

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2012 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**  
**A Public School - 12WY1**

School Type (Public Schools):                                                                        
(Check all that apply, if any)    Charter                      Title 1                      Magnet                      Choice

Name of Principal: Mrs. Shannon Harris

Official School Name: Star Valley High School  
School Mailing Address:    444 W. Swift Creek Lane  
   PO Box 8000  
   Afton, WY 83110-8000

County: Lincoln                      State School Code Number\*: 1202056

Telephone: (307) 885-7847    E-mail: sharris@lcsd2.org

Fax: (307) 885-3299                      Web site/URL: http://www.svhs.lcsd2.org

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

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\*: Mr. Jon Abrams    Superintendent e-mail: jabrams@lcsd2.org

District Name: Lincoln County School District #2    District Phone: (307) 885-3811

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

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. Mike Hunsaker

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

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

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

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

## **PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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12WY1

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2011-2012 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2006.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 or 2011.
7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
8. 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.
9. 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.
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.

# PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

12WY1

All data are the most recent year available.

## DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district 5 Elementary schools (includes K-8)  
 (per district designation): 1 Middle/Junior high schools  
3 High schools  
0 K-12 schools  
9 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 14161

## SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Rural
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 8
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2011 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0		<b>6</b>	0	0	0
K	0	0	0		<b>7</b>	0	0	0
1	0	0	0		<b>8</b>	0	0	0
2	0	0	0		<b>9</b>	94	88	182
3	0	0	0		<b>10</b>	91	77	168
4	0	0	0		<b>11</b>	77	74	151
5	0	0	0		<b>12</b>	95	89	184
<b>Total in Applying School:</b>								<b>685</b>

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native  
0 % Asian  
0 % Black or African American  
3 % Hispanic or Latino  
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
96 % White  
0 % Two or more races  
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting 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.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2010-2011 school year: 6%  
 This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	17
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	25
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	42
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2010	697
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.06
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	6

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 0%  
 Total number of ELL students in the school: 1  
 Number of non-English languages represented: 1  
 Specify non-English languages:

Spanish

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 28%

Total number of students who qualify: 181

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 13%

Total number of students served: 85

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

<u>7</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>8</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>56</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>4</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>1</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>6</u> Mental Retardation	<u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>45</u>	<u>6</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>11</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>12</u>	<u>8</u>
Total number	<u>76</u>	<u>15</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1:

14:1

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

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Daily student attendance	95%	93%	94%	93%	92%
High school graduation rate	90%	91%	88%	89%	90%

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2011 are doing as of Fall 2011.

Graduating class size:	<u>157</u>
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	<u>45%</u>
Enrolled in a community college	<u>20%</u>
Enrolled in vocational training	<u>9%</u>
Found employment	<u>15%</u>
Military service	<u>3%</u>
Other	<u>8%</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>100%</u></b>

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

No

Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

Star Valley High School (SVHS) is a rural high school located in western Wyoming along the Wyoming/Idaho border in Afton, Wyoming. We are in a remote part of Wyoming, and our school draws its 685 students from the 55 mile valley stretching from Alpine, Wyoming on the north to Smoot, Wyoming on the south. Our students and staff come from the following towns and communities: Alpine, Star Valley Ranch, Etna, Bedford, Thayne, Freedom, Auburn, Fairview, Grover, Afton, Osmond, and Smoot. The district's four elementary schools, located throughout Star Valley, eventually feed into one middle school in Afton and then into SVHS. Our student population fluctuates between 650-700 students.

There is a strong tradition and history in our school and valley, and the high school is the hub of the community. The community values and appreciates the educational opportunities afforded to our students along with the rich traditions in our athletic, music and other programs. Over 75% of our students are involved in one or more extra-curricular activities. Due to the level of student involvement, we have experienced great success as we compete in extra-curricular activities throughout the state. We have a large following of supporters wherever we go. We always have wonderful support at our drama productions, music concerts, art shows, athletic contests, and other school events. Our community also supports us financially as evidenced by the tens of thousands of dollars donated for community scholarships each year.

Our membership in the "Successful Practices Network (SPN)" and attendance at the Model Schools Conferences for the last six years has promoted forward thinking and helped to guide our vision and mission. Our "Brave" mascot, along with our focus on the work of the SPN, led us to the development of our vision statement: "Bravely preparing for the ever-changing world through rigor, relevance and relationships in academics and activities." We have focused on improving academic rigor and relevance for our students, and we constantly try to better prepare our students by giving them the skills and knowledge they will need to be successful in the world today. We currently offer over twenty concurrent enrollment college courses for a total of 75 possible college credits. We also offer AP courses in American History and U.S. Government. We strive to prepare our students for college and opportunities beyond high school. We also focus on building strong relationships with our students in an effort to better know them and meet their needs.

Star Valley High School consistently scores among the highest achieving high schools in the state of Wyoming on our required state assessment. We have continually analyzed our data for trends, strengths and weaknesses. Our data study has led us to make several improvements that have led to continuous, steady academic improvement over the last five years. Some of the changes we have implemented include intensive freshmen English, intensive math offerings, a four/five day week with Friday school for struggling students, and more tier two and tier three interventions for struggling students. As a result of our efforts to identify areas in need of improvement and then making the necessary changes, we have made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) each year in all areas and with all sub-groups.

We recognize the importance of the staff, and we recruit and retain the very best. However, we are not satisfied with our current levels of achievement. We are a community of learners committed to continuous improvement, and we allocate significant resources toward staff development in an effort to improve continuously. We have also adopted a new teacher evaluation system called iObservation to give teachers more meaningful feedback to improve teaching and learning at SVHS.

During the 2011-2012 school year, we have started Professional Learning Communities (PLC) involving all certified staff. We have had intensive, ongoing training throughout the year for our PLC leaders, and we will train another group this summer. Our entire staff has been involved in weekly PLC work as well as a book study to build capacity for PLC to ensure full implementation with fidelity for the coming school year. We are dedicated to getting each student over the bar, and we believe that the collaborative work of the PLC will help us achieve that end for all students.

In summary, Star Valley High School deserves recognition as a Blue Ribbon School because we are a high performing school focused on continuous improvement. Our dedication to improvement has helped us become one of the top high schools in Wyoming. We strive to maintain the rich traditions that come with being a high school in a small town while consistently striving to reflect, improve, and prepare our students for the ever-changing world.

### 1. Assessment Results:

A. The Wyoming Department of Education in conjunction with Pearson has developed the Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students (PAWS), which is the state assessment. The PAWS assesses students in reading, writing, math and science. The PAWS is given during the junior year of high school; however, in the past it was possible for students to test in their freshmen or sophomore years and bank their proficient or advanced scores.

The Wyoming Department of Education has established cut scores at four points and has assigned the following proficiency levels: below basic, basic, proficient and advanced. The goal and expectation for all Star Valley High School (SVHS) students is to score at the proficient or advanced levels in all areas of the PAWS.

B. Over the last five years, SVHS has shown positive trends in assessment data, as measured on the PAWS. Our 2011 data shows our academic achievement at the highest levels in reading and math for the last five years. In math, 82% of our students scored at the proficient or advanced levels and in reading 90% of our students scored at the proficient or advanced levels. In addition to having more students score at the proficient or advanced levels, we also had the lowest percentage of students scoring at the below basic level in both reading and math. The percentage of students scoring below basic in math in 2011 was 2.8%, and in reading it was 1.7%.

In an effort to improve our math scores, we intensified many math classes four years ago. Intensive classes meet daily rather than every other day. The intensification provides students with an opportunity to attain more advanced level math courses. The math grading scale may also contribute to improvements in math scores. In math there are no D grades given, and students must score at the C- or above level to go on to the next math course in the series. Individualization with highly qualified teachers in after school tutoring and summer school has also improved math skills.

In an effort to improve our reading scores, we implemented a school-wide Guided Reading class seven years ago. We have noticed a constant increase in reading scores over this time. In addition, we added a freshmen intensive English course for the students scoring in the lowest quartile on their 8th grade PAWS reading and writing assessments. We have used research-based programs, such as READ 180, System 44, and Language! to improve their literacy skills. We also provide additional support beyond the freshmen year for those who continue to struggle with literacy skills.

In reviewing the data of the subgroups versus "all students," there are some gaps greater than 10%. When comparing the special education students against the performance of "all students," 19% more of our special education students scored below the proficient level in reading and 26% more scored below the proficient level in math. We continue to analyze individual student data and incorporate tier two and three interventions to meet individual student needs. This is a small number of students, which makes it easy for us to individualize. It should be noted that SVHS's special education students scored higher than special education students throughout the state. No other subgroups have a discrepancy greater than 10% in reading; in fact, our free and reduced sub-group had 3% more students scoring in the proficient or advanced range than the percentage for "all students." In math our African American, Hispanic or Latino, and our American Indian/Alaska Native sub-groups all have a discrepancy greater than 10% when compared to the performance of "all students." Due to the small size of these sub-groups, ranging from one to five students, we are able to individualize and provide tier two and three interventions.

Perhaps the biggest factor contributing to increased academic achievement results from implementing incentives for students who previously had no ownership, accountability, or consequences for a high stakes

test. After collaborating with students, we implemented incentives, such as partial schedules, if students scored at the proficient or advanced levels on all portions of the PAWS. Since those incentives were put in place we have seen students dedicated to giving their best effort on the PAWS.

## **2. Using Assessment Results:**

Star Valley High School (SVHS) uses a variety of data to guide school improvement. SVHS usually receives the results from our state assessment, the Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students (PAWS), in August. We receive a variety of school-wide and individual student reports based on the PAWS assessment. This data is analyzed and shared with a variety of stakeholders to improve student and school performance. We also analyze data from other sources including: ACT, common assessments, AP exams, and formative assessments.

The PAWS and ACT data are reviewed annually by the staff as a whole. We look for longitudinal trends and patterns in the data and revise our school improvement goals based on this analysis. We analyze the PAWS “School Summary Reports” and the ACT mean scores to determine how SVHS compares to other districts, the state, and, in the case of the ACT, the nation. The PAWS school reports identify instructional needs for the school as a whole. The reports break the content areas into skill areas and then give the schools a red, yellow or green rating. A red indicates that additional instruction on this skill definitely seems needed, a yellow indicates that additional instruction on this skills may be needed, and a green rating indicates that no additional instruction on this skill seems needed. We use this information to identify and close curricular gaps that may exist. When teachers analyze each student's performance, they identify specific instructional areas of strength, which leads to increased collaboration to improve outcomes for all students. In addition, our ACT preparation teachers identify areas of strength and weakness by analyzing the ACT data.

The PAWS also provides student “Roster Reports” that help us identify and address skills deficits for individual students. Case managers, counselors, Professional Learning Communities (PLC), and other staff members review these reports to better identify and address skills deficits for students.

The Community Advisory Panel (CAP) also reviews the PAWS and ACT data annually. CAP looks for trends and patterns and gives input regarding school goals. They also help communicate the results with other stakeholders.

Our PLC curricular and grade level teams analyze common assessment and formative assessment data to drive instruction. They make adjustments to instruction based on the feedback they receive from these data. Additionally, they collaborate to identify teachers whose instructional strategies may be more effective and then expand these effective instructional practices to additional classrooms to benefit a greater number of students.

All of the data is also studied to guide and direct professional development. When areas of weakness are identified, we provide the needed professional development to address the gaps and improve instructional effectiveness.

Academic results are shared with the stakeholders in a variety of ways. Students and parents receive individual student reports that indicate academic achievement levels for students. We also have a back-to-school assembly at the beginning of the school year to share our assessment results with the student body as a whole. During this assembly we look at our data and compare ourselves to schools around the state. This provides an opportunity to celebrate our accomplishments and success with the students and staff. Our school newsletter, “The Braves Bulletin,” also shares our assessment results with our parents and community stakeholders. Each year we publish and distribute an issue dedicated to communicating our academic and other data. Our results are also posted on the school's website.

District personnel also share our academic results with the school board and the public each fall. They prepare a comprehensive report that is available to anyone in the community. Our local newspaper also publishes the

district's academic results each year. Annually SVHS presents our data, school goals, and our progress towards meeting our goals to our Board of Trustees.

Analyzing data and making adjustments to curriculum, processes, professional development, interventions, the schedule, and the calendar are ongoing at SVHS. We, along with our stakeholders, are constantly analyzing current data and making adjustments as indicated. As we continue our implementation of PLC, we believe this will become an even greater strength for our staff.

### **3. Sharing Lessons Learned:**

Star Valley High School's (SVHS) staff has had multiple opportunities to share successful strategies with other schools and professional organizations. Administration and teachers have shared with other schools around the state and at conferences and events throughout Wyoming and the nation.

The principal was able to share some of our successes at the fall Wyoming Association of Secondary School Principals (WASSP) conference when she was selected as Principal of the Year in 2009. She shared the practices and results of our freshmen house program that was developed to improve transitions from the middle to the high school. She also shared SVHS's implementation of the Guided Reading program and the increased reading scores. She also presented at the WASSP Wapiti conference.

In the past four years, we have had the honor of having the "Wyoming Teacher of the Year" and the "Wyoming Biology Teacher of the Year" selected from SVHS's staff. These two individuals had multiple opportunities to share some of their most effective instructional strategies with schools in the district, the state, and the nation. They presented at the National Biology Teachers Conference, the Wyoming School Improvement Conference, on the Wyoming legislative floors, and at districts throughout the state.

We have also had multiple teachers present at the Wyoming School Improvement Conferences over the last five years. Some of the topics they have presented on are: use of 3-D printers in vocational programs, engaging students in inventor's workshop, formative assessments using technology, and engaging students through the use of technology.

We have had two teachers that have had multiple opportunities to present throughout the state and the nation. One has shared instructional strategies that engage students and result in increases in math achievement with teachers in Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, and California. Another teacher/facilitator is considered an expert at using the Promethean© interactive whiteboards and has conducted trainings throughout the country. His topics range from introductory skills to advanced techniques, as well as using the interactive whiteboards for formative assessment.

SVHS is recognized throughout Wyoming as a leader in excellence. We receive frequent requests about the programs and interventions at SVHS. Calls and visits are frequently made to SVHS to gather information about the strategies we are using to get results. The Wyoming Department of Education visited SVHS to film our Guided Reading Program so it could be shared with schools around the state on its website.

### **4. Engaging Families and Communities:**

Star Valley High School (SVHS) is the hub of the community. We are fortunate to live in a place where this is the case and families and community members are integral to everything we do. We start each year with a complimentary ice cream social or barbecue for our families to kick off the school year. This event has grown each year.

We have worked to improve communication and involvement by publishing our school newsletter, "The Braves Bulletin." Our newsletter informs stakeholders and also extends opportunities for the stakeholders to communicate with the school through surveys and questionnaires.

We also expanded the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) to include a more diverse group of community members in the school improvement process and to facilitate communication and broaden our base for feedback and input. Due to the expansion of this committee, which is now known as Community Advisory Panel (CAP), we have a broader pool of stakeholders working collaboratively to improve SVHS.

As SVHS draws students from a valley that is 55 miles long, we have worked to reach out to the various communities throughout the valley. When important information needs to be shared, we hold multiple meetings throughout the various communities. We also hold parent teacher conferences each fall and spring at two locations in the valley. The first night we hold our conferences in the lower valley at Etna Elementary, and the second evening we hold the conferences at SVHS in Afton. The parents have appreciated the effort to make parent-teacher conferences more convenient to attend.

SVHS conducts "Braves in Action," which is a school-wide day of service in the community on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. We send our students out in the community to work in the local food banks, complete wood cutting service projects, finish painting and construction projects, shovel snow for the elderly, read to the elementary school children, and perform other worthwhile projects. At the school we prepare Thanksgiving food boxes and tie quilts to give to needy families in the area. We write letters and make Christmas ornaments to send overseas to our troops. We also sew and decorate Christmas stockings to be filled and distributed to needy children and children in shelters during Christmas. On this day of service, adult volunteers assist us as we work to improve our relationships and give back to the community that is so supportive of all we are trying to accomplish at SVHS.

## 1. Curriculum:

Star Valley High School (SVHS) offers a diverse curriculum meeting the needs of all learners. For a rural high school of our size, our course offerings are plentiful and include courses in the following areas; language arts, math, science, social studies, health and physical fitness, art, music, business, technology, vocational, family and consumer science and foreign languages.

The Wyoming Legislature passed a statute in 2002 requiring districts to incorporate a Body of Evidence (BOE) system that ensures districts and schools are requiring mastery of standards before granting high school diplomas. Students must demonstrate proficiency in at least 5 of the 9 areas, including language arts and math, to receive a diploma from a Wyoming high school. Our BOE system encompasses nine content areas that include the following: language arts, math, science, social studies, health & physical fitness, fine & performing arts, foreign language, vocational, and business. Students receive diplomas only if they meet both the BOE requirements, as demonstrated by performance on the common assessments, as well as meeting the Carnegie unit requirements established by the state and district. Our curriculum and assessments for all courses are mapped and aligned to the state standards, so we can track progress towards graduation requirements.

In language arts we have three state standards that guide our teaching and learning in the areas of reading, writing, and listening and speaking. Each of these standards is embedded in the English courses that students are required to take each year of high school. These classes focus on reading and interpreting a variety of texts, writing expository and expressive pieces for a variety of purposes, and listening and speaking for a variety of audiences and purposes. Students have multiple opportunities over their years in English to demonstrate mastery of the language arts standards and their numerous benchmarks.

At SVHS we have expanded the responsibility for reading and writing to all teachers in the school. For the last seven years, all teachers and other certified staff have led daily Guided Reading groups. We have also involved all teachers in providing instruction in reading informational text passages and writing constructed responses. We strive for consistency in writing by training all teachers to use the same writing rubric for writing assignments across the curriculum. The staff also emphasizes literacy skills, and all staff members take ownership and responsibility for students' attainment of these skills.

Our five math standards cover number operations and concepts, geometry, measurement, algebra, and data & probability. As stated previously, we have mapped our math curriculum to ensure that all the standards are addressed in the math courses of all students. Even those taking the minimum number of math courses required for graduation have multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery of the math standards and benchmarks.

In addition, our curriculum includes courses that support struggling learners in reading, writing and math as well as challenging the most gifted students. We offer many concurrent enrollment courses that challenge and prepare our students for their future and give them a head start on their college careers. Approximately 200 students earn college credits each year from three different colleges and universities with which we partner. Over the last five years SVHS's students have earned between 370-500 college credits annually. SVHS constantly assesses our curriculum and offerings to make sure they meet the needs of our students and other stakeholders while maintaining the rigor and relevance we are striving to achieve.

In essence, the staff is not content with the status quo. They are continuously seeking new professional development opportunities and implementing research-based strategies to prepare our students for college and careers in the 21st century.

## **2. Reading/English:**

Star Valley High School (SVHS) understands the importance of literacy and focuses on these skills for all students. We provide a continuum of courses to provide support in reading and writing for students who struggle on one end of the spectrum to advanced concurrent enrollment courses on the other end of the spectrum. All English courses are mapped and aligned to state standards, and students have multiple opportunities for instruction and demonstration of mastery in reading, writing, and listening and speaking.

Our English teachers employ a variety of instructional methods as they study and analyze literature in its many genres. The classes engage and challenge students as they read, analyze, and discuss various literary works. Formative and summative assessments are often used, and learning is further enhanced by the use of Promethean® whiteboards and interactive response systems. Our commitment to reading is further evidenced by our school-wide Guided Reading program that has been in place for the last seven years.

In another effort to address the skills deficits of struggling students, we implemented an intensive freshmen English class six years ago. This class meets daily, even though SVHS runs an alternating block schedule. Incoming freshmen are placed in this class based on their PAWS scores, MAP scores, and the recommendations from the eighth grade teachers. Two certified teachers and one paraprofessional teach a maximum of fifteen students in these intensive courses. They use a variety of instructional strategies, including cooperative learning, small group instruction, one-on-one instruction, and computer assisted instruction. They also supplement the core curriculum with research-based programs, such as READ 180, System 44, and Language!.

SVHS has also adopted a co-teaching model, pairing regular education teachers with special education teachers to co-teach regular English classes. This practice provides additional support to our special education students. Co-teaching also improves the effectiveness of the extension classes.

The writing process is an essential part of all English courses. Students have multiple opportunities to write pieces of various lengths for a variety of purposes and audiences throughout their four years at SVHS. Students are instructed in the elements of writing and the scoring rubrics used to assess their works. Students benefit from individual conferences and receive extensive written and verbal feedback from their teachers in an effort to improve their writing skills. English teachers have also trained the rest of the staff in the writing process, and the writing scoring rubrics are consistent throughout the school.

## **3. Mathematics:**

After assessing our math performance on state and national assessments, Star Valley High School (SVHS) has made significant changes in an effort to improve math performance. One significant change was to offer many of our math classes on an intensive schedule, meaning they meet every day, instead of every other like most classes on an alternating block. Our math offerings range from Pre-Algebra to Calculus II and include several concurrent enrollment courses. All math courses are mapped and aligned to the state standards.

Our math teachers use a variety of instructional strategies to engage students in the learning process. They focus on skill attainment and then move into applying those skills in problem-solving situations. Promethean® interactive white boards are used extensively during math classes. In addition to the interactive boards to enhance instruction and increase student engagement, the interactive response systems are used regularly for formative assessment. Teachers use these frequent assessments to adjust instruction and meet the needs of individual learners. Students have multiple options to get additional help outside of class time. Some of the options available to students are daily study halls, after school tutoring, and Friday school.

SVHS also uses a co-teaching model in math to improve outcomes for special education students. Our co-teaching model involves a special education teacher co-teaching with a regular education teacher to provide additional support for at-risk students. The special education teachers are also experts at making sure the accommodations are in place for students with IEPs and 504 plans.

Accelerated Math and Khan Academy are used at SVHS to remediate students' skills deficits and allow case managers and teachers to assess and individualize instruction based on students' needs. We use these programs with struggling students and in our tutoring and summer school programs. Another web-based program, Triumph College Admissions PLAN/ACT study guide, is used in our math ACT preparation class to help students improve their test taking skills.

Another practice to improve math scores and relationships is the looping of math teachers between SVHS and Star Valley Middle School (SVMS) for the past four years. We have focused on improving the rigor at both schools and on improving student-staff relationships. This practice has also helped us to identify curricular gaps and make sure they are addressed. It also facilitates the transition of incoming ninth graders by providing the same teacher two years in a row.

#### **4. Additional Curriculum Area:**

Star Valley High School's (SVHS) social studies/history offerings are crucial to fulfilling our vision of preparing students for life after high school. We believe that students cannot adequately prepare for the future if they have little knowledge or understanding of the past and how it impacts their future. We offer courses in American History, World History, US Government, Economics, Wyoming and Western Frontiers, Geography, Psychology, Sociology, and Senior Capstone. These courses align with the state standards and our mission and vision statements. Students are required to take American and World History, US Government and one other course of their choosing.

Our social studies teachers are passionate about teaching students to understand the concepts and in helping them analyze, evaluate, and apply those concepts to their lives and the world today. They help them understand the past and its impact on events that followed. Some of the instructional strategies used to engage students are lecture, discussion, dramatic interpretation, story telling, games, physical movement, debates, building models, analyzing documents, and various cooperative learning strategies. Frequent formative assessments in these classes help ensure student success.

The AP US History and AP US Government courses were added two years ago to provide a more rigorous path for our higher performing students. These students are constantly challenged to evaluate and analyze the information they are taught. They also do a great deal of writing that is scored using the same scoring rubric our English department employs. We have only done AP testing for one year, but our results were similar to the national averages. We are hoping to improve our testing results each year as we work to build the program.

Another course we added in response to stakeholder requests was the Senior Capstone class. Our stakeholders wanted us to better prepare students for college and career readiness by providing a course that deals with topics, such as applying and interviewing for jobs, job skills, contracts, finances and budgeting, service, college life, dating, career exploration, taxes, and voting. This class requires ten hours of community service. Senior Capstone has been well received by students, has improved relationships in the community, and filled some gaps for students leaving home to live on their own for the first time. Topics in this class continue to evolve to meet stakeholder needs in an ever changing world.

#### **5. Instructional Methods:**

Star Valley High School (SVHS) utilizes a variety of instructional strategies and programs to address the various learning needs of all students. The 81 minute, alternating block schedule allows teachers to incorporate multiple activities and strategies to meet the diverse needs of all learning styles. SVHS has focused on research based instructional strategies, especially the work of Robert Marzano. Some of the instructional strategies that we use include the following: cooperative learning, using advanced organizers, summarizing and note taking, identifying similarities and differences, and generating and testing hypotheses. These instructional activities take place in classrooms, labs, and on field trips around the state and region.

SVHS is a technology rich school. Every classroom at SVHS has a Promethean© interactive whiteboard for which our staff receives extensive training to improve instructional outcomes for students. They are used daily in classes to engage students in learning and assessing their progress towards the learning goals. The interactive voting systems are especially valuable tools as they allow teachers to identify individual student's strengths and weaknesses and adjust instruction or provide additional support based feedback received. In addition, we have well-equipped biology, chemistry, and physics labs in our science department. Our vocational programs are equipped with the latest technology, including an AutoCAD computer lab, a three-dimensional printer, programmable plasma cutting equipment, a CNC HAAS milling machine, and two laser engravers. In addition, SVHS students have access to multiple computer labs including, nine stationary labs, two portable labs, and one iPad lab.

A major strength in addressing the needs of students with individual education plans is our extension program. Our certified special education teachers conduct the extension classes. The focus during the extension classes is on previewing, reviewing and re-teaching concepts from the core academic classes. This enables our special education students to receive the additional support that they need to be successful in their academic classes. The previewing is especially powerful as it provides our special education students with advanced knowledge regarding curriculum before it is introduced to the core academic class as a whole. Previewing gives the special education students a head start and improves their academic success in core classes.

We also meet the needs of our high achieving students by offering many accelerated, concurrent enrollment, and AP courses. These allow our high-performing college-bound students to prepare for the rigor of post-secondary education.

## **6. Professional Development:**

Star Valley High School (SVHS) offers ongoing professional development that is aligned to our school's vision, mission and individual growth plans. We are a community of learners who value professional development and personal growth. We engage in professional development at the school, district, state and national levels.

Our school level professional development has covered many topics. We have annual training in Special Education rules and regulations, 6+1 Trait writing, guided reading, Powerschool, interactive whiteboards, formative assessment, Creating Independence through Student-owned Strategies (CRISS), cooperative learning, Quantum learning, strategies for working with ELL students, creating web pages, classroom management, and many other topics. We schedule our professional development according to staff needs. We also do book studies to further develop our effectiveness as teachers and establish common foundations for school and district initiatives.

Our district has adopted Robert Marzano's iObservation system for staff evaluation. This system has many resources for professional development that are also utilized at SVHS. One of the more powerful components is the online library and video clips featuring modeling of instructional strategies. This resource has been very beneficial as we strive to improve our effectiveness.

Our district embraces the Facilitated Unobtrusive Staff Development based on Individual Occupational Needs (FUSION) program, which was developed by Joseph Semadeni, a teacher in our district. FUSION was developed to motivate teachers to read, collaborate and share ideas, and to observe and demonstrate instructional practices in a meaningful, consistent way. FUSION has a menu of instructional strategies, skills, and programs teachers can choose from. They spend time collaborating in groups and then implementing the strategies. They also model and observe these skills. FUSION has been implemented at SVHS for last seven years.

Our teachers and staff also have many opportunities to attend professional development conferences. Some of the conferences we have attended are: Model Schools Conference, Wyoming's School Improvement Conferences, National Science Teachers Conference, National Council of Teachers of Math Conference, National Council of Teachers of English Conference, Kagan Conferences, Teton Institute, National Association of Secondary School Principals Conference, LRP's National Institute on Legal Issues of Educating Individuals with Disabilities, Council for Exceptional Children Convention, ASCD Conference, and Professional Learning Communities at Work Institutes. Following attendance at these conferences, staff implement what they have learned and share their acquired knowledge with colleagues.

We also support National Board Certification. SVHS currently has three nationally certified teachers with another seven pursuing certification at this time.

## **7. School Leadership:**

Star Valley High School's (SVHS) leadership consists of three administrators, including a principal and two assistant principals along with several leadership teams. The principal serves as the primary instructional leader with support from the two assistant principals. All three manage various aspects of the school to facilitate and provide a safe, orderly learning environment. The administrators have an open-door policy to promote collaboration between students, parents, staff, and administration.

One of the main groups that support school improvement is the School Improvement Team (SIT). The SIT meets at least monthly to discuss continuous school improvement and to facilitate communication between administration and the staff. The SIT takes the lead on monitoring and managing the continuous school improvement process. The committee is comprised of department chairs, the student council advisor, administrators, counselors, and a parent representative. At times this team is expanded to include additional stakeholders as needed.

The Community Advisory Panel (CAP) is another group that supports communication and school improvement between SVHS and its stakeholders. The CAP members attend monthly meetings to discuss school improvement, budget, school initiatives and activities, and other areas of concern. This committee is comprised of parents, a representative from higher education, Board members, business members, administration, a counselor, and a staff representative. This committee is also expanded at times to include additional stakeholders.

Instructional facilitators also help lead the staff in improved academic performance. These three facilitators specialize in the areas of technology, language arts, science, and math. They work individually with teachers to improve instructional strategies leading to positive outcomes for students. These three facilitators also provide professional development to groups of teachers throughout the year.

There are several student groups including the student body officers, the National Honor Society (NHS), and the Rise Above Drugs (RAD) Club that work in conjunction with the administration and their advisors to provide school leadership and direction. They ensure that the students' voices are heard.

While the building principal has ultimate accountability for instructional leadership, personnel management, professionalism, public relations, fiscal management and oversight, school safety and climate, student management, staff development, and overall school effectiveness, it is through collaboration with the two assistant principals and the other stakeholder groups that these tasks are accomplished effectively.

Administration and leadership groups work together to ensure that school improvement efforts and resource allocation are aligned to the school's mission, vision, and goals. We work collaboratively to obtain the best possible outcomes for our students, staff, school, and community.

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 11 Test: Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students (PAWS)

Edition/Publication Year:  
2006/2007/2008/2009/2010

Publisher: Wyoming Department of Education

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	82	75	72	77	71
Advanced	24	29	19	20	6
Number of students tested	177	175	170	159	150
Percent of total students tested	99	99	100	99	98
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	2	1	1	3
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	1	1	1	2
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	91	65	62	67	70
Advanced	11	21	19	27	9
Number of students tested	44	43	42	30	23
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1				
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	5	9	3		1
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	56	28	33	17	6
Advanced	11	11	13	6	0
Number of students tested	18	18	15	18	17
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced					0
Advanced					0
Number of students tested		1			1
<b>6. American Indian/ Alaska Native</b>					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	3	1		1	1
<b>NOTES:</b> Some sub-groups are left blank because we had no students in that sub-group for that year.					

12WY1

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 11 Test: Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students (PAWS)

Edition/Publication Year:  
2006/2007/2008/2009/2010

Publisher: Wyoming Department of Education

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	90	85	75	83	86
Advanced	36	44	35	44	19
Number of students tested	177	175	169	159	150
Percent of total students tested	99	99	100	99	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	2	0	1	3
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	1	0	1	1
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	93	81	71	90	83
Advanced	32	37	10	40	13
Number of students tested	44	43	42	30	23
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	5	9	3		1
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	61	56	27	33	12
Advanced	17	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	18	18	15	18	17
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested		1			1
<b>6. American Indian/ Alaska Native</b>					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	3	1		1	1
<b>NOTES:</b> Some Sub-groups are left blank because we had no students in that sub-group for that year.					

12WY1

# STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics      Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	82	75	72	77	71
Advanced	24	29	19	20	6
Number of students tested	177	175	170	159	150
Percent of total students tested	99	99	100	99	98
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	2	1	1	3
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	1	1	1	2
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	91	65	62	67	70
Advanced	11	21	19	27	9
Number of students tested	44	43	42	30	23
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	1	0	0	0	0
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	5	9	3	0	1
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	56	28	33	17	6
Advanced	11	11	13	6	0
Number of students tested	18	18	15	18	17
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	0	1	0	0	1
<b>6.</b>					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	3	1	0	1	1
<b>NOTES:</b>					

12WY1

## STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading      Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	90	85	75	83	86
Advanced	36	44	35	44	19
Number of students tested	177	175	169	159	150
Percent of total students tested	99	99	100	99	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	2	2	0	1	3
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	1	0	1	1
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	93	81	71	90	83
Advanced	32	37	10	40	13
Number of students tested	44	43	42	30	23
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	5	9	3	0	1
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced	61	56	27	33	12
Advanced	17	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	18	18	15	18	17
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	0	1	0	0	1
<b>6.</b>					
Proficient & Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	3	1	0	1	1
<b>NOTES:</b>					

12WY1