

***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 [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

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

Official School Name Fairview Elementary School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 738 Dorseyville Road  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Pittsburgh State PA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 15238-1102

County Allegheny County

Telephone (412) 963-9315 Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Web site/URL http://www.fcasd.edu/fairview-home.html E-mail rebecca\_stephan@fcasd.edu

Twitter Handle \_\_\_\_\_ Facebook Page \_\_\_\_\_ Google+ \_\_\_\_\_

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.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Superintendent\*Dr. Gene Freeman E-mail gene\_freeman@fcasd.edu  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Fox Chapel Area School District Tel. (412) 963-9600

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.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School Board  
President/Chairperson Mr. Terry Wirginis  
(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.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

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):
- 4 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 6 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
PreK	0	0	0
K	33	31	64
1	29	24	53
2	34	24	58
3	35	26	61
4	34	25	59
5	33	26	59
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	198	156	354

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 0 % Asian
  - 0 % Black or African American
  - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 7 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 88 % White
  - 2 % 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: 1%

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	3
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	0
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	3
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	354
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.008
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1

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

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):  
Italian, Portuguese, Uzbek

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 1 %  
Total number students who qualify: 23

8. Students receiving special education services: 11 %  
38 Total number of students served

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

<u>5</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>2</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>4</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>15</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>3</u> Mental Retardation	<u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>7</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:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers	18
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	25
Paraprofessionals	10
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 19:1

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

Required Information	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	97%	96%	96%	96%	96%
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.

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 X No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 1998

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

Fairview Elementary exists to maximize student learning, achievement, and development.

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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Part of the Fox Chapel Area School District, Fairview Elementary is approximately ten miles north of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Guided by our district's mission to maximize student learning, achievement, and development, Fairview has grown to a top performing public school in the state. Winner of the National Blue Ribbon Award in 1999, Fairview has a long standing tradition of providing learning adventures that excite, involve, and motivate our children in grades Kindergarten through Five.

Built in 1958, the original one-story school consisted of nine classrooms and accommodated 179 students from Indiana Township, whose families were mainly farmers and coal miners. In 1966, due to business and residential development, six classrooms and a library were added, and the grounds were enlarged. Renovated in 1993 to update and provide for growth, Fairview gained eleven classrooms, a gymnasium, an updated library, a new office area, a conference room, a courtyard, new music and art rooms, and a science lab. The student population has increased to 352 in 2016. This increase reflects an expanded community, transfers from parochial and private schools, and the building's ongoing reputation of having a dedicated staff and outstanding academic programs. Our previous Blue Ribbon inspired us to continue to strive for excellence as we focused on writing skills, then differentiation in instruction, then student growth.

Now, Fairview is comprised of predominantly professional families with, in many cases, two working parents. Committed to supporting the curriculum practices and efforts, families are involved with their children's academic, athletic, and social growth at school. Children are encouraged to participate in a wide range of after-school classes, play musical instruments, participate in sports, and contribute to service projects for those less fortunate. Multiple volunteer opportunities from the Fairview Parent Teacher Organization, the Site Based Management Team, and staff have broadened and deepened our family partnership as joint enthusiasm and effort extend learning for our children.

The inception of a Site Based Management Team in 1992 generated shared ownership among parents, teachers, support staff, community members, and administration in the management and operation of the school. This team creates the strategic plan based on our district's mission to achieve specified goals. Over the years, major progress has been made in the areas of communication, involvement, ethical behavior, learning and instruction, safety, and budget. We have been able to access and share information through our handbooks, technology, and our principal's newsletter and Principal's Round Table for parents.

Fairview teachers differentiate instruction so that each child has the maximum opportunity for growth. Flexible grouping allows students to move in and out of learning groups according to their learning styles and pre-assessed readiness levels. Analysis of assessment data by classroom teachers and the Response to Intervention team monitors growth to ensure appropriate interventions or enrichment. Targeted assessments are used to address early math, reading, speech and language, hearing, vision, and physical and occupational therapy needs as well as the need for gifted support. Our learning support staff implements specially designed instruction, adaptations, and accommodations for students based on need. Two of our support classrooms provide instruction for students with significant cognitive, language, and behavioral needs. Intensive teaching and errorless learning strategies help these students achieve their learning goals. Recognizing that learning is hindered for some students by inadequate social skills, small groups focus on social learning and communication skills needed to develop and maintain social relationships. We are committed to teaching the whole child and meeting all learning needs.

A systematic behavior plan is used throughout the school. The Fairview Five is visibly placed throughout the school and included in our handbook. The five rules are easily understood and hold students accountable for the behaviors they choose. Students have demonstrated growth in responsibility, positively affecting classroom instruction and routines. Students are free to take risks in their thinking in a safe and accepting classroom environment.

To address the health and safety of our students, we have implemented and refined procedures for visitors, bus arrivals and dismissals, emergency response teams, and individual student health plans for chronic situations. We hold a variety of safety drills throughout the year so that staff and students understand procedures and know what to do in the event of an emergency. These safety measures provide a healthy and comfortable learning atmosphere at Fairview.

During the past three years under the supervision of our present principal, we have come to realize that though academic proficiency is a worthy goal, it is not the only goal we have for the students entrusted to us. Our focus now is on strategies that ensure students are achieving significant growth no matter where they are on the learning continuum. As students embrace the learning opportunities from the rigors of the core curriculum and community-developed programs, we know that the successes we realize are a result of our united commitment to educational excellence and well-being of our children. We remain confident that our students will continue to achieve, be lifelong learners, and make significant contributions to our world.

## PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Core Curriculum:

Fairview students work with the Benchmark Literacy curriculum for ELA. Each grade level incorporates the use of daily whole group mini-lessons to introduce and teach comprehension skills, metacognitive skills, and genre studies. Students then apply these skills in literacy centers and in leveled guided reading groups led by the classroom teacher. Within each unit, students also participate in a Reader's Theater to improve fluency. Writer's Workshop teaches students to write within three specific genres: narrative, informational, and opinion. Students further encounter fiction works through novel studies at an appropriate level for each student. Two years ago, teachers and administrators discovered a need for greater flexibility since students were reading at levels both above and below the levels designated for any particular grade. To address this need, a team of teachers and parents from our PTO created a "Book Room." The Book Room provides extra sets of leveled nonfiction text, fiction, and novels, which can be borrowed by any teacher. This year, Kindergarten added the Foundations curriculum to teach phonics in a systematic and explicit progression.

Fairview students follow the Eureka math curriculum which incorporates the Common Core Standards and Math Practices. The lessons include a fluency component with quick assessments, concept development, application problems, and student debrief. The curriculum follows a logical progression from learning numbers to problem solving with the coordinate plane, to ensure that there are no gaps and that students are prepared for the next step. The curriculum also emphasizes persistence in problem solving and preparation for understanding advanced math. Teachers in grades three to five pretest children for prior knowledge and use this data to drive the flexible grouping of the children. Through differentiated instruction, each learner's needs are met. To assess daily understanding, exit tickets are given as a formative assessment to tailor future instruction. Curriculum based assessments for summative assessment are created by the district.

Foss and STC science kits provide inquiry-based models fostering science and math literacy as well as higher levels of analytical thinking. Students learn science notebooking to link observation and literacy skills. Environmental science is taught in cooperation with the Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania. The outdoor studies range from nature walks in neighboring parks with parent or community volunteers to a camping experience in the Allegheny Mountains.

Teach TCI Social Studies program uses inquiry-based activities to build upon children's growing awareness and interest in the world around them. Content is organized through a widening horizons approach. The program begins with a study of self, friends, and family, and expands to a study of neighborhood, community, state, region, and nation. The big ideas focus on history, geography, government, and economy. Skill development in elementary social studies is multidisciplinary. There is attention to skills typically associated with social studies such as reading maps and graphs, as well as to reading and language arts skills. A highlight in the third grade curriculum is their heritage project where each student interviews a member of his or her family about a person in the family who came to America and from which country that person came. The student then works with the classroom teacher, librarian, and technology teacher to research that country and to build a presentation for the class and family members.

Peterson Directed Handwriting focuses on smooth, rhythmic motion with audible reinforcement to improve attention span, motor skills, muscle memory, and, ultimately, handwriting fluency. The skills are important for reading skill development. The goal is to create 'instant words' which can be easily written with minimal use of the visual feedback system.

DARE is taught in cooperation with the Indiana Township police. A police officer teaches children about safety. Kindergarten and first grade attend a Safety Day, meeting a variety of community helpers and exploring their vehicles. Fifth grade students learn about the dangers of substance abuse.



## 2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Instructing the whole child is the basis of our Special Area curriculums. Special teachers focus on each student's needs through differentiation and cross-curricular collaboration. Field trips to the Pittsburgh Symphony and the local art museum, funded by our FPTO, expand the students' experiences in the arts.

The art curriculum focuses on students being problem solvers and critical thinkers, as well as acquiring a lifelong love of the arts. The art curriculum includes seven art media: drawing, painting, collage, printmaking, fiber arts, sculpture, and ceramics. There is a strong focus on the PA state standards and an emphasis on critical and aesthetic response. Students receive art education once a week for eighty minutes, except Kindergarten, which meets forty minutes once a week.

Music incorporates singing, instrument playing (Orff instruments and recorders), and movement to develop the complete musician. Children develop critical thinking through improvisation, composition, and self-expression; problem-solving through note reading, music literacy, independent learning, and analysis; and collaborative skills through ensemble work. Students in grades one through five receive General Music twice a week for eighty minutes total. Kindergarten meets once a week for forty minutes. The Intensive Teaching class occurs forty minutes, twice a week. All students participate in a music performance. Fifth grade students create the spring musical script.

Our ensembles participate in combined concerts together and with other elementary and secondary district ensembles. Orchestra is offered to students in grades three through five; 76 (43%) students participate. Offered to grades four and five, 50 (42%) students participate in chorus and 43 (36%) students participate in band. Each ensemble meets once a week, before school, for forty-minute rehearsals. Band and orchestra also provide small group, thirty minute lessons each week during the school day. We are in the process of commissioning works for each ensemble and have collaborated with artists such as Brad Yoder and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. FCASD was awarded the "Best Communities for Music Education" by the NAMM Foundation in 2015 and for the past several years.

Physical Education focuses on the overall student well being and commitment to healthy life choices. These concepts are taught using the FITT Principle which encompasses Frequency, Intensity, Time and Type(s) of activities. Within the curriculum, we encourage students to experiment with a variety of skill sets that fit this equation. Lesson plans are based on Cardiovascular, Muscular, Flexibility and Nutrition based concepts. Primary age students are introduced to motor skills through Locomotor and Manipulative movements along with Body Patterns and Awareness. Goals include collaborative efforts in making exceptional mind and body connections in the gym environment. Physical Education strives to encourage confidence and positive attitudes in every student. Kindergarten students attend Physical Education once a week for forty minutes; first through fifth grades have two forty minute classes a week.

Library class is dedicated to creating responsible information users, fostering a lifelong love of learning through literature. The curriculum includes literature appreciation through author studies, folklore, poetry and award winning book studies, library routines and procedures, and collaborative research projects (informational and project based learning in second through fifth grades). Extra Curricular programs sponsored by the library department include a yearly author or illustrator visit and the annual Battle of the Books, a district-wide reading competition dedicated to exposing students to different types of literature while encouraging them to read and discuss books with their peers. The library staff also works to meet the needs of the staff and students by collaborating closely with grade levels to support the curriculum through resources and collaborative projects. Library class is once a week for forty minutes for kindergarten through fifth grade.

FCASD recognizes that technology is vital to our student's future success. K-5 Computer Science curriculum focuses on problem solving, communication, collaboration, and perseverance. Curricular units include Coding and Robotics, Research Projects (informational and project based learning in second through fifth grades), Digital Citizenship, Word Processing, and Basic Operations. Classes meet once a week for forty minutes in addition to Resource Classes for project development and completion. The teacher works to meet the needs of the staff and students by collaborating closely with grade levels to support the curriculum.

The Spanish curriculum focuses on second language learning skills. Designed to strengthen students' understanding of language with comparison and contrast of word formation, grammatical concepts, delivery, and cultural influence on language, the curriculum is an exposure program; Spanish mastery is not expected. The three main goals are the use of metacognitive strategies for vocabulary acquisition, recognition of world language structures, and development of language skills and cultural awareness. The Spanish teacher works with the students once per week for a semester, with a minimum of sixteen lessons.

### 3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Differentiation is woven into daily instruction at Fairview. Teachers, trained to deliver instruction that engages learners at their level, provide appropriate scaffolds and challenges to achieve growth. Students engage in Project Based Learning, incorporate cross-curricular connections, and utilize a science curriculum centered around inquiry-based learning. Fairview offers a range of enrichment and intervention opportunities beyond classroom differentiation to meet diverse student needs.

There are three enrichment avenues available: Enrichment-English Language Arts (E-ELA), Accelerated Mathematics, and QUEST, our district pull-out gifted program. E-ELA services outlier students by grade level in flexible guided reading groups. Students read and respond to above-grade level texts from a range of genres with a focus on applying ELA standards at a deeper level and writing in response to text using evidence to support analysis. Students qualify for the accelerated mathematics program by demonstrating mastery of the current grade-level's mathematics standards; they attend mathematics with the next grade. Students in need of math courses beyond our K-5 scope take a virtual class with students from other district elementary buildings. These courses, taught live by district middle-school teachers, are unique in that all these students are accelerated so the teacher can compact curriculum and adjust pacing. Our common mathematics period enables students to join the appropriate math cohort. QUEST (Quality Enrichment Studies) is the district gifted pull-out program that services all identified gifted students. Students meet ninety minutes weekly in small groups to participate in STEM-based units. Gifted students also engage in an annual independent study focusing on areas of individual strength and interest.

Special education teachers and their staff support classroom differentiation in both push-in and pull-out capacities to meet the needs of learners in the least restrictive environment. Fairview utilizes tiered interventions to offer small group support to struggling learners. Tier 2 interventions, available to support both IEP and non-IEP students in reading and mathematics, include DreamBox, Think Through Math, Leveled Literacy Instruction, Rewards, Foundations, and Reading Recovery. Tier 3 services offer replacement curriculums, such as SRA or Numicon, to support students needing reading or math instruction at a different grade level. Additionally, related services are available for students with special needs in occupational and physical therapy, speech, hearing, and vision. Fairview also offers a regional Intensive Teaching classroom to support the unique needs of students with specific diagnoses. Instruction provides a calm setting without the overstimulation of the regular classroom and alternative materials and programs to support progress with language acquisition, social interactions, and academic instruction.

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

Fairview utilizes a range of ongoing assessments to evaluate student performance and plan for instructional adjustments to maximize growth. The Classroom Diagnostic Tool (CDT) and STAR 360 are computer adaptive assessments that adjust to students' individual responses to provide a reliable measure of acquisition and retention of skills and standards. These programs, used as progress monitoring tools three times a year to focus on student growth, help us address group and individual interventions. All students

take the Cognitive Group Abilities Test in grades 1 and 4 to measure students' verbal, nonverbal, and quantitative reasoning abilities in an effort to identify cognitive strengths and weaknesses in individual students. Beyond standardized measures, teachers administer an assortment of curriculum-based assessments including Eureka Math module assessments, Benchmark Literacy unit assessments, Comprehensive Strategy Assessments, and district-wide cold writes. The Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System identifies students' instructional reading levels throughout the year to place them into appropriate guided reading groups. Gifted and learning support teachers also use assessments such as AIMSweb, Running Records, and above grade level curriculum-based assessments to qualify students for specific interventions or enrichment programs. Pre-assessments, used to create flexible math groups for each unit in grades 3-5 and to differentiate reading instruction K-5, provide teachers with data to compact curriculum or adapt instructional methods to meet the needs of our range of learners. Students for whom additional supports may be required receive a full evaluation to collect additional cognitive and achievement data and make recommendations for gifted or special education programming.

Our building's Response to Instruction and Intervention team meets monthly to share and discuss the most recent data points and adjust curriculum and instruction to plan for interventions as needed. Ed-Insight, our online data warehouse, shares portfolios of student data and interventions. This portal allows current teachers to see what interventions students have had or track data to help find ways to meet student needs.

Fairview teachers and administrators make an effort to be very transparent about assessment data and its implications with stakeholders. Individual student data and actionable growth plans are shared at parent-teacher conferences, IEP or GIEP meetings, and through our online gradebook, PowerSchool. PowerSchool provides parents with real-time information about their child's progress on assignments and serves as a communication tool with classroom updates. District administration meets often to discuss and provide feedback regarding Fairview's student growth data, and district publications release school-wide assessment snapshots to other stakeholders. The collaboration amongst Fairview teachers, administration, and families allows for an ongoing, comprehensive evaluation of student progress and performance.

## **PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS**

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### **1. School Climate/Culture:**

Fairview Elementary encourages and promotes a positive school climate through the implementation of the Fairview Five, our school rules, the Heartwood Character Education Program, and the school counseling program. Teachers and the staff model this behavior as they guide students to care about each other and motivate students to learn. Treating each other as they expect students to treat their peers, the principal, teachers, and staff grow and develop in a climate of respect and collaboration.

The Fairview Five rules state “Demonstrate respect for all people and property, Follow adult directions on first request, Use appropriate language, gestures, and tone of voice, Keep your hands, your feet and all objects to yourself, and Walk quietly in our building.” They reinforce the appropriate expected behavior among all students and support academic, social and, emotional growth. At the beginning of each school year, the principal introduces these rules to the student body at an assembly. The school counselor reinforces the rules by visiting each grade level to discuss the expected behaviors. The students complete hands-on projects to reflect the importance of the Fairview Five, which are displayed throughout the building to help motivate students to make appropriate choices.

The Heartwood Ethics Curriculum, An Ethics Curriculum for Children, is a read-aloud, literature-based curriculum. It aims to teach elementary school students seven universal attributes of good character: courage, loyalty, justice, respect, hope, honesty, and love. Children in one class pair with another class to write quotes about an attribute for the morning announcements. Discussion of the application of the attributes in learning and interacting with others is woven within instruction throughout the school day.

The Fairview Counseling Program supports the school environment in promoting a caring school community. The mission of the school counseling program is to guide students to choose responsible behaviors, lead satisfying lives, and to become contributing members of society. The program provides equal and developmentally appropriate opportunities for all students to enhance their academic, career, and personal/social development. Through the use of classroom lessons, small group counseling, and brief individual counseling, the school counseling curriculum introduces and reinforces topics such as friendship, understanding and identifying feelings, importance of rules/consequences, bullying, power of a bystander, team building, and conflict resolution. The school counselor also provides interventions in small group or with individuals. In Lunch Bunch groups, for example, students meet with the counselor who focuses on social skills, leadership, positive choices, friendship, and anger management.

This positive school climate promotes a trust between students and teachers, between staff and teachers, and among teachers. Respect is evident. This climate fosters innovation in learning and teaching, collaboration, and consideration of ideas for better decisions, which contribute toward making a school successful.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

Working together for student growth defines the relationship among the teachers, administrators, parents, and community members at Fairview Elementary. The SBMT and the FPTO ensure that this collaboration presents the students with a variety of experiences that enrich their learning. Local businesses, universities, and cultural institutions also contribute to these experiences.

Traveling Art Gallery (TAG), Music Box, and Jr. Great Books programs involve parent volunteers presenting a work of art, a piece or type of music, and several short stories to groups of students. TAG and Music Box encourage students to appreciate works of art and music and think critically about them. Students in third and fourth grade can participate in Junior Great Books, reading and discussing a short story using a Shared Inquiry model.

Working together with local businesses, Fairview offers enrichment activities with In-School Field Trips,

Great Expectations, an extensive 5-week after-school enrichment program, and Multiple Intelligence Day. Grounded in Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory, our MI Day allows K-3 students to engage in activities in areas where they show strength. A team of teachers and parents plans eight different activity sets, including math games, music exploration presented by students from Duquesne University's School of Music, or nature encounters led by a local business. Students leave this day understanding that people learn in different ways.

Community building takes place during our Multicultural Night and FunFair. Both events are held in the evening allowing families to attend together. Multicultural Night provides an opportunity for families to create booths about their cultures, e.g. Philippines, Brazil, Italy, and Korea. All who attend can visit the various booths, sample foods, and view performances from a number of cultures representing Fairview families. Held at the end of the school year, FunFair offers carnival-type activities and a DJ. Last year, local businesses provided food items, and children worked with a local artist to create a canvas print.

For many years, the FPTO has had an active Community Service Committee, which has held various drives to collect coats, books, and food to support our local community. This year, the committee offered opportunities for students to be more personally involved. During their classroom parties, students created placemats for Meals on Wheels; made banners, craft bags, and cards for children at The Children's Institute; wrapped books for our local Children's Hospital; filled "supply bags" for the homeless; and created a large banner for a classmate's cousin who was experiencing an extended hospital stay. These efforts encourage our students to think outside of themselves and understand ways that they can give back to the world in which they live.

### 3. Professional Development:

The principal and teachers at FV actively engage in professional development through a team approach. Guided by the district professional development plan, the principal and the FV Learning Team develop bi-monthly sessions specific to building goals. Building goals include closing learning gaps and continually seeking out strategies to stretch our learners.

The most effective professional development is facilitated by our teachers using their expertise. All teachers from every grade level serve as chairs and members of district committees in some capacity. They then facilitate professional development at both building and district level sessions. Examples include Science, Math, English Language Arts, Art and Computer Science, and Quest committees. Teachers also participate in professional development sessions in and outside of the building through partnerships with the Allegheny Intermediate Unit, the University of Pittsburgh, ASSET, the Math Science Collaborative, Wilson Language, the Arts Education Collaborative, and with Dr. Diane Briars, President of the National Council of Teachers of Math (NCTM). Teachers then develop meaningful presentations to share with colleagues. For example, the principal and teachers may design a writing session that probes deeper than the original session offered outside of the district.

The impact of the team approach to professional development has increased teacher leadership capacity by providing an outlet for our teachers to expand their knowledge, design and develop curriculum, and present information to teachers in and out of the district. In 2014, a committee of teachers at Fairview wrote a building plan and training manual for writing and then presented it to an area school. Mentoring, coaching, and peer observation provide avenues for teachers in a smaller environment. Professional development which has been developed to reflect alignment with state standards and which provides teachers with immediate strategies and access to effective resources has positively impacted student achievement and growth. Not only do our teachers engage in professional learning through formal opportunities, they spend a considerable amount of their own time researching strategies and resources that may be beneficial for their students. They experiment with the strategy or resource in the classroom, determine its effectiveness, and then share the strategy with others if proven to be beneficial. Recent examples of professional development that have directly impacted student achievement include exploring math curriculum lesson investigations, developing and applying curriculum in the classroom, using student self-reflection and self-assessment in learning, designing differentiated respectful tasks to meet student needs, finding strategies to reach gifted learners, and responding instructionally to assessment data.

#### 4. School Leadership:

Not only the principal, but all staff are leaders at Fairview Elementary. The role of the principal is to foster high expectations of individual and collective responsibility for learning. We believe that the school's expected culture for learning sets the foundation for student success. The staff deliberately leads by example in order to transfer the skills we expect students to emulate. We engage in iterative inquiry to articulate, define, develop, evaluate, and improve student ownership of learning. There exists individual intrinsic motivation, responsibility, and commitment to collaborate and contribute toward student success.

At the core of our student-focused approach to decisions, all building employees, students, and parents of Fairview students have a voice in the decision-making and evaluation processes in order to adhere to our policy of "no stone unturned." Every teacher serves on a district or building level committee or team, and we recognize that leadership manifests in multiple ways. Teachers lead by facilitating building and district professional development, leading grade level, faculty, and department discussions, contributing to SBMT sub-committee agenda discussions, mentoring colleagues, and designing original programs and processes. Such programs include a Storytime series for Pre-K students, a Writing Professional Development manual, and a Positive Discipline System for the building. To foster teacher leadership, district level teams include the Data to Instructional Response Professional Development Team and the Professional Development Modules Team and the Kindergarten Transition Team. Examples of avenues through which decisions are made include the building's Site Based Management Team; the Learning Team, Safety, Culture, Community and Budget SBMT sub-committees; grade level and department teams; district level department and curriculum teams; our parent-teacher organization; and student leadership programs.

Staff members rotate leadership roles every two years and operate through a "you can do it, we can do it" attitude. In addition to our parent organization's leadership board, our thirty-three parent organization committees provide the opportunity for many parents to exercise leadership at Fairview. Examples of student leadership programs include peer helpers, bus patrols, new student buddies, cross grade level book buddies, morning announcement team, Veteran's Day program leaders, and student led school landscape project based learning projects. Through a gradual relinquishing of teacher control, student leadership is fostered by increasing student ownership of learning. This is accomplished via the tenets of G.R.I.T. (Give it your all, Redo if necessary, Improve every day, Try, try again), setting learning goals, engaging in self-reflection and self-assessment, and by strengthening quality learning and social behaviors. The culture of collaborative leadership provides a forum for thorough exchange of thoughts and ideas in which expressing one's voice and taking risks with continual refinement is invited and encouraged. As a result, student achievement and growth is an expected and realized outcome.

## Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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Responsibility is the basis on which Fairview has built and maintains its success. The responsibility for student achievement and growth by providing exceptional instruction and learning opportunities within a student-centered environment drives all decisions and actions. Fairview staff and parents exercise responsibility daily through a multi-faceted approach of attitude, responsiveness, differentiated instruction, and collaboration.

Attitude fuels high expectations for self and others among the staff, students, and parents at Fairview. Our motto of “you can do it” and theme of GRIT teach students perseverance and quality learning habits. A parent stated, “(GRIT) motivates kids...to look at ‘failures’ as a timing issue...they just hadn’t mastered the material yet.” Another parent stated, “Excitement about learning and the importance of learning was given to (students) in a way that they understood their purpose. All were different and all were able to achieve.” The commitment to professional learning among staff members promotes the attitude of personal accountability toward student learning.

Responsiveness to the needs of the students occurs through knowing and acting upon students’ learning profiles and interests, empowering students to take responsibility for their education, and teaching them how to do so. Staff and parents respond through personal interest and attention, support, guidance, and quality communication. Bonds created from building relationships based on trust enable the staff to be responsive to individual student’s learning needs. Our students understand our investment in their learning; this motivates them to be and produce their personal best.

Differentiated instruction requires effective instructors who demonstrate understanding of the content and students and who design independent, respectful tasks. Evidence-based differentiation at Fairview provides the opportunity for teachers to determine academic learning areas to strengthen and stretch for all students. Independent tasks specific to students’ readiness levels result in an increase in student confidence, self-monitoring skills, and metacognitive growth. Responsibly providing customized instruction reinforces the belief that all students can achieve and grow.

Collaboration promotes teamwork among colleagues and parents. Common planning among teachers reinforces the use of common language through vertically and horizontally aligned delivery of the curriculum. Staff members share knowledge, strategies, and resources. Multiple staff members help students be successful and provide a daily example of collaboration. Communication with parents supports the home school connection to help children be successful learners.

At Fairview, responsibility is a tenet that everyone shares. The staff intentionally teams with parents to practice collective responsibility on a daily basis for every child. Through our attitude, responsiveness, commitment to differentiate instruction, and collaboration, we create a learning environment focused on students. Responsibility is the force behind our academic success.