

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):
- 9 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 2 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 13 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	9	11	20
K	11	7	18
1	9	14	23
2	9	8	17
3	13	18	31
4	12	9	21
5	7	7	14
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	70	74	144

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 0 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 99 % White
 - 1 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2016 – 2017 school year: 15%

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	8
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	13
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	21
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	144
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.15
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	15

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: 59 %
Total number students who qualify: 85

8. Students receiving special education services: 5 %
7 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>0</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>0</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>3</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</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: 4
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	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.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 21:1

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	94%	95%	94%	98%	98%
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.

Mt Lookout Elementary School educates students for success in life.

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

Welcome to Mount Lookout Elementary! Our mission is to educate our students for success in life. We believe our success is based on a strong foundation of great teaching and personalized learning. Mt Lookout Elementary and the community's collective efforts to do "whatever it takes" to support the students is at our core. We provide a safe and positive learning environment that promotes citizenship, wellness, self-discipline, personal responsibility, and character. Our staff is dedicated to meeting the needs of each student and providing the motivation they need to become lifelong learners. Our teachers are continuously analyzing and assessing the progress of each student. Every success is celebrated!

Mount Lookout's name describes its location. We are a very small, rural community located in the east, central part of West Virginia, along the Appalachian Plateau and bordered by the Meadow River and Summersville Lake. Our school educates 144 students, kindergarten through fifth grade. We are also fortunate to have Head Start located on our campus to give our students an excellent beginning. We have been a Title I school the past two years. This designation has allowed our small school to benefit from an additional teacher and resources to assist us in reaching our goals. Our county also provides our school with two interventionist positions. These teachers give our students additional, individualized instruction that scaffolds student success. Our teachers are all highly qualified teachers ranging from new graduates to veterans. The combined experiences and knowledge of all are essential to our school's academic success. We are honored to be nominated as a National Blue Ribbon School.

Our school is rich in history and stands as the foundation of our community. Our families are comprised of farmers and blue collar workers. The first records of settlement date back to 1773. The first school building served both school and religious services. It was constructed of round logs, covered with clapboards, no windows, and held together with press poles. After the Civil War, a larger school was built. The present school was built in 1958. Most families in our present day school have had generations of family members attend Mount Lookout Elementary. We take great pride in our heritage and long standing success in educating our children.

We are a very community supported school. Our school invites families in for fall and spring dinners. Title I provides family night activities. We have had fundraisers with parent volunteers to improve our school/community playground, raising over \$20,000. Annual Scholastic book fairs raise money for our library. Our teachers give a graduating senior, from our county high school who attended Mount Lookout Elementary, a \$200.00 scholarship to further their educational endeavors. Parents volunteer to read to our students. Our local churches provide school supplies to any student at the beginning of each year. Free theatrical presentations are provided by our local council for the arts, Ivy and Stone. Appalachian Office Products, our Partner in Education and locally owned business, stands with us and supports our school. The Marathon Scholars program for students is provided by our local health facility. Even our fire department has a program to support our students with books for children to take home and return. It takes a village and together we are successful.

We teachers hold the bar high for each student's success and ourselves. We analyze each assessment, item by item. We meet across grade levels and as a school weekly to discuss, revise, and add new strategies for individualized success. Technology is interwoven throughout our daily curriculum. After school programs are provided throughout the year and summer school. Snow packets are given to students to complete during winter days out of school. Reward activities are given for attendance and behavior each month. Students participate in county spelling bees, young writers, Literature fair, science and social studies fairs, county math field day, and track and field competitions. Each student has a book buddy from another grade level to read with each week.

Our teachers are always attending workshops and professional development opportunities to strengthen their knowledge. Our students have the highest scores of all schools in our county and we overwhelmingly exceed county and state benchmark scores.

We may be small and our community blue collar, but we are strong, determined, and hard working. We are

proud of our students, teachers, and community. We are Mount Lookout Elementary and we thank you for this opportunity!

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

The core curriculum of Mount Lookout Elementary is consistent throughout the grade levels K-5. All of the classrooms use state and county approved adopted textbooks. All of the county textbooks are in alignment with the State of West Virginia College and Career Readiness Standards. Textbooks are provided to every student in English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies with levy funds.

Grouping of students in the classroom for small group instruction is based on data collected from PALS, ACUITY, benchmark testing from Wonders, standardized testing and classroom performance. The students scoring in the bottom 12 percent receive additional reading instruction for 15-30 minutes with the Title I teacher and interventionists. Their progress is monitored and determined if sufficient growth has been achieved. If growth is not shown, further intervention and individualized instruction is continued. Students are given clear expectations and routines are created to assist students with various learning styles from the teaching staff.

The reading series used in our county provides many opportunities to discuss Science and Social Studies vocabulary that meet the West Virginia College and Career Readiness standards through the use of leveled readers and differentiated groups. The series also emphasizes writing to share the student's knowledge and understanding of the topic in the reading unit.

The staff utilizes various other resources to meet the state's standards for Science and Social Studies. The county adopted Science curriculum emphasizes hands on, student discovery through experiments and journal entries to reflect on what is observed throughout the activities. Informational text from various resources such as student news media, online resources, and basal text allow the students at our school to read, comprehend, and document social studies topics required by the state standards.

The primary grades use the county adopted Mathematics series to meet the state standards for preparing our students for knowledge needed for skill progression. Benchmark and midyear testing, Recognizing Student Achievements, observation and unit testing are measurements used to group students and show student progression. Grades 3-5 use various resources that align with the county adopted Mathematics series. Spiraled practice of skills is used and has shown to be beneficial to our students in retention of mathematics skills.

The staff meets weekly in Professional Learning Communities (PLC) which include the principal, classroom teachers, special education teacher, and sometimes reading interventionists. Professional Learning Communities focus on student learning and student growth, identifying barriers that affect the student's learning and allow the teachers to transition to appropriate small groups and plan instruction based on the student data. The teachers identify students who are at-risk for academics or other concerns which impact student learning. The issues addressed are recorded and discussed as a reference and documentation tool. Progress is tracked through PALS, ACUITY, assessments both formal and informal. Reteaching and enrichment takes place when needed.

Mt. Lookout Pre-School offers HighScope Curriculum that addresses all areas of development. The curriculum includes active participatory learning: language and literacy, and communication: social and emotional development, health and well-being: and arts and sciences. HighScope further subdivides arts and sciences into the subjects of mathematics, science and technology, social studies and the arts. The students are provided with play-oriented exploratory activities that encourage interaction and choices while participating on their own developmental level.

In addition to our HighScope Curriculum, we align early childhood and K-Grade 3 academic standards with the Early Learning Scale (ELS). This system helps evaluate the progress the students are making in three key educational areas or domains: Math/Science, Social-Emotional/Social Studies, and Language and Literacy. Research has shown that competence in these domains is critical for a child's future success in

elementary school. The ELS assesses and tracks individual children's progress over time. It can be used for all children including those with disabilities or dual language speakers.

The Pre-K/Head Start program works in collaboration with the county board of education and parents to set school readiness goals. Observations and assessments of Pre-K students indicate a higher skill level after completing an Early Childhood Program. These early Pre-school experiences will set the foundation for future success when entering kindergarten and will continue to increase in the primary grades.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Mt. Lookout Elementary supports specialized curriculum areas through collaborative efforts from specialists, classroom teachers, parent volunteers, and various community organizations. This ensures students are meeting or exceeding all content standards and requirements.

Visual art experiences are enhanced through an integrated Reading/Language Arts curriculum. On a weekly basis students complete visual art projects using a wide variety of mediums and techniques that are relevant to their current theme of study. As an extension of the visual arts program, the Physical Education teacher and parent volunteers plan and execute seasonal art projects for each class. Classroom and seasonal projects can be found on display throughout the school. Students are encouraged to participate in state art competitions and have successfully had work displayed in galleries.

Performing arts are brought to life for students twice a year, by enabling them to experience live performances sponsored by our local council for the arts, Ivy and Stone. Theatre West Virginia comes into the county for a live performance each year. Thus allowing students to witness a live production and transfer acting and performing techniques to their own classroom productions and school talent show. These live performances have encouraged students to try out and be cast in local theater productions.

Our students gain an appreciation of music through integrated instruction in the Reading/Language Arts series. Students learn about and listen to music as it correlates to their current theme of study. Music instruction is reinforced by the Physical Education teacher. Music, dance and singing is large part of the Physical Education curriculum.

The Physical Education program is a blend of movement, health and nutrition. Each child spends 40 minutes a day concentrating on their overall health. Students walk or run laps on the outdoor track, participate in team or individual sports, and dance. The local hospital sponsors the Marathon Scholars program in which students are encouraged to read 26 books and run 26 miles. The county hosts a track and field day for students for grades 3-5. Mt. Lookout students are consistently among the top finishers. The Fitnessgram test is administered to students in grades 3-5 with a pass rate of no less than 90%. Students participate in Jump Rope for Heart each year, raising money for the American Heart Association.

West Virginia University provides a guest instructor for nutrition. Students learn to prepare and experience new and different foods while learning how to eat a balanced diet. The school cooks provide two balanced meals each day. The fresh fruit program provides students with fresh fruit to take home twice a week.

The technology specialist and teachers at Mt. Lookout utilize technology with a purpose, to increase student engagement and accelerate learning. When designing technology activities, teachers ensure that classroom instruction incorporates the West Virginia College and Career Readiness Standards for Technology and Computer Science, and that technology supports the lessons being taught. Within the classrooms, students use iPads, laptops and computers for research, creativity, and problem solving. Their technology instruction focuses on learning to use technology safely and responsibly with the help of lessons provided by Common Sense Media. Throughout the year, all students learn the basics of coding. These lessons on code.org help students develop computational and problem solving skills. Other apps, such as Seesaw and Office365 enable students to create digital multimedia presentations of their research and creative writing. Students create original work by taking pictures, inserting labels and text, and adding audio to their presentations. By communicating online, students learn to demonstrate appropriate methods of sharing information and respecting the work of others. Technology integration is one of the many ways that teachers effectively

meet diverse student needs within their classrooms.

Students are encouraged to use the school library on a daily basis. The library is managed by a computerized system, and updated by a parent volunteer. To ensure students are reading on the appropriate level the STAR reading test is administered. Accelerated Reader is used to encourage students to read and track the points they have earned. New books are added to the library each year through money earned by our school book fairs.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

In a collaborative effort the Mount Lookout Elementary administration and staff developed a mission statement and a set of core beliefs that drive the work of the school. The core beliefs are used to set the expectations of the students and the staff at Mount Lookout Elementary. Mount Lookout Elementary School educates students for success in life. Our students do great work through: 1. A strong foundation of great teaching and personalized learning. 2. Continuous improvement by accountability; and 3. Collective efforts of multiple individuals.

Mount Lookout Elementary uses a variety of assessment data to analyze and improve individual student performance. The school uses the Wonders Reading program for reading group placement. We start with the Diagnostic and Placement assessments (phonics quick screener, inventory, etc.) to see where the students are level wise for Wonders. Using this early assessment along with our differentiation helps us to meet the needs of the many levels of students within our classes. We also have a math and reading assessment program, Acuity. These Acuity tests for ELA and Math reflect the shift to a new generation of standards that require a more evidence-centered approach to assessment. They provide the rigor and complexity students need to be successful on the summative assessments. The pre-made K12 Readiness forms prepare students to handle the skills assessed on summative assessments in a technology environment. The scores are provided in tier levels, so immediate intervention and reteach is provided.

At Mount Lookout Elementary we strive to create an environment that is learner-centered, with differentiated instruction that provides optimal conditions for teaching and learning. The teaching and learning is guided by extensive data. This data allows teachers to continuously provide tailored instruction to the unique needs of each student. Mount Lookout Elementary teachers, the Title I teacher, and interventionists collaborate to closely monitor all students learning opportunities to provide feedback and extra support. This ensures that every student masters designated learning goals through the Support for Personalized Learning Program.

Mount Lookout Elementary uses explicit instruction throughout the building. Explicit instruction is systematic, direct, engaging, and success oriented. We use this proven, practical and accessible resource to give special and general education teachers the tools to implement explicit instruction in any grade level or content area. Through the use of explicit instruction, it supports students through scaffolds. Scaffolds are used to teach students a new skill, by providing modeling and clear explanations along with support and practice until independent mastery occurs.

At Mount Lookout Elementary technology is used as an instructional tool to enhance, extend, or remediate learning. The Reading Wonders program has the following assessments available online: customizable eAssessments with reporting, Fluency Assessment, Weekly Assessment, and Unit Assessment Countdown to Common Core Assessment. Acuity is an online testing and remediation program that provides progress monitoring. Acuity has questions that are aligned to specific skills. The items are useful for brief, periodic checks on student progress. They are excellent to use with students who are working above or below grade level. Mount Lookout Elementary also uses iPads and computers for science and social studies. Each classroom is equipped with a Smart Board or Interactive TV.

Other related services that our school offers are from the speech language pathologist and school counselor. The speech language pathologist evaluates and diagnoses speech, language, communication, and swallowing disorders. The speech language pathologist provides training and education to family/caregivers and other professionals. They work collaboratively with professionals from many other disciplines. The school

counselor listens to students' concerns about academic, emotional or social problems. They help students process their problems, plan goals and take action. School counselors mediate conflict between students and teachers and improve parent/teacher relationships.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

We at Mount Lookout Elementary, strive to provide a positive and safe learning environment for our students. We are a school of approximately 144 students, located in a rural community in Nicholas County, West Virginia. Because we have a smaller school, we have smaller class sizes, which allows us to give our students more one on one help.

We engage and motivate students in different ways. One way is through our after-school program we have in the fall, spring, and summer. We use Acuity test scores along with input from teachers, to determine who needs tutoring in Math and English Language Arts. We go by the specific skills they need help with to determine the lessons we use. In the fall, the after-school program is offered to first, second, and third grade students, and in the spring, it is offered to third, fourth, and fifth grade students. This program is also used to help the upper grade students prepare for the General Summative Assessment they take at the end of the school year. The summer portion of the program is offered to grades kindergarten through third. We often see students who are at risk of falling behind during the summer months.

We also motivate students with our attendance incentive and monthly behavior reward. At the beginning of each month, we take one hour at the end of one day to reward the students who have had good attendance and behavior for the month prior. We have activities such as arts and crafts, indoor activities, outdoor games, and a movie with popcorn.

We encourage students to participate in the school Literature fair, Social Studies fair, Science fair, Math Field Day, Spelling Bee, and Young Writer's contest. Students who participate have the potential of moving on to the county and state contests.

Along with what is stated above, we have other ways of supporting the students' academic, social, and emotional growth. We have West Virginia Read Aloud volunteers that come in to classrooms to read to the students, and the students always look forward to that. We also have a school counselor who visits our school biweekly. She works with each classroom and with individual students who need additional counseling.

We truly do have a school of kindhearted and well-behaved students who are willing to work with each other and help each other when needed. As for the staff, we have a wonderful group at Mount Lookout Elementary. Everyone gets along well with each other, and we are always willing to help each other out in anything that is needed. When a new teacher comes to the school, we are ready to offer any guidance we can to continue to have a positive environment for both staff and students.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The faculty and staff of Mt. Lookout Elementary realize the positive impact that parent and community involvement have on the success of the school. While always looking for innovative ways to engage both parents and community, there are some interactions that have become an integral part of the school's success.

Open House - Before the school year begins, students and parents are invited to the school to meet their new teacher and visit their new classroom. This event allows some of the nervousness often associated with the new school year to be eased, and creates a positive interaction between student, teacher, and parent.

Parent Volunteer Program – As an important asset to Mt. Lookout Elementary, parents are given information on how to become an approved volunteer and are encouraged to do so. Through the efforts of the parent coordinator, parents are engaged in a variety of areas that they are comfortable in working. These areas include; clerical assistance, helping with school dinners, assisting with art projects, maintaining the school library, fundraising, organizing field trip activities, and reading with students.

Read Aloud WV – Parents and community members interested in participating in this program are provided with a full day of training. Students and readers enjoy a special reading time on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.

Social Media Page – As a means of communicating special school events and activities to parents and the community Mt. Lookout Elementary has created a Facebook page which is constantly updated with new information.

Snack Pack Program (Nicholas County Hunger Prevention) – A community organization provides snack bags which are an option for all students. The bags are left outside classroom doors and are to be discreetly distributed by teachers. Snack Packs are provided every Friday afternoon or before any extended break.

JROTC – Students participating in the Jr. ROTC program at the local high school have been invited to join with the local VFW to present patriotic programs to the students of Mt. Lookout Elementary.

Wilderness Volunteer Fire Department – Each year the local fire department presents a fire safety program in which they provide age appropriate materials for the students.

Marathon Scholars – A local health clinic challenges all elementary students to exercise mind and body by walking 26 miles and reading 26 books during the school year. Students can walk laps during their recess to reach the 26-mile goal while Accelerated Reader is used to keep track of the number of books students have read. A celebration with the sponsor is held in which the students who meet the goal are rewarded with a t-shirt and a medal.

National Park Service – Mt. Lookout Elementary is located at the edge of New River Gorge National Park. Rangers from the park visit the school and engage the students in environmental activities. The students sometimes visit the education center located inside the park.

American Electric Power – A representative from American Electric Power Company reads to individual classes and donates books to the school annually.

St. Patrick's Day Parade – The 4th and 5th grade classes participated in a small community parade in which they constructed their own float. Their participation deemed them eligible for a grant which they were awarded. The grant was used for technology funding for their classrooms.

Service Projects – As a means of giving back to the community, students participate in a variety of service projects each year. Recent projects include a non-perishable food collection for victims of Hurricane Harvey, Annual Jump Rope for Heart, collection for a local animal shelter, and gift bags for a local nursing home.

3. Professional Development:

Effective Professional Development (PD) plays a key role in successful schools. Teachers, as well as all staff members, need to continually learn in order to refine the pedagogies required to educate a diverse group of children. Quality professional development is crucial to improving education and the teaching profession. PD is provided to our staff by the state of West Virginia, the Nicholas County Board of Education, and within our school, Mt. Lookout Elementary.

One of the many practices we use is the Professional Learning Community (PLC). The PLC is made up of the leadership team and the grade cluster teams. The leadership team meets monthly to learn and discuss any new state or county initiatives. The members of the leadership team then share any new information with their small grade cluster group. During PLC meetings, we can discuss instructional methods and seek additional research-based strategies to improve our teaching. At Mt. Lookout Elementary, we consider PD a part of our daily routine. For example, our teachers collaborate and plan group activities, join online workshops together, and assist one another. Learning from a fellow teacher or joining forces to accomplish

a difficult lesson not only benefits the students but the teachers as well.

We are fortunate to have many different PD opportunities offered to us. Our county's belief is that teachers must continue to learn throughout their career so they can become more effective in helping children succeed. Every year we are invited to attend the West Virginia Reading Association Conference and the West Virginia Council of Teachers of Mathematics Conference. These conferences offer numerous sessions over a two-day span that touch on almost every aspect of the subject. Being able to learn and participate in hands-on PD from fellow teachers and professors from across the state is essential in improving upon the knowledge of teachers. Teachers who attend the conference share any new information and instructional strategies with other members of the staff during whole group PLC meetings. We believe that when teachers learn, the students will also.

Our county's instructional coordinators offer additional trainings throughout the academic school year as well as during the summer. The following is a list of the PD opportunities that have been offered: Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS), McGraw Hill's Wonders Reading, Acuity, West Virginia's assessment program, Smarter Balance, FOSS Science, Youth Mental Health First Aid, General First Aid and CPR, Dyslexia Awareness, Moby Max, Accelerated Reader 360, and various technology trainings.

We believe there is a direct link between teaching practices and student outcomes, and to improve both, professional development is essential. Our professional development opportunities are aligned with West Virginia's state standards and are fully focused on student success. We at Mt. Lookout Elementary consider PD a blessing and continually look for new and exciting ways to teach our students.

4. School Leadership:

Our mission at Mt Lookout Elementary educates students for success in life. The principal and staff of Mt Lookout Elementary value and support this vision. The leadership philosophy at Mt Lookout Elementary promotes problem solving, cooperation, and coordination at all levels. With only the principal at the administrative level, this sharing of ideas and responsibilities is critical to the smooth operation and daily revitalization of the school. The principal works with the special education teacher and Title I to develop a schedule that provides struggling students with ample opportunities for small group instruction.

The principal does weekly classroom walk throughs to verify teachers are engaging students in their instruction. This also gives the principal an opportunity to provide feedback to the teachers on instruction. These classroom walk throughs also allow the principal and teacher to have an open conversation on the teacher's strengths, weaknesses and suggestions for improvement.

The principal and teachers maintain good relationships with students, parents, and community. Either the principal or a teacher greets all students as they arrive in the morning. At dismissal time the teachers send the students home with words of encouragement so that they are excited to return the next day.

Our teachers also demonstrate leadership not only in the classroom with their students but with their colleagues as well. The teachers at Mt Lookout Elementary lead different committees within the school including Faculty Senate, PLCs – leadership, whole group and small group, and Student Assistance Team. The teachers attend workshops and bring what they have learned back to the staff.

Students of Mt Lookout Elementary also demonstrate leadership through book buddies and schoolwide morning greetings. Students in grades 3, 4, 5 work with students in grades K, 1, 2 on reading their AR books and taking the AR test/quizzes. All students in the school participate in the schoolwide morning greetings which include the pledge, mission statement, and thought for the day.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

One practice that has been the most instrumental in our school's success is teamwork. Alone, our resources, knowledge, time, experience, and understanding are limited – together we can accomplish so much more. One way that teamwork can be seen in action is in what seems like casual chatter between colleagues. You can often see teachers and other staff gathering in the hallway or classrooms before or after school hours to discuss struggles with classroom management or curriculum delivery. Ideas are passed from veteran teachers to beginners as well as between grade levels for possible solutions to current issues.

When children show signs of academic struggle, there is a team ready to step-up, fill in the gaps and help them to succeed. Our two interventionists, special education teacher, teacher aides, and Title I teacher can often be seen working with classroom teachers to identify students in need of extra support. They are then faithful to meet with students in small groups and individually in and out of the regular classroom to provide that support.

Even the gym teacher goes well beyond the basics of physical education in her classroom. She often collaborates with classroom teachers to accommodate special scheduling circumstances, as well as reinforcing academic skills and character development issues when she knows of a need.

Let's not forget some of our other MVPs. The cooks prepare healthy foods to nourish growing bodies and brains, dress up for every occasion to add fun to mealtime, and learn children's names so that they can give them a personal greeting. The custodian often works behind the scenes, but his efforts to give our children a clean and sanitary learning environment do not go unnoticed. The bus drivers teach responsibility and character by maintaining high expectations for behavior. They are an extension of the school that reaches to the home. The principal, clerk, counselor, nurse and parent coordinator who also give of themselves to add value to the team effort.

Our team would also not be complete without parents, who are an invaluable resource in each child's education. The lines of communication are kept open with the usual notes home, but also through phone calls, texts, emails, and via social media. We have seen many children's success flourish simply from knowing that the school and their parents had open communication and were working together.

On this team, we realize that none of us alone have all the answers, but together we are limitless.