



# 2018 Application

Performance Area:

Governance, Leadership and Accountability

Please complete all sections of this application form, save the file and email to [Training@msbanet.org](mailto:Training@msbanet.org) by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 9, 2018.

School District: Mehlville R-9

Board President: Samantha Stormer President Daytime Phone: 314-686-3854

President Email: stormers@mehlvilleschooldistrict.net

Names of and Titles Who Contributed to the Application:  
 Samantha Stormer, Jean Pretto, Lisa Dorsey, Larry Felton, James Murphy, Kevin Schartner, Peggy Hassler

We attest that this application has been completed and reviewed by the board members listed above and made with the knowledge and approval of at least a quorum of the board. We attest that the information provided in this application is true and accurate. **Signatures Required:**

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name:	Signature:
EMMA JEAN PRETTO	<i>[Handwritten Signature]</i>
LARRY FELTON	<i>[Handwritten Signature]</i>
Peggy L. Hassler	<i>[Handwritten Signature]</i>
Kevin J. Schartner	<i>[Handwritten Signature]</i>
Samantha Stormer	<i>[Handwritten Signature]</i>
Lisa Dorsey	<i>[Handwritten Signature]</i>
James Murphy	<i>[Handwritten Signature]</i>

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If selected as a winner, the Board of Education agrees to share their outstanding accomplishments through MSBA communication channels, including but not limited to publications, media outlets and/or presentations at meetings and conferences, on mutual agreement of the district and MSBA.

Yes  No

### **Governance, Leadership and Accountability Criteria**

- 1. Strategic Planning:** Long term strategic planning occurs every few years. Strategic planning meets State requirements and focuses on continuous school improvement as directed by board policy. The strategic planning process allows for input from all stakeholder groups, students, staff, administrators and board members. The strategic plan includes board governance goals and strategies.
- 2. Strategic Planning Implementation and Monitoring:** The board approved Strategic Plan/CSIP serves as the foundation for allocating resources, developing policies and procedures and selecting and implementing instructional programs and practices to increase student achievement. The strategic plan is consistently referenced in board discussions and guides board decision-making. Annual board review of the implementation of the strategic plan allows for any adjustments needed in order to provide continuous school improvement and respond to specific critical needs. The board's implementation of the district strategic plan has led to district improvement.
- 3. Accountability:** A comprehensive system of district accountability focusing on student performance is established and monitored. District performance data continually guides governance decisions and is systematically utilized in program evaluation, improvement planning and decision making. The board reviews the effectiveness of district programs and practices for effectiveness in meeting district goals and priorities. The board continually monitors student performance and reports on student learning, growth and progress are clearly communicated with all stakeholders. Data-driven decision making has led to measurable district and student improvement.
- 4. Collaboration:** Board members engage in ethical behavior as directed by district policy. Collaborative relationships among board members and between the board and superintendent facilitate a focus on student learning, district improvement and effective governance.
- 5. Advocacy:** The board is regularly engaged and proactive with community/local leaders and local, state and federal government officials to advocate for students and schools. Board reviews the effectiveness of their efforts in advocating for students and schools.
- 6. Professional Growth:** There is evidence of a commitment to continuous board development for both individual board members and as a whole board to build shared knowledge, values and commitments for district improvement efforts and effective governance practices. Opportunities are provided for board members to share their learning. The board's involvement in professional development had led to improved governance practices.

### **Application Questions**

Provide the Board of Education's response to the following questions for each of the criteria areas listed above. Responses may not exceed one page for each of the criteria areas. Additional pages, including appendices or attachments, will not be read or considered.

1. Describe what occurred that is outstanding in the criteria area. Be sure to address all areas listed in the description of the criteria.
2. Fully describe how specific board practices achieved or contributed to the outstanding

accomplishment for the criteria area. Fully describe the board's role and/or actions that led to the accomplishment.

3. How do you know it worked? Describe the evidence that demonstrates the board's practices are effective in meeting the criteria area.

### **Application Process**

On the last page of the application, describe the process the board used to complete the application so as to ensure participation of board members in the application process. Include information on the board's process for deciding to apply for the award; how board members contributed ideas for the content of the application; board member involvement in the drafting of the application; and board approval of the final application to be submitted to MSBA. The response is limited to one page.

### **Questions about the Application or Awards**

Please contact Janet Tilley, Director, Board Development, by phone at 800-221-MSBA (6722), ext 379, or by email at [tilley@msbanet.org](mailto:tilley@msbanet.org).

**Strategic Planning:** Describe what occurred that is outstanding in the criteria area; the board’s role and/or actions that led to the accomplishment; and evidence that demonstrates the board’s practices are effective. **Be sure to address all areas in the description of the criteria.**

The CSIP is used by the Mehlville R-9 School Board as a Governing document to meet state standards. In 2014-2015, the district took a serious look at the future and developed a comprehensive Strategic Plan to serve as the district’s primary Governing document. Plan development started with an outreach to the community. District meetings were held to explain the State of the District, and answer questions. Focus group and surveys quantified community concerns. Community perceptions and school district information were shared. Plan development improved community/district relationships.

The Mehlville School District’s Strategic Plan is designed with a focus on continuous improvement. The Plan was adopted in February of 2015, creating a forward-looking purpose and direction for the district. The Plan establishes 3 goals driving the Governance and Operation of the Mehlville R-9 School District, and the development of the CSIP:

- Student Preparation. Every student will demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to perform at the next level.
- Teacher Support. The district systems work to assist teachers in their work to build a rigorous engaged culture for every student.
- Effective and Efficient. A balanced use of district resources to support learning for all students.

The Board adopted the Plan’s goals as its goals. The Plan also defines Measures, Indicators, and Action Plans for each goal. The Board adopted strategies for alignment, improvement and review.

The District’s Learning Mission, Vision, Mission, and Learning Mission are aligned to the Plan. The Vision describes the importance of improving to meet each student’s needs: *“The Mehlville School District, a district striving for excellence focused on each student’s challenge to engage in their future.”* The Mission states the importance of a culture of improvement: *“The Mehlville School District mission is to build a high performing school system rooted in the community’s desire to build a culture of improvement for staff and students.”* The Learning Mission applies the District focus on improvement to student preparation. The Learning Mission concludes with, *“For the Mehlville Community to thrive, the education system must build a culture of quality improvement serving every child’s learning”*.

The Strategic Plan is the framework for school improvement and Board improvement. The Plan drives the Governance and Leadership roles of the Board and the Superintendent, and sets a direction for aligning district policies, programs, and services. The Plan also serves as a foundation for Board Accountability through improved measurement and review. Roles are reviewed each year.

The Plan defines the purpose and forward-looking direction for the District. Board decisions focus on establishing plans, monitoring progress, and evaluating results. A schedule for Program and Service reviews is published and followed. The Board aligned and expanded the mission and membership of its committees. Regular meeting agendas now focus on student recognition, community comments, interaction with Building leaders, Student Achievement, and Governance. Emphasis is placed on measurements, trends, and corrective action.

Adoption and use of the Strategic Plan has improved our relationship with the community as measured with surveys. This was demonstrated in November 2015 when a community-proposed Strategic Plan funding initiative (Proposition R) was passed with 72% approval.

**Plan Alignment:** Describe what occurred that is outstanding in the criteria area; the board’s role and/or actions that led to the accomplishment; and evidence that demonstrates the board’s practices are effective. **Be sure to address all areas in the description of the criteria.**

Plan Alignment began when Policy AD (School District Mission) was changed to add the statement, “*The School Board, administration, teachers and staff will align their work with the Strategic Plan, focused primarily on student preparation, teacher support, and efficient and effective systems.*” The Board also implemented strategies to align the board agenda, program evaluations, student achievement, committee structures, and resource allocation with the Plan.

The Board revised the agenda to organize Board discussions around the Plan’s goals: Recognition of students, Public Comments, Consent (routine business), Student Achievement, and Governance. Student Achievement focuses on student learning, teacher support and academic dashboard reviews with each Building Principal. Governance focuses on effective and efficient systems, budgets, and resource allocation.

Program and progress evaluations provide the data and evidence needed for process improvement. Regularly scheduled reports are necessary to review results, compare with expectations, look for trends, and take corrective actions as needed. Additional discussions are also conducted as needed. These are the main programs and deliverables that are reviewed:

- |                   |                                   |                                 |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| * APR             | * Facilities                      | * Policy                        |
| * Audit           | * Federal Programs                | * Professional Development      |
| * Budget          | * Finance                         | * Special School District (SSD) |
| * Bus Routes      | * Food Service                    | * Technology                    |
| * Calendar        | * Health Services                 | * Transportation                |
| * Communications  | * Innovation                      | * Wellness                      |
| * Curriculum      | * Insurance                       |                                 |
| * Early Childhood | * English Language Learners (ELL) |                                 |

Mehlville has 4 standing committees to research, review, and provide recommendations to the Board: Facilities, Finance, Insurance and Policy. Committee Charters were created to improve the efficiency and alignment of these committees. Each committee charter defines its mission and responsibility, tasks, membership, decision making process, and expected outcomes. Membership includes community members, faculty, staff, and board members. Charters are created for ad-hoc committees, such as redistricting, communications, and compensation/salary.

For the on-going financial review strategy, the Board requested the creation of 5-year resource and spending plans to support student preparation, teacher support, and improved efficiency and effectiveness.

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|--------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| * Capital    | * Innovation               | * Proposition R (tax levy) Capital |
| * Curriculum | * Professional Development | * Proposition R (tax levy) Buses   |
| * Finances   | * Text Books               | * Proposition A Buildings          |

Plan Alignment included financial alignment. Strategic Plan implementation expense and capital costs were estimated. Initial Strategic Plan alignment efforts focused on actions to support student preparation, student success and growth of learning. The opportunity to fund the Plan coupled with growing support to improve student preparation resulted in Prop R, a community-initiated tax levy to fund Strategic Plan implementation. In November of 2015, Prop R was approved by 72%.

Continuous improvement efforts generate measurements, data, and results. This has resulted in more informed Board Governance decisions. Buildings and Departments are also using this approach. They have created dashboards to track their measurements and academics outcomes, student engagement, and district operations. These dashboards are available to the public.

**Accountability:** Describe what occurred that is outstanding in the criteria area; the board’s role and/or actions that led to the accomplishment; and evidence that demonstrates the board’s practices are effective.  
**Be sure to address all areas in the description of the criteria.**

The Board is accountable to the students, parents, administration, teachers, staff, parents, and the community for the decisions it makes. Board decisions focus on actions to implement the Strategic Plan. Continuous improvement is used to establish plans for specific goals, to track progress, to review results with the plans owners, and to take corrective action. The Board has added 2 non-voting student members to the Board as advocates for student issues and to add a student voice to Board discussions. These changes provide better information, leading to informed decisions and improved Governance.

The Board reviews Programs and action plans on a defined schedule. Updates are scheduled when new data is available or corrective actions are needed. Standing Board committees review and recommend actions for Policy, Finance, Facilities, and Insurance. Five (5) year action plans for capital and expense spending give the Board a better idea of future needs. Reviews and action plans provide the Board with accurate, reliable information that leads to informed decisions.

Board decisions are made to support Student Preparation, leading to Student Progress. Measurements include a combination of state test results, formative assessments, attendance, and individual engagement in learning. Progress Measure percentage indicators have been established for tracking and review:

- \* Children ready for Kindergarten
- \* Students taking Advance Placement (AP) courses
- \* Graduates attending a technical 2 or 4 year program
- \* Students performing at Grade Level in reading by end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade
- \* Students performing at Grade Level in math by end of 5<sup>th</sup> grade
- \* Students college/career ready
- \* Students graduating from high school
- \* Students ACT at/above state average

District APR and MAP scores are reviewed each year. Last year’s performance is used to take corrective actions such as providing resources in subject areas needing improvement. A view of current progress is needed for proactive decision making. Each Building and Department has created a publicly available Dashboard that lists their current student progress measures, observations, trends, and actions taken. Board meetings include discussions with Building and Department leaders to review progress, to make adjustments, and to identify any resources the Board can provide.

The Board is Accountable to the community. Information about student performance and fiscal management is shared. Meeting announcements, board agendas, and attachments are made available to the public by email or by online access. Community members can attend meetings and are given two chances to speak: one for agenda comments, and another for any subject. All meetings are live streamed and also recorded so they can be watched. By policy, Board members don’t interact with the public during meetings. To improve two-way communication, 4 listening sessions are schedule throughout the academic year so the public can sit down and talk with board members about their concerns.

The Board is accountable for public funds. An annual Audit is conducted to demonstrate that effective, secure methods are used. The District operating budget is reviewed in each meeting, with annual budget development working sessions included. Budget adoption and tax levy adjustments are done in public sessions. Proposition R revenue is tracked separate from the operating budget. All revenue and expenses are tracked to confirm they match the original Prop R spending plan and subsequent Prop A plan. The Finance committee also independently reviews these results.

**Collaboration:** Describe what occurred that is outstanding in the criteria area; the board’s role and/or actions that led to the accomplishment; and evidence that demonstrates the board’s practices are effective. **Be sure to address all areas in the description of the criteria.**

The Mehlville Board of Education actively collaborates to support its commitment to continuous school improvement. Effective Board collaboration calls for individual ethical behavior as defined in policy BBF (School Board Member Ethics), and avoiding conflicts of interest as defined in policy BBFA (Board Member Conflict of Interest and Financial Disclosure). These policies apply to all Board members. These Board members work together on committees where they collaborate with each other and the Community. In all cases, Board discussions follow Sunshine Laws.

The Board Standing Committees work on specific issues to suggest solutions. Their work results in greater efficiency and effectiveness in full Board discussions. Board members are assigned to committees with other teachers, administrators, staff, and community members. Board members also collaborate with the team while learning more about each other as board members. Here are the committees, and the board members assigned:

<u>Communication (ad-hoc)</u>	Samantha Stormer	Larry Felton	Peggy Hassler
<u>Facilities</u>	Jean Pretto	Dr. Lisa Dorsey	Kevin Schartner
<u>Finance</u>	Larry Felton	Jamey Murphy	Peggy Hassler
<u>Insurance</u>	Jean Pretto	Jamey Murphy	
<u>Policy</u>	Samantha Stormer	Dr. Lisa Dorsey	Kevin Schartner
<u>Compensation/Salary (ad hoc)</u>	Samantha Stormer	Larry Felton	

Board members also collaboration with other groups: Special School District (SSD) Governing Council, SSD Public Review Committee, and Missouri School Improvement Program – 6 (MSIP 6).

Community interaction is important to effective collaboration. Public listening sessions are scheduled by the Board where the public can attend, sit down with 2 or 3 board members, and talk about issues and concerns that they might have. Board members have the opportunity to listen and learn more about issues, and engage the public in a discussion.

Collective, collaborative action improves the Board and Superintendent relationship. The Board and Superintendent identified policy changes, strategies, opportunities, and priorities that enabled the effective implementation of the Strategic Plan. Policy changes were identified to make the Strategic Plan the District’s primary governing document. A set of 5-year expense and capital plans were identified and defined to improve long-range planning. Discussions of innovative classroom and teaching ideas led to the creation of the new MOSAIC Elementary School to put these ideas into practice.

Board members actively exchange ideas with each other, and actively participate in district events to demonstrate their involvement, such as parent meetings, PTO, sports, fine arts, and school clubs. Each year Board members present awards at the annual District Recognition dinner.

Board meetings include topics such as budget development, curriculum planning, and policy direction for extended work sessions. This gives Board members a chance to learn and contribute their perspective. Board members provide short summaries of meetings or classes they have attended, such as school visits, parent meetings, school events, MSBA Region 7 meetings, MSBA conferences, SSD meetings, and NSBA conferences.

**Advocacy:** Describe what occurred that is outstanding in the criteria area; the board's role and/or actions that led to the accomplishment; and evidence that demonstrates the board's practices are effective. **Be sure to address all areas in the description of the criteria.**

The Mehlville Board of Education actively advocates for public education and the welfare of the students we serve. Mehlville is in a unique advocacy position. A current board member serves as Past State President of the Missouri School Boards' Association (MSBA). In July, our District Superintendent will become national President of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA). The Board works at the local as well as state and national level to advocate for policies and laws that benefit public education in general, and benefit the Mehlville school community.

Board members serve as advocates for the needs of the district, and use their knowledge of the district to serve as ambassadors. Board members routinely attend school events to show their support and add to their knowledge of the district. Board members visit schools to see the results of the board's decisions, and to meet and talk with the people who educate our children. Every time we meet with a state legislator, we advocate by being informed about Mehlville and informed about pending legislation. Board members work with students who need elected officials participation for their academic projects or organizational badges.

The Board uses local opportunities to advocate. Board Members attend local MSBA Region meetings where they can present our best practices, discuss legislative issues, and learn from approaches taken by other schools. Board representatives join with area schools to meet with state and federal legislators to explain our positions on proposed bills. Every meeting improves our knowledge and our ability to advocate for the Mehlville district, and for public education.

The Mehlville School District uses several ways to meet and talk with the 2 state senators and 6 representatives that serve the district. Board members attend MSBA's Legislative Forum to learn about current issues, hear from legislative leaders, and travel to the capitol to meet with our representatives. Board members attend MSBA's June and Fall conferences to plan legislative actions, and learn from other districts. The Mehlville Board was represented in meetings with the State Board of Education and the Commissioner of Education to provide school board members' views of public education's needs as well as testifying in opposition to Senate Education Savings Account (ESA) and Charter Expansion legislation. Meeting summaries have been shared with the entire Board. As a measure of effectiveness, the Mehlville Board has developed a strong working relationship with 1 of the Senators and 4 of the Representatives where they will call and ask for our opinions.

A Board Member participated in both the NSBA Federal Advocacy and MSBA Federal Relations meetings in Washington, D.C. to advocate for IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), Perkins Technical Education, and Federal Title funding. The impacts on Mehlville caused by content and funding changes for these programs were explained to both Senators and our Representative. The Advocacy meetings have improved the working relationship with their Education staff members.

Information from advocacy events are shared with all Board members. The Board reviews the subjects and people involved and determines the effectiveness of that effort. Future advocacy events are selected based on our experiences and our advocacy results.

**Professional Growth:** Describe what occurred that is outstanding in the criteria area; the board's role and/or actions that led to the accomplishment; and evidence that demonstrates the board's practices are effective. **Be sure to address all areas in the description of the criteria.**

The Mehlville School Board actively works to improve their knowledge of the school district, improve their skills as a governing body, and improve their personal skills. The Board maintains an approach where Board members explain what they understand, ask about what they don't, and offer differing views without any fear of retribution. The conversational approach improves the trust, efficiency, and effectiveness of the Board which leads to student-focused Board decisions.

One measure of Personal growth is certification levels: 4 members have CBM (Certified Board Member), 1 member has Advanced, 1 member has Masters and 1 member has Distinguished.

Another personal measure of growth is when a Board member accepts leadership responsibilities:

- Board Officer
- Committee member
- MSBA officer, committee chairman, FutureBuilders foundation
- MSBA voting delegate
- MSBA advocacy committee
- Delegate to the Special School District (SSD) Governing Council
- SSD Public Review Committee
- NSBA delegate, committee member, presenter

The Mehlville Board presented at the MSBA Fall Conference. Two Board members presented the details of the 2017 OBOE Award for School Finance Resources. One Board member presented the approach taken to pass Proposition R by 72%. The Board was also recognized with the Governance Team Award.

Board growth is a by-product of our work as a team. In Board meetings, our comments and questions educate all serving on the board and community members present. Prior to a meeting, board member questions are collected by the Superintendent. Answers are sent to everyone. This improves the effectiveness and efficiency of the Board. The questions are usually repeated during meetings to inform the community.

Governance experiences provide ongoing professional growth for Board Members. Representative experiences are listed with the key learning from each:

- Strategic Plan development – Community involvement and consensus building
- Proposition R tax levy – Well-defined spending and tracking
- Professional Development – Classroom teaching, resources and practices
- Technology 1 to 1 in classrooms – Improved instruction
- Classroom Instruction innovations – Problem-based Learning, and Individualized learning
- MOSAIC Elementary School – Innovation
- Expanded programs (Project Lead the Way, AP courses, associate degrees, CAPS, MyPath) – Student engagement
- Student Advisors – Student perspective
- Safety and Security – Collaboration with local law enforcement organizations
- Planning and Preparation – Continuous Improvement

The Mehlville Board of Education has learned from these individual and team growth opportunities. What we learn as individuals is shared with our fellow Board members. Our collective Professional Growth equips the Board to take the steps and make the decisions that will lead us to the Strategic Plan's 3 Goals: Student Preparation, Teacher Support, and Effective & Efficient.

**Application Process:** On the last page of the application, describe the process the board used to complete the application so as to ensure participation of board members in the application process. Include information on the board's process for deciding to apply for the award; how board members contributed ideas for the content of the application; board member involvement in the drafting of the application; and board approval of the final application to be submitted to MSBA.

The Board decided to apply for an OBOE award. After discussion, the Board decided to nominate for the Governance, Leadership and Accountability award. One Board member volunteered to be the lead writer, with the two lead writers from last year's nomination agreeing to initially review drafts before they were sent to all Board members.

Previous winner's applications (Festus, Ozark, and Platte City) were reviewed to get a sense of the type of content that should be included in our application. After reviewing these applications, an outline of the Board's development and use of the Strategic Plan was created. Using that outline as a guide, question-specific responses were outlined, and then were expanded to answer the questions. All of the board members were involved in reviewing and commenting on content of the outlines, and the drafted responses to the questions. This was achieved by the editing of content by all board members.

Ultimately, each board member determined whether or not, in their opinion, the application was complete or needed changes. All Board members indicated their approval by signing the application.

All members of the Mehlville School District Board of Education acknowledge that the Strategic Planning process and the use of continuous improvement are key factors for successful Governance, Leadership, and Accountability.