

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2016 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [ ] Title I      [ ] Charter      [X] Magnet      [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Mrs. Jeanne Greer

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Academy for Science and Foreign Language

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3221 Mastin Lake Road

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Huntsville State AL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 35810-2823

County Madison County

Telephone (256) 428-7000 Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Web site/URL http://www.asflmagnet.org E-mail jeanne.greer@hsv-k12.org

Twitter Handle \_\_\_\_\_ Google+ https://plus.google.com/+ASFLPTA  
https://twitter.com/asflmagnet Facebook Page \_\_\_\_\_

YouTube/URL \_\_\_\_\_ Blog \_\_\_\_\_ Other Social Media Link \_\_\_\_\_

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\*Dr. Casey Wardynski E-mail casey.wardynski@hsv-k12.org

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Huntsville City Schools Tel. (256) 428-6800

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board  
President/Chairperson Ms. Laurie McCaulley

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## Part I – Eligibility Certification

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

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The public school has met their state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) using the most recent accountability results available for the year prior to nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) for the year in which they are nominated (2015-2016) and be certified by the state representative. 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 2010 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: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, or 2015.
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 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 (2015-2016) unless otherwise stated.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 21 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 6 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 7 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 34 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 with characteristics typical of an urban area
  - Suburban
  - Small city or town in a rural area
  - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2015 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
<b>PreK</b>	13	13	13
<b>K</b>	27	18	45
<b>1</b>	21	24	45
<b>2</b>	19	19	38
<b>3</b>	27	19	46
<b>4</b>	40	24	64
<b>5</b>	42	24	66
<b>6</b>	36	44	80
<b>7</b>	33	31	64
<b>8</b>	31	39	70
<b>9</b>	0	0	0
<b>10</b>	0	0	0
<b>11</b>	0	0	0
<b>12 or higher</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	289	255	544

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 2 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 4 % Asian
  - 54 % Black or African American
  - 14 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 24 % 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 2014 – 2015 school year: 3%

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, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	1
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	12
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	13
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	435
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.030
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 3 %  
18 Total number ELL

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 100 %  
Total number students who qualify: 544

8. Students receiving special education services: 7 %  
37 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>25</u> Autism               | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness              | <u>3</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness        | <u>4</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>5</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment    | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</u> Mental Retardation    | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed               |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 3
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers	35
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	7
Paraprofessionals	9
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

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 16:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	96%	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 2015.

<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 X

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.

ASFL provides a learning environment which models inquiring, caring, and open-minded individuals. We develop students who embrace global diversity through international mindedness.

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

Students with interest in science and/or foreign language come to ASFL from all parts of Huntsville. Any student enrolled in Huntsville City Schools may apply to ASFL. Student applicants for PreK-fifth grade apply online and are chosen through a lottery selection process. Sixth through eighth grade applicants apply online and are chosen through an essay and lottery process.

## PART III – SUMMARY

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The Academy for Science and Foreign Language (ASFL) was established in 1988 as a magnet school in order to desegregate the student population in Huntsville, Alabama. Students with interest in science and/or foreign language come to ASFL from all parts of Huntsville. Any student enrolled in Huntsville City Schools may apply to ASFL. Student applicants for PreK-5th grade apply online and are chosen through a lottery selection process. Sixth through eighth grade applicants apply online and are chosen through an essay and lottery process.

ASFL is a PreK-8 magnet school located in the northwest section of Huntsville, Alabama. In addition to the science and foreign language magnet, ASFL is an authorized International Baccalaureate (IB) World School in both the Primary Years Programme (PYP) and the Middle Years Programme (MYP). Authorization for both of these programs was granted by the International Baccalaureate in the 2010-2011 school year. ASFL is unique in offering French to all Primary Years students, Pre-K to grade 5, and a choice of three languages (Spanish, French, and German) to Middle Years students, grade 6-8. Two of the four foreign language teachers are native speakers.

The total population of ASFL is 544 students with 332 in the Pre-K-5th classrooms and 212 students in the 6th-8th grades. All of our students receive free breakfast and lunch due to our current grant. Prior to our grant (2014), our school was 64% free and reduced lunch. Our population reflects 54% African American, 24% white, and 22% other, which includes Asian, Hispanic, Multi-race, Pacific Islander, and Native American/Alaskan students.

ASFL helps all students develop by providing them with a high-quality, global perspective education where excellence and service learning are the norm and achievement is a practice that all students not only strive for but attain. This is due in part because our teachers adopted the philosophy that all students have areas of strength which allows them to incorporate motivating and stimulating learning opportunities based on their students' learning abilities, skills, talents, and personal experiences.

ASFL also helps students develop by providing them with unique, collaborative learning experiences where students discover commonalities and differences with children who live in countries outside the United States. For example, our students had the opportunity to Skype with students in Russia (2014) and Pakistan (2015) where the primary focus was on helping educators and governments of other countries realize the benefits and the joys that girls achieve as they obtain a formal education. This experience helps students develop a greater appreciation of the educational opportunities that are afforded to them as American citizens.

International mindedness is central to the program at ASFL. Teachers strive to integrate the locally based curriculum requirements with one that includes important concepts, encourages inquiry, and connects these ideas to others throughout the world. Students are challenged to examine their place in the world and to act on the ideas that are important. Critical reflection is the focus as students and teachers evaluate their place in the world and how they fit.

In support of the IB programme at ASFL, teachers collaborate to design and implement unit plans that encourage students to achieve a high level of excellence. This has resulted in a myriad of academic achievements for our students and for programs in our school over several years. Robotics and Future City students have consistently received awards and accolades in local, state, and national competitions. Most recently, our Future City Team placed first in the National Future City Competition. Foreign language students have participated in state-wide competitions and have received numerous awards, including 2015 First Place for Individual Speaking Contest Resolution in French. German students participate annually in German Day where they compete against high school students and have achieved high honors in these state-wide awards. In addition, our German teacher was selected as the Alabama Foreign Language Teacher of the Year for 2012.

In addition to Science and Foreign Languages, our students have also excelled in the fine arts. Student artwork has been displayed at the local art museum. Music students were chosen to be a part of the

Huntsville All-City Choral Festival, as well as the All-State Choral Festival every year since 2007. This is one of the highest choral honors in the city of Huntsville.



## PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Core Curriculum:

The fundamental concepts of IB, Communication, Intercultural Awareness, and Holistic Learning are interwoven in the curriculum, along with the personal development of students, and a focus on the culture and climate of the school. Through this programme, using the Five Essential Elements of IB: knowledge, concepts, skills, attitude, and action, students are able to extend their understanding and experiences outside of the circumstances of their lives and beyond the doors of the classroom.

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Transdisciplinary Skills: Thinking, Social, Research, Self-management, and Communication, are used to build a strong foundation of learning which begins in our Pre-K classrooms. English/Language Arts (ELA) is integrated into the science and social studies curriculum to allow students to develop greater conceptual understanding. Our teachers strive to design units that are relevant, standards based, and meaningful to students. At ASFL, students are given opportunities to consolidate skills and apply them in new contexts. Teachers use the IB key concepts and related questions to guide inquiry. Teachers develop units of study that focus on concepts that are relevant to all students in all locations, across all cultures.

Reading in the primary grades exposes children to a literacy rich environment. As they progress toward third grade, the focus at ASFL is to ensure that every student is reading on or above grade level. Our teachers differentiate instruction in a small group model across all grade levels. In keeping with our IB philosophy, students in grades PreK-5 remain in a self-contained classroom with their primary teacher for core subjects. This allows the teacher to experience the whole child and increases the ability to address any needs that the child may have. In grades 6-8, students are challenged with regular and advanced classes.

In the primary grades, students begin to learn math concepts through manipulatives, group work, and vocabulary, where teachers use Common Core Standards to guide their instruction. Master math training, provided to teachers in grades 3 -6, provides teachers additional knowledge, methodology and resources to create engaging math activities that build math conceptual knowledge. As students are ready to advance, teachers differentiate using small group instruction and digital resources.

In addition to the general science curriculum, students in Pre-K through 5 receive weekly hands on instruction in the areas of physical science, life science, Earth science, and pre-engineering. The dedicated science resource teacher works with the grade level teachers to support their standards through connected activities and labs with real world applications.

In Social Studies, teachers develop units of study that focus on concepts that are relevant to all students in all locations, across all cultures. Using authentic literature, teachers are able to provide students with information that interests them and relates to them. For example, a unit of study used in upper elementary is the Holocaust. Students learn about the Holocaust in a unit that focuses on hatred and prejudice during their Social Studies time. They then read authentic literature (*The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*) related to the subject in their Reading classes. As an extension, the students complete a related project such as writing diary entries from the perspective of the main character in the novel. Additionally, our German teacher connects this unit by providing perspective from Germany during that time period.

Additionally, accelerated students benefit from our gifted specialist who assists teachers in increasing rigor and challenge in content, process, and product beyond that of the general curriculum. This specialist uses an enrichment model implemented school-wide which includes differentiation of curriculum to further talent development among students which supports our IB essential elements.

As a PreK-8 school, students and parents enjoy the continuity of educational experiences afforded by attendance at ASFL. IB lays the groundwork for the continuum of holistic learning throughout the grades as students in all programmes consider the IB profile traits in each unit of study. Our research based curriculum, along with our IB philosophy, helps to foster a developmentally appropriate program that

utilizes exploration and purposeful play. Through readings, songs, discussions, modeling, free choice centers, direct instruction, and facilitated support, Pre-K children gain the foundation for educational success.

## 2. Other Curriculum Areas:

ASFL elementary students receive weekly instruction in either art or music. Through teacher collaboration, these art and music lessons are frequently connected to grade/subject IB units. For students in grades 6-8, art or music is a core class, as required by the IB Middle Years Programme. The music and art classes focus on connecting our curriculum through exploring other cultures, including the school's languages of focus: French, German, and Spanish.

ASFL students benefit from daily instruction by a certified physical education teacher. This allows for a focus on health and the physical development for our students. Our students develop teamwork skills that extends the IB philosophy of collaboration among students. Additionally, this time supports our belief that continued practice and cooperation contributes to success.

Communication is the key to any culture. ASFL has a dedicated world languages department that offers French, German, and Spanish to students. Language study begins in pre-K, with daily French classes that continue through 5th grade. Once students enter the Middle School Programme, they select a language to study throughout their Middle Years Programme experience. French, German, or Spanish are offered as a core class in MYP. Our high school, Columbia High School, offers IB curriculum, which allows our students to continue their journey in foreign language, as well as other IB areas. The focus languages are interwoven through other subject areas to promote global awareness and international mindedness.

ASFL is a Digital 1:1 school, meaning that every student in grades 3-8 has an individual laptop computer that they can use both during school and at home throughout the school year. Pre-K through Grade 2 students use iPads during the school day. The teachers also have individual laptops, as well as Promethean ActivBoards, to support them in creating interactive, engaging lessons. In addition, ASFL has an interactive technology lab called a SMALLab. Teachers use this SMALLab to enhance lessons using a motion sensor interactive environment. Daily use of personal tech tools has allowed our students access to resources and information not possible in a textbook centered world. Our students benefit from a more enhanced global personal perspective through this tech window.

ASFL offers Project Lead the Way (PLTW) to all students. PLTW is a science, technology, engineering, math (STEM) initiative which provides world class activity-project and problem-based curriculum. PLTW uses a high quality teacher professional development model, combined with an engaged network of educator and corporate sponsors. This allows students to develop skills needed to succeed in our globally connected world. All elementary students complete one unit per semester. Middle years students take PLTW as part of their design component for the IB MYP program. Some examples of PLTW units are Design and Modeling Using 3D printers, Medical Detectives, Flight and Space, and Robotics.

ASFL has been an Alabama Math Science Technology Initiative (AMSTI) school since 2000. This is the Alabama Department of Education's initiative to improve math and science teaching statewide. Teachers receive training in specialized modules that allow children to participate in engaging, hands-on, inquiry based science and math activities in collaborative groups.

## 3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Teachers at ASFL use a wide variety of instructional approaches to ensure that all needs of students are met. A three level instructional model is used to assist teachers in targeting each level of learner. Tier 1 is used primarily for whole group and core instruction, while Tier 2 is used for small group and targeted instruction. For students not achieving proficiency using Tier 1 or Tier 2 level, ASFL uses a Problem Solving Team (PST) to support teachers and students responding to individual needs in the instruction in Tier 3. The PST team is made up of administrators, an instructional coach, a counselor, and highly skilled teachers. The team writes an individual plan for each student and meets monthly to discuss the effectiveness for that plan.

Teachers use small group time in their classes to focus on needed individual skills, as well as accelerate those advanced learners. For example, students in reading groups participate in leveled literature activities created to support individual needs. Students with Individual Education Plans (IEPS) or 504's receive services as required by the state. Certified Collaborative teachers work closely with the students and classroom teachers to provide the identified support needed to ensure success. Students who qualify for gifted services have a General Education Plan (GEP), which is used to guide their instruction.

Inquiry, project based learning is a major component of our IB curriculum across all grade levels. Teaching methods are built on students' individual knowledge and interests and emphasize learning how to learn. The teacher serves as the facilitator in this learning process. This inquiry based learning is innately differentiated and specific to the needs of each learner.

Teachers use a variety of digital resources to target individual needs for students. For example, both Scootpad and IXL allow the teachers to assign practice on individual standards in both math and ELA. SuccessMaker is a program that is a component of our reading and math series that provides a diagnostic assessment for each student and then places them on a differentiated course of practice. Teachers use the results from all individual digital practice to develop the next level of instruction.

#### 4. Assessment for Instruction and Learning and Sharing Assessment Results:

Teachers begin the learning process through pre-assessments to activate student engagement as they introduce a unit of study. This reveals prior knowledge, interests, strengths, and weaknesses which the students possess. Teachers modify and develop instruction based on the pre-assessment information.

Teachers continue the learning process through daily formative assessments which help students progress towards reaching a desired level of understanding and provides teachers with feedback to review and adjust instruction to meet student needs. To meet the diverse needs of our students, our assessments vary, provide for differentiation, and show flexibility and sensitivity to our learners. Our formative assessments help both teachers and students observe and close the gap between where they are academically and where they need to be. Student and teacher reflection on learning is an essential component of the assessment process. These reflections, along with descriptive feedback from teachers, allow for a continuous learning cycle.

After students have engaged in learning formatively, teachers present them with a summative assessment. Summative assessments connect to the concepts learned and demonstrate a cumulative depth of understanding based on their formative work. The assessments address the IB criteria and Common Core standards with the expectation that they are relevant, authentic, inspiring, growth-oriented, organized, and reflective for students.

Students in grades 3-8 participate in the ACT Aspire, which is a state summative assessment that provides data pertaining to the students' progress toward college and career readiness proficiency. Due to opportunity for growth shown in ACT Aspire data for the 2014-2015 school year, writing is an area of focus for our students. ASFL developed and implemented a school-wide writing plan where students engage in monthly writing prompts. In addition to writing journals, students in grades 3-8 use Write to Learn, a program that allows students to not only type in their response, but also receive digital feedback on their writing. All teachers engage in action step plans for their classrooms and the school in order to meet the needs of all of their students.

Teachers review and discuss all assessments during grade level and school-wide data meetings. Assessment results are shared with all stakeholders through both digital resources and personal conferences. Students take ownership of their progress by leading reflective student led conferences yearly. Through parent feedback provided to ASFL, student led conferences are beneficial not only in sharing academic progress, but also in strengthening communication between all stakeholders.

## **PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS**

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

The Academy for Science and Foreign Language believes that our school's climate and culture coupled with our high expectations for all are the foundation for our students' success. In addition to our district climate goals, ASFL takes steps to go above and beyond the expectation. For example, our library is opened before and after school to provide our students with tutorial services. Our English Language Learners (ELL) receive additional support after school with speaking, reading, math and writing. Teachers take additional time, before, during, and after school, to meet with students to provide additional support.

Our school uses positive behavior recognition to encourage our students to strive for the best, both behaviorally and academically. Students are recognized at the classroom level with positive tickets, which are used to redeem small prizes for rewards. In addition to classroom recognition, students are rewarded for their meeting their personal goals throughout the year through a variety of recognition activities. The Student Government Association works with the students and teachers to provide student activities-created by students. For instance, this past semester, the SGA requested to plan end of semester activities, including a school dance for middle schoolers. Because it was their idea, the students supported each other in the planning, advertising, and implementation of the dance and end of semester activities.

ASFL fosters the emotional and social growth for all students by promoting citizenship and character using multiple representations. Each month, two students from each grade level are recognized for exemplary display of an IB profile trait (Principled, Balanced, Caring, Inquirers, Knowledgeable, Thinkers, Communicators, Open-Minded, Risk-takers). ASFL fosters the emotional and social growth for all students by establishing relationships with all students and their families, where trust is quintessential in order to provide the student with the best educational experience.

ASFL teachers are valued and celebrated for their successes throughout the year. In addition to teacher recognition at school, our Hospitality Committee plans monthly activities to allow teachers to socialize in a relaxed environment, which in turn builds friendship and trust among the staff. This committee also organizes celebrations such as baby showers, wedding showers, and birthdays, as well as flower/card delivery during other life events.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

Beyond the scheduled classes, ASFL has established a climate that welcomes students and families into our school. Parents are notified of acceptance to our school in November for the following school year. Due to this early acceptance, we create opportunities for new families to visit and bond with our existing families and staff. For example, new families participated in our annual science night in February. Student ambassadors and teachers served in a hospitality role for new families during this event.

In addition to welcoming new families, we sponsor events to connect our families to each other. Because our students travel from all parts of the city and are disconnected geographically, we create a community and culture that is not otherwise connected. For example, our annual International Festival provides a time for our families to share and celebrate their unique differences. Students and parents enjoy participating in and learning about our diverse heritage through this much anticipated event.

Our PTA (Parent Teacher Association) leadership team meets monthly to organize events that support the connection of families to the school. Some examples of these events include student performances from foreign language classes, musical concerts, and our student talent show. Our PTA leadership team has devoted much time and effort into showcasing our events and activities on social media such as Facebook and Twitter. This is one way that our PTA assists in creating a cohesive community.

In addition to our ASFL faculty and families, we connect to our Huntsville community on a regular basis. ASFL has established relationships with local legislators, Global Ties Alabama, and the local Peace Corps.

Our local legislators connect with our school by visiting during school activities and providing financial support. Global Ties Alabama is a strong community partner with ASFL. This organization and our school share a common goal of educating others about our global society. Global Ties Alabama plans and organizes performances, visitors, and projects that connect our students to people of other countries. One connection created by Global Ties Alabama was with our local Peace Corps. The Peace Corps members have implemented the Peace Corps World Mapping Project, which connects our students with members of the Peace Corps who have traveled to a variety of countries.

### 3. Professional Development:

ASFL, along with district support, provides professional development to all teachers which supports the IB and district expectations of classroom teachers. Teachers attend leveled workshops, funded by Huntsville City Schools Magnet Office, that are sanctioned by the International Baccalaureate Organization. Each of these workshops focus on concept-based instruction using an inquiry approach. Additionally, teachers meet collaboratively to plan IB units of instruction by grade/subject level both horizontally and vertically. At least twice per year, ASFL middle school teachers meet with teachers at our IB partner/feeder school, Columbia High School, for vertical planning.

ASFL teachers lead district IB workshops for schools who are new to the IB programmes. As professional development leaders, our teachers develop a deeper understanding of curriculum and approaches to learning. ASFL teachers assist educators who are new to the programmes as they work to develop curriculum and assessment. IB units of study are standards based, inquiry focused and must meet the requirements of IB and the state. Teachers attend professional development offered by the district to assist them in this endeavor. The professional development in IB and planning has a direct impact on students by providing a cohesive learning experience as they progress through grade levels.

Collaboration between teachers is an essential component of professional development and learning in the classroom. Multiple collaborative times are built into teachers' schedules to provide scheduled time to build capacity. This time is used to work on IB planners, develop inquiry based lessons, and analyze student data, but is also sometimes used for grade specific professional development.

In addition to IB, our district has professional development focuses each year. This year's focus is on equity awareness and the Standards of Mathematical Practices. The district equity training builds upon our open-mindedness and global awareness as IB educators and learners. ASFL teachers in grades 3-6, as well as the math coach, were selected to attend "Master Math Teacher Training" throughout the year. The focus has been on building the math conceptual knowledge and creating a higher interest in math for all students.

Professional development on technology and instructional products is essential. We use Pearson products as a resource to teach some of our standards. Therefore, we have Pearson representatives come in and not only use their products, but also provide professional development on Standards of Mathematics Practices and Authentic Writing in the Classroom. This professional development connects to our school goals.

### 4. School Leadership:

ASFL believes in empowering teachers in their classrooms and supporting them as leaders outside of the classroom. In addition to empowering teachers, we have a school leadership team. Our leadership team consists of the principal, the assistant principal, the counselor, the instructional coach, two IB coordinators, the media specialist, and the music teacher. The team meets weekly to steer programs and discuss details in order to effectively run programs. The principal guides the leadership team and delegates responsibilities to the appropriate team members. Each person on the leadership team is also a member of one of our breakout committees which oversee activities such as technology, magnet programs, IB implementation, professional development, safety, student support, and outreach.

In order to keep all faculty informed, minutes from the leadership meetings are shared with the entire faculty. Likewise, teachers are kept abreast of programs, resources, and information surrounding student

achievement. This encourages teachers to ask questions and/or make suggestions regarding policies or new ideas that could further student achievement.

To ensure student achievement, our counselor and our instructional coach discuss student needs during our leadership meetings. The instructional coach reviews data to drive our next steps for additional educational needs as a school. The counselor takes this a step further by leading our Student Support Committee. The counselor and the Student Support Committee work as a liaison between teachers and the leadership team to formulate an educational plan which provides students with a pathway to success. The Student Support Committee meets monthly with grade levels to review educational plans and make adjustments as needed.

Distribution and knowledge of technology resources is an essential component of maintaining the success of our Digital 1:1 platform. As part of the leadership team, the media specialist plays a lead role in updating all stakeholders on the status and implementation of technology including, but not limited to, hardware, software, student technology safety, and professional development. The inclusion of the media specialist on the leadership team allows our technology to be interwoven in all of our educational endeavors.

The leadership team, with district and PTA support, have established lines of communication with all stakeholders to support involvement in student success. Scheduled meetings with parents, social media, the school webpage, and classroom newsletters are a few of the ways we keep stakeholders informed of programs and other pertinent information relative to a successful education for our students.

## Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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Incorporating the IB philosophy into our teaching and learning is the major practice that sets ASFL apart from other schools, and therefore supports the success of ASFL students. A strong support from our Magnet and District Offices has enabled us to implement the IB program effectively. The IB aims to do more than other curricula by developing inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people who are motivated to succeed. Our success at ASFL is a multi-faceted determination that includes a focus on the whole child. Teacher created summative assessments allow students the opportunity to express what they have learned and relate how it connects to their lives. These assessments often involve student choice and allow the students to express themselves in a method that includes their individual areas of strength. In addition to classroom assessments, students are offered the opportunity to develop an action component that involves taking the concept outside of the classroom to the wider community. This often manifests itself as an act of community service. Students become aware of the greater need to develop and grow personally by using the IB Learner Profile traits as a guideline. These traits include a focus on developing students who are knowledgeable, caring, open-minded, and principled. Additionally, students are expected to be inquirers, communicators, and reflective. As a result of the educational experience at ASFL, students become globally minded learners and future leaders.