

U.S. Department of Education
2023 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[] Public or [X] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Ben Lippen School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 7401 Monticello Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Columbia State SC Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 29203-1513

County Richland

Telephone (803) 807-4345 Fax (803) 744-1387

Web site/URL <https://www.benlippen.com/> E-mail kelli.larsen@benlippen.com

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. Tony Fajardo E-mail tony.fajardo@benlippen.com
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Private School Tel. (803) 807-4000

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 Mr. Jason Blackwell
(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, leave blank.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2023 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 must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2018 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2022.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 or 2022.
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. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

12. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the current school year (2022-2023) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools. For charter schools: If a charter school is part of the public school system, information should be provided for the public school district. If a charter school is considered its own district or part of a charter district, the information provided should reflect that.)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 0 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
0 Middle/Junior high schools
0 High schools
0 K-12 schools
- 0 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. **Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not for the district.**)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

☐ Urban (city or town)
☒ Suburban
☐ Rural

3. Number of students in the school as of October 1, 2022 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

Grade	# of Students
PreK	54
K	62
1	63
2	61
3	58
4	60
5	0
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	358

*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):
- | |
|--|
| <u>0</u> % American Indian or Alaska Native |
| <u>1.3</u> % Asian |
| <u>23.7</u> % Black or African American |
| <u>2.9</u> % Hispanic or Latino |
| <u>0.3</u> % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander |
| <u>70.9</u> % White |
| <u>0.9</u> % 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 2021 - 2022 school year: 2%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	4
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	2
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	6
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	358
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.02
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

n/a

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
0 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 0 %

Total number students who qualify: 0

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 0 %
Total number of students served 0

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. All students receiving special education services with an IEP should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

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

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 0 %
Total number of students served: 0

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 5

11. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	5
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	19
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	6
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	12
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

12. 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

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

Required Information	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018
Daily student attendance	94%	96%	94%	95%	95%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

14. **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 2022.

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%

15. 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.

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

Ben Lippen School seeks to glorify God by educating students from a biblical worldview to impact the nations with the message of Christ and by assisting the family and church in equipping students spiritually, academically, socially, and physically under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

17. Provide a URL link to the school's nondiscrimination policy.

<https://www.benlippen.com/>

The policy is at the bottom of the main page underneath the contact information.

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

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

1. Ben Lippen Lower School is part of the PK3-12th grade program offered at Ben Lippen School in Columbia, South Carolina. Families who choose Ben Lippen School seek a biblically-based, academically rigorous program that will prepare their child(ren) for college and beyond. Often, parents note the family atmosphere, supportive community, and Christian values as key reasons why they choose Ben Lippen School. Community is built through family events, Friday night football games, and volunteer opportunities for our parents, just to name a few. The mission statement reads, “Ben Lippen School seeks to glorify God by educating students from a biblical worldview to impact the nations with the message of Christ and by assisting the family and church in equipping students spiritually, academically, socially, and physically under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.” The word “assisting” emphasizes the need for partnership from parents in the education of their child(ren).

In general, students at Ben Lippen School are bright, talented, hard-working, and kind. They have a wide range of academic abilities and varied extracurricular talents that are showcased on fields, courts, stages, and academic arenas. Students focus on goal-setting, growth mindset, and achieving their personal best. They are encouraged to passionately pursue excellence, celebrate mistakes and successes, and give their best in all they do.

In summary, Ben Lippen School’s character is centered around the common goal of glorifying God in all we do. Parents, students, staff, teachers, and leaders partner together to provide an atmosphere where students are challenged, supported, safe, and encouraged to grow to reach their potential. Building a culture of community and family has helped us reach this goal.

2. Ben Lippen Lower School seeks to encourage and challenge all students to develop their full potential in all aspects of their lives. To this end, specific strategies, programs, and initiatives have been implemented.

Ben Lippen School follows a five-year curriculum review cycle to ensure the curricula is up-to-date and effective. The lower school implements a workshop-model method for both reading and math instruction. Teachers provide mini-lessons for the whole group, but a majority of instruction occurs within small groups or individual conferences. This allows for differentiation, personal goal-setting, and a better understanding of each student as an individual learner.

Social and cultural growth is encouraged daily through organic opportunities. However, the school-wide character program emphasizes one specific trait each month. These areas are highlighted on morning announcements, in assemblies, and in individual classrooms. Students who shine in these areas are recognized and celebrated.

Additionally, all teachers were trained in growth mindset strategies. The language and philosophies associated with a growth mindset are implemented consistently. NWEA’s Measure of Academic Performance assessment allows K-4th grade teachers to encourage and celebrate individual growth with students.

Lower school leaders work collaboratively to ensure the program operates with excellence. One Principal, who also serves as an Associate Head of School, and two Assistant Principals serve the lower school to ensure a big-picture vision is maintained while the day-to-day operations run smoothly and efficiently. One Assistant Principal primarily focuses on instruction, providing teachers with the support they need to best meet the needs of individual students. The school also operates under the leadership of a Head of School and an additional Associate Head of School over academic affairs.

3. Ben Lippen School’s science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) program is designed to align with the standards for each grade level and is uniquely implemented with a flexible schedule, allowing the STEM director to be available as needed in each classroom. STEM at Ben Lippen School provides collaborative, integrated, and hands-on experiences that encourage critical thinking, problem-solving, and engineering. STEM projects include racing cars constructed out of pasta, a Macy’s Thanksgiving Day

Parade-inspired robot parade, hatching chicken eggs and caring for the chickens, exploring the on-campus pond, creating silent movies, growing gardens, and much more. The STEM program is closely aligned with our Creation Care Initiative. Through this initiative, classrooms are often transported into outdoor settings where students learn in and from nature. Students learn about plants, the life cycle, and the world around them through hands-on experiences.

Ben Lippen Lower School's teachers also bring learning to life through room transformations. Classrooms creatively convert into the Mayflower, rainforests, cities around the world, gardens, and more. These transformations immerse students in an engaging environment that spurs creativity and adds excitement to the educational process.

4. Like most schools, Ben Lippen School closed its doors and operated as a virtual school beginning in March of 2020 and remained virtual through the end of the 2019-2020 school year. However, beginning in August of 2020, Ben Lippen School reopened its doors and has offered live, on-campus instruction without interruption since that time.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Reading/English language arts curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

State standards along with research-based best practices drive the instruction for the English Language Arts program. Published curriculum and resources are intentionally chosen based on what will provide the students with the most rigorous learning opportunities, support instructional strategies, and develop literacy engagement. Cross-curricular connections are a focus within reading comprehension to deepen students' understanding of all content areas as well as boost engagement and interest in text selections. Teachers follow a student-centered literacy framework utilizing a published curriculum as a guide for instruction.

Ben Lippen Lower School has a specific focus on writing instruction by ensuring all classrooms have a writer's workshop instructional block. Students work in authentic ways to develop independence as writers. Published curriculum and resources were chosen based on the expertly scaffolded scope and sequence throughout the grades which sets up students each year for success in the following grade. Students participate in mini-lessons where the teacher introduces various genres of writing and models skills, followed by time in independent writing allowing for one-on-one conferencing and small group instruction.

In kindergarten through second grade, systematic instruction focused on phonics, phonemic awareness, and alphabetic knowledge are at the core of the English Language Arts content. Structured, systematic literacy instruction supports the research-based science of reading approach. This instructional method provides opportunities for students to engage with word study/phonics instruction, read alouds, and guided, shared, and independent reading experiences to develop thorough literacy skills.

Ben Lippen Lower School uses a workshop-style approach for literacy block instruction in kindergarten through fourth grades which allows for purposeful teaching of reading strategies in comprehension, accuracy, fluency, and expanded vocabulary through mini-lessons and conferring with students. Teachers approach discussions and questioning with intentionality and thoughtful planning to promote higher order thinking among students. Students are given the opportunity to engage with texts of all genres and are challenged to think critically about what they read. Teachers promote active engagement with students while they read to deepen comprehension and help students construct meaning from a text.

Methods of instruction are designed to meet students where they are in their readiness and support their individual learning needs. Teachers are trained in differentiated instruction and are adept in designing and implementing formative (observations, reflection journals, exit slips) and summative assessments (projects, presentations, written tests) which not only aid in monitoring and adjusting instruction as needed, but also in pinpointing where students are in their growth. Each classroom has a teaching assistant to support tiered instruction which furthers the opportunity for individualized instruction. Teachers and administrators collaborate while reviewing assessments to reflect and highlight areas of strength and growth leading to focused planning. The Developmental Reading Assessment (grades K-2) and the STAR reader assessment (grades 1st-4th) are utilized to monitor growth and development of students as a literacy learner. A normalized assessment, Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), is also given three times a year in English Language Arts to gain specific feedback on each student, classroom, grade, and lower school as a whole. Data disaggregation meetings take place to collaborate and analyze the data as a team of professionals.

1b. Mathematics curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The goal of our mathematics program is to provide meaningful learning experiences that will support students' overall growth in mathematical thinking. Our teachers follow a math workshop model providing students with whole group, small group, and one-on-one instruction. This approach encourages active thinking, mathematical processes, communication of mathematical ideas, collaboration, and problem-solving. A vertically-aligned published curriculum based on state standards provides a guide for daily instruction.

At Ben Lippen Lower School, students build mathematical understanding through a concrete-pictorial-abstract approach. Teachers masterfully build the foundations of mathematical concepts by using manipulatives first, then visual models/drawings, and finally numerical symbols. Through these research-based instructional strategies, students learn to apply multiple strategies for computation and develop as problem solvers and thinkers. Teachers place an emphasis on having students interact with mathematical concepts in various ways, such as drawing diagrams to understand word problems and provide a bridge to algebraic thinking. Students are taught to analyze word problems to focus on important information and decipher steps necessary to solve. Various strategies for illustrating mathematical concepts are utilized in this process. Additionally, mental math exercises are used to promote and support numerical fluency. Each day, collaborative number talks are utilized to strengthen and develop mental math abilities, leading to a strong foundation in number sense. Intentional spiral review focused on deepening understanding also contributes to solidified mathematical understanding. This combination of mental exercises and tactile experiences work together to build mastery of mathematical concepts.

Developmentally appropriate practices are at the forefront of instructional methodology. Meeting the individual learning needs of students is accomplished through expertly designed differentiated instruction. Teachers understand a variety of formative assessments are necessary to monitor student growth. Kindergarten through second grade teachers rely on formative assessments such as observations during guided practice, one-on-one performance tasks, and work samples from independent practice to gather evidence for where a child is in their math development. As students age and move into more of an abstract understanding of mathematical concepts, third and fourth grade teachers utilize age-appropriate formative assessments such as math journals, exit slips, recording sheets for independent tasks, and observation of guided practice. Summative assessments, such as projects and written tests, also direct where to monitor and adjust instruction as well as provide specific and holistic views of strengths and areas of remediation. Teachers use assessments to not only design flexible grouping, but also to reflect on their methods. Tiered instruction is supported through classroom teaching assistants who are trained to work with students one-on-one and in small groups. To gain specific feedback on each student, classroom, grade level, and lower school as a whole, the MAP math assessment is given three times a year. Classroom lessons and small group instruction are driven by data derived from each MAP assessment. This allows for differentiated instruction to best meet the needs of individual learners. Additionally, each student's NWEA MAP score is uploaded to IXL, an online educational support program, which generates individualized suggestions and lessons for students.

1c. Science curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Students are encouraged to develop their critical and innovative thinking while building creativity within the science core curriculum at Ben Lippen Lower School. An inquiry-based, hands-on approach to science instruction gives students numerous opportunities to discover principles and truths of God's creation. Children learn best when they can physically interact with the content, which is why teachers are focused on making science come to life through active engagement and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) experiences. State standards are used as the guide in designing units of study in Life Science, Physical Science, Earth & Space Science, and the human body. The science instruction is intentionally designed within units of study to engage students in age- and grade-appropriate investigation skills.

Cohesive learning experiences are developed through a focus on standards-based units of study in each grade level. Science standards are often incorporated into English language arts instruction to deepen students' understanding of science concepts while engaging with informational texts. Ben Lippen Lower School places a priority on making learning more easily understood by all students by connecting concepts to the real world in ways that make sense and conceptually come together.

The teachers design and utilize various types of assessments in science similar to their approaches to assessing students in other disciplines. Both formative and summative assessments are used to guide instruction and meet students where they are in their learning. Formative assessments within science most often are observational tools, think-pair-share strategies, reflective journals, and classroom experiments and

activities. Summative assessments most often include presentations, formal experiment designs, written tests, and projects.

An emphasis is placed on developing strong communication skills by designing risk-free classroom environments, encouraging students to participate in classroom discussions and present ideas while sharpening their speaking and listening skills. Creativity is threaded throughout the core curriculum by intentionally incorporating activities that require innovative thinking and design on behalf of the students engaging in project-based learning.

1d. Social studies/history/civic learning curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Ben Lippen Lower School's social studies curriculum is designed to focus on more than the written standards and curriculum. Students within these developmental ranges are learning how to live in community with one another. Teachers are intentional in providing focused instruction for how to navigate friendships, responsibility, and overall citizenship to develop students in having a positive impact in their community. Students develop their critical thinking skills while comparing, contrasting, and analyzing cultures, groups, events, and periods of time.

Specifically designed units of study are based on state standards and integrated with other content areas to support reading and writing through hands-on activities, collaborative projects, discussions, and experiential learning through field trips. Students learn best when concepts connect to the real world in ways that make sense and conceptually come together. An emphasis on friendships, authority figures, American government and citizenship, economics/goods and services, families and communities here and around the world, families and communities then and now, South Carolina and US History, and cultures of America are what drive the social studies instruction.

Formative assessments within social studies most often are observational tools, think-pair-share strategies, reflective journals, and classroom activities. Summative assessments most often include presentations, written tests, and projects. Creative methods of demonstrating learning include digital presentations, a wax museum, oral reports, visual displays, and hands-on, collaborative projects.

The social studies core curriculum incorporates speaking and listening standards through specialized instruction in discussion and how to build on one another's thinking and ideas. A safe, risk-free environment allows students to openly share ideas and present thoughts and opinions with evidence and clarity. This is accomplished through socratic seminars, debates, persuasive writing, and analysis of current events.

1e. For schools that serve grades 7-12:

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

Ben Lippen Lower School offers the youngest learners a place to thrive in a safe and nurturing environment, with endless opportunities for hands-on exploration. Kindergarten readiness skills are the goal as students explore through experiential learning that fosters engagement and natural curiosity. The teachers design units of study to support early literacy, handwriting, early numeracy, social, and science inquiry skills. Students explore all content areas through hands-on, experiential learning in structured play experiences. Ample opportunity for authentic play and social interactions contribute to the development of the whole child.

Early literacy development is a fundamental component of a child's overall development. The Pre-K students build literacy understanding through intentionally designed units of study to immerse them in language and literacy in various ways. Our teachers provide developmentally appropriate support and guidance through small group and one-on-one instruction. Handwriting lessons are designed to promote growth in a child's fine motor skills along with visual skills through engaging and interactive activities. The teachers are intentional about utilizing tools such as play dough, blocks, chalk, and other tactile materials to

encourage interacting with letters using their senses.

Pre-K students build mathematical understanding through a concrete-pictorial-abstract approach. Using manipulatives and drawings, students learn the fundamentals of number sense and learn to become problem solvers and thinkers. Teachers provide support and guidance through small group and one-on-one instruction while incorporating tactile experiences to build a solid mathematical foundation.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

Exploring the world by looking closely at objects and responding to the visual world that surrounds them, including exemplary works of art, art in picture books and creation is the focus of the visual arts enrichment. Students create as they engage in observing, making, remembering, and imagining. Students learn to express themselves through art using art tools and their hands to increase their fine motor skills.

In the performing arts of music enrichment, students learn the foundations of music. In the PK3-kindergarten enrichment time, students begin learning about music dynamics of pitch and tempo. Students learn to read music through symbols and pictures. In grades second through fourth, students learn to see patterns in music and how to count basic rhythms such as whole notes, half notes, quarter notes and eighth notes, as well as rests. Students are taught musical concepts in a fun and engaging way through the use of games and fun songs. Students play simple rhythm instruments. Students are introduced to different styles of music. Beginning in first grade, students start learning solfege, which is the system of learning pitches of the scale. A strong emphasis on learning to read the notes and time signatures begins in third grade while learning how to play the recorder and read music while playing. Students in fourth grade review note reading and focus on bucket drumming and begin learning how to write their own songs. All PK4-4th grade students attend both music and art once every six days.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Personal and social skills are the focus of the physical education enrichment class. Students are taught the basic skills of interacting with their own bodies and their own personal space as well as learning how to interact with others. As students grow and develop physically, they are taught to be able to better control their own bodies through balance, hand-eye coordination, ball-handling skills, and overall movement. Social skills are taught by working collaboratively as a team in order to meet the objective of completing a task within the unit. Various units include locomotive skills, throwing skills, striking skills, and various team sports. The various units teach students how to care properly for their bodies and how to work with others. Students are taught the importance of maintaining physical fitness for life. Each PK4 class meets for thirty minutes. Each kindergarten class meets for thirty-five minutes. Each grade level, first through fourth, meets for forty-five minutes. The physical education enrichment classes are offered to students in pre-school through fourth grade on each campus on a rotating basis.

2c. Foreign language(s), if offered (if not offered, leave blank)

The introduction of other cultures is the main focus of the world language enrichment class. Students are taught why learning about other cultures is important and how they can learn from other cultures. Students are taught about other customs in other countries and also learn how their own culture may be affected by other cultures. This is shown through learning about how other countries celebrate American holidays such as Christmas, how other cultures dress, how other cultures go to school, and what other cultures eat. Students also learn some basic items such as numbers, colors, phrases, and family units in Spanish. Students learn how to interact with students from other countries by learning about their culture and gaining a better understanding of the culture as it relates to their own. The Enrichment classes are offered to students in pre-school through fourth grade on each campus on a rotating basis. Each PK4 class meets for thirty minutes.

Each kindergarten class meets for thirty-five minutes. Each grade level, first through fourth, meets for forty-five minutes.

2d. Technology/library/media

The technology enrichment class focuses on digital citizenship first. Students are taught how to use technology safely both personally and eventually professionally. The students are introduced to the Google suite in the lower grades and then taught how to use the Google suite to further their research in whatever class or project they may need. Students are also taught basic coding using Code.org which increases in difficulty level as the grade level and age increase. Keyboarding skills are taught using Typingclub.com. This curriculum is a leveled, self-paced keyboarding program. Basic robotics are taught at the PK3-K levels using a robot mouse. It is a hands-on program that introduces young students to basic engineering. In the higher grade levels, robotics become more complex such as Lego robots and Wonderworks.

Library class enhances standards by teaching basic library skills of how to research a topic and how to navigate through both a physical and digital library system. The library class also reinforces different literary genres. Library also exposes students to various books that are about another culture and heritage that they may be studying in the other classes. Library teaches students at their level how to research various topics of interest for another class. Library tries to instill in the students a love of reading by exposing students to new and fascinating types of books that generally fosters the enjoyment of a story. All PK4-4th grade students attend both music and art once every six days.

2e. Any other interesting or innovative curriculum programs you would like to share

The standards-based STEM program engages students in hands-on learning to experience real-world problems in order to responsibly serve others, to work collaboratively to develop respect and compassion for one another, to persevere and create with integrity, and to potentially find their inspired purpose in a STEM-related field. The STEM Director partners with classroom teachers to integrate real-world problem-solving projects into their core curriculum. It is a standards-based STEM initiative. Through the Creation Initiative within the STEM program, students learn to use their physical abilities to create the ideas they imagined. They experience working collaboratively to create an idea in order to learn how to treat others with respect. They are challenged to show self-control and patience as they work with others to create a design. They contemplate whether their creations are beneficial or harmful to the world around them. All of the lower school teachers are trained through the Project Learning Tree which is a conservation program sponsored by the South Carolina Forestry Commission that focuses on classroom learning outdoors. Students care for the chickens and maintain the chicken coop as part of the Creation Initiative. They also plant and care for the garden spaces. The Creation Initiative instills in the students the understanding that they must care for the environment that has been given to them.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment is given to all students in first through fourth grade three times a year. MAP is given to kindergarten during the second semester. MAP testing data is used to guide instruction. The Assistant Principals meet with the grade level teachers in data disaggregation meetings three times a year to guide instructional practices and curriculum choices. The MAP data also helps guide the collaborative learning groupings to help tailor learning to the individual learner's needs. Students also create personal goals using the MAP data. The Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning (DIAL) is used for PK3, PK4, and K up to age six. The DIAL data is used to appropriately place students in classrooms that will be tailored to their needs. The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) is used for students in grades K through second to assess students' reading proficiency. The DRA data is also used to allow for students' individualized instruction within the classroom.

The workshop model is used to provide instruction in reading, writing, and math. Teachers conduct ongoing progress monitoring to assess student learning and identify academic needs. When classroom performance,

ongoing data, and teacher observations indicate that a student is not making progress, the teacher contacts the Individual Learning Center (ILC) Director. The ILC Director analyzes assessment data, conducts classroom observations, and facilitates collaborative meetings between the parents and teachers to discuss student learning needs. The team will develop a plan to support student success that may include additional academic support and tutoring. The Director may also recommend a comprehensive evaluation so that the team has a deeper understanding of the student's learning style, strengths, and weaknesses. If the evaluation indicates a disability that impacts classroom performance, the student may be determined eligible for an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and individualized accommodations.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

The Measures of Academic Performance (MAP) assessment from NWEA also provides helpful information to teachers seeking to provide an enriched learning experience for students who are performing above grade level. Utilizing the Learning Continuum and various reports from the MAP testing, teachers are able to hone in on students' strengths and provide instruction, activities, and assignments that meet each child's individual needs.

The workshop model of daily instruction in both ELA and math allows for one-on-one conferencing to be able to assess each student and push each student to their highest potential. Reading instruction is also strategy-based utilizing independent book boxes to allow for book selections according to a child's interests and current growth range. The IXL (iExcel) online math program offers each student unlimited opportunities for math growth by empowering students as they work independently at their own pace with tailored activities. The Accelerated Reader (AR) program offers students the ability to read and test at their own reading level, not grade level. This allows students to be challenged according to their current growth rate. Ensuring each classroom has a half-day teaching assistant is another way to meet the needs of students operating above grade level. Teaching assistants work with small groups of students in and out of the classroom as well as one-on-one. The ILC Director may also recommend a comprehensive evaluation so that teachers and the student have a deeper understanding of the student's learning style and strengths.

An emphasis is placed on developing strong communication skills by designing risk-free classroom environments, encouraging students to participate in classroom discussions and present ideas while sharpening their speaking and listening skills. Creativity is threaded throughout the core curriculum by intentionally incorporating activities that require innovative thinking and design on behalf of the students and engagement in project-based learning.

3c. Students with disabilities:

Although Ben Lippen School does not develop and implement Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), the Individualized Learning Center at Ben Lippen School provides Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs) for students with diagnosed learning differences. The ILPs provide basic accommodations, however modifications to curriculum are not implemented.

3d. English Language Learners:

n/a

3e. Other populations, if a special program or intervention is offered:

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Ben Lippen School seeks to engage, motivate, and provide a positive learning environment for the growth of students in a variety of ways. Recognizing that fear is a major inhibitor of the learning process, Ben Lippen School seeks to provide students with a safe environment where students understand that they are loved and cared for as individuals. This understanding begins with the hiring process by employing teachers who love students, partner with parents, and desire to be excellent educators.

Teachers use a variety of instructional approaches to assist students in their educational journey. Differentiated instruction within each classroom allows teachers to meet students where they are academically and to assist them in the ways that best meet the needs of that particular student or students. ELA and mathematics are taught using mini-lessons and reinforced through small group learning, allowing teachers and teaching assistants to engage with students in a more personal manner. Problem-solving through a collaborative effort with the STEM Director allows students to think critically, attempt solutions, and solve problems that are related to the current lessons being taught in the classroom. Additionally, teachers utilize the outdoors and natural settings for lessons when the weather and topics align. As a means of generating excitement and interest, classrooms are transformed quarterly into unique spaces of learning. Examples of classroom transformations include bat caves, rainforests, airplanes, and the Mayflower.

Social and emotional learning are extensions of the environment created through intentional effort in building relationships with students and families. As a faith-based school, character trait training revolves around the fruits of the spirit found in the Bible (Galatians 5:22-23). Monthly recognition is given to students who consistently display the characteristics of the monthly trait. These include love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Additionally, as conflicts arise between students, teachers and administrators are intentionally discussing effective means for conflict resolution for the students, adding tools for them to access when faced with future conflict.

Exposure to career opportunities for lower school students often come through guest speakers during the weekly chapel meetings, as well as speakers for classes that align with the lessons being taught.

During the time of remote learning, teachers recorded instruction and provided assignments through the Google platform while also setting up real-time interactions through Zoom calls with entire classes or small groups. Chapel messages continued through recordings, drive-through promotion ceremonies occurred, and student material deliveries were made when needed.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

As a part of the mission of Ben Lippen School, the school partners with families in the education of their children. Based on Deuteronomy 6, the school recognizes the parents or legal guardians as the primary educators of their children and seeks to partner with families in the formal education of their children. This foundational understanding between the school and families allows teachers and administrators to work with families in ways that best address student needs. For example, Ben Lippen School strives to reduce schoolwork over weekends and holidays as a means of protecting family time, allowing families to pursue interests that are aligned with their values.

Ben Lippen School has been the K-12 ministry of Columbia International University since its inception in 1940. As a result of this relationship, Ben Lippen School has been blessed with the support of Columbia International University and has benefitted from the experience and understanding of their education department, as well as many other areas. Educational support comes through collegial relationships between teachers and administrators with professors, as well as opportunities for professional development, and advanced degree opportunities with tuition reduction. Additionally, classes have benefitted from opportunities to hear from speakers and explore exhibits at Columbia International University, particularly relating to International Missions Week celebrations.

As a faith-based school, Ben Lippen School partners with Christian counseling centers to assist with addressing the mental health needs of our students. In addition to speaking to large groups of students, counselors are also used for parent education opportunities. Parent topics have included the benefits and dangers of technology, the negative effects of exposure to pornography, anxiety, depression, and other mental health concerns.

Aligned interests with local businesses and individuals also play a key role in the support of students and families. As enrollment has seen consistent growth, facility upgrades and new construction have been needed. Business leaders and individuals with aligned interests have proven invaluable to help improve the facilities as a means of providing more opportunities for the students.

Additionally, Ben Lippen School seeks to partner with local churches, ministries, and local public services. Each class is responsible for providing opportunities for students to serve the local community. These range from nursing home pen-pals to delivering cookies to local police departments.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The culture and environment at Ben Lippen School starts with the hiring process and ensuring that employed teachers align with the expectations of Ben Lippen School. Knowing each teacher on both a professional and personal level is a foundational approach from the Ben Lippen School leaders in establishing a professional and supportive environment. This approach allows the Ben Lippen School leadership to assist and support the staff and to expand that support outside of the school building.

Designated time for professional development is built into the weekly schedule every Monday with late start for students. The first hour of every Monday is dedicated to professional development (PD). The designated Monday PD includes yearly themes for professional development such as growth mindset, data disaggregation, assessments, classroom management, biblical integration, best instructional practices, technology training, and new curriculum implementation training. Time is also given to grade-level teachers to connect and work through curriculum and instruction alignment among the three lower school campuses. This opportunity for professional development has availed teachers in collaboration, differentiation, a deeper understanding of standards, and elevated instruction.

In addition to corporate PD on Monday mornings and professional development days, teachers are encouraged to pursue personal areas of interest for their development. This can include off-campus events, webinars, as well as on-site presentations. Leaders also provide ideas and lists of PD opportunities that may be of interest to teachers and/or administrators. Teachers have attended local workshops, online seminars, and national conferences in pursuit of continued professional growth and knowledge of current pedagogy.

Providing teachers with appropriate support through PD and teaching assistants has been key to student success. Currently, each classroom teacher has a teaching assistant for half of their instructional time. Teaching assistants support teachers through small group instruction and classroom management, as well as assisting in the preparations for upcoming events/field trips. The support of teaching assistants is a vital part of creating a supportive environment.

Remote learning took place during the spring of 2020 when teachers were asked to transition from in-person learning to remote learning for the remainder of the school year. Ben Lippen School teachers pivoted and continued to provide excellent education through the use of the Google platform. Support during this time included many one-on-one conversations and trainings. Group meeting check-ins took place regularly, allowing teachers to share things that seemed to be working well and things that did not work well. Care packages and teacher appreciation parades were some of the ways that administration and families supported the teachers. Since the spring of 2020, Ben Lippen School has been able to continue with in-person learning.

4. School Leadership:

The philosophy of leadership at Ben Lippen School focuses on the following priorities: people (students and families), programs, and facilities, in this order. Each of these areas works together to provide a positive impact on the students and their education. Ben Lippen School is committed to caring for students by preparing them for the next steps in their life's journey through effective education. This is done, in part, by providing excellent programs and top-notch facilities.

Ben Lippen School leadership for the lower school consists of a Principal as well as two Assistant Principals. The Principal directly reports to the Head of School who oversees the lower, middle, and upper school divisions. The primary responsibilities of the Principal include setting vision and direction for the lower school that aligns with the overall goals of Ben Lippen School, strategic planning and initiative development, policy development and follow-through, developing and overseeing the divisional yearly budget, recruiting and hiring faculty and staff, and student discipline.

Assistant Principals act on behalf of the Principal when the Principal is not directly accessible or on a different campus. Each campus has an Assistant Principal or the Principal on its campus at all times. The primary responsibilities of the Assistant Principals include curriculum review and adoption, instructional coaching, overseeing PD opportunities, working with parent volunteers, as well as managing student discipline. Assistant Principals also work directly with the Assistant Head of School of Academics to ensure alignment across divisions and to assist with maintaining teacher expectations.

Each grade level has a lead teacher that provides guidance on the procedures, provides a space for teachers to share, and assists with teacher development. Lead teachers also give insight to administration on teacher concerns and share feedback for reflection throughout the school year.

Strategic planning is key to ensuring that school policies, programs, relationships, and resources align for the benefit of the student. Through the strategic planning process, each of these areas is evaluated and filtered through the school's mission, vision, and core values. As leaders consider the implementation of new programs or policies, they must first ensure that they are beneficial to successfully accomplishing the mission of Ben Lippen School. Policy adoption and resource allocation also go through an additional step of being approved by the school's board of directors.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Like most schools, the needs and backgrounds of Ben Lippen School students, families, and staff differ greatly. Ben Lippen school is composed of many different types of faith-based families such as Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian and Evangelical. Although the families have different religious backgrounds, being part of a covenant model, faith-based school does provide a stable foundation for each of the families as they agree to the foundational tenets of the Christian faith. Despite this truth, there are ways in which Ben Lippen School is intentional in addressing the various backgrounds represented in the students, families, and staff.

With students from around the globe, it is important that teachers instill a sense of respect for various cultures early in the educational journey of the students. One way this is accomplished is through celebrations such as International Missions Week where classes choose a country and learn about its culture, styles, activities, and foods. This has included live streaming with current missionaries across the world and providing opportunities for students to inquire about life in places around the world.

Additionally, it is important that students have access to books and lessons about people who resemble them in appearance. Library books and class set books are intentionally reviewed to ensure accurate reflections of various cultures and backgrounds within each grade level.

Giving opportunities for students to share their backgrounds and experiences with classmates has proven to be a wonderful way to enrich the learning of all students. Recognizing and celebrating events, such as the Chinese New Year, also provide students the ability to share parts of the culture and celebrations that are important to them.

Lippen School. Parent education sessions, Parent Summits, provide parents the opportunity to hear from outside experts on topics that directly impact their children. Parent topics have included the benefits and dangers of technology and stewarding your child's mental health.

Current events and social movements are discussed when developmentally appropriate for the grade level. However, it is critical that teachers not allow personal perspectives to drive conversation as many views will be represented within each classroom. It is an expectation that biblical truth will be discussed when evaluating the motivations of the events and social movements.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

The success of Ben Lippen School is due to a conglomeration of strategies and factors. However, the ONE strategy that has had the greatest impact on Ben Lippen Lower School's academic success is the implementation of workshop model instruction in both reading and math content areas. In 2018, Ben Lippen Lower School transitioned to a workshop model for reading instruction and began utilizing The Daily 5/CAFE instructional method. This program allowed our creative, innovative, and passionate teachers to have more autonomy over what was taught in their individual classrooms. Conferring and strategy groups became part of the everyday norm and teachers were able to better understand each child as an individual learner. This shift spurred even greater differentiation, as teachers sought to meet students' individual needs while both challenging and supporting them along the way.

Additionally, the workshop model provided ample opportunities for students to read, write, and grow in word study skills. Students were afforded choice in book selections, increasing their desire to read. Teachers were able to differentiate centers to meet the needs of a variety of abilities. The successes of this implementation have continued and grown over the last five years.

In 2019, Ben Lippen Lower School adopted a new math program and applied the workshop model to math instruction. Implementing the workshop model of instruction in math produced the same result: teachers knew students' as individual learners and were able to gear instruction to meet specific needs. Mini-lessons presented main concepts, but targeted instruction happened in small groups. During this time, students were also able to participate in workshop stations that were specific to their needs and helped them grow in specific areas determined by their teacher.

The addition of MAP testing took the workshop model to a new level. Teachers were then able to analyze testing data and glean insights specific to individual students. Individual conferences were more meaningful since teachers were able to pull specific strategies for certain students. This also sparked goal-setting, where students were able to be part of the process of selecting attainable growth goals. The data often supported teachers' understanding of areas of needed growth, but also pinpointed students' strengths. The workshop model of instruction, backed by the understanding of helpful testing data, has significantly improved the academic program over the last five years.

PART VII - NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

1. Non-public school association(s): Christian

Identify the religious or independent associations, if any, to which the school belongs. Select the primary association first.

2. Does the school have nonprofit, tax-exempt (501(c)(3)) status? Yes X No
3. What is the educational cost per student? \$8913
(School budget divided by enrollment)
4. What is the average financial aid per student? \$1676
5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 16%
6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 25%

PART VIII – NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL ASSESSMENT RESULTS

FOR NORM-REFERENCED TESTS

Non-public schools must report norm-referenced test (NRT) results in reading and mathematics for students tested in grades 3 and higher in the most recent administration of the test within the most recently completed school year (2021-2022)¹. Each school must obtain grade level summary reports from the test publisher for students tested in reading and mathematics for each of these grades.

These reports must include:

1. the number of students tested;
2. the average student scale score or the national percentile equivalent of the average scale score in reading and mathematics **for all students in each tested grade; and**
3. the average student scale score or the national percentile equivalent of the average scale score in reading and mathematics **for each sufficiently large subgroup² in each tested grade.**

Please make notations on these reports to explain results that represent fewer than 95 percent of the students enrolled at the time of testing (e.g., the number of students who took alternative assessments³).

A copy of these reports (in a PDF file) must be uploaded through the National Blue Ribbons Schools Portal.

Also, one hard copy of these reports must be submitted by mail to CAPE with two hard copies of this application.

¹ Because of school closings due to COVID-19, schools may use test results obtained in the fall or spring of 2019 or the fall of 2020.

² Possible subgroups are those identified in Items 4, 6, 7, and 8 in Part II of this application (racial/ethnic groups, ELL students, students eligible for free or reduced meals, and students receiving special education services). A sufficiently large subgroup is one that represents at least 10 percent of the school enrollment as reported in these items.

³ Alternate assessments are used to evaluate the performance of students who are unable to participate in a school's norm-referenced test (NRT) even with accommodations. These assessments are based on the grade-level content covered by the NRT, but at reduced depth, breadth, and complexity. (adapted from National Center on Educational Outcomes)