

HIGHLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

ANSWERS:

1. School Name

Highland Elementary School

2. District Name

Meridian CUSD 223

3. RCDTS Code

47-071-2230-26-2002

4. Contact Name

Stacey Mannix

5. Contact Title

District Bookkeeper

6. Contact Telephone Number

815-645-2230 ext: 7004

7. Contact Email Address

smannix@mail.meridian223.org

8. Superintendent Name

Dr. Michael Plourde

9. Poverty Percentage at Time of Board Approval

34.11%

10. Describe the need and rationale for this schoolwide waiver.

While our poverty rate falls below 40%, we continue to face significant academic achievement gaps, especially among students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. These students often require support beyond what a Targeted Assistance

Program can provide, including access to high-quality instruction, extended learning opportunities, and comprehensive family engagement initiatives.

11. Provide reasons why need(s) cannot be met without a schoolwide program and/or why needs are not being met under the current targeted assistance program.

A schoolwide program will allow us to leverage Title I funds to upgrade the entire educational program, rather than limiting services to a specific group. This flexibility is essential in a school like ours, where need is widespread, but not always captured by income eligibility alone. Many students, including those just above the poverty line, have limited access to early learning experiences and unstable housing. Operating a schoolwide program reduces the stigma associated with receiving Title I services. When all students benefit from high-quality, evidence-based supports, the school environment becomes more inclusive and equitable. This also fosters stronger community trust and engagement.

12. Provide the educational need to receive schoolwide status.

Our school has a demonstrated commitment to data-informed decision-making. A schoolwide approach will enable us to align our Title I funding with our School Improvement Plan, ensuring that resources are used strategically to address root causes of underachievement across all student groups. We have the leadership, staffing, and instructional capacity to implement a schoolwide plan with fidelity. Our school has already begun integrating academic interventions, social-emotional supports, and professional development aligned with schoolwide reform strategies, and Title I funding will enhance and expand these efforts.

13. Outline the size and demographics of the school.

Total enrollment is approximately 383 students.

White: 83.7%

Hispanic/Latino: 11.9%

Two or More Races: 3.3%

Black/African American: 1.1%

Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaska Native: 0%

14. Outline the academic status of the students.

Students are demonstrating stronger skills in social-emotional and language/literacy development. Math is a clear area of concern where students are below state average. Compared with state averages, Highland students are underperforming in all domains, particularly in math and literacy.

Recent developmental assessment data at Highland Elementary School highlights both strengths and areas of academic concern among our early learners. While students show promising progress in social and emotional development, with approximately 60% meeting benchmarks, academic readiness—particularly in math—lags significantly behind.

Only 17.5% to 37.1% of students are meeting early math expectations, indicating substantial gaps in foundational numeracy skills. In language and literacy development, just under 50–55% of students are performing at or above benchmark levels, suggesting that nearly half of our students enter school without the critical early literacy skills necessary for long-term academic success.

This data underscores a compelling need for comprehensive, schoolwide supports that go beyond the reach of a targeted assistance model. A schoolwide Title I approach would allow us to address the full range of student needs—academic, social, and emotional—through aligned interventions, early literacy initiatives, and family engagement strategies, ultimately improving outcomes for all learners, not just those who qualify individually.

15. Outline other factors that contribute to the need for schoolwide programming.

Operating a schoolwide program reduces the stigma associated with receiving Title I services. When all students benefit from high-quality, evidence-based supports, the school environment becomes more inclusive and equitable. This also fosters stronger community trust and engagement.

16. Provide the date the school board approved the schoolwide plan.

September 3, 2025

17. The school followed the ESEA Section 1114(b) statutory requirements listed below to develop a comprehensive schoolwide plan.

ESEA Section 1114(b)

- a. Developed during a one-year period.
- b. Developed with the involvement of parents and other members of the community to be served and individuals who will carry out such plan, including teachers, principals, other school leaders, paraprofessionals present in the school, administrators, the Local Educational Agency, (LEA) to the extent feasible, tribes and tribal organizations present in the community, and, if appropriate, specialized instructional support personnel, technical assistance providers, school staff, if the plan relates to a secondary school, students, and other individuals determined by the school.
- c. Monitored and revised as necessary based on student needs to ensure that all students are provided opportunities to meet the challenging State academic standards.

- d. Accessible to the LEA, parent, and the public.
- e. Developed in coordination and integration with other federal, state, and local service resources, and programs.
- f. Based on a comprehensive needs assessment of the entire school that takes into account information on the academic achievement of children in relation to the challenging state academic standards.
- g. Included a description of strategies that the school will be implementing to address school needs. Yes, the school followed the ESEA Section 1114(b) statutory requirements to develop a comprehensive schoolwide plan. No, the school did not follow the ESEA Section 1114(b) statutory requirements to develop a comprehensive schoolwide plan.

Yes

18. I certify that the waiver application is complete, and all data responses are true and accurate to my knowledge. (name and date)

Stacey Mannix
September 3, 2025