Archived Information

Blue Ribbon Schools Program
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
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National Review Panel
Elementary Scoring Guidelines
2000-2001

The National Review Panel rates each of the responses and overall categories as: exemplary, strong, adequate, inadequate, and insufficient evidence. The scoring guidelines describe two of those categories, exemplary and adequate. Any response that is not exemplary but exceeds adequate is rated strong. Any response that does not meet the adequate descriptors will be rated inadequate or insufficient evidence. For a school to receive a site visit, it must be judged "exemplary" in two general categories, have no adequate general categories, have no more than six adequate ratings in the individual items, and have no inadequate ratings. Schools must meet the assessment criteria in Section H.

A. STUDENT FOCUS AND SUPPORT

Exemplary General Category: Goals and objectives flow from the school's vision and student needs, and reflect high aspirations for all students. The school strives for and achieves excellence and equity. A cohesive and integrated network of programs, cocurricular activities and services has been implemented to support the full spectrum of students in achievement of the goals and objectives of the school. The staff has aligned curriculum and put in place strategies to ensure successful transitions of students entering the school and transitioning to other schools. Examples of and participation rates in programs and services provide evidence that the school is committed to doing whatever it takes to ensure student success.

Adequate General Category: The school provides opportunities for participation in cocurricular activities and non-academic programs and services that support a range of student needs. Goals and objectives delineate aspirations for all students. Examples and illustrations show evidence of student participation in individual programs but not necessarily the integration of support services with other components of the school program.

A1. **How would you describe your student population? What are your students' needs? How do you assure that the needs of all students are met?** *Explain how the school determines and meets the needs of diverse students.*

EXEMPLARY	ADEQUATE
A pervasive focus on the success of all students is supported by a comprehensive system of needs analysis based on the school's vision, goals (see Vision Statement), and data that drive the setting of priorities, establishment of objectives and programs. Explanations and/or specific examples illustrate how programs and strategies have been implemented to ensure that the needs of diverse students are being met (see C1-C6, D1, H1).	The school describes the outcomes of needs assessment that is reflected in the school's vision and provides information related to some of its goals (see Vision Statement). Descriptions of programs and strategies provide examples of how the identified needs of students are being addressed (see C1-C6, D1, H1).

A2. **What nonacademic services and programs are available to support students, and how do they relate to the student needs and school goals identified?** *Describe any counseling programs, health services, safety programs, tutoring or mentoring services, dropout prevention programs, or similar student support activities. Explain how you integrate student services with other components of the school program, including accessibility of students with disabilities to all programs. Indicate student participation rates and explain how you ensure that you include all students who need nonacademic services.*

Comprehensive support services and programs are in place to meet the full range of student needs. It is clear how these services and programs are integrated and support other components of the school program. There are positive effects of support services and programs and inclusion of all students, e.g., rates of participation and exit rates of students served in special programs. Students with disabilities participate in programs and services based on their needs (see C3, G2-3).	Standard non-academic programs and services are in place and provide the opportunity for students to meet non-academic needs (e.g., guidance services, nurse, drug prevention curriculum, remedial courses); however, there is limited evidence that the programs form an integrated support system for all students. Provisions have been made for students with disabilities to participate in programs and services. (see C3, G2-3).

A3. **How does your school determine and address the developmental needs of students as they move from grade to grade?** *Explain how you determine that your programs and services are developmentally appropriate. Also, describe your strategies to ease transitions for first-year students, transfer students entering other grades, and students leaving the school.*

Curricula, programs and services are clearly matched to the developmental needs of students. (see C1-C7).	Curricula, programs and services reflect some attention to developmental needs of students (see C1-C7).
There are needs-based programs and practices in place to assist students and their parents in making successful transitions for (a) beginning first year students (b) students transferring into the school (c) students moving up to another school, career, or further education.	Transition activities are described but lack some elements and lack the articulation of a comprehensive program for transition for all students who are (a) beginning first year in the school (b) transfer students entering other grades (c) students moving up to another school, career, or further education.
Strategies reflect knowledge of school demographics and student needs (e.g., mobility rate). They include, but are not limited to, curriculum alignment, staff responsibility, implementation of activities such as orientation, parent information sessions, articulation of expectations and information on school operations and procedures.	

A4. **What cocurricular activities are available for students and how do those activities extend the academic curriculum?** *Indicate what cocurricular (extracurricular) opportunities are provided, including clubs and athletics. Indicate how participation is encouraged, what voice students have in planning cocurricular offerings, what percentage of students participate, and the extent to which participation represents the overall student body, both male and female.*

A wide range of cocurricular activities is in place based on student interest and need. Students have had an active voice in planning activities and all students are actively encouraged to participate. Procedures and services are in place to promote and facilitate participation (e.g., financial support for students who cannot pay for trips usually paid for by parents). As a result there is a high student participation rate that is representative of the student body (see G2-G4).	A standard selection of cocurricular activities offers the opportunity for student participation based on interest. Participation rates are moderate and fairly representative of the student population (see G2-G4).

A5. **How does your school address the accessibility of its facilities to students and others with disabilities?** *Describe what you have done or plan to do to improve the school's physical accessibility.*

There is evidence that disabled persons (students, parents, and community) are provided access to all facilities so that they can take advantage of all services and programs (see A1, 2, 4, C3, G2).	Attention has been directed to providing access to facilities and programs. Although not all areas of the facilities are accessible to disabled persons, provisions are being made for students with disabilities to participate in appropriate services and programs (see A1, 2, 4, C3, G2). The school is generally accessible to parents and others with disabilities.

B. SCHOOL ORGANIZATION AND CULTURE

Exemplary General Category: The school culture exemplifies a caring community of learners that supports continuous learning and improvement flowing from student-focused goals. Examples document that members are engaged in collective inquiry, reflection and responsible decision-making about learning Hiring and assignment of staff, opportunities for students to build sustained and caring relationships with adults, a healthy peer climate among students, and the existence of a safe positive environment demonstrate that this school is focused on the welfare and continuous achievement of all students and staff.

Adequate General Category: Discipline policies and age-appropriate procedures for drug prevention and discipline indicate that the school is providing a safe environment for students and staff. There is limited evidence of a culture that engages all members of the learning community in continuous reflection and improvement. Hiring practices, opportunities for students to build caring relationships with adults, and efforts to build a positive peer climate among students are typical for schools.

B1. **How does the culture of your school support the learning of all its members and foster a caring community?** Describe your school culture. Explain the process the school uses to engage all members in collective inquiry, reflection, and responsible decision-making about their learning. Provide examples.

Examples make it clear that the focus of the school is student achievement and that all members of the learning community are actively engaged in collective inquiry, reflection, and responsible decision-making, resulting in continuous school improvement (see C1-7).	Examples of committee work provide evidence of how the school has solved problems or developed programs to improve education. However, there is limited evidence of the existence of a school culture that is continuously focused on school improvement (see C1-7).

B2. **What opportunities do students have to build sustained and caring relationships with teachers and other adults? How does your school promote a healthy peer climate among the students?** *Explain how you foster positive interactions and respect between students and adults and how you promote a healthy peer climate among students and student groups. Describe an instance when you remedied a situation where a student or group of students felt less than fully included.*

A positive school climate exists in the school. Examples provide evidence of respect among individuals and groups of students, as well as attention to the needs of any students or groups who may feel less a part of the school (see A2, C3). Adults provide individual and caring support for students.	The school is making an effort to create a positive climate for teaching and learning, but provides limited programmatic or anecdotal evidence of the existence of a healthy peer climate (see A2, C3) or of opportunities beyond the ordinary for sustained student/adult relationships to develop.

B3. **How are teachers hired in your school? How are teacher assignments made?** *Describe teacher recruitment and hiring standards and practices. Describe how teacher assignments are made. Give evidence that these assignments are made for the benefit of all students and that teacher strengths are matched to student needs.*

The school recognizes the importance of hiring practices to the achievement of the mission, goals, and objectives of the school. Recruitment, hiring practices, and assignment of staff are based on staff knowledge, ability to meet student needs, and commitment to student learning	Hiring practices are typical (e.g., review of academic preparation, compatibility with existing staff) and focus on process (e.g., multiple interviews, input from a review committee). Assignments are made based on the schedule of the teacher replaced or seniority.

B4. What is your school's plan for school safety, discipline, and drug prevention? What is your record for the past five years? *Describe your plan and create a set of behavioral categories that is consistent with your school safety, discipline, and drug prevention policies and appropriate for describing incidents ranging from minor to serious that occur in your school. Show how your school maintains a safe, orderly, and drug-free environment. Report incidents in terms of percentages of students involved for each category you identified and give evidence about any policy or practice that is effective.*

The school is safe and orderly for both students and staff. Data support that realistic age appropriate drug prevention programs are in place. Classroom management and discipline strategies minimize disruption, facilitate the learning process, and contribute to a positive school climate (see A2).	Strategies and discipline policies minimize disruption of the school day. Drug prevention programs are in place, but there is not evidence of their rate of effectiveness (see A2).
The record of incidents supports significant improvement in or sustained low incidents of negative behaviors.	Reported incident data show limited improvement in or moderate sustained rates of negative behaviors.

C. CHALLENGING STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM

Exemplary General Category: The curriculum is rationally designed to ensure high levels of achievement of the school's goals and objectives by all students. These goals and objectives include learning of significant content by all students, and citizenship, interpersonal, and workplace skills. The curriculum is based on knowledge of effective practice and the nature of the student body; programs and curricula are consistently implemented, and are regularly monitored, evaluated and improved. Students are meeting rigorous standards for promotion and/or graduation.

Adequate General Category: The curriculum provides the opportunity for students to achieve subject-related objectives (including learning of significant content and citizenship, interpersonal, and workplace skills). There is some evidence that specific programs and curricula have been based on knowledge of effective practice and diverse learner needs. There exists a process for curriculum review and revision. Standards for promotion and/or graduation are moderate.

C1. How does your curriculum serve the broad goals for student learning and development that the public generally expects education to achieve: personal and intellectual growth, citizenship, and preparation for work and higher education? What relative emphasis do you place on these goals in your curriculum? *Give specific examples of how your curriculum addresses, and how much emphasis you place on each of these objectives: basic skills; learning in the academic disciplines; character development and ethical judgment; preparation for life in a complex and diverse society; appreciation for democratic values; participation in the practices of democracy and community service; development of interpersonal, technological, and other skills valued in the workplace; and other broad goals and objectives consistent with your school's vision/mission.*

The overall curriculum provides a picture of a purposely developed and articulated program of studies clearly designed to ensure high levels of achievement of all students of school goals with challenging objectives for: • academic learning • personal growth • citizenship development, and • skills valued in the workplace.	The overall description of the curriculum provides a picture of a standard program of studies that focuses on providing opportunities for students to achieve objectives that include: • academic learning • personal growth • citizenship development, and • skills valued in the workplace
Rich curriculum examples have been selected to make it clear how achievement of important objectives is accomplished through programs and instruction (see A1).	Examples of how the curriculum emphasizes objectives are not rich and lack detail (e.g., citizenship is taught in social studies; a special language arts program is described, but only a few students are involved and little attention is given to the needs of other students in this area). (see A1)

C2. How is your school organized to provide for differing student academic needs within the school's goals, priorities, and curriculum? *Provide evidence that decisions about student grouping and scheduling are made with the benefit of all students as the primary goal. If student ability grouping exists at your school, describe under what conditions and how often students may move among groups. Provide data for the last academic year indicating how many students moved into groups with more challenging course work.*

The organization of the school, scheduling and class placements clearly reflect the school's mission, goals, differing student needs, and commitment that all students will achieve high academic standards and be prepared for the next level of schooling (see A1, C3-C7).	The organization of the school and class placements indicate commitment to learning for all students (see A1, C3-C7).
Any students placed in separate programs designed for lower or average achieving students are meeting high academic standards and are prepared to and actually move into higher level or mainstream programs. Data provide evidence of student movement into classes with more challenging course work (see C3, H4-H6). Data provide evidence that students placed in classes with advanced content also participate in mainstream classes (see A1, C3).	There is no formal tracking in the school. However, there is limited evidence that programs designed to meet the needs of lower or average achieving students lead to achievement of high academic standards or movement of such students into higher level or mainstream programs (see C3, H4-H6). (Tracking, that is, the assignment of students to specific academic groups that results in the inability of the students to move from one program to another, will result in an inadequate rating for this criterion.) (see A1, C3).

C3. How do you ensure that diverse learners (for example, students with disabilities, gifted and talented students, students with limited English proficiency, migrant students, and students placed at risk) have the opportunity to learn challenging content and achieve at high levels?
Describe any special programs or curricular offerings available for students with particular needs. Explain how these relate to the overall curriculum.

Students grouped in order to meet special needs (e.g., students with disabilities, gifted and talented students, limited English proficient, migrant students, and students placed at-risk) are engaged in courses with challenging content; data show that these students are achieving (see A1, H4-H6).	Programs and courses are in place based on short-term needs of special populations but the data provided do not consistently reflect that these students are expected to achieve the school's academic standards (see A1, H4-H6).
Although the needs of specific student groups are addressed, students are not tracked or isolated from other students.	The alignment of objectives and content in special programs with those in standard does not encourage movement of students into the mainstream, or the curriculum content in special programs lacks the rigor of the standard curriculum and does not consistently address all the skills needed to transition to the mainstream.
Although there may be special programs or offerings for students with lower past achievement or limited English proficiency, it is clear that the goal of such programs is to move students into the mainstream in a reasonable amount of time; the curriculum content parallels the standard programs; and there is evidence that students successfully move into the mainstream or into upper level programs.	There is only limited evidence that students with special needs are prepared to and actually do move into the mainstream or that students in the standard curriculum have the opportunity to move into high challenge programs or courses.
Opportunities are available for gifted and talented students to participate in high challenge programs either in or out of the regular classroom and to pursue studies that exceed even the school's high academic standards.	Gifted and talented students are identified and provided with programs that incorporate high challenge subject matter.

C4. **What is the process for continuous curriculum renewal at your school? What questions about curriculum is your school currently addressing?** *Describe your process for continuous curriculum renewal, including the data and resources you use for evaluating and decision-making, the participants involved in the process, and the impact of its implementation on teachers and students. Discuss your plans for future curriculum renewal.*

A comprehensive process for continuous curriculum renewal is in place that includes such practices as: • analysis of courses and programs in terms of alignment of objectives with the school's goals and vision/mission • examination of student achievement data • review of effective teaching practices, and of professional, state, and national content and curriculum standards • current course content analysis in terms of student needs and standards • provision for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of courses or programs • involvement of appropriate people in development and implementation of change (see E2, H1, 2 ,4, 5, F3-4).	Programs have been developed or revised in content areas in response to new trends, assessment requirements, or availability of new textbooks. Although there are examples of renewal in terms of specific programs, there does not appear to be a continuous and coherent approach to data analysis, research on practice, monitoring and evaluation of courses. Based on the examples given, the renewal process does not clearly reflect attention to the diverse needs of students. Although programs are described, there is limited evidence that they have been fully implemented, monitored and under continuous review (see E2, H1, 2 ,4, 5, F3-4).

C5. Successful schools offer all students opportunities to be engaged with significant content. How does your school ensure that students achieve at high levels in the core subjects? *Include a brief description of each subject area below, noting: (1) the general content and performance standards in each major subject area, including how essential skills such as, reading, writing, and thinking are addressed; (2) curriculum articulation throughout the content areas or across grades; (3) ways in which content areas are integrated; and (4) any unique or unusually effective features of your curriculum.*

> *Note: If your core curriculum is organized in a manner that would be better explained using a framework other than the traditional subject areas, you may substitute your framework for the one listed below. However, be sure to explain how the essential skills and core subjects relate to your curriculum framework.*

> *Although foreign language instruction is optional for elementary schools this year, no school will receive an exemplary rating in the overall "C" category unless it offers at least one foreign language as a part of the regular curriculum.*

> a. **English (Language Arts)**
> b. **Mathematics**
> c. **Science**
> d. **Social Studies**
> e. **The Arts**
> f. **Foreign Languages (Optional)**

For each subject area a rich curriculum is in place designed to accomplish the expectation that each student will learn significant content and essential cross content skills and be fully prepared for the next level of schooling.	The school presents a curriculum in each subject area that provides the opportunity for most students to study significant content and learn essential cross content skills.
There is clear articulation of curricula across grades and programs reflect application of content and learning research.	There is some articulation of curricula across grades and some program descriptions include references to research-based practice, (e.g., learning styles, student engagement); however, it is unclear how the research base actually influences curriculum decisions.
Descriptions of unique or unusually effective features of the curriculum add evidence to support that the curriculum is knowledge based and designed to meet the needs of various groups of students.	Descriptions of unique or unusually effective practice provide evidence that the school is concerned about meeting special needs of students; however, these courses may not be a reasoned part of a carefully planned sequence.
The description for each subject makes it clear how any students who are grouped based on lower ability or special needs (see A1, C2 and C3) are engaged in significant content, and the program makes it possible and likely that students will move into the mainstream.	If any students are grouped for instruction based on lower ability or special needs (see A1, C2 and C3), the scope and sequence for each subject includes provisions for these students that engage them in significant content and provide for movement into higher level courses.

C6. What other content areas or programs play essential roles in your schoolwide curriculum goals? *Select two content areas or programs that you think should be highlighted because of their central importance to your school's vision/mission and priorities or because of the high quality, uniqueness or special significance of the offering. Provide the same kind of information for these content areas as in item C5.*

The school has selected two additional content areas or programs to illustrate the breadth of the curriculum. For each area, a coherent curriculum is in place designed to accomplish the expectation that each student will learn significant content.	The school presents descriptions of two additional content or program areas that provide the opportunity for most students to study significant content.
There is clear articulation of courses or programs across grades, and courses reflect application of content and learning research.	Course descriptions and program descriptions include references to research-based practice, (e.g., learning styles and student engagement; however, it is unclear how the research base actually influences instruction.
Descriptions of unique or unusually effective features of the curriculum add evidence to support that the curriculum is knowledge based and designed to meet the needs of various groups of students (see A1, C2-C3).	Descriptions of unique or unusually effective practice provide evidence that the school is concerned about meeting special needs of students; however, these courses may not be a reasoned part of a carefully planned sequence (see A1, C2-C3).

C7. What requirements must be satisfied before a student is promoted to the next grade or level of schooling? *Describe policies and practices related to promotion and eligibility for accelerated course work. Explain how these insure content mastery, appropriate student development, and challenge students beyond minimum standards.*

Promotion requirements are challenging and indicate that more is expected of students than minimum standards. School practices and policies ensure content mastery and student development (see H4-H6).	Students are meeting relatively high state and/or district requirements; if these standards are minimal then many students exceed the standards (see H4-H6).

D. ACTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Exemplary General Category: There is clear and compelling evidence that there is purposeful decision-making governing all aspects of the teaching and learning program. There is a discernable link between instructional strategies and student achievement. Teaching practices and learning experiences reflect current research on cognition, teaching, and learning. An abundance of technology, print, and media resources is available to all students and staff to insure that educational goals and student needs are met.

Adequate General Category: There is some evidence that purposeful decision-making is utilized to develop most aspects of the teaching and learning program; however, it may not permeate the entire program or be systematic. The link between instructional strategies and students is not clear and may be a result of individual teacher quality rather than overall program quality. Current research on cognition, teaching, and learning is considered in the development of some programs. Some technology resources and sufficient print and media resources are available for student and faculty use.

D1. How are teaching practices and learning experiences in your school consistent with current knowledge about successful teaching and learning? *Explain and illustrate through examples why your teaching practices are appropriate for the programs or subjects in your curriculum and for your students.*

The teaching practices described clearly demonstrate:	The teaching practices described demonstrate:
• that all teachers have high expectations for all students	• that most teachers have high expectations for students
• that there is effective use of a variety of instructional methods and resources (see C5 and C6).	• use of a variety of instructional methods and resources with little evidence of effectiveness (see C5 and C6).
• that there is attention to different learning needs and instruction planned to meet those needs (see C3).	• knowledge of learning needs but only limited evidence that there is consistency in planning to meet those needs (see C3).
• that all student populations successfully achieve high standards (see H4-H6, H9) • that critical thinking strategies are stressed in classes for all ability levels of students (see C3-C6) • hands-on, investigative experiences are provided for all students in a variety of class settings (see C5-C6).	• an attempt to insure that all student populations achieve high standards, but standards may vary for different groups (see H4-H6, H9) • critical thinking strategies stressed in some classes, particularly for higher ability students (see C3 – C6). • hands-on, investigative experiences (see C5-C6).

D2. In what ways do your teaching practices support student-initiated learning? *Give evidence that your classrooms are communities of learners and support student responsibility for contributing to individual and peer group learning and achievement.*

There is clear evidence that students (see C1-6):	There is evidence that students (see C1-6).
• have multiple opportunities to complete independent projects in a variety of courses • have both formal and informal ways to be involved in decisions regarding learning experiences and use of class time	• have some opportunities to complete independent projects in selected courses • have mostly informal ways to be involved in decisions regarding learning experiences and use of class time
• have multiple opportunities to work effectively in collaborative groups in different class settings	• have opportunities to work effectively in collaborative groups in some class settings
• have multiple opportunities to be engaged in real-life, problem-solving experiences.	• have limited opportunities to be engaged in real-life, problem solving experiences.

D3. **How are resources made available to teachers and students for gathering information and sharing the results of their efforts?** *Describe your library, information, or media services and explain how these services support the curriculum and classroom instruction. Include any usage data available, for example, the number of students using the library.*

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There is clear evidence that:	There is evidence that:
• learning resources are available and effectively used within the classroom (see C5-C6)	• classroom learning resources are available and used; however, there is little evidence of level of effectiveness (see C5-C6)
• the library/media center is well stocked with print, media, and technology resources	• the library/media center is well-stocked with print, media, and technology resources
• library/media and information gathering and analysis skills are coordinated and integrated into the instructional program	• library/media and information skills are taught
• students have adequate time both within the school schedule and after school to utilize classroom and library resources	• students have some time within the school schedule and/or after school to utilize classroom and library resources
• students have regular opportunities to share the results of their research and work (see C5-C6).	• students have some opportunities to share the results of their research and work (see C5-C6).

D4. **What technology applications are you using? How do they relate to your curricular goals and how do they support teaching and learning?** *Describe your approach to technology and how that approach enhances teaching and learning. Explain how you ensure equitable access to technology for students and teachers.*

There is clear evidence that:	There is evidence that:
• technology applications that enhance learning have been effectively incorporated into all facets of the instructional program (see C3, C5-C6).	• technology applications have been incorporated into some facets of the instructional program, but there is little sense of the level of effectiveness (see C3, C5-C6).
• all students have equal access to current technology to support their educational goals and needs (see C3).	• technology is accessible to students in only some classes or programs or may be limited to selected students (see C3).
• teachers and students have the time and knowledge to utilize the Internet and other technology for a variety of uses, such as writing, research, problem-solving, etc.	• teachers and/or students have limited time and knowledge to utilize the Internet and other technology for such uses as writing, research, problem solving, etc.
• there are sufficient technology resources available to meet teacher/student requirements.	• there are technology resources available, but they are insufficient to meet all the demands of teachers and/or students.

E. PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY

Exemplary General Category: The school recognizes the vital role continuous professional development plays in achieving the school's mission. The school has developed a culture that encourages teachers, administrators, and school staff to work together as members of a professional community, supporting each other in the improvement of student learning. Professional growth and development, both inside and outside the school walls, is continuous and thoughtfully planned, based on analysis of data on student and faculty needs, and is integral to implementing new school initiatives and/or changes in curriculum. Formal and informal support is provided to beginning and experienced teachers. Staff are given opportunities for leadership and recognition. Finally, teachers, administrators, and other staff are provided with the time and opportunity to reflect on what is working and to change what is no longer effective.

Adequate General Category: Certain groups of staff work together and support each other; however, there is a sense that this is not a regular or planned occurrence. The school offers its staff a variety of professional development activities and other opportunities for growth, but there is no sense of an overall plan tied to ongoing analysis of data on student and faculty instructional needs, new initiatives, or changes in curriculum. Although some support is provided to help new and more experienced teachers, this is not systematic and does not reach everyone who needs help. Opportunities for developing leadership skills and receiving recognition often fall to the same, select group. Finally, there is little encouragement to reflect on what is and is not working and make the necessary changes.

E1. **What opportunities do teachers and other staff have to build professional community that enhance their collective capacity to work together to support student learning?** *Describe the professional community in your school. Provide specific examples of how professional community builds a sense of collective responsibility for student outcomes, offers collegial support to develop and try out new ideas, solves problems collectively, seeks out information, provides a context for reflection, or enables staff to work together in other ways. Explain how such activities support student learning.*

The school provides clear evidence that:	The school provides evidence that:
• faculty and administration share a collective sense of responsibility for student outcomes.	• some faculty and administration share a sense of responsibility for student outcomes.
• a culture exists that encourages and rewards staff who plan and implement new strategies to improve instruction; there is a commitment of the staff and administration to support and evaluate new practices and to broadly adopt successful new practices.	• individuals or groups of teachers who want to try new ideas to improve instruction receive support; however, there is inconsistency in the adoption of new practices if they prove successful.
• faculty and administration consistently work together in both formal and informal groups to solve common problems (see B1).	• faculty and administration occasionally work together to solve common problems, but this is not a regular part of the school culture.
• faculty and administration consistently utilize current research and school and student data to improve programs and solve problems (see C4, H2, H4-H6).	• faculty and administration occasionally utilize research and school data to improve programs (see C4, H2, H4-H6).
• regular/frequent opportunities are planned to reflect on current practice, student performance, and other significant school issues.	• some opportunities exist to reflect on current practice, student performance, and other significant school issues.

E2. **How does a coherent approach to professional development for teachers and other staff ensure their ability to implement effectively the school's curriculum, instructional strategies, and support system? How do organizational arrangements, such as time and teaching assignments, and school norms and culture, make professional development a priority?**
Describe professional development in your school and show how teachers are involved. Give examples of significant ongoing on-site learning opportunities (such as mentoring, teacher research, teacher-led seminars) and school support for participation in out-of-school professional activities (such as networks, district workshops, professional associations, conferences, courses, links with higher education, cultural institutions, and businesses). Describe your long-term professional development plan and its relation to school goals.

There is a coherent, ongoing professional development program focused on continuous improvement of student learning and school practice that is evidenced by:	A variety of on-site and off-site professional development activities occurs; however, there is little evidence that these activities flow from analysis of student and staff instructional needs and requirements of new initiatives or curriculum (see A1, B1, C4, D1, H2, H4-H6).
• a school culture that recognizes staff development as vital to accomplishing the school's mission and that actively promotes and supports continuous professional growth (see B1).	Although individual activities are described, there is little sense (commitment of time and resources, coherent plans, promotion of participation) of a school culture that recognizes the vital role of planned professional development in improving programs and increasing student learning
• regular opportunities for staff to analyze assessment data and to modify curriculum or identify the need for further staff development (see A1, B1, C4, H2, H4-H6).	
• Sufficient preparation of all involved staff for successful implementation of new or revised curriculum and other changes in practice or program.	
• a major commitment of time and resources that results in significant on-site and off-site professional development based on program and staff needs such as, training in content areas and instructional methods, mentoring, teacher research, staff-led seminars and training sessions, and participation in networks, professional conferences, observations in other schools, and courses (see C4-C6, D1).	

E3. **How does the school tailor professional development and support to address the differences in career experience or professional responsibility?** *Describe the formal and informal support that the school provides for beginning teachers, newly hired teachers, and teachers undertaking a significant change in responsibilities. Describe opportunities for teacher leadership and provide examples of professional development opportunities for other staff (such as paraprofessionals, counselors or specialists, and administrators) and explain why these opportunities are appropriate.*

A formal and informal support system is provided for beginning teachers (e.g., training sessions, internships, mentoring, observations of veteran teachers, buddy system, etc.), designed to ensure that beginning teachers have both the content and instructional skills needed to implement school programs and practices and are successfully incorporated into the culture of the school (see B1).	The support system for new teachers is less formal. General sessions and assignment of buddies are the main methods for providing support for new teachers during their first year in the school (see B1).
Ongoing professional growth activities are provided for all veteran teachers, and specific developmental support is provided for those with new responsibilities or those experiencing problems with their current teaching assignment (e.g., targeted training, peer coaching, mentoring, observations of colleagues).	All teachers are provided with opportunities to participate in professional development activities; however, there are limited strategies or opportunities that ensure that staff with new responsibilities or those experiencing problems with current teaching assignments are receiving the assistance needed.
Highly skilled experienced teachers have the opportunity to provide leadership for professional development activities.	Opportunities exist for some experienced teachers to provide professional development leadership.
Customized professional development opportunities exist for non-teaching staff members, such as counselors or specialists, paraprofessionals, or administrators (see B1).	Staff members, such as counselors or specialists, paraprofessionals, or administrators have the opportunity to participate in a limited selection of professional development activities based on their needs or interests (see B1).

E4. How does your school use the processes and results of student assessment, staff evaluation, and school review to support professional growth? How has teacher professional development improved teaching and resulted in higher student achievement and success? *Describe the opportunities that teachers and other staff have to obtain feedback on their own professional performance, including the role of formal staff evaluation. Provide any evidence available on the impact of professional development, especially on how this investment has improved teaching. Describe how your school recognizes excellent teaching.*

The school systematically uses the results of student assessment, staff evaluations, and school reviews to develop both personal and school plans for professional growth (see B1, C3, D1, H2, H4-H6).	The plans for staff development are primarily based on staff interest and/or desire to introduce staff to new concepts; some attention is given to the results of student assessment, staff evaluations, and school reviews in planning in-service programs (see B1, C3, D1, H2, H4-H6).
Staff members are provided with feedback on their own professional performance as a basis for encouraging participation in professional growth activities and for providing for the recognition of excellent teaching.	The school evaluates professional development based on staff satisfaction with offerings, but does not evaluate the impact of the programs on the improvement of teaching (see C1-C6).
The school evaluates the relationship between professional development and instructional improvement and modifies plans accordingly (see C1-C6).	There are some efforts to recognize and reward staff for excellence in improving education for students.
The school provides examples of how the investment in professional development has improved teaching.	The school has limited evidence that its professional development efforts have improved teaching.

F. LEADERSHIP AND EDUCATIONAL VITALITY

Exemplary General Category: Dynamic leadership engages the school and community in continuous school improvement focused on student learning and based on vision, data, knowledge of research, effective practice, and continuous monitoring and assessment that has resulted in high levels of student achievement and implementation of comprehensive plans to meet current and future challenges.

Adequate General Category: Leadership engages the school and community in a school improvement process based on identified problems or deficiencies that may result in higher levels of student achievement and that may address future challenges.

F1. **How does leadership move your school toward its vision/mission? How is the instructional leadership role defined and implemented? How are resources aligned with goals?** *Be specific about what leadership roles and functions are considered important in your school. Describe the leadership role of the principal. Provide concrete examples of how your school leadership ensures that policies, programs, relationships, and resources focus on the achievement of the school's vision/mission and promote learning.*

It is clear how the commitment and actions of the principal and other leadership have actually moved the school substantially toward realizing its vision. Concrete examples illustrate how leadership has resulted in policies, programs, relationships, and resources that have promoted learning (see A1, B1, C3-4, H2-3, G2).	The principal is described as an instructional leader. Examples of leadership activities may include the establishment of committees to develop solutions to problems or revise curriculum. Management activities are clearly described but leadership that promotes learning and moves the school toward achievement of the school's vision are unclear (see A1, B1, C3-4, H2-3, G2).
Clearly the leaders in this school not only "talk the talk but walk the walk," engaging the staff in "keeping the dream (vision)".	There is limited evidence that the vision/mission is operationalized in daily practice.

F2. **How does the school engage its internal and external stakeholders in leadership and decision-making? What is the relationship between the principal and stakeholders?** *Explain how staff, teachers, students, parents, and the wider community have a voice in the formulation of the school's vision/mission, goals, and priorities. Explain how often and by whom long-range goals and priorities are reviewed. Also, provide specific examples of how key stakeholders within the school have a voice in everyday decisions of critical importance to them.*

There is abundant evidence to show that leadership works collaboratively with appropriate stakeholders in planning and decision making, resulting in desired outcomes. The parameters of leadership are clear, understood by all stakeholders, and consistent with implementing the vision and goals of the school (see B1, C4, G2, H2-3).	There is evidence to show that leadership has involved some stakeholders in planning and decision making with some positive results. The parameters of leadership are established and understood by all stakeholders (see B1, C4, G2, H2-3).

F3. **What kind of participatory school improvement process operates at your school? How did your school prepare its Self-Assessment for the Blue Ribbon Schools Program and how did this initiative relate to other school improvement and planning efforts?** *Describe your efforts to effect school improvement, detailing your progress to date. Specify the leadership roles in this process. In describing the preparation of this Self-Assessment, explain the process, how internal and external stakeholder groups were involved, the time frame, and its relationship to ongoing school improvement efforts.*

There is evidence of a school-wide culture that supports ongoing student focused improvement demonstrated by:	There is a commitment to make changes in programs or practices when needs are readily identified (see B1, D1, H2).
• ongoing self-assessments, that have included input from stakeholders and are used as the base for the development of the Blue Ribbon Schools application and other school improvements	There is only limited evidence of ongoing self-assessment.
• a record of successful implementation of a coherent set of planned student-centered improvements (see B1, D1, C4-C6, G2, H2)	The process for development of the Blue Ribbon School application involved internal and external stakeholders and is somewhat related to other improvement efforts (see B1, D1, C4-C6, G2, H2).
• a commitment to monitor and evaluate new and old programs and to make changes as needed (see C4, H2).	Examples illustrate how some improvements were planned and implemented to meet identified needs (see C4-C6, H2).

F4. **How does your school leadership use the most current information about education to promote continuous improvement in your school? How does such evidence influence decision-making?** *Provide specific details about how the use of research findings, education reform reports, and/or the analysis of data (including data generated by the school) have fostered a deeper understanding of the school's goals, policies, and practices. Explain how this information has prompted specific improvements designed to achieve your vision/mission and enhance student learning.*

The school's process to promote continuous improvement and informed decision making includes:	The school's process to promote improvement and informed decision making includes some of the following:
• use of guidelines and standards of professional organizations and major school reform efforts (see C5, C6). • examination of a variety of data, e.g., achievement, attendance, discipline, post promotion studies (see A1, B4, D1, E1-4, H2, H4-H6, H9). • use of research findings concerning content and instructional practice (see C4 and C5).	• use of guidelines and standards of professional organizations and major school reform efforts (see C5, C6). • examination of a variety of data, e.g., achievement, attendance, discipline, post promotion studies (see A1, B4, D1, E1-4, H2, H4-H6, H9). • use of research findings concerning content and instructional practice (see C4 and C5).
The comprehensive improvement process is supported with specific examples of implemented improvements designed to achieve the school's vision and enhance student learning (see A1, B1, C4, H2).	The improvement process is supported with some examples of implemented improvements designed to solve problems (see A1, B1, C4, H2).

F5. **As you reflect on the last five years, what conditions or changes have contributed most to the overall success of your school?** *Give specific examples.*

The school has documented significant changes made as part of an ongoing improvement effort.	The school has documented some changes made as part of an ongoing improvement effort.
The changes have resulted in improvement of educational effectiveness (see C1-C8, H4-H6).	Some changes have resulted in improvement of educational effectiveness (see C1-C8, H4-H6).

F6. **How has the school integrated technology to improve management and program efficiency and effectiveness?** *Assuming that educational applications of technology have been discussed in D, describe how you use technology in your school. Describe also how you insure that staff are trained in the use of technology and given the opportunity to use these resources effectively. Provide specific examples of how technology has enabled you to develop and analyze data about your school and use it as a basis for important decisions.*

The school has integrated the use of technology to support management; provisions are made to ensure that staff have the technical skills and available resources to allow them to use technology to solve problems and process information see (see C4, D3).	The school has partially integrated the use of technology to management; some provision is made to ensure that staff have the technical skills and available resources to allow them to use technology to solve problems and process information (see C4, D3).
Technology has increased the efficiency of school operations and has provided a database for school improvement; specific examples are provided to show how data analysis has informed important decisions and increased management efficiency (see C4, D3, E3, H2).	There is some evidence that technology has increased the efficiency of school operations and has provided a database for school improvement (see C4, D3, E3, H2).

F7. **What do you consider the major educational challenges your school must face over the next five years, and how do you plan to address them?** *Give specific examples.*

Through a process of needs assessment, the school has identified challenges that must be addressed in order to maintain or increase school effectiveness and has developed an agenda for action (see A1, B4, C4, H1-2, H4-H6).	The school has identified challenges that must be addressed in order to maintain or increase school effectiveness, and has developed some strategies to address these challenges (see A1, B4, C4, H1-2, H4-H6).

G. SCHOOL, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Exemplary General Category: A pattern of actions taken by the school demonstrates commitment to and recognition of the important role that families, partnerships and community play in supporting learning The school has implemented strategies (e.g., services that meet the needs of families, parent conferences and meeting schedules that facilitate parent participation, methods for promoting two-way communication) that are effective in involving parents from all segments of the community in supporting their children's education. Examples illustrate how the school has successfully engaged the educational resources of the community, families, and other partners to support educational goals and provided reciprocal benefits.

Adequate General Category: The school has provided examples of efforts to involve parents in their children's education (e.g., report cards, parent conferences, newsletter); however, there is a sense that this is neither a priority nor part of an overall plan to encourage involvement. Examples of the use of educational resources of the community, families, or other partners are limited.

G1. **What are the goals and priorities of your school, family, and community partnerships? How have your school and community both improved as a result of these partnerships and how did you measure the improvements?** *Discuss how your school identifies these goals and priorities, who was involved in identifying them, and how they are related to the school's overall goals and activities. Provide specific examples of activities or projects conducted in collaboration with community institutions, agencies, and groups and show how these school-community partnerships benefit the community and the school. Describe an effort that you feel best exemplifies your partnerships and describe as specifically as possible the results achieved for each of the participating stakeholders.*

The goals and priorities of school, family, community and other partnerships are clearly articulated and aligned with the school's goals and activities. The school provides a significant example of collaboration and there is evidence of the positive impact on each of the participating stakeholders (see A1, C4, F2-3, H3).	Goals and priorities for partnerships are identified. Alignment with overall school goals is not clearly defined. An example of a collaborative effort is provided; however, the impact on stakeholders is not clear (see A1, C4, F2-3, H3).

G2. How does your school involve families in their children's education? *Discuss how, in partnership with families, the school: (1) supports and enhances the parenting role; (2) ensures effective two-way communication; (3) recruits and encourages volunteers; (4) facilitates learning at home (including homework); and (5) involves families in decision making. Show data to indicate the extent of family involvement in these activities and the degree to which the families involved represent the overall student body.*

The extent of family involvement and the degree to which families involved are representative of the overall student body provide evidence of the effectiveness of strategies implemented to: • support and enhance the parenting role • ensure effective two-way communication • recruit and encourage volunteers • facilitate learning at home (including homework) • involve families in decision making (see A4-5).	Only limited evidence is provided of family involvement in activities and/or minimal data support that such involvement is representative of the overall student body (see A4-5).

G3. How does the school support the needs and concerns of families? *Discuss how you determine needs and concerns. Provide examples of school support, such as integrated health and social services at the school site, referrals to community services, before- and after-school child care, adult education, family counseling, nutrition education, times for parent meetings and conferences, and transportation options.*

A clearly defined and articulated process is in place to determine the needs and concerns of families; policies, programs and strategies to support families have been implemented, such as: • integrated health and social services at the school site • referrals to community services • before and after school child care adult education • family counseling • breakfast program • times for parent meetings and conferences • transportation options (see A1-2, C3, H2).	Needs and concerns of families are identified with a list of community resources provided. Examples of services, programs, policies, and interventions address some of the needs of families for support but are not comprehensive (see A1-2, C3, H2).

G4. How are educational resources in the school and the community used to extend learning opportunities for students, teachers, and families? *Provide specific examples of how community educational resources such as museums and performing arts institutions, public libraries, summer academic and athletic programs, study-abroad programs, community enrichment programs, job training, internships and apprenticeship programs extend your school program. You may also discuss extended use of the school's own facilities, such as the media center, classrooms, gymnasium, and computer lab if programs provide reciprocal benefits to the community.*

An abundance of concrete evidence verifies that community resources (e.g., institutions, agencies, businesses, individuals) are used to enrich (1) student learning, (2) staff development, and (3) family education.	The school provides examples of how the staff make use of some of the potential educational resources of the community or other outside agencies to extend learning opportunities for students and staff.
Community groups have access and frequently use school facilities for implementation of activities that have positive impact on the community at large.	Outside agencies have limited use of school facilities.

H. INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

Exemplary General Category: Based on multiple indicators, students have consistently achieved high academic standards. On norm-referenced tests, the students score at least two-thirds standard deviation above the mean. **Or,** the school has provided evidence of significant improvement in student achievement over time (at least two-thirds standard deviation improvement over five years). Criterion reference tests and other achievement measures support that high levels of learning are achieved. Illustrations show how assessment data have been used to improve practice and to promote student learning factors that can have a negative effect on school climate (e.g., high absenteeism, serious discipline problems) have been minimized. Significant data are shared with the community, parents, and students concerning the outcomes of the school's programs and offerings.

Adequate General Category: On norm-referenced tests, the students score at least one-third standard deviation above the mean. There is some documentation to support that the academic needs of all groups are being met, or the school has provided evidence of significant improvement in student achievement over time (at least one-third standard deviation improvement over five years). A significant portion of the school's population is currently meeting with academic success. Criterion reference tests and other achievement measures support that students are achieving. There are minor examples of how assessment data has been used to improve programs. Statistics concerning negative school related factors are typical for a school of this type. Efforts to inform parents and the community concerning the outcomes of schooling are limited to standard practices (e.g., report cards, news releases).

H1. **What is your school's overall approach to assessment? How do your methods align with your educational vision/mission and curriculum? What questions about assessment is your school currently addressing?** *Provide evidence and examples of a coherent school-wide assessment program. Identify current issues and future directions. It is the school's responsibility to show sustained high achievement or significant improvement over five years through reports on norm-referenced tests, criterion-referenced tests, and/or alternative assessment. The school need not utilize any particular assessment method, but must show that students achieve academically.*

There is evidence of coherent and comprehensive school-wide assessment strategies that align with the school's stated purposes and curriculum and that provide outcome data for subgroups and individuals (see A1, C3-6, H4-H6).	Assessment focuses on achievement of individual students for grading purposes. National or state tests may provide data concerning individual student and overall school achievement for groups tested (see A1, C3-6, H4-H6).
Selected examples support that the school is working to stay current with the developing state of knowledge in educational assessment. Current and future assessment issues are identified.	Examples of assessments are limited to the typical tests and reports.

H2. **How do you use assessment results to understand and improve student and school performance? How are data used to influence decision-making?** *Provide evidence that assessment data are used systematically in making decisions about programs and students. Give examples of how school administrators and teachers use assessment data to improve teaching and learning.*

The school has shown through examples that teachers and administrators monitor and continually use assessment data to improve instruction, and modify school policies and practices (see A1, B1, C4, E2).	There is some documentation of the use of data to influence decision making regarding school practice, student learning, or specified school programs; however, the primary use of assessment is for grading (see A1, B1, C4, E2).
Selected examples demonstrate how the school administration and teachers have used assessment data to improve teaching and learning (see C4-6).	

H3. **What assessment data are communicated to students, parents, and the community? What are the purposes of these communications? How does the school ensure that these stakeholders understand the standards for judgment and the meaning of the data?** *Show how the school keeps students, parents, and the community actively informed about the results of assessment.*

The school regularly communicates assessment results to the community in order to promote understanding of the school's progress in achieving established standards.	Communication of assessment results to the community is limited to standard methods (e.g., press releases).
Students and parents are made aware of the criteria and standards for evaluation, regularly receive results, and are helped to understand results in ways that support learning (see G2).	Communication with students and parents concerning achievement is limited to periodic standard report cards (see G2).

H4. **What standardized norm-referenced tests developed on the national, state, or district level has your school given in the last five years? What are the results for the last five years?** *It is the responsibility of the school: (1) to show sustained high achievement, that is, at least one-third standard deviation above the mean or a normal curve equivalent (NCE) of 57; (2) or to show significant improvement over the past five years, that is, at least a one-third standard deviation increase in achievement or a 7 NCE increase in achievement.*

> *Even if the entire school does not achieve above 57 NCEs, a school may present itself as eligible for Blue Ribbon status by disaggregating data to show that the majority student group in the school achieves at a level at least one-third standard deviation above the mean or 57 NCEs and that other students have improved at least one-third of a standard deviation over five years. If a school has a significant number of students with low socioeconomic status or with other challenges, the school may show how these students have improved significantly because of the school's efforts. If the school has a high student turnover rate, it may also disaggregate the data to show the results for students who have attended the school for two years or more compared to those students with less than two years attendance.*
>
> *Present data from all standardized assessments administered by your school. If you do not have five years of data, present at least three years of data and explain why you do not have data for the other years. It is the school's responsibility to provide a sufficient explanation of the meaning of the scores so that someone not familiar with the tests can interpret them. Using the sample tables as a guide, present the data for each test in the following ways:*
>
> a. *Indicate the test name and edition/publication year.*
> b. *Specify the grade at which the test was administered.*
> c. *Indicate the number of students in the grade and the number and percentage of students tested.*
> d. *Using tables (no charts or graphs), report scores in terms of NCEs or standard scores. Do not report percentiles or stanines. For each grade (not for each classroom), report the mean and the standard deviation for the test and each subtest. Report the national mean and standard deviation in the same metric as the scores.*
> e. *Disaggregate the data for any ethnic/racial or socioeconomic groups that comprise 15 percent or more of the student body of your school. Show how all subgroups of students achieve at high levels or improve dramatically in achievement for at least two years and up to five years. Explain any disparity among subgroups and what you are doing to close the gaps.*
> f. *Specify which groups, if any, are excluded from a test, the reasons for the exclusion, as well as the number and percentage of students excluded. Describe how these students are assessed.*
> g. *Explain any patterns of increase or decline in test scores. Also, discuss the implications of any special circumstances that may affect student outcomes, such as an unusually high student mobility rate.*
> h. *Attach all test data to the end of this application and continue numbering the pages consecutively.*

Achievement on standardized test over a five-year period show sustained student achievement that is at least two-thirds of a standard deviation above the national mean. Results of assessments (not necessarily the same as for regular students) for students with disabilities and limited English proficiency show substantial academic progress (e.g., successful movement into mainstream classes). There are realistic interpretations of any fluctuations in results over time.	Achievement over the past five years shows sustained high achievement that is at least one-third standard deviation above the mean.
OR, the school has provided evidence of significant improvement over the past five years of a minimum of two-thirds standard deviation increase in achievement.	**OR,** there has been significant improvement over the past five years, that is, in general one-third of a standard deviation increase in achievement.
Disaggregated data for significant student groups for a five-year period using either standardized or performance assessments show high levels of success for all students. There is a reasonable explanation for any variance for any subgroup. There is evidence that progress has been made in reducing or eliminating disparities (see C3).	Disaggregated data show that all students are achieving at reasonable levels. However, explanations of variances and strategies to reduce discrepancies are limited (see C3).

H5. What criterion-referenced tests do you use? What are the results for the last five years?
Describe and report the data resulting from these tests using the prompts in H4, where applicable. It is the school's responsibility to provide sufficient explanation of the meaning of the scores so that someone not familiar with the tests can interpret them. Use the sample tables in the nomination package as guides. Do not use graphs or charts.

Criterion-referenced test results (e.g., subject related district and/or state performance tests) provide evidence that over the past two to five years students are achieving significantly above set passing scores or minimum levels of proficiency for the district and state.	Mean achievement on criterion-referenced tests over the past two to five years show sustained achievement at least equal to the district or state set passing scores or minimum levels of proficiency.
Or, the school has provided evidence of significant improvement over the past two to five years	**Or**, the school has provided evidence of reasonable improvement over the past two to five years.
Disaggregated data for significant student groups for at least two years show high levels of success for all students. There is a reasonable explanation for any variance for specific subgroups. There is evidence that progress has been made in reducing or eliminating disparities (see C3, C4)	Disaggregated data for significant student groups for at least two years show reasonable achievement levels for all students. However, explanations of variances and strategies to reduce discrepancies are limited (see C3, C4)

H6. What alternative assessments of student performance do you use? *Describe the assessments you used, present the results, and provide sufficient explanation of the meaning of the results so that someone not familiar with these forms of assessment can interpret the results.*

The school has selected significant examples of the use of alternative student assessments (e.g., portfolios) that are clearly part of a comprehensive and coherent approach to assessment. These assessments include established evaluation criteria and measurement practices, and demonstrate consistently outstanding results or significant improvement.	Typical classroom tests are the main forms of non-standardized assessment. References are made to alternative assessments; however, only limited attention has been given to evaluation criteria and the use of assessment data.

H7. What are the data for the past five years in the following areas that serve as quantitative indicators of school climate and engagement?

	1999-2000	1998-1999	1997-1998	1996-1997	1995-1996
Daily student attendance	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Daily teacher attendance	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Teacher turnover rate	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Explain any patterns of increase or decrease as well as special circumstances that affected any of these indicators. Report in terms of percentages, listing each of the past five years under each category. If you use other indicators of school performance, you may add up to three additional indicators to this list.

Note: In computing student attendance, both excused and unexcused absences should be tallied as absent. Similarly, any teacher out for personal or sick leave should be tallied as absent.

The school has high attendance rates for students and staff, and low teacher turnover rates. Any pattern of increase or decrease is explained in a satisfactory manner and includes strategies for solving any problems.	Statistics reported concerning attendance and teacher turnover appear comparable to national averages.

H8. Which awards received by your school, staff, or students are most indicative of school success? *Limit your description of awards to 10 or fewer and explain the reasons for your choices. Give the year each award was received.*

Awards received by the school, staff, or students are indicative of school success. The reasons for selection of these awards reflect on the exceptional quality of the school's programs and achievements of staff and students.	Awards reported by the school provide some independent support for the quality of educational programs and/or achievements of staff and students.

I. PREVIOUSLY RECOGNIZED SCHOOLS

Blue Ribbon Schools seeking recognition again must highlight changes and improvements throughout the application since they were last honored. Throughout the School Self-Assessment, schools previously recognized should explicitly document their progress since the earlier award and note any interactions with other schools in sharing their successful strategies. Previous nomination forms are not available to the review panel. Thus, you must take care to document all claims as thoroughly as a school applying for the first time.

This section provides space for previously recognized schools to summarize their progress and accomplishments since the last recognition. Limit the summary statement to two pages.

Exemplary General Category: Previously recognized exemplary schools provide evidence of significant continued improvement. The school has clearly documented positive changes in the curriculum and instructional program, identified enhanced parent and community interaction, listed additional leadership efforts, showed continued growth in or consistently high student achievement, and implemented plans for continued school improvement. The school has had interactions with other schools in the district, the state or region, and has made contributions to the profession through presentations at professional conferences, writing, and/or research for the purpose of sharing successful strategies and practice.

Adequate General Category: Previously recognized schools provide evidence that the school's program has stayed the same or has had only limited growth and improvement in some areas. The school's documentation indicates that there have been limited changes in the curriculum or instructional program, few additional strategies to gain parent/community support, continued stable leadership, and sustained but not improved student achievement. There are no particular plans for school renewal or improvement efforts. Interaction with other schools has largely been within the district and there have been few contributions to the profession through professional conference participation, writing, and/or research

I1. **What major changes and improvements have taken place since the school was last recognized?**

The school has documented throughout the application that overall performance has improved or high achievement has been sustained and improvement has been made in most of the following areas:	The school has documented throughout the application that overall performance has been sustained with improvement made in only a few of the following areas:
• school leadership • curriculum and instruction • student services • parent and community interaction • professional development • student achievement.	• school leadership • curriculum and instruction • student services • parent and community interaction • professional development • student achievement.

I2. **Have you had any interactions with other schools to share some of your successful strategies and practices? Has your staff been involved in leadership or training programs beyond your school to disseminate practices and programs? If so, please elaborate.**

The school has documented examples of outreach for the purpose of sharing successful strategies and practice, such as:	The school has documented only limited examples of outreach for the purpose of sharing successful strategies and practices, such as:
• visitations by staff from other schools • presentations made at professional meetings • faculty/administrators professional contributions through writing/research • maintenance of a website with information concerning successful programs and practices • faculty/administration assuming major leadership role in district-wide improvement efforts (curriculum development, policy development, etc.).	• visitations by staff from other schools • presentations made at professional meetings • faculty/administrators professional contributions through writing/research • maintenance of a website with information concerning successful programs and practices • faculty/administration assuming major leadership role in district-wide improvement efforts (curriculum development, policy development, etc.).