



## Part I – Eligibility Certification

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The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. 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

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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):
  - 149 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 14 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 61 High schools
  - 1 K-12 schools

225 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	0	0	0
K	34	47	81
1	44	43	87
2	37	35	72
3	37	48	85
4	62	52	114
5	45	36	81
6	58	47	105
7	48	51	99
8	53	39	92
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	418	398	816

\*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
  - 28 % Asian
  - 11 % Black or African American
  - 8 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 48 % 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 2017 – 2018 school year: 3%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain.

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	20
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	5
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	25
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	795
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.03
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 18 %  
146 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):  
Chinese, Malayalam, French, Arabic, Ukrain, Spanish, Korean, Russian, Romanian, Vietnamese, Uzbek, Portuguese, Tajik, Gujarati

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 47 %  
Total number students who qualify: 383

8. Students receiving special education services: 14 %  
117 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>50</u> Autism                  | <u>2</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                 | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness           | <u>21</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay      | <u>54</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>5</u> Emotional Disturbance    | <u>11</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>2</u> Hearing Impairment       | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>11</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: 13
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	29
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	2
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	6
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 28:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
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 2018.

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

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

Yes  No

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

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

The mission of the Joseph J. Greenberg Elementary School is to nurture the creative, empathy, and critical thinking skills essential to thriving in a changing global environment.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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Surrounded by aluminum-sided, split-level homes and colorful, tall trees, Joseph J. Greenberg Elementary School is nestled in the Bustleton section of Greater Northeast Philadelphia bordering Penny Pack park. The school is named for Philadelphia real estate developer and school board member, Joseph Greenberg, who selected the school's site. When new homes were built in 1965, families residing in areas east and west of Bustleton were drawn to the area and the migration continues today.

Over the last 50 years the diversity of the community has increased. A community that was primarily white and upper middle class, now includes families representing a range of socio-economic, ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds. When taking a stroll through the community one observes families representing the global diaspora. Likewise, family structures have changed so that in addition to traditional, two-parent families, single parents and grandparents are raising children. Parents or caregivers continue to be employed in the vocational trades while others work in the public and private sectors in the fields of education, law, medicine, and technology. The increased diversity has been welcomed and celebrated in the school and community.

The composition of the school is now 11.5% African American; 8.4% Latino; 26.7% Asian; 48.2% White and 5.2% Multi-racial/other. Additionally, 8% of our students receive English Second Language services and approximately 14% of students receive special education support. Overall, the changing demographics of the community have broadened opportunities for students and families to foster relationships with and understand people representing different cultural norms and customs from their own, which can positively impact the broader society.

Greenberg traditions strengthen and bind the school community. The arts enrich students with opportunities to explore their talents while stretching their creativity. Timid and anxious students blossom and relinquish their fears because arts programs unfetter voices and empower them. Annually, students perform in a holiday music show and annual Spring Concert with student artwork showcased. Like music, students enjoy acting in plays and musicals each year. Several teachers produce musicals that students present each Spring, continuing a tradition that began with Annie 20 years ago. Similarly, eighth grade students dramatize literature such as MacBeth writing, producing, and directing the productions, and building the sets. A long-standing tradition is the 100 Book challenge reading program. Through this program, reading for pleasure is nurtured. Finally, expanding the athletic tradition has been a boost for students in the middle grades. Field hockey, lacrosse, basketball, softball and baseball are offered to students. Since students are required to maintain good academic standing and attendance school engagement increases.

Greenberg has achieved expected and unexpected milestones. These milestones honor the school community and individual teachers. A huge milestone for the Greenberg school was the achievement of AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) for 8 consecutive years under the No Child Left Behind law after the 8th administration of the PSSA, (Pennsylvania State System of Assessment). Another milestone occurred in 2013, when it was identified as one of the top performing K-8 elementary schools on the School District's nascent School Performance Report card. And, 2018-2019 was the first year 90% of 8th graders were proficient and advanced on the PSSA science test. Finally, several teachers were recipients of the Rose Lindenbaum Improvement in Teaching award. And last year, a teacher received the inaugural Christian R. and Mary F. Lindback Distinguished teacher award.

The long-term success of the Greenberg school can be attributed to an attitude of high expectations for all students and the immutable belief that all children have the potential to exceed beyond current levels of achievement. This attitude fuels teaching and learning in every classroom across the school and undergirds the strategies selected to ensure we achieve our mission and improve performance outcomes for all students.

Student discourse is an essential element of the student-centered learning environment. All teachers include discourse or "accountable talk" in their lessons. Students share, argue, and defend their ideas publicly. In math, students pair up to defend and debate problem-solving approaches, while in other subjects, such as social studies, they critically evaluate and discuss opposing rationales for the Revolutionary war. Like

discourse, writing in all content areas facilitates students' learning. For example, in music, students read the history of protest songs and then compose protest songs themselves.

The gradual release and blended learning models are two practices that impact student learning. Gradual release scaffolds learning, giving students access to direct instruction followed by opportunities for group and independent practice. During this time, the teacher identifies students for small group re-teaching. A more recent initiative, blended learning combines direct and small group instruction with adaptive, online learning. Students have benefited from this model because they learn independently at their own pace and receive targeted group support from the teacher. All these strategies have been instrumental in maintaining a rigorous instructional program at Greenberg.

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

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

#### **1a. Reading/English language arts:**

Greenberg’s reading and language arts curriculum is aligned to the Common Core Standards and embraces the shift toward deeper learning for all students. Literacy is taught using whole texts and authentic literature instead of Basal readers.

Young learners develop literacy skills through the essential components of a balanced literacy program. Using whole text, teachers develop units of study that focus on literary themes, while teaching students strategies to comprehend texts across a wide-span of genres and purposes. Strategies for reading informational text and literature are explicitly taught during a 90 minute reading block that includes a teacher Read Aloud, Shared Reading, Guided Reading and Independent reading. Even in the early grades, students learn to read closely and support their assertions based on evidence in the text. Teachers use formative assessments to measure reading progress using running records, rubrics, and student journals. Diagnostic assessments like the DRA are administered quarterly to monitor growth overtime. Students reading below grade level receive daily interventions including Guided Reading, small group instruction, and online interventions.

In grades 3 - 8, teachers design units of study for contemporary novels and classical literature for the purpose of sustained inquiry of a text. Included in each unit are complementary articles, poems, speeches, and essays that convey the social and historical contexts of the central text. Students examine craft and structure, author’s purpose, and theme in order to effectively read authentic literature closely and then perform a deep analyses of the text. Content-based vocabulary is explicitly taught, modeled, and practiced. Students read above-grade level texts, and classical literature, like Julius Caesar, that contain complex themes. Student assessment consists of vocabulary tests and critical analysis papers in addition to other written assessments. Quarterly and formative assessments monitor improvement and are used to assign students to daily intervention support groups and online reading programs.

#### **1b. Mathematics:**

The Greenberg Elementary School math curriculum aligns with the Common Core standards and addresses the major math shifts. The math shifts emphasize deeper, conceptual learning and problem solving rather content coverage, minimize teacher talk, and increases student conversations about math. The shifts force teachers to think about creating student-centered lessons that incorporate number sense activities that build procedural fluency and mental math and problem-solving skills. Increased discourse facilitates students critical thinking skills as they defend a strategy or process with sound reasoning. Following a Number Talk activity, concepts and skills are taught explicitly using the gradual release model since its structure includes opportunities for cooperative learning and independent problem solving. Discourse is a routine practice that ensures students deepen their conceptual understanding of grade-level math standards.

Blended Learning and small group instruction are additional approaches that have strengthened Greenberg’s math program. Blended learning is an approach that combines traditional instructional practices, such as direct instruction and online learning platforms that differentiate, remediate, and excel learning for all students. Two or three times per week students rotate through learning stations based on need. Based on formative assessment data, for example, students receive small group instruction or complete an anchor lesson activity or application problem, and practice skills on an online platform such as Imagine Math.

Data from a variety of sources is used to build flexible intervention groups. Quarterly Renaissance STAR tests and Benchmark assessments identify students performing below and above target. Below target students are assigned to a ten-week Saturday program for extra math support where the student to staff ratio is approximately 1:15. Middle years students are exposed to algebra in 6th and 7th grade. In 8th grade,

eligible students are assigned to an algebra one class, however, they are still required to learn 8th grade math standards.

### **1c. Science:**

A specialist teacher covers the K-5 science curriculum in the primary grades. In these grades, students are introduced to topics that are the foundation of their future science studies. Some topics taught at this level include the five senses, weather and climate, life cycles, land and water, magnetism, the solar system, energy and matter. Students are taught to think and learn like scientists, using scientific instruments starting in the early grades. Literacy strategies are incorporated at each grade level, thus students read, write, and think like scientists. Structured lessons include "shared reading" and "read aloud" for K-3 students, while students in grades four and five read and respond to text. Following a reading, the teacher will review and connect previously taught content and employ hands-on activities, including STEM lessons and experiments to explore and enhance learning. At this level students learn the scientific method. In fourth grade, students are required to apply the scientific method and build and present a science project for a schoolwide science fair. Students compete in the citywide Carver Science Fair each year and have been awarded medals and monetary prizes for their outstanding science fair projects.

The science curriculum in grades 6 - 8 extends and expands the study of topics introduced in the primary grades. A few of the broad topics covered in these grades include astronomy, cells and heredity, ecology and our environment, forces and motion and the properties of matter. Inquiry-based lessons facilitate deep learning of topics. Students, like scientists, pose questions and through empirical experiments and collaborative exercises build understanding of the content. Typically, a lesson begins with a review of previously learned science concepts and inquiry about what students already know followed by a teacher demonstration, discussions and experiments. Students wonder and pose questions about the experiment they observe and engage in discourse to share observations and conclusions they have reached. The teacher then introduces an essential question and explicitly teaches content vocabulary. Students read a variety of science texts, work in cooperative learning groups, and write in response to what they read. Students are assessed on their laboratory notes, participation in labs, formative assessments, projects, and presentations.

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

Greenberg students approach the study of events, places, and people like historians. In 6th grade, they investigate ancient history and landforms while in 7th and 8th grade they delve into Latin American history, American social studies content in addition to discourse, direct instruction, and inquiry-based and cooperative learning. In the primary grades, students study their city, state, and early colonial history.

A variety of educational models and tools are to balance direction, small group instruction, and inquiry-based learning. Routinely, students are introduced to an essential question that focuses on the big ideas of a topic, which students investigate independently through a close reading of texts. Students debate and contemplate issues, ideas, and events just as people did in the past. For example, they examine the cause and effects of the Revolutionary and Civil Wars and argue or debate reasons to support and pursue war. Such debates bring history to life while giving students a deeper understanding of the motivation for war. Students are actively engaged in lessons through the application of various questioning strategies and Socratic dialogue. The social studies textbook serves only as a resource, since students read primary sources such as essays, speeches, and letters as well as secondary sources to understand the people and events of a period. They learn how to evaluate these sources for their validity and reliability. While students work independently, other students receive direct instruction with the teacher. During small group instruction, the teacher extends the anchor lesson, clarifying students' misconceptions, explaining content and posing questions that stretch students' thinking. Finally, technology is an important component of the format of the learning process.

Assessment is embedded in each lesson in the form of exit tickets and teacher questioning. Students' knowledge is further evaluated in the assignment of analytical essays, projects, and teacher tests.

### **1e. For secondary schools:**

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

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

Specialists teachers work collaboratively in multiple disciplines to help students develop into well-rounded young adults ready to tackle problems in an ever changing, global environment. With high expectations, and a multi-tiered approach specialists help enrich the lives of their students by not only supporting classroom teachers and the acquisition of literacy, and problem-solving skills, but help expose students to the world at large. Under the tutelage of several teachers, students are exposed to the arts and technological sciences they will use in the real-world. Students in grades K-8 participate in these classes on a six-day rotation schedule.

In robotics, students study robotics where they are tasked to work together and build simple to very sophisticated machines to perform a myriad of tasks. Students are required to vigorously communicate and overcome obstacles to build these machines. In addition to the skills they learn while collaborating in groups, students learn about the real-world applications and changing technology and place robotics have and will have in our world.

In art class, students learn to express themselves and create art in both two and three dimensions by working with their hands, technology, and other various mediums. In addition, students learn to appreciate and understand the value of the arts hold in the broader society. Students learn It both informs and enhances not only the lives of its creator but those around them.

In physical education and health classes, students learn how to make good choices about their bodies. Not only do students learn the value of exercise, physical activity, and a healthy diet but also about the dangers of tobacco, alcohol, and drug use. Through collaborative games and activities, students learn how to work together to achieve goals, the importance of structure and rules in any game and the importance of good sportsmanship. Most importantly the teacher empowers students to understand the importance of taking responsibility for one's own actions and the impact every decision can make in their lives.

In music students have diverse experiences in performing, listening to, creating and responding to music. Students learn how music enriches their lives, and that music has an important place within all cultures. In addition to learning how to read notation, music history and theory, singing, and use of music technology, students leave music class with a fundamental skill set in percussion, recorder and guitar.

In Spanish, students learn to speak and read in Spanish. In addition, they have various experiences engaging in stories and cultures from Latin America. Students learn about our multicultural and multilingual society and the role languages play in expression, communication and the interconnectivity of languages. Students learn to communicate through several written and spoken mediums and ultimately are better prepared with skills to compete in a global marketplace.

The Digital Literacy class helps students develop the essential technology skills and knowledge they will use in their education careers, work, and everyday lives. For example, students learn to distinguish between reliable and unreliable websites and how to use the copy paste feature to edit a document in Google. In addition to modern problem solving, and internet safety, students are prepared to confront any technology put in front of them.

In addition to implementing their curriculum, each specialist supports the general academic program by collaborating with other teachers. Through communication, collaboration and professional development specialist teachers integrate writing and text analysis into their curriculum. Specialist teachers focus on reading for understanding and using text evidence to answer questions and support argumentative writing. When creating discussion questions the specialist team aims to ask higher order thinking questions and stimulate conversation between students around problem solving and current events.

Specialists work together in a grade group meeting once a week to help students grow into well developed young adults. Here, teachers discuss how to meet the needs of every student from kindergarten through 8th grade, with topics ranging from adapting lessons to include different kinds of learners to the best methods for including students from the Autistic support classroom. In addition, they work together to nurture students' creativity, empathy and critical thinking skills, which are all essential to our changing global environment. Through these various mediums, specialist classes help students become fully developed problem solvers.

### **3. Special Populations:**

A core value of the Greenberg school is embracing and celebrating diversity. Greenberg's diverse student body is comprised of students from different cultures and socio-economic backgrounds, but also includes students with various learning disabilities, including those with Autism and English Language Learners (ELLs). Students belonging to any of these categories can perform above or below grade level. The instructional program, interventions, and assessments for all these students are designed to guarantee the academic growth and achievement of every student.

Students with learning disabilities and ELLs receive instruction in Core Curriculum standards and grade-level content in the general education classroom. Special education and general education teachers collaborate to design appropriate lessons and activities that accommodate the needs of special students so they can thrive and succeed in the least restrictive environment. They identify a plethora of strategies to either reduce or eliminate barriers to accessing content and include accommodations like study guides, outlines, visual displays, graphic organizers, and technological supports. These students frequently participate in small group instruction with their teachers and can receive additional support from a resource room teacher, who on occasion pushes in to support groups of students. Student achievement and academic growth are progressed monitored with varied assessments such as STAR Renaissance, KeyMath, and Woodcock diagnostic assessments, teacher assessments, and quarterly District Benchmark tests.

English Language Learners receive similar supports so they can access grade-level content. The general education teacher and the ESOL teacher work collectively to design accommodations and modifications that help English Language Learners comprehend various texts read in the content areas. For example, vocabulary instruction is essential to ELLs comprehension of text. The District mandates that Level 1 and 2 ELLs receive their support in the classroom, while Level 3-5 are pulled out for support in the Resource Room. Despite an achievement gap between non-ELL and ELL students and non-IEP and IEP students, both groups achieved significant growth last year in either reading or math.

Students performing below and above grade level can be members of any classified group. Any student performing below grade level receives additional instructional supports during and beyond the school day. During the school day, students receive targeted supports for 20-30 minutes a day during the school day. Based on data from formative assessments, classwork, and other assignments, students struggling to understand similar content participate in small group instruction in either reading, math, or both. A math coach is scheduled to remediate the lowest performing students in math across various grades, including learning support. These students have access to online reading and math intervention programs that tailor learning based on a student's current performance levels. Students access these programs during blended learning rotations and while participating in a Saturday tutoring program.

Students achieving above grade level in math and reading have similar access to the online programs with individual instructional pathways that are based on their current performance levels. Eligible eighth grade students are enrolled in an Algebra One class, which convenes twice a week and enables students to test out of Algebra 1 in high school. All advanced students participate in accelerated learning activities in science, robotics, art, and music.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

At the Greenberg elementary school, a positive school environment is essential to each students' academic and social-emotional development. The entire school community, students, staff and parents contribute to creating and maintaining a positive school climate where students belong and feel valued and appreciated. As much as possible students assume leadership roles in the school.

Placing students in leadership roles is key to a positive climate at Greenberg. Instead of the administration leading announcements each morning, middle school students lead morning pledges and share morning news. Students lead the entire student body in pledging to be respectful and responsible citizens of their school, and with a thoughtfulness, strive to improve everyday through diligent persistence. Students lead in other ways, for example, they serve on Student Council, which advocated for changing the school's dress policy. As members of the Junior Honor Society, students lead important fundraising efforts for non-profit organizations such as the Leukemia Society. At Greenberg, student leadership is an effective method for creating a strong, positive school environment. In addition to opportunities to lead, we maintain a positive school climate through various school spirit events, awards assemblies, and clubs.

Awards assemblies celebrate student achievement and progress each quarter. These programs recognize students for their advancement in overcoming academic challenges and improvements in attendance, citizenship, and academic growth and achievement. Students serve as the master of ceremonies for these programs. Activities that unite the entire school community are spirit days. Spirit week activities include wearing favorite college sweatshirt or dressing like a twin with a best friend. Finally, teachers organize a variety of clubs, like robotics, knitting, and chess that allow students to socialize with friends while exploring a talent.

The counselor is essential to helping Greenberg maintain a safe climate. For students who find making friends challenging or maintaining healthy social connections, the counselor intervenes, creating friends groups and counsels troubled students on an individual basis.

Strong student outcomes would be non-existent without strong and committed teachers who believe in students. Teachers are recognized in the weekly newsletter. Classroom practices from informal visits are highlighted and "bucket drops" shared for extra-curricular activities with students and leading professional development. Teams are recognized too. Teacher attendance is recognized monthly and quarterly. And, teachers are nominated for various District and state awards. Several teachers received the Rose Lindenbaum Improvement in Teaching award while another was a recipient of an Office Depot educator and was recognized by the local school board.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

Greenberg strongly views parental involvement and family engagement as essential to achieving its goals for students. Several parent groups and community stakeholders collaborate with the school staff to clarify school policy issues. These groups include the School Advisory Council (SAC), Friends of Greenberg group (FOG), and Home and School Association (HSA). Each of these groups supports the school, and students, in unique ways. The SAC team, a parent-teacher group, suggests ideas for improving the school's climate and culture. For example, it was the SAC team that supported the students' decision to augment the school uniform dress policy for middle schoolers. Their suggestions inform the Title 1 School Compact and Parent Involvement policies. Additionally, the SAC team participates in the creation of the budget each year. Two other groups, the FOG and HSA focus their efforts on acquiring resources for the school. Through the HSA, parent volunteers plan and lead annual family events that include the Father and Daughter Dance, Spring Fair, and Book Fair. Several community organizations are invaluable school supporters. The Philly Kidz organization monitors students before and after school, provides homework assistance, and the director is a member of the FOG. The University of Pennsylvania's Philly AIMS program consistently partners with Greenberg to assist the Autistic Support Program.

“Parents are our partners” aptly characterizes how we view the role parents play in ensuring a child’s academic success. Greenberg coordinates events designed to inform and empower parents so they can support their children. In August, Greenberg hosts an orientation to welcome new families so that they learn and support the school’s mission, core values, and academic and climate expectations. Later in the fall, parents participate in a Back to School Night open house where they meet teachers and socialize and enjoy tasty delights at food trucks. A Literacy Week event allows parents to observe instruction to acquire a deeper understanding of the practices employed in developing students’ literacy. Partnerships such as these have fostered years of student achievement, progress, and positive relationships with staff.

Finally, stakeholders are informed of students’ achievements or challenges through varied formats and time frames. Parents attend quarterly Title 1 meetings to learn about programs, initiatives, and progress toward the school’s goals. And, they actively participate in the annual action planning and budget meetings where progress is evaluated and resources are assessed and allocated. Family involvement and community engagement are core values of the Greenberg school.

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

The approach to professional development at Greenberg encompasses coaching and schoolwide and District level training. This approach has increased teachers’ and administrators’ capacity for implementing effective instructional practices that have demonstrated strong performance outcomes for students across all grades.

Teacher coaching is an effective professional learning approach and has had an immediate impact on teacher practice. A reading coach guides teachers in planning and executing the literacy block and its components with fidelity across grades K-3. The coach is responsible for providing feedback to teachers after observing them deliver a literacy lesson. A math coach provides similar support for teachers in grades K-8, teaching them to effectively plan for small group math instruction. Coaching permits differentiated support for teachers where they need it in a timely and non-threatening manner, immediately impacting student performance outcomes. Independent reading levels among African Americans (K-3) was 68% in 2017-2018 rising to 71% 2018-2019. Currently, 73% of all white students read on grade level.

School-based professional development targets specific grades or the entire school to build capacity in effective strategies that are aligned to the school’s and District’s long-term academic goals. For example, reading and writing data indicated that students in grades four and five struggled to keep pace with the achievement of students in grade three and the middle grades. This analysis motivated fourth and fifth grade teams to explore a rigorous literacy practice that has shown positive performance results in other schools. Subsequently, teachers adopted the new strategy and sought professional development to learn it. Teacher capacity expanded further when teachers in grades two and three embraced this literacy practice after observing improved student outcomes. PSSA data shows the number of below basic students decreased 1.9%, from 6.7% in 2017 to 4.8% in 2018.

Professional learning is a routine practice and is frequently facilitated by teachers. The fourth and fifth grade teams lead the training for teachers learning the new literacy program. Teachers grew in their ability to teach students how to write with better form and expression, and principals strengthened their capacity for providing critical feedback. In another instance, two teachers whose students demonstrated strong writing performances lead professional training in how to teach students to “close read” and write impactful text dependent analysis responses.

These approaches to professional learning strengthened the administrators’ capacity for monitoring execution of nascent practices and give feedback that immediately improves the teacher’s performance.

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

Distributed leadership is the basis for the leadership structure at Greenberg, and as a result decisions are frequently made by consensus. Specifically, the leadership team, which includes the assistant principal,

counselor, special education liaison (SEL), union representative, and principal work collectively to ensure all systems support high quality instruction, proper resource appropriation, and a positive, safe learning environment for students. Members of the leadership team host subcommittees that include school climate, safety, technology, and family engagement. All members of the school community are invited to join these subcommittees.

The leadership team is the body that ensures a laser focus on student achievement. Annually, the team modifies the school's achievement goals and considers the resources, including personnel, and programs required to facilitate improvement. These decisions inform the budget, which the leadership team is responsible for shaping. Quarterly meetings are held to review the plan and check progress toward yearly goals. Each member of the leadership team leads a committee. For example, the building representative leads a school climate committee and the assistant principal leads a data team. The climate committee chair and her team created the school-wide behavior management program PAWS (Positive Actions with Students) to recognize classrooms that follow the school rules. The data team analyzes school-wide data and makes recommendations to improve student outcomes.

The principal and assistant principal are responsible for monitoring instruction to ensure that curriculum standards are followed and rigorously implemented. Instruction is monitored through daily informal visits and annual formal observations. Prior to formal visits, administrators conference with teachers to discuss their instructional plans and set expectations. In this way, they ensure teachers employ the school-wide focus strategies during the lesson such as checking for understanding and connecting the learning objective to the learning tasks. Additionally, administrators monitor professional learning community meetings, which occur daily, and assist team leads with planning their agendas.

Several other leaders and teams support student achievement. The SEL participates in and monitors IEP meetings and ensures that students with special needs are appropriately serviced, especially in the regular education classroom. To that end, he works collaboratively with regular and special education teachers to ensure accommodations are in place for learning support students and that teachers are aware of each student's learning goals. Likewise, the technology lead is essential to ensuring that all students and teachers have uninterrupted access to technology and facilitates workshops.

Greenberg believes that leadership is a shared responsibility and inclusiveness results in better outcomes for students.

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

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The single practice instrumental to the school's success is the weekly PLC (Professional Learning Community) meetings. In weekly PLC meetings, teachers collaborate to analyze data and identify patterns of weakness in reading and math standards. Then teachers develop an action plan that addresses these weaknesses.

The PLC framework drives teacher collaboration and a focus on teaching and learning so that all students can succeed. Teachers consider five questions when discussing teaching and learning. "What must students learn? How will we know when they learn it? What will we do for students who learned it? What will we do for students who did not get it the first time?" In September, when teachers return to school, they convene in PLCs to analyze PSSA (Pennsylvania System of State Assessments) along with other related data from District and diagnostic assessments to identify the weakest reading and math standards evidenced in each data set. After identifying the standards that most challenged students, teachers discuss various instructional strategies and select the option deemed the most effective in ensuring students will master the standard, and then reteach it to students. Next, teachers design a common assessment, which they later use to determine if at least 75% of the students mastered the standard. For example, last year in grade 7, students struggled with a literacy standard, Integration of knowledge and ideas. Over 80% of the students mastered this standard so the teachers then selected another standard to reteach, but had students been unsuccessful at mastering the standard a different strategy would have been used to reteach it. Schoolwide data is used to identify the patterns of weakness and strength in reading and math standards across grades. Data is also used to form intervention support groups.

Teachers collaborate and identify students for intervention support during PLC meetings. Generally, MTSS (Multi-tiered System of Support) groups are initially created based on PSSA results, diagnostic assessments, and online learning data. As data is evaluated and discussed students are placed in flexible groups based on similar needs. These groups are rostered into the school day so students can receive an additional 30 minutes of support where they need it daily. In the middle school, for example, students participate in intervention groups from 8:35 A.M. - 9:05 A.M. daily.

Focusing on teaching and learning within the PLC structure is the strategy that has been the most instrumental to Greenberg's success.