

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. 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, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2019 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.
3. 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.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2013 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, or 2018.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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 (2018-2019) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 3 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, 2018 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	16	16	32
K	28	23	51
1	21	22	43
2	28	17	45
3	28	28	56
4	28	23	51
5	0	0	0
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	149	129	278

*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 1 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 96 % 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 2017 – 2018 school year: 14%

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, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	16
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	20
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	36
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	265
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.14
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	14

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: 55%
Total number students who qualify: 154

8. Students receiving special education services: 8 %
21 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>3</u> Autism | <u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>7</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>2</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>4</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 14
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.	16
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	6
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	5
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

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 17:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Daily student attendance	94%	96%	95%	96%	92%
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 2018.

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. 2009

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

The mission of Hickory County R-I Schools and community is to accept and share the responsibility to provide a nurturing environment and well balanced sequential program of studies which leads to academic proficiency for the whole child to learn through traditional and innovative instructional techniques and to utilize current educational trends and technology to prepare themselves for responsible citizenship in a democratic society.

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

Skyline Elementary is located in a rural setting in Southwest Missouri with the nearest town located approximately 3 miles away. Skyline Elementary is located 60 miles north of Springfield, Missouri on 65 Highway. Skyline Elementary is a part of the Hickory County R-1 School District. The Hickory County R-1 School District (Skyline) came into existence in 1958 when the four small towns of Preston, Urbana, Cross Timbers, and Tunas consolidated their four schools. Our school has earned the Distinction in Performance award, which is awarded from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) in Missouri for 16 consecutive years. Our school also won the Blue Ribbon School of Excellence in 2009, a Gold Star school, as well as one of only two schools in the state to be awarded nationally distinguished Title 1 School in 2015, where our school was honored in Salt Lake City, Utah.

“EVERY CHILD MATTERS” is the key statement in the mission of our school. Every child who walks through our doors is considered a precious gift that deserves the opportunity to have a successful start in life. No matter where our children come from, when they walk into our school they are equal to every other child. Although, as a school, we cannot control their environment away from school, the second they walk into our building, they become an equal who has the right to feel safe, secure, and loved. This vision and attitude which is present here at Skyline Elementary is the main reason why our school is successful. Another reason why our school is successful is because of the relationship between the community and the school. The community is a key stakeholder in the success of our students. The community is always welcome into our school. We have volunteers, family nights, dinners, back to school bashes, music and art programs, athletics, senior citizens' day, grandparents day, school plays, etc; all of which involve the community. Because the community feels a part of our school, we can always call on them when we need something and they do not let us down. In return, the community is proud of what the school accomplishes and feels proud their children attend Skyline Elementary.

Skyline Elementary educates a socioeconomic diverse student body in kindergarten through fourth grade. We provide a wide variety of differentiated instruction in our classrooms to ensure all students are successful. We also provide Title I services, special education services, and (RTI) Response to Intervention teams. Technology is immersed within our curriculum. In today’s society, technology is a key ingredient for any successful school. The teachers play a huge role in developing the curriculum. Since the teachers will have to implement the curriculum, they have to feel a part of the design, take ownership and responsibility to ensure the curriculum will be successful and meet the needs of the students. High expectations and the shared responsibility of educating, caring, and nurturing all students regardless of their socioeconomic background make our school what it is today.

Our shared commitment to the success of all students between teachers, staff, and community is the main priority in our school. Our staff truly cares for our students. The staff works hours upon hours to ensure every child receives the education and commitment they deserve. As the sign in front of our school states: “EVERY CHILD MATTERS.”

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

Skyline Elementary follows a balanced literacy approach with integrated reading and writing with emphasis placed on phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. All teachers in grades K-four were trained with the LIPS (Lindamood Phonemic Sequencing) program. Literacy Centers are also an integral part of our reading curriculum in grades K- one. We have chosen a text series from MacMillan/McGraw Hill for all grades K through four. We chose MacMillan/McGraw Hill because we feel this text best encompasses the necessary skills to help our students become competent, capable lifelong readers. This series also provides students opportunities to develop their listening, speaking, and thinking skills. This series also incorporates activities to develop good reading comprehension skills which include strategies to use before, during, and after reading, which helps to develop a deeper comprehension and understanding of what they read. Other supplemental resources we use in the lower grades are from the Wright Group Series. Other resources which are utilized are: 4 block, Mailbox Magazines, Teacher Helper, and educational internet websites. A few of the teacher resource books we use are Debbie Miller's Reading with Meaning, Lucy Calkin's Reading and Writing Workshop, and Jim Trelease's The Read Aloud Handbook. The upper grades utilize many literature sets as well as leveled readers as supplements that go along with the text series. Title 1 reading services are also provided to all students. Our reading curriculum includes use of text features, explaining literary devices such as figurative language, analyzing and using text elements, such as setting, characters, sequence of events, problem-solution, author's purpose and audience. Skills for comprehension include retelling, recognizing important information, identifying cause and effect, drawing conclusions, making references, summarizing, comparing and contrasting texts. We use a variety of assessments to get the overall best data available. For grades K through three we use AimsWeb Plus, PAST, and we use the QPS testing for all grades. Grades one through four also use the SRI (scholastic reading inventory). Grades three and four also use PARCC.

1b. Mathematics:

Like our entire curriculum, our math curriculum is based on the Missouri Learning Standards. Mathematics is taught daily through math centers in grades pre-K through 1st grade and in 50- minute blocks sections for grades two through four. Learning centers allow students to learn both on paper and through hands- on experiences. We use the McGraw Hill "My Math" text books as a pacing guide. We complete all standards by January, then we go back and review them all again. We use a variety of assessments to get the best data available. Kindergarten and first grades use a skill-based assessment based on the Missouri State Standards. It's a check list of skills to determine whether each individual student knows or doesn't know each skill. Second through fourth grade students are assessed with a variety of assessments. Triumph Online uses benchmarks, Domain and Summative assessments. We also utilize STAAR and LEAP assessments.

1c. Science:

.Skyline Elementary uses a science curriculum that is based on the Missouri Learning Standards and then pulls from many different areas to supplement those standards. Some of the resources we use are as follows: Mystery Science: The website Mystery Science aligns with the NGSS science standards as well as the Common Core science standards. This website shows a short video about the subject at hand then provides a hands on learning activity for students to do (<https://mysteryscience.com>). We also use IXL for practice. IXL allows students to work through science standards at their own pace. We use IXL to reinforce science standards that have been previously taught. Scholastic News: We use scholastic news to read about current events happening in the field of science and social studies. This is a good way to reinforce why science is important.

1d. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement

Using the Missouri Learning Standards as a guide. Skyline elementary teachers align many different lessons with the social studies curriculum. This includes integrating community, civic awareness, chronological and geographical skills, history, and government. Skyline partners with local newspaper corporations and receives free newspapers for all the students to study current events. Most of our field trips are social studies related such as visiting the Capital, Frontier theatre, and Wilson's Creek Battlefield. Students also participate in activities such as Veterans Day Programs, local food drives, and career days.

1e. For secondary schools:

1f. For schools that offer preschool for three- and four-year old students:

Skyline Elementary has a very important preschool program. The preschool teacher uses the same curriculum as our kindergarten Missouri Learning Standards, just at a slower pace. Our preschoolers are housed in a classroom next to the kindergarten rooms. They follow the same schedule as the rest of the school and eat in the same cafeteria etc. Preschool students are even in the rotation for special classes such as art, p.e., music, and computers. Our preschool program has been a tremendous asset to our school. The students come to kindergarten on the very first day ready to learn. Most all the students have already had a year of preschool so in kindergarten there is no anxiety, fear or nervousness. Missouri just passed a law where school districts can now count preschoolers on their average daily attendance for all students who qualify for free or reduced lunches. This helps both the students and the school.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Skyline Elementary boasts strong music and physical education departments. Our performing arts curriculum includes vocal performance as well as musical theatre. Skyline fine arts students have performed at various state-wide functions including performing before the governor and state legislators.

Skyline's physical education program is diverse in nature, encouraging students to participate in lifelong healthy habits through personal exercise as well as organized sports. Skyline participates in national cup-stacking competitions. Research has shown cup-stacking to be instrumental in increasing test scores and concentration in participants. Cup stacking, as a key component of Skyline's physical education curriculum, promotes midline crossing of the body which in turn helps individuals develop new connections in the brain. These new connections promote brain growth and promote academic achievement. Research on the positive effects of sport cup stacking can be found at <http://www.speedstacks.com/groups/benefits.php>.

Skyline Elementary places heavy emphasis on integrating technology into our curriculum. In today's society children must be equipped with the knowledge of the latest technology trends. We have budgeted approximately fifteen thousand dollars a year to upgrade our technology in our elementary classrooms. Our school has made many improvements in the past three years in the advancement of our technology program. We have two computer labs with 30 computers and a smart board that is available to all elementary students. In the classrooms, we utilize smart boards, document cameras, digital cameras, writing notebooks, and four computers per classroom as well as rolling computer labs with chrome books. The computers in the classrooms as well as in the computer lab and library are used for Reading Counts quizzes. Last year alone, our students from 1st to 4th grade took and passed over 25,000 quizzes. In our elementary library we have a collection of DVD's ranging from educational videos to professional development videos for the teachers and staff. We also utilize the school information system Lumen as a resource for all information that is kept for school records. The Lumen information system allows parents to check the child's entire work throughout the year as well as lunch accounts, schedules, etc. The Lumen system also allows parents access to teachers' lesson plans.

3. Special Populations:

Skyline Elementary serves a socioeconomically diverse student population. Because of this diverse population, teachers must be able to differentiate their instruction so all students achieve success. Although

we strive for all students to learn certain objectives, there are many different approaches to achieve these objectives. One size does not fit all when it comes to education. In order to come up with the best plan for all students, we utilize several Response to Intervention (RTI) strategies. We utilize a teacher team which meets once a week to evaluate different students. During these meetings, we come up with several different scientifically researched strategies the teachers take back with them to apply to their classrooms. We also utilize a program called Aims-Web which tracks the student's progress to ensure the proper strategies are being applied to each individual student. All students also have access to a Title 1 program in both reading and math. The Title 1 teachers are not only a resource for the students but also for the classroom teachers. Not only do we accommodate students' needs at school, we also have a program for students to better achieve success at home. Students who are hungry have a hard time concentrating on school work when all they can think about is food. We have a program which sends food home in back packs with such students when the need arises. We also have different organizations that help with students' clothing if need be. Although some students come to school with a disadvantage, we at Skyline Elementary try to eliminate such disadvantages as much as possible.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

School climate and culture are two of the main areas that we focus on at Skyline Elementary. All students have to feel loved, cared for, and safe. If a school does not have those things, the students will not be successful no matter what else the school has going for them. Our Skyline staff puts a heavy emphasis on making sure every child that walks through our doors feels loved and that we believe in them. No matter where the students come from, what race or socioeconomic status they are, the students are all the same when they walk in our doors and the students can count on us to meet their needs whatever they may be. Every child that walks down our halls will get a barrage of high fives or fist bumps. The students feel we want them here. The principal here at Skyline has an open- door policy. Students come in and out of the office continuously throughout the day. In the principal’s office you will find a refrigerator full of healthy drinks as well as healthy snacks and a treasure chest. Students are sent for rewards they earn throughout the day. There are at least 50 students a day that go in and out of his office. That positive interaction with the principal is very important to our culture, as it is the principal's responsibility to set the tone for the building.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

At Skyline Elementary, we believe that parent involvement and meeting individual needs of students are essential to student success. Skyline Elementary will continue to develop and create an environment in which parents feel welcome and needed, as well as to continue reaching out in new ways to connect with all parents. Parents are encouraged to actively participate in their child’s education by supporting their school and realizing the important role they play in their child’s achievement. The Title I Program, national educational standards, Missouri educational standards, state and local assessment tools, and the school’s performance profile showing progress toward meeting the learning goals, will be communicated to parents in a variety of ways that include such things as PTO meetings, parent teacher conferences, classroom visitations, parent involvement nights, progress reports and report cards from classroom teachers, conferencing – school, home, phone, and/or letters. Parents also volunteer on a daily basis and are encouraged to have lunch with their kids anytime they want.

3. Professional Development:

Skyline Elementary has created a professional development program that’s foundation is grounded through learning communities and is complete with research-based practices, careful design, continual learning, and collaboration. It is a program driven by data and results in quality instruction for all students. The consistent improvement and high achievement results of students on the MAP test, and the last six years of Distinction in Performance award are testaments that the program is effective and appropriate.

The mission of the professional development program is to provide educational opportunities for teachers to improve instruction, resulting in higher student achievement. The professional growth activities are a cooperative effort involving teachers and administrators. The professional development committee provides various presenters to enhance focused instruction and achieve our building goals. Faculty meetings are instructionally based and center on such activities as vertical teaming, core data analysis, reviewing curriculum, differentiated instruction as well as celebrating successes. Teachers attend professional workshops on an individual basis depending on the needs of their students for that year. These teachers then share the knowledge they gained with colleagues through professional dialogue and collaboration. All new staff members receive a mentor. The mentor acquaints the new teacher with school policies and procedures. The mentor also guides the new teacher through grade level expectations, professional development requirements, state certification requirements and grade level curriculum guides. The proper professional development of staff members is key to any successful school.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership style at Skyline Elementary is more of a site-based management strategy. In a site-based management style, a leader must be able to empower staff to be active participants in the decision-making process. As one administrator stated, "I recognize that it is our school, not my school and that synergy produces better solutions to problems than I can figure out by myself." When administrators take a site-based management approach, the school culture is much more positive and the staff will work harder to achieve the goals set forth. The reason for this attitude is because when the staff is involved in the decision-making process, they will take more ownership in the idea and feel responsible to make sure the goal is reached.

The administrator is still the one in charge, but there is nothing wrong with empowering others to make decisions. I have tried to take this approach as a principal which has been successful. Principals should not have to micro-manage. If an employee is not getting the job completed up to your standards, someone else may be needed to get the job completed successfully. Leaders who have a problem with empowering others are usually leaders who have the least amount of confidence in their own abilities. If an administrator has little confidence in themselves, they will worry that by empowering others, they will not look to them as the boss. I have always enjoyed the quote "If you ARE the boss, you don't have to PROVE you're the boss."

A school leader's responsibility is to create a school environment where good teaching is fostered and made available to all students. Only by achieving this kind of environment will we ever be able to begin to close the achievement gap. Teachers have the most impact on students. Without good teachers, no matter what kind of program we come up with, we will not close the achievement gap. That is why it is crucial for school leaders to hire the very best teachers.

As school leaders we have two options. We can either accept excuses of why some students can learn and others cannot. This in turn, widens the gap. Or, we can accept the responsibility and accept no excuses and be determined to close this gap. While it is true that educators cannot change the condition of children's lives outside of school, it is also true we can and must work to greatly improve our learning conditions for the poor and minority children in our schools. Only by believing in this attitude will we ever start to close the achievement gap.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The one practice that makes Skyline Elementary so successful is the emphasis placed on reading throughout the early years. Without reading and comprehending, students will struggle in every subject. Skyline uses Reading Counts. Students start taking quizzes halfway through first grade. We have approximately 200 students in 1st grade through 2nd pass over 25,000 quizzes a year. Every student knows how many points they have on a daily basis. Students walk down the halls reading books. Every 10 points they are sent to the principal's office for treats. Throughout the year we also do reading challenges and reward them with indoor water park trips. Reading is a huge deal here at Skyline Elementary. Skyline Elementary library circulates over 40,000 books a year. It really is amazing to see how many books the students read. The average student reads and passes quizzes on over 300 books a year.