

U.S. Department of Education
2012 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School - 12MO4

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

Name of Principal: Mr. Don Edwards

Official School Name: Lawson High School

School Mailing Address: P.O. Box 157
 600 Bob Gill Drive
 Lawson, MO 64062-0157

County: Ray State School Code Number*: 089-080
Telephone: (816) 580-7270 E-mail: edwardsd@lawson.k12.mo.us

Fax: (816) 296-3048 Web site/URL: lawsoncardinals.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. Roger Schmitz Ed.S Superintendent e-mail:
schmitzr@lawson.k12.mo.us

District Name: Lawson R-XIV District Phone: (816) 580-7277

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. John Wier

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

12MO4

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

12MO4

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 (per district designation): 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 1 High schools
 0 K-12 schools
 3 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 7973

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Small city or town in a rural area
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 11
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		6	0	0	0
K	0	0	0		7	0	0	0
1	0	0	0		8	0	0	0
2	0	0	0		9	47	68	115
3	0	0	0		10	64	53	117
4	0	0	0		11	56	34	90
5	0	0	0		12	56	43	99
Total in Applying School:								421

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
1 % Asian
0 % Black or African American
1 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
98 % 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: 8%

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.	11
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	21
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	32
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2010	408
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.08
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	8

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 0%

Total number of ELL students in the school: 0

Number of non-English languages represented: 0

Specify non-English languages:

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 23%

Total number of students who qualify: 99

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: 4%

Total number of students served: 18

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>2</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>2</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>10</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>4</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</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>1</u>	<u>1</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>19</u>	<u>3</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>
Total number	<u>31</u>	<u>11</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: 18:1

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%	95%	95%	95%	95%
High school graduation rate	93%	91%	98%	96%	93%

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>81</u>
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	<u>52%</u>
Enrolled in a community college	<u>23%</u>
Enrolled in vocational training	<u>0%</u>
Found employment	<u>17%</u>
Military service	<u>3%</u>
Other	<u>5%</u>
Total	<u>100%</u>

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?

The Lawson School District has earned the Distinction in Performance award from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for the past five years. Its only high school, Lawson High, has earned Missouri 'Top 10' status in mathematics 8 out of 10 years from 1999-2008. Missouri ceased this recognition program at that time. Lawson High School is housed entirely in a structure that was constructed in different phases beginning in 1992. All classrooms are modernly updated with interactive whiteboards and other current technology. A spacious commons area provides a comfortable setting for meetings, breakfast, and lunch. The gymnasium is a community gathering place throughout the year for competitions and graduation. The showcase facility for the high school and district is a state-of-the-art 750-seat performing arts center.

The Lawson R-XIV School District is located just 15 miles to the northeast of the Kansas City metropolitan area. Portions of three counties comprise the geographic make-up of the district. The Lawson R-XIV School District enjoys a population of just under 6,000 with approximately 2,200 households. The median age of district patrons is 37.6 years of age. Per capita income is \$27,016. The median family income is \$67,203. The largest community employer is the Lawson R-XIV School District. A high number of the population commutes to the Kansas City metropolitan area for employment at corporations such as the Ford Motor Company, Hallmark Cards, Kansas City International Airport (KCI), and American Italian Pasta Company (AIPC). Of district patrons 25 years of age and older, over 89% are high school graduates and 14% have a bachelor's degree. (Source: 2009 American Community Survey)

The Lawson R-XIV School District serves over 1,200 students and their families. The high school, which serves grades 9-12, is currently home to over 420 students. Integrated technology enhances the board-approved curriculum. Additionally, Lawson High School reaps the benefits of effective programs which include: K-12 gifted education program, special services, the Missouri A+ Program, collegiate dual-credit course offerings, abundant extra-curricular activities, and numerous other programs. Although vocational and technical courses are offered within Lawson High School's curriculum, students have the advantage of enrolling in comprehensive vocational programs through the Excelsior Springs Career Center located in nearby Excelsior Springs, Missouri.

“The mission of Lawson High School is to form a partnership with family, business, and community in order to provide a quality education in a safe, drug-free environment that prepares students to be confident in their abilities, enthusiastic about their possibilities, and eager to engage life as contributing members of society.”

It is from this mission statement that successes are judged. Students have achieved very well in academic, fine art, and athletic competitions. Titles have been won in regional Math Olympiads and state competitions in different sports. Students have earned superior ratings at state music contests. Students are well-rounded and ready to promote a safe, drug-free environment of learning. They exemplify this through student groups such as Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) and Overtime (which plans fun student activities after Friday evening home athletic contests throughout the year). These Overtime events provide students a place to “hang out” with friends in a safe, drug-free environment.

A contributing member of society is one who takes responsibility for his or her own actions. Students have collectively attained over a 95% attendance rate for many years. Suspension rates have continually declined over the past eight years. Three out of 4 students attend post-secondary schooling after graduation. One of the school's strongest community supporters is the Lawson Alumni Association. Alumni are determined to give back to a quality school that helped shape their lives. Numerous faculty members are Lawson High School graduates and have made Lawson, Missouri their home. The dedication and commitment to excellence shown by the students, faculty, staff, school board, parents, community members, and business partners is what has made Lawson High School exemplary.

1. Assessment Results:

A.

The performance levels on standardized assessments for Lawson High School have been exemplary. Using No Child Left Behind's (NCLB's) Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) as a measure, Lawson High School has 'met' AYP status *every* year in mathematics. Additionally, through 2010 when Missouri stopped announcing 'Top 10' status on Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) tests, Lawson High School's math results earned 'Top 10' status 8 out of 10 years. In communication arts, Lawson has 'met' AYP status every year but two and one of those was the first year of AYP in 2002.

MAP is commonly believed to be a rigorous set of assessments when compared to other states. To gain Proficient or Advanced status, a student is expected to be above grade level. In 2006, Missouri began utilizing the "expanded" MAP, assessing grades 3-8, grade 10 in math, and grade 11 in communication arts. In 2009, the End-of-Course (EOC) exams replaced the respective high school grade-level exams.

The school takes great pride in Lawson High School's performance on the MAP assessments. A stated Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) goal is that the percentage of students in the Proficient and Advanced proficiency levels will exceed the respective state average. This goal has consistently been achieved since inception. More importantly, Lawson has an expectation that every student will improve and that every student can improve. Individual performance results are analyzed from year-to-year to identify student growth. We believe that if we can improve each student at whatever level of proficiency he/she may be, then the overall 'met' status will take care of itself. Each of the graduation class cohorts at the high school has shown this level of improvement and performance in the past five years of data. We expect nothing less.

B.

In examining data tables of Lawson High School's performance over the past five years, one will see a steady trend of improvement. This five year window encompasses the 2007 through 2011 assessment results. High school Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) tests shifted from a grade-level exam through the 2008 school year to an End-of-Course (EOC) exam in 2009. The results show a change coinciding with the testing format change.

In communication arts, performance trends have steadily increased through the years and have been extremely high since 2009, the first year of the EOC tests. As reported in the final Annual Yearly Progress (AYP), 78.0% of students were proficient or above in 2009. In 2010, that figure increased to 85.0% and remained a very high 83.5% in 2011. During these same years, according to the Missouri Annual Performance Report (APR), fewer than 1.24% of students have been in the Below Basic proficiency level. In 2011, 38.7% of students earned Advanced proficiency level status in communication arts. These results have kept us ahead of No Child Left Behind's (NCLB's) Annual Proficiency Target for communication arts.

Mathematics, just as communication arts, has enjoyed extremely high results. As stated earlier, Lawson High School has met the annual proficiency target in mathematics every year of the NCLB. With the exception of one year, 2009, Lawson has seen an upward trend in Proficient and above student percentage. In 2010, AYP displayed 78.8% of students Proficient or above in mathematics. In 2011, this figure was an astounding 86.5%. According to the Missouri APR, Lawson had *no* Below Basic students in mathematics in 2010 and in 2009 and 2011 this figure was in the 2% range.

There are many factors that contribute to high achievement in both communication arts and mathematics. As should be stated, this starts with students and faculty who take great ownership and pride in their efforts. Parents and a supportive community place a premium on a quality school district and then support it in that matter. Internal factors that have been instrumental in being successful are many. The systems of instruction in place are not just implemented at the high school level. K-12 systems of instruction are in place that are supported by K-12 vertical teams. Many of the vertical team chairpersons are from Lawson High School.

Another factor the district believes has positively influenced performance is a commitment to technology. All classrooms are equipped with a SMART Board® (interactive whiteboard). These SMART Board®'s have revolutionized presentation and engagement with learning in the classroom. We use interactive SMART Response® systems and document cameras on a regular basis to further this student engagement with learning.

Finally, the faculty consists of a high number of quality veteran educators. Just as the system of curriculum and instruction is a K-12 approach, faculty has operated well together for a number of years. They are not influenced by the pressures of high-stakes testing. They do not just teach to a test. They are here for the betterment of students and students know that. All are very fortunate to have the consistency and self-regulated expectations of success at Lawson High School.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Lawson High School and the Lawson R-XIV School District has informally adopted and utilized the *Understanding by Design* (UbD) model, developed by Wiggins and McTighe, in preparing assessments and using the results for planning, implementing, and evaluating instruction of learning. Lawson faculty strongly agree that by developing instruction with the end in mind, all can better guide students to enduring understandings. Therefore, the evaluation of assessment data is vital to continued success.

The assessment data that becomes the guiding foundation of instruction comes from the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) assessments. The MAP assessments are developed around Grade-Level and Course-Level Expectations (GLEs and CLEs). Lawson High School uses the GLEs and CLEs to prioritize local objectives and promote focused, intentional instruction. The assessment data that is returned with the annual MAP results provides performance measures associated with assessed GLEs and CLEs. Vertical teams analyze the item benchmark descriptions to prioritize the GLEs/CLEs that students are performing well on, in addition to those on which performance needs improvement. The next step is to evaluate local curriculum, identify the objectives that target both areas of GLE/CLE strength and areas of needed GLE/CLE improvement.

Once vertical teams have identified the GLEs and CLEs targeted for improvement and the local objectives associated with them, teams then evaluate both summative and formative assessments that quantify learning of these desired outcomes. Through the past few years of data analysis, vertical teams have developed focused local assessments targeted for specific GLEs/CLEs to use as a comparison of rigor to the same targets located within the MAP assessments. In analyzing locally developed assessments compared to the MAP assessments on the same GLE or CLE, one can determine if local assessments are a quality measure of learning. In most cases, faculty have then been able to guide instruction based on the data gleaned from these assessments. This affirmation of instruction provides confidence that Lawson is teaching students toward understanding while achieving test success at the same time.

Assessment data is used to compare success from year-to-year. Administration and teachers can compare the same groups to help measure the improvement of those groups over time. Use of assessment results, however, is not confined to data analysis of group success. Since assessments are given for grades 3-8 and through End-of-Course (EOC) assessments in the high school, everyone can evaluate student success as well. Faculty spends considerable time identifying student trends and targeting students for improvement. This is done both for students who are struggling and for those who have had great

success. The availability of data providing objective measures of success has allowed teachers to effect focused individual instruction. The data also enables instructors to target curriculum gaps, strengths, and weaknesses.

Additionally, use of assessment results to inform instruction and learning is not confined just to the MAP results. Results of periodic benchmark assessments are commonly used to provide feedback for instructional improvement. In all grades, not just at Lawson High School, the district greatly relies on assessments taken through student response systems. Teachers utilize the SMART Response® system to provide this valuable instantaneous assessment feedback. Whether it be a science, communication arts, mathematics, or other classrooms, a high percentage of teachers utilize the SMART Response® system on a regular basis. It effectively engages the students, provides instant feedback of learning for both the teacher and students, and refines instruction for better student achievement.

Succinctly stated, student achievement is the common goal. When appropriate, the administration holds assemblies, makes announcements, and publishes honor lists of students who have excelled on state and national standardized assessments. Teachers do not purposively prepare students for assessments alone, but all do take pride in the excellent results achieved by students.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Although a school's Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) results are not necessarily intended to be used to compare schools, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) maintains a school directory containing vital school information including the test results used to determine the state Annual Performance Report (APR) and No Child Left Behind's (NCLB's) Annual Yearly Progress (AYP). The general public, including peers from other schools, can access Lawson High School's testing performance. As indicated earlier in Part IV, Lawson High has had solid success, and as such, is sought out to provide insight to others on *best practices*.

Principals are members of the Missouri Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP) and have presented *best practices* to regional peers. The counselor has also been a presenter to peers through membership in the Missouri School Counselor Association (MSCA). In the last two years the St. Joseph School District asked Lawson to share its version of the Career Exploration and specifically the School-to-Career (STC) programs. Area high schools in Missouri and Kansas have contacted Lawson for the mechanics of how the counselor and teachers put together a Career Day program. The curriculum written for the STC program, which included the middle school career exploration program and the work-based student internships for high school students, attracted the interest of neighboring districts. As a result, Lawson served as a consultant for these schools in writing curriculum to start their own Career Day or STC program. Faculty members are encouraged to maintain memberships in professional organizations such as Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), etc. These professional networks provide an opportunity for continual learning and sharing throughout the school year. Lawson High School regularly works with area universities to provide a quality practicum for student teachers.

Within Lawson High School, the Professional Development Committee (PDC) strives to promote and provide quality in-service opportunities for faculty. Using a train-the-trainer model, PDC attempts to develop leaders within faculty who are willing to spread their knowledge and expertise to others. Lawson regularly employs the Regional Professional Development Centers (RPDC) as a resource for current knowledge and practice.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

Lawson High School is a source of great pride for the Lawson R-XIV School District and the community of Lawson, Missouri. Whenever possible, Lawson High School utilizes various mediums to communicate with and involve parents and community. Media, personal communication, and presentations to engage stakeholders are utilized.

Communication of student success to parents and community is considered a key element in creating a culture of pride and ownership for all stakeholders. Student success is communicated through many venues. The local weekly newspaper, *The Lawson Review*, is an outstanding partner in promoting students as a cornerstone of the community. The *Review* regularly publishes student achievements, both co-curricular and extra-curricular. The district utilizes the school website, monthly student magazine, and a semi-annual district newsletter as other vital sources of information to engage the stakeholders of the community.

Another example of engaging families and community is the *Cardinals with Character* program. Community merchants display descriptive posters of 12 vital character traits in their places of business. These posters are a reminder for their patrons that displaying good character should take place at all times and not just in the educational setting.

The most important method of engagement, however, is personal communication with parents and students. Throughout the school year, teachers regularly engage parents through phone calls, e-mails, Lawson Alerts (text message of important announcements), and face-to-face conferences. In the fall, Parent/Teacher Conferences set the standard for this communication. The high school has a very high percentage of parents who attend and discuss student progress with teachers. Throughout the school year, teachers post bi-weekly to a web portal system called Parental Access Support System (PASS) that allows parents to access student progress and grades. All believe that the availability of current information is vital for maintaining parental awareness and support of student success. The counselor is readily available to communicate with parents and students alike in evaluating course options, assessment results such as ACT, and college preparedness actions both in person and on the counselor's page on the school website.

When appropriate, Lawson High School prides itself on recognizing student achievement. This is evident when Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) results become available. High school students take End-of-Course (EOC) tests. Administration annually honors the top 10 students in each of the EOC test areas. Additionally, in the spring, the district holds an annual Academic Letter ceremony, honoring students for grade-point average achievements.

1. Curriculum:

Lawson's core curriculum addresses learning standards "that prepare students to be confident in their abilities, enthusiastic about their possibilities, and eager to engage life as contributing members of society" (Lawson High School Mission Statement). With rigor and support, Lawson's curriculum focuses on the skills and knowledge students need to thrive. Core curricula, as well as elective curricular areas, work together creating an environment of success and achievement in Lawson.

High school English courses concentrate on preparing students for writing and reading after high school in either a collegiate or professional setting. In order to be a proficient reader, one must be able to recognize and comprehend how to read a variety of written forms. Examinations of well-written essays and compositions, non-fiction newspaper, magazine and journal articles, as well as a selection of creative fiction inspire and motivate readers to become introspective. Cognitive, emotional, and imaginative skills are developed through the writing experiences offered in English classes.

The math department offers a variety of upper-level classes including Math Analysis II, Calculus, and College Algebra, enabling college-bound students to experience the rigors of a strong advanced curriculum. Special emphasis is placed on the ability to problem solve and use technology to their advantage. The SMART Board® is also a huge benefit to students as they can see interactions from various math websites. Seeing is as much as doing for a lot of students as education has moved to such a web-based world of learning.

The science curriculum is designed to provide younger high school students with knowledge in the areas of Physical Science and Biology as outlined in the Course Level Expectations (CLEs). The various teaching strategies are aimed to help students strengthen processing skills. The students are then able to choose from Earth Science, Chemistry, Physics, Physiology, College Biology, and College Chemistry; these courses are aimed at strengthening scientific knowledge that is necessary for various career choices.

The Lawson High School visual and performing arts curriculum stresses creative problem solving, critical thinking, and the communication of ideas. Students are asked to think about what they are doing and why they are doing it. This process requires them to research a problem before making/performing artwork and then reflect on their artistic choices. Afterwards, students are asked to judge the quality and to interpret the meaning of what they have done. Students don't just have the technical skills to create art, but they have confidence in their creative problem-solving skills.

The health education curriculum is a comprehensive approach designed to motivate students to stay safe and healthy throughout their lifetimes. Students understand that in order to have a high degree of wellness they need to be physically, socially, and emotionally healthy. Students are taught to understand how the lifestyle decisions they make can affect their health now as well as in the future. Through these efforts students should have an understanding of how to control their health and enjoy life-long wellness.

Technology is integrated into the curriculum for all subject areas and for all grade levels in the district. The goal of technology integration is to facilitate learning, to improve student achievement, and to help students become college and career ready.

The foreign language curriculum at Lawson High School encourages students to develop positive attitudes towards life-long learning especially in the area of cultural diversity. In addition to learning to communicate with others in multicultural settings, foreign language students are given the opportunity to expand their critical thinking skills in reasoning, problem solving, and conceptualizing.

2. Reading/English:

Communication arts (English) provides the foundation for all other curricular areas. All communication arts courses K-12 at Lawson R-XIV are built on a strong research-based understanding of knowledge and proficiencies needed for constructing a solid and balanced foundation in literacy. The curriculum design integrates vocabulary, grammar, reading, and writing at every level. Lawson High School has expansive offerings, which include the study of American Literature, English Literature, Speech/Debate, Drama, Mass Media, Journalism, Novels, and Creative Writing. Readings, writings, and student-centered activities are designed around big ideas and/or essential questions which are significant to young readers and writers in guiding their thinking and engagement with the text. The driving force for all communication arts based courses is to promote reading for meaning, function, and purpose, as well as for gaining information, pleasure, and the application of higher order comprehension skills.

The English department focuses on discovering the answer to “How do we understand what we read?” to produce students who recognize words, read fluently, monitor and self-correct, and comprehend text. High school students are exposed to a diverse array of fiction and non-fiction pieces that not only enrich their lives but allow students to participate in “unpacking” advanced rhetorical strategies while engaging in close reading for use in becoming more effective communicators. In writing, the department recognizes that the ability to form a strong argument with clear, detailed support is an important life skill whether advancing to college or a career after high school. Teachers create lessons that address the different aspects of forming a strong argument, including a tiered approach of what would be focused on at each grade level.

Advanced Placement (AP) English is the “college” English class at Lawson High School. An AP English Literature and Composition course engages students in the careful reading and critical analysis of imaginative literature. Through the close reading of selected texts, students deepen their understanding of the ways writers use language to provide both meaning and pleasure for their readers.

Additionally, students who have been identified through Response To Intervention (RTI) as reading below grade level, are addressed with course offerings that restructure the traditional English classes to meet the needs of diverse learners. Meaningful learning scenarios are constructed and concrete pathways are built to give students tangible connections to the abstract concepts of English modeled after Fred Jones’ *Tools for Teaching*.

3. Mathematics:

Mathematics at Lawson High School incorporates courses from Applied Math and Pre-Algebra to Math Analysis, Calculus, and College Algebra. The teaching methods focus on math understanding and procedural skills. Algebra develops critical-thinking skills, specifically logic, patterns, problem solving, deductive, and inductive reasoning. The more math one learns, the greater the opportunity for jobs in engineering, actuary, physics, programming, etc. Calculus is the study of how things change. It provides a framework for modeling systems in which there is change, and a way to deduce the predictions of such models. Calculus is essential for many areas of science and engineering. Both make heavy use of mathematical functions to describe and predict physical phenomena that are subject to continual change, and this requires the use of calculus.

The math department offers a variety of upper-level classes including Math Analysis II (emphasis on trigonometry), Calculus, and College Algebra which enable college-bound students to experience the rigors of a strong advanced curriculum. In each of these classes, emphasis is placed on the ability to problem solve and use technology to their advantage. With the aid of 15 graphing calculators, which are used heavily in these three classes, advanced graphing equations and higher-order equations can be easily recognized and solved. With each teacher equipped with a SMART Board®, students are benefiting from direct interaction with technology and various websites.

Another factor that has contributed to success in mathematics at Lawson High School is a spiraling curriculum, meaning students never really leave a topic. Math topics are taught and then revisited throughout the year. Curriculum is presented through small, incremental steps every day allowing students to build a strong foundation and deep understanding of the math concepts. This approach assists students in remembering and applying skills needed for higher-level problem-solving situations.

In addition to the resources available, the math department has recently spent time as a vertical team in preparing Instructional Plans (IPs) which has helped the teachers address areas of concern at all levels. By working together in the IP process, each individual teacher has become aware of potential problems in the grades above and below. The math department has recently used IPs to create IP Assessments addressing low scoring areas of standardized testing.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

The major goal of the Lawson High School science department is to develop critical thinking skills that enable students to become scientifically literate citizens. The classes offered include: Physical Science, Principles of Technology, Biology, Anatomy and Physiology, Earth Science, Chemistry, Physics, College Chemistry, and College Biology. Classes emphasize a system of reasoning that is applicable to all endeavors of life. Students gather, analyze, and apply information and theoretical concepts in a logical, sequential manner. Application of well-developed problem-solving skills are stressed. Lab activities are provided by the instructors and are also designed and conducted by the students throughout the year. The 5 E's learning cycle is used teaching students to engage, explain, expect, elaborate, and evaluate.

Physical Science is designed to help prepare students to make informed decisions and develop an understanding of the world. The course focuses on the methods of science and physics concepts which include energy, waves, and fields. It also addresses the nature and structure of matter and the changes it undergoes. From the physics of roller coasters to the chemistry of hamburgers, physical science can answer questions about almost every topic. Physics and chemistry are the two branches of physical science integrated into this course. The advanced curriculum offers Principles of Technology which connects traditional physics principles to technological situations, concentrating on the use of physics formulas in the workplace rather than on their derivation and manipulation. This class emphasizes physics concepts in the context of their relationship to the four energy systems – mechanical, fluid, electrical, and thermal. To convey these objectives, this course utilizes modern technical equipment and hands-on laboratory activities to teach students the mathematical and scientific principles behind technology.

Biology provides fundamental concepts in the area of biology. Topics covered include, but are not limited to, cell structure and function, mitosis and meiosis, DNA (genes and chromosomes), genetics and Punnett squares, photosynthesis and cellular respiration, and ecosystem.

Chemistry deals with the substances that make up the environment and the changes that take place in these substances. The class emphasizes a system of reasoning that is applicable to all endeavors of life. The study of chemistry is highly recommended for students planning to attend college, but can also be useful in many fields not requiring formal training after high school.

5. Instructional Methods:

The Lawson School District provides and differentiates instruction to meet the needs of the diverse learning styles presented by all groups of student learners. Modifying for the students' thinking processes typically involves a variety of questioning strategies offered to either the whole class or an individual student. Scaffolding questions in this manner opens up discussion for answers from a variety of student learners. Game-like activities (jeopardy, for example) offer various skill-level questions. Teacher choice allows for the depth of modification to be determined on an individual student basis. A student at Lawson High School can count on being exposed to cooperative learning activities, small group instruction, and hands-on learning at one time or another during the course of their day. Teachers give immediate feedback to students whenever possible. The feedback is accomplished by utilizing online quizzes,

discussion board forums, SMART Response® assessments, SMART Board® review games, and other classroom Kagan mastery structures.

For students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) or 504s, teachers attend meetings and reevaluations on each student so they can be sure to provide the required modifications within their classroom setting. Technology-based methods such as using CD/tape players for audio learners, SMART Board® activities for visual learners, and computer-based tests/quizzes give additional possibilities for student success. Before and after school tutoring by teachers or student-led tutoring through the Missouri A+ program can provide extended learning opportunities for all students. Tutoring gives students the chance to have small group assistance or one-on-one help. This can motivate students and increase their desire to learn and be successful.

Parent contact and communication is an essential part in ensuring the success of all students. Teachers make this a priority by calling parents, sending e-mails, scheduling conferences, and posting information on the school web page. The web page offers parents and students access to important information and documents, such as syllabi, course descriptions, school policies, and school events.

We believe ALL students can succeed and should be given many methods and strategies to use in their academic endeavors.

6. Professional Development:

The goal for the professional development program is to improve classroom instruction and, ultimately, academic achievement. The Lawson R-XIV Board of Education values professional development for its faculty and is committed to providing systematic professional development for beginning and practicing teachers. The specific focus for the professional development program is determined by the results of the long-range planning process or identified student needs relating to performance. Once the performance goals have been set, Lawson High School and the district align their professional development targets with those outlined by Wiggins and McTighe in *Understanding by Design* (UbD). As a UbD district, by necessity, each teacher must consider what specific learnings/skills/abilities are desired before designing the best method of instruction. Across the district, teachers adopted the Wiggins and McTighe model and realigned their methods with the end in mind. The overarching questions drove the staff to work together in vertical teams and create common assessments to ensure that assessments were authentic and standards-based. Teachers completed Instructional Plans (IPs) which were reviewed both by vertical teams and an oversight committee demonstrating that the established goals and understandings were addressed not only by the learning activities, but by the performance task that comprised students' grades. In the Communication Arts Vertical Team, teachers collaborated K-12 on writing scoring guides that were both vertically aligned and applicable to all content areas. Those scoring guides were made available through a shared folder to all district personnel. Finally, as the state moves away from the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) testing to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) changes will need to be implemented to continue meeting annual performance goals. Continued collaboration time between buildings to maintain the integrity of local standards as they relate to the newly articulated CCSS will once again be a focus and priority for both staff and administration.

7. School Leadership:

The leadership structure at Lawson High School is a shared responsibility by all staff members (whether certified or non-certified), students, parents, and community. At the top of the list is the principal, followed by the assistant principal, special services director, athletic director, counselor, and department chairs. The high school administration attends regular meetings with the superintendent and other building administrators to discuss common concerns, evaluate current practices, upgrade or innovate current practices, and brainstorm for the future. The administrative team has on-going open and honest collaboration that encompasses budget, curriculum, extra-curricular activities, and school climate.

The role of the principal and assistant principal is to promote the educational well-being of each student in the school. They have high expectations of staff, students, and community and then work to ensure the school's vision and beliefs are considered when making decisions. The educational philosophy at Lawson High School is to recognize that each student is a unique individual and that the role of the teacher is to provide opportunities for the individual to achieve at the maximum level of his/her capacity. The principal and assistant principal work very hard to protect instructional time (as few disruptions as possible), provide for a safe and positive school climate, and be the instructional leaders in the building. It is their goal to meet the needs of all students and to work hard to create self-directed life-long learners.

Department chairs meet regularly with vertical teams to discuss instruction and work to improve practices across the curriculum. Two groups that work to help with At-Risk students are a Teachers' Support Team (TST) and a mentoring group called Students Encouraging Preparing and Understanding Peers (StEP UP). TST consists of teachers only and the StEP-UP mentors are junior and senior students who have been screened, carefully selected, and trained to meet on a one-on-one basis with freshmen students. To help with school climate and safety, committees that focus on bullying prevention, general school improvement, and curriculum meet regularly to discuss strengths and weaknesses of the high school. These committees include administrators, teachers, parents, and students.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 10 Test: Missouri Assessment Program MAP Grade Level/Missouri Assessment Program End-of-Course

Edition/Publication Year: 2006/2008 Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill/Riverside

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	May	May	May	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient and Advanced	87	79	60	66	46
Advanced	31	34	2	14	13
Number of students tested	100	82	58	111	106
Percent of total students tested	99	99	100	99	99
Number of students alternatively assessed		1			
Percent of students alternatively assessed		1			
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient and Advanced	80	55		61	29
Advanced	19	17		8	11
Number of students tested	27	12	7	25	18
2. African American Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient and Advanced				100	50
Advanced					
Number of students tested				2	2
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested			7	6	8
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
1) Effective for the 2008-2009 school year, the MAP Assessment changed from Grade Level 10 for Mathematics to End-of-Course exam for Algebra I Course.					

12MO4

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 11 Test: Missouri Assessment Program MAP Grade Level/Missouri Assessment Program End-of-Course

Edition/Publication Year: 2006/2008

Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill/Riverside

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	May	May	May	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient and Advanced	84	85	78	35	60
Advanced	38	18	18	14	12
Number of students tested	81	108	94	103	106
Percent of total students tested	99	100	100	100	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	1				
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1				
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient and Advanced	77	89	71	7	63
Advanced	36	17	13		
Number of students tested	14	18	15	15	16
2. African American Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					2
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested		1	1	2	1
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	2	7	6	6	7
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
1) Effective for the 2008-2009 school year, the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) Assessment changed from Grade Level 11 for Communication Arts/English/Reading to End-of-Course exam for English II course.					

12MO4

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient and Advanced	87	79	60	66	46
Advanced	31	34	2	14	13
Number of students tested	100	82	58	111	106
Percent of total students tested	99	99	100	99	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	1	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	1	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient and Advanced	80	55		61	29
Advanced	19	17		8	11
Number of students tested	27	12	7	25	18
2. African American Students					
Proficient and Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient and Advanced	0	0	0		
Advanced	0	0	0		
Number of students tested	0	0	0	2	2
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	0	0	7	6	8
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient and Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
6.					
Proficient and Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
NOTES:					

12MO4

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient and Advanced	84	85	78	35	60
Advanced	38	18	18	14	12
Number of students tested	81	108	94	103	106
Percent of total students tested	99	100	100	100	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	1	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient and Advanced	77	89	71	7	63
Advanced	36	17	13	0	0
Number of students tested	14	18	15	15	16
2. African American Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	2
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	0	1	1	2	1
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested	2	7	6	6	7
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient and Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
6.					
Proficient and Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
NOTES:					

12MO4