social Studies Wax Museum, Spring Musical, and First Grade Business Day.

Scales has consistently demonstrated an ability to be both innovative and high performing. Honors received include Tennessee Reward School status for performance and progress, consistently leading our district in academic performance in benchmark and standardized test results, routinely ranking in the superior category in local Mini Mu math competitions, regularly placing in local, state and global Destination Imagination tournaments, typically placing in area-wide Quiz Bowl, Scripps Spelling Bee, and National Geographic Geography Bee competitions.

Over the past 40 years, Scales has proudly cultivated an environment that fosters growth, creativity, and academic achievement. Our school mission statement truly expresses our educational purpose: At Scales Elementary, we promote a balanced education to help us be lifelong learners. Our school community is grateful to be recognized as a Blue Ribbon nominee.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Scales Elementary School's core curriculum encompasses rigor, relevance, relationships, and relentlessness. Rigor is first discovered within Williamson County Schools Scope and Sequence, which is aligned with our state standards. These standards serve as an instructional blueprint for teachers to ensure that high quality instruction is delivered to all learners. Our curriculum is relevant to students and provides differentiated learning opportunities to integrate technology and to make real world connections. Dedicated members of the staff are relentless when diagnosing, prescribing, and intervening to meet the academic needs of each child.

One of our foundational pillars is to facilitate a rigorous learning environment where our students become critical thinkers, problem-solvers, and gain necessary skills to be successful members of society. Weekly teacher collaboration on content, instructional strategies, and assessments ensures that best practices occur across all areas of academics. Monthly data meetings are scheduled to allow for discussion on student assessments and benchmarks, which in turn, determines RTI placements for remediation and enrichment groups. The 90-minute Literacy and Math blocks encompass whole group, small group, and independent practice. Whole group instruction consists of teacher-led instruction, technology integration, and cooperative learning. Small group instruction is used to create differentiated lessons based on students' academic needs. Independent work consists of purposeful practice activities that include reflective writing, interactive notebooks, engaging projects, and higher level thinking tasks. Our learning environment creates rigor by centering the focus on increasing achievement for all students.

Academic relevance is provided to build deep conceptual understanding and create global connectivity. Teachers choose culturally relevant literature that highlights social and emotional themes to help students better understand their role in today's world and to plan for their future contributions to society. Students interact and engage with text to solidify the importance of reading in their lives. Students are exposed to volunteer readers, historians, and authors who relate text to the curriculum in a meaningful way. Students apply mathematic fundamentals to relevant weekly tasks requiring higher level thinking. Scales' Family Math Night is an example of students connecting math to their daily lives. Students are given the opportunity to see science up close and personal through field trips, hands on science stations, STEM activities, and interactive kits. Students engage in civic learning through creative, purposeful activities. Students have the opportunity to further their understanding of civic responsibility by participating in community service projects. Students have access to iPads, Chromebooks, Smart Boards, laptops, and Williamson County Schools' Bring Your Own Technology (BYOT) initiative; all of which are powerful and relevant tools that impact their lives and bring the world into the classroom.

Scales Elementary holds a relentless approach to instruction that allows students to excel and grow. Teachers maintain an instructional pace that maximizes time and instruction. Our teachers consistently build a solid foundation of content skills, concepts, and fluency. Regular review allows students with academic gaps the necessary repetition to build and practice, while also encouraging all students to implement multiple problem solving strategies. Teachers continually review data from formal and informal assessments to facilitate small groups. Small groups change, often on a daily basis, as teachers monitor their students' growth and needs. Themed and holiday-related activities incorporate current units and concepts, ensuring that no instructional time is lost. The continual desire to better each and every one of our students.

Social Studies instruction in early elementary focuses on government structure and world geography. Upper elementary has a heavy emphasis in US History. By integrating Social Studies standards into the literacy block, teachers create a greater depth of knowledge in both subject areas.

Hands-on experiences are a vital part of science instruction. Students use scientific inquiry to learn about scientific concepts that range from matter to simple machines and from geology to forces and motion. That knowledge is enhanced by STEM concepts in Math and Literacy instruction.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

In addition to the Core Curriculum, Scales Elementary has other related content area curriculum that support students' acquisition of essential skills and knowledge. Related arts classes operate on a 6-day rotation schedule, with all K-5 students attending Visual Art and Music classes once every rotation, Physical Education twice every rotation, Guidance lessons every two weeks, and Library and Technology once every rotation on average. This schedule is supplemented with an additional class in either Art, Music, or Physical Education once every 6-day rotation. As well as enhancing all of the general education instruction, the Related Arts courses help equip students for success in a variety of interests, hobbies, and careers.

The Visual Arts program enhances the overall educational experience of our students by reinforcing the school's core curriculum while emphasizing creativity, imagination, and curiosity. A consistent visual arts education contributes to the development of our students' critical thinking skills and visual awareness of the world around them. There are several annual opportunities for students to share their artwork with the school, local and Greater Nashville community.

The Music program is based on the Kodály Approach to Music Education, which emphasizes the development of music literacy through carefully sequenced activities. Students listen, analyze, and perform music of diverse cultures and time periods. Each grade level presents an evening of interactive music that showcases the curriculum and includes singing, dancing, instrumental music, and demonstrating students' developing ability to read music. Essential skills include self-discipline and cooperation. Music classes also provide opportunities for improvisation and composition, encouraging students to exercise creativity with musical concepts. Beyond the school day, chorus is offered to all 4th and 5th grade students. Chorus students rehearse weekly and perform several times during the school year.

Twice a month, students participate in classroom guidance lessons with a School Counselor. These lessons address mindfulness, empathy, flexibility, study skills, goal setting, and safety. Our school counselors provide opportunities for small student groups to meet and address specific needs such as social skills, friendship, anxiety, conflict resolution and family support. The goal is to provide social and emotional support to students so that learning readiness is impacted. Quarterly, our counseling department sponsors parent/counselor coffees to educate our parents on current parenting topics or areas of concern. Several evening events are also scheduled throughout the year to keep parents informed of issues impacting our academic community.

The English as a Second Language program helps to meet the unique needs of English Language Learners by equipping and supporting them in their efforts to learn English and achieve the high academic standards expected of all students. These services are available to any Williamson County Schools student who has been identified as an English Language Learner by the approved Tennessee Department of Education language proficiency assessment. Our ESL program educates and helps ESL students in a way that respects individual diversity, ability, intellect, and character.

The Physical Education program provides students with opportunities to engage in skill development and competitive play, problem-solving skills, and social awareness among students all while encouraging fun. Students learn how to be active, lifelong learners through movement and exercise. Additionally, Williamson County Schools' Scope and Sequence for Physical Education provides a variety of health education topics that address many aspects of healthy living including topics such as body systems, drug and tobacco abuse, hygiene, nutrition. These foundational lessons, along with physical education help to develop strong bodies for life. During fall and spring, students have the option to participate in 10 weeks of Run Club, which provides them with a twice-weekly opportunity to exercise before school. This can aid in academic focus during the instructional day.

The Scales Library Media Center provides students with unlimited access to activities that promote their imagination, critical thinking, and engagement. Students are encouraged to follow their imagination and creative passions by seeking books that foster personal interests. Through the deliberate use of technology, STEM projects, and collaborative teamwork, students become engaged and critical learners. In addition, the Library Media Center celebrates the literacy achievements of its students through the Birthday Book Club,

Read Across America Week, and the Volunteer State Book Award Celebration.

The Technology program reinforces state technology standards by implementing lessons that develop students' fine motor skills, letter recognition, graphic design, typing skills, technology use, digital citizenship, and coding. Students use Bee-Bots and Pro-bots for learning coding, which bring excitement into the classroom with planning, sequencing, and estimation. Outside of the school day, students have the opportunity to participate in the 21-Day Typing Challenge, which encourages students to practice typing at home to increase their words per minute (WPM).

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

At Scales Elementary, we are proud to offer all students a superior education through a variety of instructional approaches. All students receive daily explicit instruction based on Tennessee State Standards and Williamson County Schools' Scope and Sequence. The evaluation of our instructional program is an ongoing process using teacher observations, assessments, and student academic data.

Ninety-minute reading and math blocks provide a myriad of educational opportunities for students. Our instructional strategies incorporate whole group, differentiated small groups, and independent practice activities. Differentiated instruction helps meet the diverse needs of individual learners and empowers each student to pursue success. Students experience differentiation through varied teaching methodology, strategy/skill groups in content areas, one-to-one conferring, developmental word study groups, mathematical skill and fluency groups, and small group remediation. In order to prepare our students for middle school, we group fifth graders homogeneously for Math and ELA using a variety of data including state test results, district benchmark test results, STAR reading and math universal screeners, Fountas and Pinnell reading assessment results, teacher-made tests, as well as reading and math unit tests. Another method of differentiation is our unique approach to Response to Intervention (RTI). Data meetings are held monthly to review benchmark scores, reading levels, diagnostic assessments, and writing samples. Students are then provided with a network of support, allowing them to make academic gains. Teachers and students keep data notebooks to follow academic progress throughout the year.

Students work daily to master state technology standards that are embedded in curricular instruction and assessment. Our district provides a Technology Coach who helps teachers increase their technology capacity and assists teachers in the creation of technology-based and technology embedded lessons. Teachers use G Suite for Education to make digital assignments and assessments. Chromebooks and iPads are used regularly in the classroom for independent and individual activities. Benchmark assessments, STAR benchmark tests in reading and math, STAR progress monitoring, and 5th Grade TCAP are all presented in an electronic format, requiring student proficiency in technology.

A variety of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments are used to inform and guide daily instruction and RTI instruction. These assessments provide valuable information to determine the appropriate next steps for students. Diagnostic assessments include the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), Fountas and Pinnell's Benchmark Assessment, Developmental Spelling Assessment (DSA), reading pre-assessments, running records, and teacher observations. In math, diagnostic assessments include beginning and end of the year tests, periodic math skills tests, and math fluency tests. Formative assessments include mid-chapter tests and Number Talks, daily exit tickets, daily spiral reviews, and weekly fluency tests in grades 3-5. In some Kindergarten, first, and second grade classes, the use of exit tickets varies between daily and weekly use in math. Summative assessments include middle and end of year math tests, weekly reading tests, quarterly benchmarks, and state assessments (TNReady). Three times a year, the STAR Universal Screeners are administered in reading and math to help guide instruction and form small groups for classrooms and RTI. All students and teachers monitor and record growth through the use of data notebooks.

Our unique approach to RTI provides individualized instruction to every student. During our daily school-wide RTI block, all students are assigned a grade-level homogeneously structured math or reading group. For Tier 1 students, RTI time consists of math or reading activities based on the current standards or enrichment activities for more academically advanced students. Tier 2 students receive intervention using

research-based programs and methods in groups of five or less based on their assessment results. Tier 3 reading students receive a third session of reading instruction using S.P.I.R.E. (Specialized Program Individualizing Reading Excellence), Barton Reading and Spelling Program, or Leveled Literacy Intervention. Currently we are pleased to note there are no Tier 3 math or written expression groups.

At this time, Scales Elementary does not meet the criteria of an achievement gap of 10% or more in any subgroup of our population. Despite this, we still identify students' areas of need in order to close their achievement gaps. As a school, we constantly work to enrich our students academically. Rigorous, differentiated instruction and flexible groups are the customary practice, school wide.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Engagement for Scales students begins as they arrive each day. The school framework creates familiarity and expectations that set the standard of success. A variety of structures are in place to empower and engage students on a deeper level. In partnership with Vanderbilt University, students are motivated using Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies (PBIS). PBIS is a system of positive reinforcement based on three school-wide expectations: Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Your Best Self. Students earn Mustang Merits (tickets named for our school mascot, Murray Mustang) by demonstrating behaviors and qualities that exceed everyday expectations. Friday mornings, the entire school gathers at “Mustang Meetings” to celebrate student and staff successes that occur both in and out of the school building. The meetings are full of a sense of joie de vivre for everyone and feature music and movement. Mustang Meetings provide an opportunity for all to appreciate and acknowledge the successes of others as well as self. In addition to the daily PBIS, we have many events throughout the year that serve to promote the family atmosphere that we have at Scales. Guidance lessons are embedded in every grade levels’ curriculum to guide the children in developing empathy and intrinsic motivation. These lessons provide tools and strategies that can be utilized for academic, social and emotional success throughout their educational and life experiences.

To support students’ academic growth, Scales has a variety of programming that touches all curricular areas. Math Night, RTI, STEM Fair, Mini Mu, Quiz Bowl, Chemical Test Day, Business Day, and JA BizTown incorporate math and science. Hibernation Day, Song Writing Project, Wax Museum, Thanksgiving Feast, Spelling Bee, Geography Bee, Business Day, Destination Imagination and Reading Buddies offer language arts and social studies support. Numerous activities are cross-curricular. To provide a balanced education, social and emotional growth is supported by the Be Nice Campaign, Fine Arts Fair, Invest Fest, Spirit Week, Winter Olympics, Spirit Nights, community service projects, parent/child events, student lead morning announcements, Read Across America Week, Field Day, theatrical presentations, Bus Helpers, Buddy Bench, ENCORE Week and before and after school clubs. Understanding that every child has an area of academic strength, Scales prides itself on competing academically while simultaneously building empathy with grade-level specific service projects. Through involved parent organizations, student mentors, Encore summer camp, Run Club, Art Club, musicals and drama, and Mustang Meetings, we cultivate meaningful relationships that lead to student growth and confidence. The importance of fostering positive relationships between students, teachers, and the school community is demonstrated through our goal to create an environment where our students feel respected, encouraged, and flourish academically and personally.

The Administration and the community work cohesively to create a school environment where teachers can flourish. There is a visible culture of support and value for the faculty and staff. Consistent encouragement of a growth mindset for teachers empowers the pursuit of new ideas, ever expanding instructional techniques and strategies, and professional growth. The cornerstone of collaboration is continuous vertical and grade-level planning, mentoring new teachers, consistent contact with curriculum coaches, and coordination through the school leadership team. A myriad of social and emotional supports are also in place. Health and wellness support, PTO backing, involvement of community experts, team building activities, and Brentwood library are all integral components of teacher holistic well-being. The result is an inspired faculty that fosters inspired learning.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

At Scales Elementary, we are dedicated, passionate and committed to engaging our families and our community. We engage our students with several academic opportunities such as Family Math Night, Read Across America Week, and grade level project fairs. While these activities are student led and driven, they are family oriented at the core. Building three dimensional shapes with glow sticks at Family Math Night, having our principal read her favorite Dr. Seuss book to individual classrooms during Read Across America Week, and seeing fifth graders research and present an historical figure at Wax Museum Scales are all examples of educational milestones where family participation is key. We involve our community

in promoting student academic success through Career Day for our lower elementary students, JA (Junior Achievement) in a Day for our upper elementary students, and BizTown for our fifth grade students. Career Day is designed to educate and expose our students to a range of professions that are important to our community. JA in a Day is an onsite program sponsored by Junior Achievement of Nashville, an organization that promotes a business mindset to encourage students to think and develop real life skills including financial literacy, work readiness, and entrepreneurship. Junior Achievement also sponsors BizTown, an offsite experiential learning process where students themselves facilitate a business simulation by developing business plans, work towards paying off a business loan, and donating a portion of their salaries to actual local philanthropies. The gradual progression of these community-led programs, from Kindergarten through fifth grade, acquaints our students with career options so they can make wise choices about their futures.

Scales seeks school leadership opportunities by developing partnerships within our community in several ways. These include our nine-year relationship with Warner Elementary of Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, GraceWorks food drives, Spirit Nights at local restaurants and other businesses throughout Brentwood, and community service projects across all six grade levels. Our Kindergarten and fifth grade students work closely to build face-to-face relationships with the students at Warner Elementary. Our efforts include sending Scales parents to be guest readers, establishing pen pals in Kindergarten classrooms, and an annual gently used book drive. Through our Mustang Closet program, gently used clothing is collected and our fifth grade students, along with their parents, travel to Warner Elementary to personally help Warner students select clothing, shoes, and outerwear items to take home. Twice annually, Scales families and students collect items for GraceWorks Food Bank. Spirit Nights not only unify our students and families with our community, but also support our local businesses to show our appreciation for their contributions to our school. Grade level community service projects are designed to teach our students about empathy, which is one of our school wide growth goals.

The family involvement demonstrated by our Scales families sets us apart from other schools. We strive to build cooperative and productive relationships with our students' parents and extended families through a wide variety of events and activities held at Scales. These include Grandparents' Day, Girls Night Out, Invest Fest, Sneak-a-Peek for rising Kindergarteners, Coffee with Counselors and monthly newsletter communications from classroom teachers, our administration, counselors and academic coaches. Of these, we are very proud and appreciative of Invest Fest, our annual fundraiser that provides additional financial support for improving our school in areas such as technology devices and support, P.E. and recess equipment, a Reading Intervention Assistant, and classroom materials. Daddy Daughter Dance, Mother Son Events, and Girls Night Out (sponsored by our School Counseling department) all provide parents with a school-based opportunity to spend quality time with their sons and daughters, which ultimately cultivates stronger relationships within our Scales family. Teachers and staff support students outside of school at extracurricular activities. These positive relationships help our students reach their full potential and be their best.

3. Professional Development:

At Scales Elementary, we pursue a wide variety of Professional Development (PD) opportunities that allow us to engage students and improve learning outcomes. Administrators, faculty, and staff participate in PD both inside and outside the district, with the goal of meeting the diverse needs of our student population. Attendees reflect on the effectiveness of each course and submit an evaluation, which is used to refine future PD offerings.

Each year our administration submits a professional development proposal that addresses the specific needs of the professional staff. Teachers also submit Individual Professional Growth Plans targeting areas that allow them to refine their craft. Teachers not only seek out, but are encouraged to create PD opportunities that will directly correlate to student achievement and growth. One example, a book study and implementation of Seven Habits of Highly Effective Students, continues to improve students' study habits, work quality, and academic relationships.

Professional development begins with the district's new teacher induction addressing the practical needs of

each teaching position. At Scales, each new teacher is paired with a mentor and begins the school year with a team-building day to boost teachers' integration into the Scales family, which translates into a positive classroom and school environment.

Many professional development courses address specific content areas with an emphasis on reading and math. Teachers learn new ways to present academic content in a variety of modes to accommodate different learning styles and to differentiate instruction so students can demonstrate growth. Our new district-wide science curriculum and instructional methodology includes cross-cutting concepts and science and engineering practices. We are proud that one of our faculty members helped to develop the new curriculum and will be training our district science teachers.

Another focus of professional development is in obtaining, interpreting, and utilizing data about students' achievement and growth. Recently our faculty learned to use the Unify platform to create and administer benchmark assessments that measure students' mastery of learning standards.

In addition to classroom teachers' professional development, our administrators, literacy and math coaches, gifted specialist/differentiation coach, special education teachers and assistants, and related arts teachers attend PD specific to their areas. During student-focused meetings three times a month, these specialists share new ways to enrich and remediate core instruction.

Special Education teachers and paraprofessional staff attend PD throughout the year. The knowledge and skills gained support individual students' academic, physical, behavioral, and social/emotional needs.

Scales Elementary School relentlessly provides the tools teachers need to assist students in succeeding. Along with the school district, Scales provides PD trainings on a wide range of topics, from instruction to technology to safety and well-being.

4. School Leadership:

Scales Elementary leadership philosophy focuses on outstanding academic achievement and growth while building students of character. The structure consists of a shared teamwork approach, with members that include the principal, assistant principal, building leadership team (BLT), classified staff, and parent-teacher organization representative (PTO).

The role of the principal is to provide leadership to the academic process, manage fiscal resources, serve as liaison between the local school and the district, and serve as a resource to parents and community concerning local school activities. Responsibilities include overseeing programs and services, leading data teams to ensure student success, attending parent conferences and IEP meetings. The principal serves as a resource and positive role model to the staff and students. Additionally, the principal places value on team collaboration and planning and creates ample opportunities for teachers to engage in these types of experiences. Bi-monthly school-wide assemblies build relationships among all stakeholders. The principal consistently maintains an open-door policy and encourages staff members to share ideas, provide feedback and request advice. This leadership style promotes an environment where staff feels valued as part of the team.

The assistant principal values educating the whole child and often communicates with students and staff, inquiring about personal and professional well-being. Additional responsibilities include addressing physical plant needs on campus, and addressing transportation and behavioral issues.

The Scales Building Leadership Team (BLT) is a committee of teacher leaders, administrators, and PTO representatives. They disseminate information from administration to faculty and PTO committee chairs through monthly leadership sessions. The team collaborates with administration to make school-wide decisions, including giving input on professional development, budgeting and fiscal resources, and annually updating the school improvement plan.

The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) flourishes under the leadership of the principal and assistant

principal. The PTO supports teachers by providing programs and equipment to support academic growth. They provide each classroom with updated technology. They cover teacher environmental needs and supplemental resources. The Scales' PTO also provides the funds for our reading intervention assistant. These funds are raised through our annual Invest Fundraiser. The Scales' PTO has also built a sense of community, raises school morale through leading school wide activities, and encourages parent involvement.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The one practice at Scales that has been the most instrumental to our success is the customization of Response to Intervention (RTI). In 2010, Williamson County began an initiative to incorporate a daily RTI block. At this time we analyzed our student data and identified the content area needing an enhanced focus, making this time more relevant and the material more rigorous. We decided to utilize a Walk to Intervention model, where students join a homogeneously assigned group for RTI.

Our RTI strategy incorporates the Zone of Proximal Development where students are grouped according to their individual academic needs. The effectiveness of the RTI block is protected and consistent throughout the week. This ensures the entire staff become stakeholders with ownership of the process.

Our RTI model remediates struggling learners, challenges average students, and enriches those that show mastery of subject matter. This differentiation is a key aspect of our success helping each student go deeper into the curriculum and exceed their current level. For example, our fifth grade Advanced Math students work on sixth grade material and standards, while Basic Math students focus on mastering the fifth grade standards. Students are assigned a group during the RTI block based on many types of data including, but not limited to: annual assessments (beginning, middle and end), chapter tests, Renaissance Learning STAR Universal Screeners in reading and math, District Benchmarks, Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), and Written Expression Screeners. Our groupings are flexible and are adjusted throughout the year based on results, feedback, and discussion in monthly data meetings.

RTI offers teachers an extra measure of creativity, allowing them to focus their RTI planning on a specific level of students and develop plans that will prove to be most beneficial for the group. Teacher satisfaction data from the 2016 Tennessee Educator Survey revealed that Scales' teachers were exceptionally happy with the RTI approach, which resulted in a visit from state officials desiring to observe and learn about our RTI success. The overwhelming popularity of the Walk to Intervention model among both students and teachers is instrumental to its implementation and support.

Since launching this unique approach to RTI, we are pleased with the exceptional results and phenomenal success of our students. Our fifth grade data indicates 100% proficiency in math while 94% of fifth graders are proficient in reading.

At Scales, we pride ourselves with the highest academic standards and achievement. Our current student population includes 797 students with 9% qualifying under Special Education. In 2017, the Tennessee Ready test (TNReady) given to students in grades 3-5, exhibited that we were well above the state average in both math and reading, performing 51.1% higher in math and 47.3% higher in reading.

TN Ready results for students in grades 3-5 are reported in four categories: Mastered, On Track, Approaching, and Below. A combined category of Percent On Track and Mastered is also reported. In math, Tennessee students demonstrated 8.9% Mastered while Scales students demonstrated 54.1% Mastered. Tennessee students showed 29.1% as On Track and Scales students showed 35.0% On Track. Tennessee students reported 36.1% Approaching and Scales students reported 9.7% Approaching. 25.9% of Tennessee students were in the Below category with only 1.2% of Scales students in the Below category. In the combined category of Percent On Track and Mastered, Tennessee students were at 38.0% and Scales students were at 89.1%.

TN Ready results in reading showed similar outcomes. 5.7% of Tennessee students were in the Mastered category and 29.5% of Scales students were in the Mastered category. 28.1% of Tennessee students were On Track and 51.6% of Scales students were On Track. In the Approaching category, Tennessee students were 44.7% and 17.7% of Scales students were in the Approaching category. 21.5% of Tennessee students were in the Below category and 1.2% of Scales students were in the Below category. Tennessee students reported 33.8% On Track and Mastered while 81.1% of Scales students were in the On Track and Mastered category.

The entire Scales school community is very pleased with the outstanding results of our norm-referenced

tests; however even with these notable results, our work continues as we strive to reach each student's academic potential. We realize that until every student has reached his or her dreams and goals, we cannot be satisfied with past performance. Every student matters every single day!