



National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

2025 Application

Introduction.....	1
Application	12
Part I – Eligibility Certification	13
Part II – Demographic Data	15
Part III – School Overview	19
Part IV – Curriculum and Instruction	20
Part V – School Culture and Climate	22
Part VI – Strategy for Academic Success.....	23
Part VII – Non-Public School Information	24

2025 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

A National Recognition Program for American Schools

Since 1982, the U.S. Department of Education’s National Blue Ribbon Schools Program has honored America’s most successful public and non-public elementary, middle, and high schools. A National Blue Ribbon Schools flag waving overhead has become a trademark of excellence, a symbol of quality recognized by everyone from parents to policymakers in thousands of communities.

The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program recognizes: 1) schools whose students achieve at very high levels, or 2) schools making significant progress in closing achievement gaps among different groups of students. The Program sets a standard of excellence for all schools striving for the highest level of achievement.

National Blue Ribbon Schools are honored each year at a recognition ceremony in Washington, DC. The applications from the award-winning schools are posted on the Department’s website. A small group of National Blue Ribbon Schools are visited each year to highlight educational practices that have been especially successful.

Public School Nomination Process

For public schools, the Secretary invites Chief State School Officers (CSSOs), including the District of Columbia (DC), Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), and the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), to nominate schools. In this document, the title CSSO will refer to the chief school officers in the states and in the public education entities named above.

In submitting the list of nominated schools, CSSOs must certify that the schools meet the minimum requirements established by the Department for nomination. As described below, CSSOs must also rely on their own education accountability and assessment systems to identify schools for submission to the Secretary.

Disadvantaged Backgrounds of Students. At least one-third of the public schools nominated by each state must be schools with a high percentage of students from disadvantaged backgrounds. A student from a “disadvantaged background” is defined by the CSSO of each state. The definition may include economically disadvantaged students, that is, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals; students with disabilities; students who are limited English proficient; migrant students; and/or students receiving services under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015. “High percentage” means at least 40 percent unless a state has found that this threshold precludes identifying a sufficient number of such schools. Such a state may propose to use a percentage lower than 40 percent as long as the proposed percentage is no lower than the state’s overall (average) percentage of students from disadvantaged backgrounds as defined by the state.

Each state’s nomination criteria must pertain equally to all public schools nominated by the state.

Nominated schools for the 2025 NBRS award are based on assessment results from the 2023-2024 school year. A school may be nominated in either of two performance award categories: *Exemplary High Performing* or *Exemplary Achievement Gap Closing*. The student performance criteria that a school must meet in order to be nominated in each of these two categories are described below.

- 1) ***Exemplary High Performing Schools.*** “High performing” is defined by the CSSO of each state, but at a minimum means that the school meets the performance criteria summarized in the following table:

Criterion	Threshold	Measure for Ranking Schools		
		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
1a. Whole School Performance	Top 15% in the State	Reading\ELA and Math Performance Separately	Reading\ELA and Math Performance Combined	Composite Score Combining Reading\ELA, Math, and Other Measures
1b. School Historically Underserved Student Group Performance	Top 40% in the State for Each Historically Underserved Student Group	Reading\ELA and Math Performance Separately	Reading\ELA and Math Performance Combined	Composite Score Combining Reading\ELA, Math, and Other Measures
1c. High School Graduation Rate and optional CCR Measure	Top 15% in the State	Graduation Rate and optional CCR Measure Separately	Graduation Rate and optional CCR Measure Combined	Composite Score Combining Graduation Rate and optional CCR Measure with Reading/ELA, Math and Other Measures

1a. Whole School Performance. All schools are ranked¹ based on the performance of all students in the school on the most recently administered state assessments in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics.² The state may rank schools on these two subjects separately or rank schools on the two subjects combined (e.g., sum or average). The state may also combine performance on these assessments with other measures of student performance (e.g., student growth on state assessments, performance on state assessments in other subjects, graduation rates, or other indicators in the state’s accountability system) and rank the schools on the resulting composite score/index. Schools in the top 15 percent of each ranking for reading/ELA and mathematics (separately, combined, or as part of a composite score/index) meet the threshold for this criterion.

1b. School Historically Underserved Student Performance. For each of the state’s historically underserved student groups,³ all schools are ranked based on the performance of the students in that group on the most recently administered state assessments in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics (separately, combined, or as part of a composite score/index). Schools in the top 40 percent of each ranking for each of their sufficiently large historically underserved student groups⁴ meet the threshold for this criterion.

1c. High School Graduation Rate. All high schools are ranked based on the state’s most recently available graduation rate and, optionally, on the most recent measure of CCR

¹ The state may rank schools based on all grades served or rank schools separately for different grade spans or grades.

² This includes students tested with accommodations.

³ States are encouraged to nominate schools based on the performance of the historically underserved student groups included in their accountability system.

⁴ A “sufficiently large group” is one that meets the minimum “n-size” for subgroups in the state’s accountability system.

(separately, combined, or as part of a composite score/index).⁵ High schools in the top 15 percent of each ranking meet the threshold for this criterion.

- 2) ***Exemplary Achievement Gap Closing Schools:*** “Achievement gap closing” is defined by the CSSO of each state, but at a minimum means that the school meets the performance criteria summarized in the following table:

Criteria	Threshold	Measure for Ranking Schools		
		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
2a. School Historically Underserved Student Group Improvement	Top 15% in the State for One or More Historically Underserved Student Groups	Improvement in Reading\ELA and Math Separately	Improvement in Reading\ELA and Math Combined	Improvement in Composite Score Combining Reading\ELA, Math, and Other Measures
2b. School Historically Underserved Student Group Performance	Top 40% in the State for Each Historically Underserved Student Group	Reading\ELA and Math Performance Separately	Reading\ELA and Math Performance Combined	Composite Score Combining Reading\ELA, Math, and Other Measures
2c. High School Historically Underserved Student Group Graduation Rate and optional CCR Measure	Top 40% in the State for Historically Underserved Student Group	Graduation Rate and optional CCR Measure Separately	Graduation Rate and optional CCR Measure Combined	Composite Score Combining Graduation Rate and optional CCR Measure with Reading\ELA, Math and Other Measures
2d. Whole School Improvement	Equals or Exceeds Whole State Improvement	Improvement in Reading\ELA and Math Separately	Improvement in Reading\ELA and Math Combined	Improvement in Composite Score Combining Reading\ELA, Math, and Other Measures

2a. **School Historically Underserved Student Group Improvement.** For each of the state’s groups,⁶ all schools are ranked based on the increase in the performance of that group on the most recently administered state assessments in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics (separately, combined, or as part of a composite score/index), comparing the results for the most recent school year in which the state assessments were administered to the results for the school year 2-4 years before. Schools in the top 15 percent of each ranking **for at least one of their sufficiently large groups** meet the threshold for this criterion.

2b. **School Historically Underserved Student Group Performance.** For each of the state’s groups, all schools are ranked based on the performance of the students in that group on the most recently administered state assessments in reading (or English language arts) and

⁵ If a state uses a composite in 1a that includes graduation rate and optional CCR measure(s) for ranking high schools, their composite scores may be identical to their composite scores used in 1c.

⁶ States are encouraged to nominate schools based on the performance of the historically underserved student groups included in their accountability system.

mathematics (separately, combined, or as part of a composite score/index). Schools in the top 40 percent of each ranking **for each of their sufficiently large subgroups** meet the threshold for this criterion.

- 2c. **High School Historically Underserved Student Group Graduation Rate.** For each of the state's groups, all high schools are ranked based on the state's most recent graduation rate and, optionally, on the most recent measure of CCR (separately, combined, or as part of a composite score/index). High schools in the top 40 percent of this ranking **for each of their sufficiently large groups** meet the threshold for this criterion.
- 2d. **Whole School Improvement.** In order for a school to meet the threshold for this criterion, the increase in the performance of **all students** in the school on the most recently administered state assessments in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics (separately, combined, or as part of a composite score/index), comparing the results for the most recent school year in which the state assessments were administered to the results for the school year 2-4 years before, must equal or exceed the increase in the performance of all public school students in the state over the same period.

In addition to meeting the above student performance requirements, a nominated school must, in most cases, have at least 100 students enrolled and have assessment data for at least 10 students in each tested grade for both reading (or English language arts) and mathematics. States with a large percentage of schools with fewer than 100 students enrolled may include up to a similar percentage of these schools in their nominations. However, these schools must have assessment data for at least 10 students in each tested grade for both reading (or English language arts) and mathematics.

All nominated public schools must meet the performance targets that are set by the state for the school year in question in at least reading (or English language arts), mathematics, graduation rates, and possibly other academic indicators, for the all-students group. Additionally, nominated schools must have assessment participation rates of at least 95 percent, using the most recent accountability results available, for the all-students group. Finally, in order to meet all school performance eligibility requirements, all nominated public schools must be certified by the state prior to the September 2025 announcement of National Blue Ribbon Schools by the U. S. Secretary of Education.

Other Eligibility Requirements for Public National Blue Ribbon Schools

1. 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.
2. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2020 and grades participating in statewide assessments must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2024.
3. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, or 2024.
4. 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.
5. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
6. The school must provide the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a compliance review.

7. The school must follow all applicable civil rights laws and must not be subject to a letter of findings from OCR concluding that the school has violated one or more of the civil rights laws that OCR enforces. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the school to remedy the violation.
8. The school must not be subject to a pending lawsuit by the U.S. Department of Justice alleging that the institution has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
9. The school must have, or be subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide a link to the policy), be committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and must not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify an institution's nomination and/or rescind an institution's award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.
10. 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.

The U.S. Department of Education also reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination if that school changes the grades that it serves in the 2025-2026 school year by adding or dropping one or more grades between 3 and 12 such that the school's new grade configuration does not adequately reflect the nature of the school at the time when its qualifying student assessments were administered.

Once the Secretary receives the nominations from the CSSOs, nominated schools are invited to submit applications for recognition as National Blue Ribbon Schools.

Non-Public School Nomination Process

For not-for-profit non-public schools, the Secretary invites the Council for American Private Education (CAPE) to nominate schools that meet the criteria for recognition. Non-public schools interested in applying for nomination should contact the [Council for American Private Education](#) directly. CAPE must ensure and certify that the schools meet the criteria before submitting nominations to the Department.

Non-public schools are eligible for National Blue Ribbon recognition if they meet the following criteria:

- 1) *Exemplary High Performing Schools*: "High performing" means:
 - (a) that the achievement of the school's students in the most recently completed school year tested places the school in the top 15 percent in the nation in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics as measured by a nationally normed test.
 - (b) Disaggregated results for historically underserved student groups, including students from disadvantaged backgrounds, must be similar to the results for all students tested.
 - (c) For the most recent year in which graduation rates are available, the graduation rate for non-public high schools must be 95% or higher.
- 2) *Exemplary Achievement Gap Closing Schools*: "Achievement gap closing" means:
 - (a) The school's enrollment consists of at least 30 percent disadvantaged students.
 - (b) The achievement of the school's students in the most recently completed school year tested places the school in the top 30 percent in the nation in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics as measured by a nationally normed test.

- (c) Disaggregated results for historically underserved student groups, including students from disadvantaged backgrounds, must be similar to the results for all students tested.
- (d) For the most recent year in which graduation rates are available, the graduation rate for nonpublic high schools must be 95% or higher.

In addition to meeting the above student performance requirements, a nominated school must, in most cases, have at least 100 students enrolled and have assessment data for at least 10 students in each tested grade for both reading (or English language arts) and mathematics.

A student from a “*disadvantaged background*” may include economically disadvantaged students, that is, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals; students with disabilities; students who are limited English proficient; migrant students; and/or students receiving services under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015.

Other Eligibility Requirements for Non-Public National Blue Ribbon Schools

1. The school configuration must include one or more of the 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.
2. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2019 and grades participating in statewide assessments must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2024.
3. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2020, 2021 2022, 2023 or 2024.
4. 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.
5. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
6. The school must provide the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a compliance review.
7. The school must follow all applicable civil rights laws and must not be subject to a letter of findings from OCR concluding that the school has violated one or more of the civil rights laws that OCR enforces. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the school to remedy the violation.
8. The school must not be subject to a pending lawsuit by the U.S. Department of Justice alleging that the institution has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
9. The school must have, or be subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide a link to the policy), be committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and must not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify an institution’s nomination and/or rescind an institution’s award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.
10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 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.

The U.S. Department of Education also reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination if that school changes the grades that it serves in the 2025-2026 school year by adding or dropping one or more grades between 3 and 12 such that the school's new grade configuration does not adequately reflect the nature of the school at the time when its qualifying student assessments were administered.

For information on the nomination process and timeline for CAPE, representatives of non-public schools should consult the [Council for American Private Education](#) Website.

Public and Non-Public Nomination Allocations and Eligibility for Public and Non-Public Schools

States and public entities, including DC, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, BIE, and DoDEA, are allocated a number of National Blue Ribbon School nominations based on total K-12 student enrollment and number of public schools. Allocations range from a minimum of 3 schools to a maximum of 35. CAPE may nominate up to 50 non-public schools. A total of 420 public and non-public schools could be nominated each year.

Eligible schools, then, are those submitted by authorized nominators that meet all National Blue Ribbon Schools Program criteria and requirements and have completed a comprehensive, high quality application according to Program timelines.

Application Process for Nominated Schools

Once the Department receives the nominations from the CSSOs, the Secretary extends an invitation to the nominated schools to apply.

The nominators are encouraged to contact principals of selected schools prior to nomination to verify principals' commitment and to review completed applications prior to submission to ensure that recognized schools will be outstanding models of excellence for their states and for the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program. The Secretary reserves the right to initiate site visits to schools to document educational practices as well as to verify the accuracy of data.

Timeline for 2025 National Blue Ribbon Schools

Date	Due
October, 2024	The Secretary of Education sends a letter of invitation to the CSSOs and CAPE requesting nominations of eligible schools.
October, 2024	Conduct webinar/TA conference calls to review guidance and application with liaisons.
December 27, 2024	Nomination processes and data for public schools being considered for nomination from CSSOs are due to the Department.
January 10, 2025	Hard copy of non-public school applications are due to CAPE.
January 15-17, 2025	Nomination processes and data for public schools being considered for nomination are reviewed by ED and a NBRS Assessment Panel for alignment with the general eligibility criteria of the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program.
January 31, 2025	Approved public school nominations are entered by states into online portal.
February 6, 2025	The Department invites public schools nominated by CSSOs to apply for recognition as National Blue Ribbon Schools.
February 21, 2025	CAPE selects non-public school nominations.
April 11, 2025	Completed public and non-public school applications are due to the Department.
April-June, 2025	Applications are reviewed for completeness, quality, and accuracy.
August, 2025	States certify that nominated public schools have met all eligibility requirements.
September, 2025	The Secretary of Education announces the 2024 National Blue Ribbon Schools (public and non-public).
November, 2025	Two representatives from each school, the principal and a teacher, attend the recognition ceremony in Washington, DC.

Important Considerations for Completing the National Blue Ribbon School Online Application

1. The entire application must be submitted through the secure online school portal at: [National Blue Ribbon Schools Program](#).
2. A School ID username and Password are necessary to access the online application form in the secure school portal.
3. Narrative responses to application questions must address the topic succinctly. No attachments to the online application can be submitted. Bulleted sections are not acceptable.
4. Tables, charts, graphs, photos cannot be accommodated by the online application.

5. Online instructions must be followed when copying/pasting text from Word to the online application; formatting may be changed.
6. Saving work frequently is necessary to protect the “work in progress.”
7. Printing the application for review is possible before and after the final submission.
8. **Public and non-public school applicants** must convert the original signed cover page of the application to a PDF file and upload the PDF via the online application portal.
9. All public and non-public school applications must be completed and submitted by Program timelines. No changes can be made to applications after submission.

Instructions for completing the application are provided as online help text. Assistance is available for school applicants through the National Blue Ribbon Schools Technical Assistance Team. For help in navigating the online system, or questions regarding responses to the narrative or data items, use the contact form located at: [National Blue Ribbon Schools Program](#).

Paperwork Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1860-0506. The expiration date is 6/30/2027. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 39.75 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202-4651. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of the individual submission of this form, contact Aba Kumi, (Aba.Kumi@ed.gov) Director, National Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

2025 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[] Public or [] Non-public

Public Schools only, check all that apply: [] Title I [] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

Non-public Schools only, indicate application type: [] Exemplary High Performing School
[] Exemplary Achievement Gap Closing School

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

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

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

City _____ State _____ Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) _____

County _____

Phone () _____

Fax () _____

Web site _____

Email _____

X (formerly Twitter)

Facebook

Instagram

YouTube

Blog

Other Social Media
Link

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

Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* _____ Email _____
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name _____ Phone() _____

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

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

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

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

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

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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 and non-public schools must have met the program’s academic requirements overseen by each state, public entity, and the Council for American Private Education.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2025 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 2019 and grades participating in statewide assessments must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2024.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, or 2024.
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 a link to 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.

The U.S. Department of Education also reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination if that school changes the grades that it serves in the 2025-2026 school year by adding or dropping one or more grades between 3 and 12 such that the school's new grade configuration does not adequately reflect the nature of the school at the time when its qualifying student assessments were administered.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the current school year (2024-2025) 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):
- _____ Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - _____ Middle/Junior high schools
 - _____ High schools
 - _____ K-12 schools
 - _____ 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, 2024 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school.

Grade	# of Students
PreK*	
K	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12 or higher	
Total Students	

*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):
- _____ % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - _____ % Asian
 - _____ % Black or African American
 - _____ % Hispanic or Latino
 - _____ % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - _____ % White
 - _____ % 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 2023-2024 school year: _____%

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, 2023 until the end of the 2023-2024 school year	
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2023 until the end of the 2023-2024 school year	
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2023	
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	

6. If applicable, list the languages other than English that are spoken by students in the school (separate languages by commas): _____

Students who are ML/EL: _____%

Total number ML/EL: _____

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

Total number students who qualify: _____

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: _____%

Total number of students served: _____

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. 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.

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| ____ Autism | ____ Multiple Disabilities |
| ____ Deafness | ____ Orthopedic Impairment |
| ____ Deaf-Blindness | ____ Other Health Impairment |
| ____ Developmental Delay | ____ Specific Learning Disability |
| ____ Emotional Disturbance | ____ Speech or Language Impairment |
| ____ Hearing Impairment | ____ Traumatic Brain Injury |
| ____ Intellectual Disability | ____ Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Students receiving services with a 504 plan: _____%

Total number of students served: _____

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

11. Use Full-Time Equivalent (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below.

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

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 _____

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

Required Information	2023-2024	2022-2021	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020
Daily student attendance	%	%	%	%	%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

If student attendance is under 90% in the most recent year, please explain: _____

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 2023.

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

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.

17. Provide a link to the school’s nondiscrimination policy.

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

In approximately 800 words, introduce your school by providing a narrative snapshot that addresses the following bullets and includes any other interesting information you would like to share.

- Describe the nature and context of the school community, including a description of the school’s learning and teaching culture. **Avoid repeating demographic data provided in Part II. This narrative should help the reader understand the character of your school and the students who attend it.**
- Describe the key strategies used within the school that have encouraged and challenged all students to develop their full potential academically, emotionally, physically, socially, and culturally. For instance, strategies could include curriculum, programs, initiatives, student and school supports, and leadership.
- **Describe any creative or innovative techniques/programs the school uses.** These techniques/programs contribute to your school’s unique character. They could be academic, socio-emotional, cultural, or other, but they should be something that sets the school apart.
- Additionally, if your school is a previous recipient of the National Blue Ribbon School award within the last ten years, briefly describe how the recognition has been leveraged or served your school and its community.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

- 1a.** Provide an overview of your school’s approach to curriculum, instruction (including how technology is used for teaching and learning, if applicable), and assessment, which may include an overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas (300 words).

For each of the four core areas: describe the curriculum content; describe the general instructional approaches; and explain, using examples, how the school uses formative and/or summative assessment data to analyze and improve student performance and/or make instructional decisions.

Please note, instructional interventions should **not** be addressed in this question. They should be addressed under Question 3, Academic Supports.

- 1b.** Reading/English language arts core curriculum content (what is taught), instruction (how it is taught), and assessment (500 words total)
- 1c.** Mathematics core curriculum content (what is taught), instruction (how it is taught), and assessment (500 words total)
- 1d.** Science core curriculum content (what is taught), instruction (how it is taught), and assessment (300 words total)
- 1e.** Social studies/history/civic learning core curriculum content (what is taught), instruction (how it is taught), and assessment (300 words total)
- 1f. For any school that serve grades 7 and higher:** In approximately 300 words, describe how the curriculum supports college and career readiness (e.g., dual credit courses, college prep classes, Career Technical Education (CTE), apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship opportunities, industry-recognized credentials). This may also include student leadership, community and civic responsibilities, entrepreneurship skills, or work-based learning opportunities that align with essential or emerging careers. If a school does not have secondary grades, this section should be left blank.
- 1g. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:** In approximately 300 words describe:
1. the core curriculum areas provided;
 2. the alignment of early childhood and K-Grade 3 academic standards; and
 3. any indicators of the impact of early education on school readiness and success in the primary grades.

- 2. Other Curriculum Areas:** For each of the school’s other curriculum areas, describe: 1) how they support students’ acquisition of essential skills and knowledge, 2) which grades participate, and 3) how often students or grades participate. If the school does not offer a particular curriculum, write NA.

- 2a.** Arts (may include visual arts, music, theater, dance, etc.) (200 words)
- 2b.** Physical education/health/nutrition (200 words)
- 2c.** Foreign language(s) (200 words)
- 2d.** Technology/library/media (200 words)
- 2e.** Any other interesting or innovative programs, practices, initiatives, or curriculum areas you would like to share (200 words).

- 3. Academic Supports:** Describe how the school tailors interventions and supports to meet the diverse and individual needs of various student populations, including examples. If there is an achievement gap of 10 or more percentage points between the test scores of all students and the test scores of any student group, describe what the school is doing to close this achievement gap. Responses should address:
- 3a.** Students performing below grade level (300 words)
 - 3b.** Students performing above grade level (300 words)
 - 3c.** Students with disabilities (300 words)
 - 3d.** Multilingual Learners/English Learners. If the school does not have an ML/EL-specific intervention, write NA. (300 words)
 - 3e.** Other populations (migrant, homeless, etc.) if a special program or intervention is offered. If none, write NA. (300 words)

PART V – SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE

- 1. Engaging and Supporting Students:** In approximately 500 words, describe how your school supports students' cognitive, behavioral, and emotional engagement. How are programs and services aligned to the unique needs of your student population, academically and culturally?
- 2. Engaging Families and Community:** In approximately 400 words, describe the strategies the school has found most successful in working with family and community members for student success and school improvement. What, if any, community partnerships have been formed to address student and/or family needs? Community can include non-profits, institutes of higher education, and businesses and industry partners, etc.
- 3. Creating Professional Culture:** In approximately 400 words, describe how your school creates an environment where teachers feel valued and supported. This should include, but should not be limited to, the school's professional development approach and its impact on the capacity of teachers and other school staff. Include examples of how teachers and other school staff are supported.
- 4. School Leadership:** In approximately 400 words, describe the leadership philosophy and structure in the school, along with the roles of the principal, other school leaders, and stakeholders. Illustrate, through examples, how the school's leadership ensures that policies, programs, relationships, and resources focus on student achievement. **Please refer to school leaders by their roles, rather than by their names.**

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

National Blue Ribbon Schools are held up as educational models, and as such are often called upon to explain what makes them so successful. While excellent schools employ multiple strategies, please describe, in approximately 400 words, the **ONE** practice—that has been the **most instrumental** to the school's success.

