



Illinois Horizon Schools: Schools to Watch  
2016-2017  
Application for Re-Designation  
Of a Current School to Watch

Name of School:

School Address:

School Telephone No.

## **Illinois Horizon Schools: Schools to Watch** **In collaboration with** **The National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform**

The Illinois Horizon Schools: Schools to Watch Program affirms that exemplary schools are schools involved in an on-going journey of excellence. To this end, Illinois Horizon Schools: Schools to Watch, in coordination with the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform, has established a program of continuous evaluation for all schools designated as a School to Watch. In order to maintain status as an Illinois Horizon School to Watch at the end of three years it is necessary to submit an application for re-designation. A one day visit will be arranged in order to ascertain the progress of the school since the original designation.

The application portion of the re-designation process asks for the following specific information:

- Staff members assigned to schools seeking a re-designation will be required to complete the on line "Schools to Watch Self Study and Rating Rubric". Prior to administering the rubric, please contact John Viano, the Executive Director of the Association of Illinois Middle-Grade Schools. (AIMS). You will be registered for access to the electronic version of the rubric as administered by CPRD in Champaign, Illinois. CPRD will facilitate the rubric administration in your school and return results electronically.
- A narrative reflection of school progress and programs in each of the four criteria areas
- An explanation of any significant changes that have occurred since the initial designation, specifically in the areas of leadership, school size and/or demographics, district mandates, program, structure, and test data
- Suspension data for the 2015-2016 school year
- A list of any special recognitions awarded to your school since your designation as a School to Watch
- A description of any research projects, grant awards, articles, and projects of which your school has been the subject or recipient in the past three years

The identification of several "stretch goals" that will move your school to the next level. Goals may be, but are not limited to, the following areas:

- Efforts to move from teacher-directed to student-centered classrooms
- Institution of more authentic and varied measures of student progress
- More integrative approaches to learning
- More effective use of data in planning instructional improvement
- The establishment of instructional coaches
- Transitions into and out of the middle school
- Increased involvement in the arts and humanities
- Evidence of inter-school collaborations
- A summary of standardized testing data since the original designation

The report is to be completed by a team of administrators and teachers chosen by the school and signed to certify their participation in preparing this application.

Note: Completed applications should be sent to the following address:

*Association of Illinois Middle-Grade Schools  
3712 N. Broadway, Suite 180  
Chicago, Illinois 60613*

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Application Format**

Note: Please submit re-designation applications by November 14, 2016.

**Part One**

Please provide a narrative reflection of progress and programs in each of the following criteria areas:

- Academic Excellence
- Developmental Responsiveness
- Social Equity
- Organizational Structure & Support

Narratives, in 12-point type, double-spaced, one to two pages per area, should reflect the indicators involved in each area (a copy of the criteria is attached to this application to assist the faculty in assessing growth in each area). If you prefer, you may use a "bulleted" format and describe how you are continuing to grow as a school.

**Part Two**

Describe any significant changes that may have occurred in the school in the past three years in:

- Leadership
- Size
- Student demographics
- District mandates
- Overall program and structure
- Test data: Please provide state generated student data with sub-groups . Data from local assessments instruments may also be submitted.

**Part Three**

**Suspension Data**

To provide information on the suspension rate for your school for the past year, please fill out the attached chart. Numbers should reflect the **cumulative total suspensions** for the past year.

**Part Three** continued  
Suspension Data

School Name:

School Year	In School Suspensions				Out of School Suspensions			
	1-10 Days		10 + Days		1-10 Days		10 + Days	
2015-2016	# of Different Students (Unduplicated Count)	# of Cases (Duplicated Count)	# of Different Students (Unduplicated Count)	# of Cases (Duplicated Count)	# of Different Students (Unduplicated Count)	# of Cases (Duplicated Count)	# of Different Students (Unduplicated Count)	# of Cases (Duplicated Count)
African American								
Asian								
Latino (a)/Hispanic								
Native American								
Caucasian								
Other								

Given these data on suspension, what is your school's plan to address your school's suspension rates? Has there been a change in suspension rates over the last three years (maximum length one page)?

## **Part Four**

What special recognitions have been awarded to your school or faculty members since your designation as a School to Watch three years ago? You may use either narrative or "bulleted" formats (maximum length, one page).

## **Part Five**

Please provide a description of any research projects, grant awards, articles, and projects of which your school has been the subject or recipient in the past three years. You may use either narrative or "bulleted" formats (maximum length, one page).

## **Part Six**

Please identify several "stretch goals" that will move your school to the next level as you continue on your journey to being a high-performing middle grades school. In other words, "What's next?" Goals might include, but are not limited to, the following areas:

- Efforts made to move from teacher-directed to student-centered classrooms
- Increased use of authentic and varied measures of student progress
- Integrative approaches to learning
- Effective use of data in planning instructional improvement
- Establishment of instructional coaches
- Transitions into and out of the middle school
- Increased involvement in the arts and humanities

Please briefly describe how you intend to meet these "stretch goals" in the coming years (maximum length, one page).

## **Part Seven**

### Inter-School Collaboration Stretch Goals for Re-designation Application

Each Horizon School to Watch clearly provides a vision or model for any middle grades school to follow. However, it is also important to remember that each Horizon school has developed and honed strengths that are often related to its unique population, setting, administration, and faculty. Simply put, while all Horizon Schools are exemplary examples of middle-level practice, they are certainly not the same and each school has particular traits in which they excel.

The inter-school collaboration stretch goal involves explaining how your school has shared its expertise with larger middle-level audiences and/or assisting at least one new applicant school with its efforts at becoming a Horizon School. There are many ways to provide others with professional growth experiences or help new applicants, and the following list is by no means exhaustive:

- Hosting site visits for staff from applying schools to observe practices
- Providing staff development activities at applying schools
- Sharing curricular, administrative, pedagogical materials
- Proof reading and editing Horizon applications
- Presenting at AIMS/AMLE or other professional conferences to a larger body of middle-level professionals
- Publishing articles in professional journals related to exemplary middle level work
- Political involvement in middle-level issues

In this section of the application, please describe any activities that occurred during the past three years in which staff from your school provided assistance or education to others that related to the mission of AIMS or the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform.





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Re-Designation Application Cover Sheet**

Please type or print all information

School Name:	
School Address:	
City, Zip:	
School System:	
School Phone:	School Fax:
School Web Address:	
Total Enrollment:	Grade Configuration (6-8, K-8, etc.)
Principal's name (please print):	
Principal's E-mail address:	
Signatures of Application Writing Team & Position in Your School:	

Report Deadline: November 14, 2016

Mail completed application to:  
 Association of Illinois Middle-Grade Schools  
 Illinois Horizon Schools  
 3712 N. Broadway, Suite 180  
 Chicago, Illinois 60613

An electronic version of this application may be submitted to:  
[jviano13@gmail.com](mailto:jviano13@gmail.com)