

U.S. Department of Education
2016 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [] Title I [] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal Ms. Ashley Paige McCallum

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Green Valley Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3838 Overdale Road

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Roanoke State VA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 24018-4438

County Roanoke County

Telephone (540) 772-7556 Fax (540) 776-7149

Web site/URL

http://www.edlinesites.net/pages/Green_Valley_Elementary

E-mail amccallum@rcs.k12.va.us

Facebook Page

https://www.facebook.com/GreenValleyElementarySchool

Twitter Handle IPta/?fref=ts

Google+ _____

Other Social Media Link _____

YouTube/URL _____ Blog _____

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

Date

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Gregory Killough E-mail gkillough@rcs.k12.va.us

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Roanoke County Public Schools Tel. (540) 562-3900

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

Date

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. Michael Wray

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

Date

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

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

Part I – Eligibility Certification

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The public school has met their state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) using the most recent accountability results available for the year prior to nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) for the year in which they are nominated (2015-2016) and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be 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.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2010 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, or 2015.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The 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.
10. 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.
11. 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

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2015-2016) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 16 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 5 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 5 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 26 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
 - Suburban
 - Small city or town in a rural area
 - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2015 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	17	8	17
K	37	46	83
1	47	42	89
2	42	36	78
3	39	42	81
4	41	37	78
5	37	41	78
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	260	252	512

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 4 % Asian
 - 8 % Black or African American
 - 10 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 72 % White
 - 6 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report 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.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2014 – 2015 school year: 18%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	41
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	39
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	80
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	451
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.177
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	18

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 5 %
25 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

Amharic, Arabic, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Chinese (Mandarin), Kinyarwanda, Korean, Marathi, Mongolian, Romanian, Spanish, Telugu

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 37 %
Total number students who qualify: 188

8. Students receiving special education services: 21 %
105 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

<u>4</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>21</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>19</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>40</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>5</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>2</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>12</u> Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers	24
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	8
Paraprofessionals	9
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 21:1

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

Required Information	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	96%	97%	97%	97%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2015.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

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

Yes No X

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

Our mission is to ensure quality learning experiences designed to equip all students with skills to adapt and thrive in a changing global environment.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

PART III – SUMMARY

Green Valley Elementary School (GVES) is a suburban school located in the southwest portion of Roanoke County, Virginia - right in the heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains. When the building first opened for the 1964-65 school year, it contained 381 students from first to seventh grade. A new wing, housing Kindergarten and a library was added during the 1993-1994 school year. Extensive renovations occurred from 2009-2011 to add eight additional classrooms and upgrades. Now some 50 years later, Green Valley serves over 500 students in preschool through fifth grade.

Over the past five years, due to redistricting of school zones in the south county area, enrollment numbers at Green Valley have steadily increased. The grounds of Green Valley are surrounded by apartment complexes providing an abundance of students walking to school each morning. Many local businesses including Carilion Clinic and Advanced Auto provide temporary corporate housing in these apartments and townhomes bringing a diverse group of residents to the region. Our student body is very transient; many families stay less than a year, moving in and out of rental housing units frequently. The student population at GVES are made up of students from dozens of different countries, ethnicities, and various nationalities. This enables the students to develop a unique understanding of the perspectives of children from diverse backgrounds, and learn to function in a multicultural, multiethnic environment.

Academic excellence is a long-standing tradition at Green Valley. Our numerous awards, proudly displayed in the showcases, celebrate our prestigious accomplishments. GVES was the recipient of the Title One Highly Distinguished Award from 2007-2013 for meeting all Virginia and federal accountability requirements and achieving average reading and mathematics SOL scores at the 60th percentile or higher. In 2012, GVES received the Governor's Award for Educational Excellence, and also earned the Board of Education's Distinguished Achievement Award in 2013 and 2015. Additionally, our teaching staff embodies excellence. They have been nominated for "Golden Apple" awards, and our fourth grade teacher also won Roanoke County's Educator of the Year award in 2014.

Our success can be attributed to the dedicated staff of professionals at GVES working to educate a diverse group of learners to be productive citizens in the 21st century. To promote high levels of student achievement Green Valley, faculty and staff members have committed themselves to accurately aligning the curriculum to the Virginia Standards Of Learning (SOL) essential knowledge question strands as well as purposeful differentiation of student-centered instruction. Administrators and teachers have studied Virginia's Standards of Learning expectations and specifically aligned their activities and assessments with these standards. Faculty and staff work with students in small, flexible groups on a daily basis to provide students with material that is developmentally-appropriate and individualized to their specific learning styles/needs in reading and math. In school and after school remediation is offered to struggling learners to strengthen weak skills while extension activities are presented to gifted and talented students to challenge them with higher level thinking opportunities. No matter where each student is on the continuum of learning, teachers assess students to obtain an accurate picture of current skill levels, and PUSH them to succeed with rigorous expectations for academic achievement.

Our school community maintains a balance between preparing students for standardized tests and developing 21st Century Skills (collaboration, critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity) through a variety of assessments and a whole-child approach to learning. We embrace project-based learning opportunities and the implementation of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) design briefs that encourage problem-solving techniques at higher levels on Bloom's Taxonomy. We engage students with active-learning strategies that incorporate manipulatives, and instill a love of hands-on learning to promote real-world applications of skills. Additionally, our students explore their surroundings through a multitude of field trips, which make learning more relevant by establishing background knowledge and connections to history, places, and experiences in the world around them.

In alignment with our division's strategic framework, Green Valley is dedicated to cultivating a physically, emotionally, and an intellectually safe environment for learning built on respect and fairness with a high standard of character and citizenship. Through team-oriented and visionary leadership promoted by the

administrative team, student and school success is celebrated at GVES every step of the way. Furthermore, problem-solving is fostered by viewing failure as a learning opportunity through collaboration and a positive attitude with evidence-based decision making.

Don't underestimate the other powerful indicators of success at Green Valley Elementary. In addition to a supportive PTA, parents, and surrounding community, our teachers are among the best in the state of Virginia. They deliver effective instruction daily and seek out professional development opportunities to strengthen their skills and expand educational knowledge. Effective lines of communication between school and home are maintained in a variety of formats to keep all stakeholders informed of student progress. But, let's not forget the heart of our school – our students. Green Valley's students outperform kids from surrounding schools with less challenges. Why is that? It's a proven fact that our students work hard for teachers who have established relationships with them, believe in them, encourage them, and love them.

WE ARE GREEN VALLEY. WE ARE THE CARDINALS. WE ARE UNSTOPPABLE!

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Green Valley is dedicated to teaching the core curriculum set forth by the Virginia Department of Education. These rigorous standards, known as the “SOLs”, are intertwined into each lesson throughout the school day. Our teachers identify the “essential knowledge” and “essential questions” students are expected to learn, then collaborate to plan meaningful lessons which cover these standards in various ways.

Our well-balanced, individualized reading program is one of our greatest achievements. By the time students leave GVES, they are able to understand print and communicate effectively in writing. Primary grades focus on fluency, concept of print, and beginning writing skills through intensive small-groups using tradebooks. These groups are based on pre-assessment data, such as running records and phonological checkpoints. There is a strong focus on word study, where students learn about word features and what makes them unique. Reading instruction in grades 3-5 focuses on mastering comprehension skills. We believe in the importance of building background knowledge, conducting book-talks, and writing about reading. Each day, all students read books on their independent reading levels, conduct research on topics, and build oral language skills by presenting research to classmates.

Just like our reading program, our math program has greatly evolved. Our goal is to move students away from worksheets and textbooks towards hands-on experiences. Each classroom uses daily guided math groups where students work on individual goals. This allows teachers to provide remediation, as well as enrichment for students who have already mastered a concept. These small groups encourage students to work with manipulatives to practice skills until they are mastered. We want students to not only be able to “do” the math, but for them to understand the reasons behind what they are doing and apply these skills to real-world problems. Teachers incorporate math into other subjects throughout the day including daily measurements in science, examination of graphs in reading, and skip counting/number sense in both music and physical education. Technology is woven into the daily math instruction through the use of IXL math and interactive math lessons with the K-2 Envision math series.

Our science curriculum comes “alive” for students as they are actively engaged. By using their five senses to observe their surroundings (both inside and outside of the building), track data, analyze their findings, and make predictions, students are able to relate science to their own lives. They use technology, such as barometers and hygrometers, to make daily forecasts. Students participate in science “centers” where they practice vocabulary, conduct research online, and read/discuss interesting science articles. Students often use visuals, foldables, to exhibit what they have learned. We believe our high-achievement scores in science are due to the daily real-world applications provided in our classrooms.

Our social studies curriculum covers both local and world-wide concepts. In grades K-3, our focus is on community, economics, and the accomplishments of famous Americans. Our third graders create a “Living History Museum”, where for one night, they pose as a famous American, and teach others about their accomplishments. In fourth grade, our students learn about the geography and history of Virginia. Each April, our fourth graders perform a musical about our state called “Sing to Know Virginia Studies”. Our music teacher reinforces social studies skills into her curriculum through her programs such as “Temples and Tombs” for second graders.

One of our greatest achievements over the past four years has been our implementation of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) lessons into each preschool through fifth grade classroom. These lessons are hands-on and interactive, requiring students to “think outside of the box” and strengthen their problem-solving skills by moving beyond a multiple choice test. The implementation of STEM projects at GVES has empowered all students through technology and 21st Century Skills: critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and communication.

Our school currently enrolls 18 students ages 2 to 5, mostly from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and students with disabilities, in our preschool program. “Tools of the Mind” is used as the preschool

curriculum. It is an instructional program which encourages students to strengthen their social-emotional and cognitive abilities while learning at their capacity... Students are engaged throughout the day in theme-based learning centers where they learn skills through play and discussion. This program allows for daily differentiation for each child with conferencing time set aside with an adult each day. Children learn to plan and work together as a team.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Green Valley students participate in the 12-day rotation ENCORE schedule for educational experiences in art, physical education, library, and music. Children love their time spent with our specialists in environments that are fun, and engaged in lessons that incorporate core curriculum standards from the state of Virginia. GVES' physical education program is designed to teach children the motor skills that form the foundation for a lifetime of enjoyable physical activity. Our physical education teacher possesses extensive knowledge in sound physical education instruction, curriculum, and research-based practices. The P.E. specialist understands that effective physical education includes developmentally-appropriate instruction and time to practice and apply skills and knowledge within the class setting including a variety of motor skills, movement, and fitness concepts. The P.E. specialist also supervises Jump Rope for Heart for students in grades 2-5 each year to support the American Heart Association, organizes our annual Field Day, and sponsors GVES' Fitness Club (grades 3-5) that meets weekly after-school during the spring. Green Valley students are UP and MOVING in all sorts of ways to promote health and wellness.

Music class provides the perfect opportunity for valid connections to be made between core curriculum subjects like social studies and math and the music field. Students learn how to read music, play instruments, dance, make rhythms, etc. all in a fun and age-appropriate manner. Children sing about cultures from Ancient Egypt and China in second grade, discover historical concepts related to Virginia's history in fourth grade, learn about patterns and their common occurrences in music in first grade, and so much more! Our music instructor is passionate about teaching music to students in grades K-5 and it shows! More importantly, the music teacher works diligently to prepare a fabulous Veterans Day show every year to honor our heroes, and instills a sense of pride and patriotism in our students from a young age. In fact, every Green Valley student leaves our school knowing how to sing every branch of the military's anthem - an amazing tradition at GVES!

Art is a beloved class at GVES, and art work is highly visible throughout the hallways of the school. Children in grades K-5 learn how to paint, design, draw, make ceramics, and learn how to compare works of art, elements of architecture, and artifacts of other cultures with those of their own culture. Students identified as gifted in visual art may participate in enrichment programs in grades 3-5 offered after school in each building. To further promote the integration of art into our school's culture, Green Valley hosts a school-wide "Art Show" in May of alternating years to showcase at least one piece of artwork from every student in the building.

With a diverse population of students attending GVES, it is imperative to expose children to cultures and languages of the world around them to be able thrive in a global setting. Green Valley promotes foreign language acquisition K-5 via a Spanish vocabulary program in which the primary goal is to expose children to Spanish words and phrases that can be recognized, understood, and used in a contextual (real-life) setting. These words and expressions help support the academic content area instruction by utilizing the vocabulary students hear and use every day and increases in complexity as students get older. Furthermore, GVES' students and staff celebrate each others' heritage as we explore various cultures around the world.

Technology is an integral part of the instructional program at Green Valley, and it is embedded in a variety of ways across the curriculum. Our librarian serves as GVES' computer coordinator and demonstrates rich understanding of literature, current trends in library practice, and information technology. All classrooms are equipped with an ActivBoard and ActivSound system for voice amplification purposes. Our school is blessed to have four computer labs around the building, one cart of iPads, one cart of iPods, and clusters of 4-5 refurbished laptops in each classroom to enhance and supplement the core curriculum. Various computer applications including IXL, Study Island, PortaPortals, Glogster, and blogging help our students conduct research, discover information, practice skills, and stay connected in a digital world - promoting the

acquisition of 21st century skills including creativity, communication, critical thinking, and collaboration. Furthermore, our Instructional Technology Resource Teacher (ITRT) collaborates with classroom teachers to co-teach lessons that integrate technology and multimedia resources, and provides training to teachers on how to utilize the most modern technological programs/applications effectively in their classrooms. Our ITRT and librarian "model the way for others" in the area of effective implementation of technology via STEM projects PK-5 that challenge students to think critically to solve real-world problems. Great teamwork!

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

First and foremost, our daily classroom instruction must be engaging, purposeful, and rigorous. Because our rapidly-growing student body consists of a diverse group of learners, the administrative team must plan for opportunities for small group instruction throughout the school day. Our classroom teachers use small, flexible groups every day in the areas of reading and math in order for students to work on his/her instructional level with the appropriate materials. In order for this differentiation to occur, administrators schedule either a special education teacher, learning specialist, or instructional assistant for each math or reading block each day. When you enter any classroom in the building during a reading block, you will find teachers and specialists working with children in a small group setting, while the independent students work on vocabulary, writing, word study, or comprehension activities. During a math lesson, both the teacher and specialist work with small groups on specific skills, while the remainder of the students use manipulatives or technology to practice concepts.

GVES has several plans in place for students who require enrichment or remediation in addition to the classroom instruction. In Kindergarten, first, and second grades, teachers and administrators use weekly data to identify students who need more intensive instruction, and a certified teacher works with seven small groups each day for intensive intervention in the targeted areas, including phonemic awareness, concept of print, beginning writing skills, and fluency. Additionally, students in grades 1-5 who are reading below grade level participate in a daily "Leveled Literacy Intervention" group, where they practice reading, writing, and word study skills with a specially trained staff member. Finally, students in grades 3-5 are provided with intervention or enrichment as needed through our after school tutoring program, small group instruction provided by our reading specialist, differentiated lessons through our ESL specialist, and small group tutoring/instruction provided by our assistant principal, also a licensed reading specialist. Our gifted resource teacher also works with small groups of students each week to provide enrichment activities.

Regarding math, teachers use data from various assessments, observation, and anecdotal records to identify student strengths and weaknesses. During the school day, three retired educators work one-on-one with students to build math skills with the use of manipulatives, visuals, and guided practice. Additionally, instructional assistants work in collaboration with classroom teachers each day to provide enrichment activities for the appropriate students and remediation activities as needed. Our after school math remediation program allows for additional math instruction one day per week for students in grades 3-5.

Finally, every teacher in our building incorporates STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) design briefs and project-based learning no less than eight times per school year. Many teachers use these hands-on, engaging activities weekly with their students, allowing the children to create, innovate, and relate their subject area into their everyday lives. Our technology resource teacher and media specialist work collaboratively with classroom teachers to create meaningful lessons which require the students to think "outside of the box". Given a task, our students regularly work in collaboration towards their goal, beginning in preschool!

In summary, Green Valley educators believe in using hands-on teaching methods, meeting students at their instructional level, and encouraging creativity into our DAILY instruction.

4. Assessment for Instruction and Learning and Sharing Assessment Results:

Green Valley Elementary relies on a variety of formal and informal assessment data to drive instructional choices and inform parents of students' progress in preschool through fifth grade. Grade level teams meet

with the administrative team on a bi-monthly basis to disaggregate data for students' strengths and weaknesses with concepts/skills, identify most-missed questions on assessments, and examine tests for specific alignment with curriculum standards.

Faculty and staff work diligently throughout the year to prepare students for Virginia's Standards of Learning assessments administered in May in grades 3-5 in reading, mathematics, Virginia Studies, and science. Additionally, Roanoke County Schools require performance-based assessments in science (grade 3), social studies (grade 3), and writing (grade 5) that are given 2-3 times per year. Division Benchmark/Formative Assessments administered semi-annually in math and reading in grades 2-5 provide diagnostic feedback to teachers and administrators regarding student progress and enhance decisions about instructional and remedial interventions. A vital component of GVES' assessment practice is the utilization of running records from Fountas and Pinnell in grades K-5 (a minimum of two times per year) to identify students' instructional and independent reading levels in the domains of reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension. The Developmental Spelling Analysis (DSA) is administered twice per year to provide teachers with information about students' word study skills, helping teachers place students into appropriate word study groups to eliminate "one-size-fits-all" spelling lists.

Over the past several years, Green Valley students have continued to make substantial gains in achievement on the Virginia SOL assessments; however, the Students With Disabilities (SWD) subgroup has lagged behind the All Students group in reading and math. Despite the fact that GVES' special education students were some of the highest performing in the state of Virginia in 2014-15, SWD earned a 79% pass rate in reading and an 82% pass rate in math in comparison with a 94% pass rate in reading and a 93% pass rate in math for the All Students group. To address the visible gap in student performance, our leadership teams utilized data reports to identify the areas for growth: comprehension of nonfiction skills (reading) and computation/estimation concepts (math). As a result, all resources (financial and personnel) in 2015-16 have been scheduled/allocated to meet the needs of SWD in these designated areas.

The Green Valley community is informed of students' academic achievement via weekly Wednesday folders where graded papers are sent home to parents. Teachers conference with parents in person, by phone, and/or via email to communicate students' progress in academic areas, and our webmaster updates the school's website with the most recent Standards of Learning assessment results. Keeping parents "in the loop" regarding their students' learning is a top priority at Green Valley. To maintain high levels of achievement it takes a "village" to support instructional practices that are research-based, rigorous, and aligned to curriculum expectations. We give 110% every day to achieve top academic growth!

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

At GVES, we believe students learn best in a positive, fun environment. Our faculty/staff is often told, “You all have so much FUN at your school!” Students are engaged in learning due to our hands-on approaches to teaching. Technology, high-interest literature, STEM lessons, movement, and even music are intertwined throughout the school day. Our students are motivated to work to their fullest potential due to the enthusiastic nature of our faculty and staff. We believe in recognizing students for their hard work in a variety of ways. Both our principal and assistant principal check each child’s report card and write a personalized note. Each child on the "Honor Roll" receives a certificate/award each grading period, and students who are not on the Honor Roll but improve a grade receive a “BUG” award, which stands for “Bringing Up Grades.” Often times student work is chosen to be displayed on the school’s website or PTA Facebook page or students have “dress up days” to celebrate successes achieved. Last but not least, students are rewarded once a month with prizes/incentives for the successful completion of monthly reading goals via our "Pay Day" program.

Our school counselor and special education staff have developed several initiatives/programs to help motivate students to exhibit good citizenship and demonstrate positive behaviors at school. Our “Cardinal Cash” program allows identified students to earn cash for positive behavior, and then “cash” in their money for time in the “Fun Zone”. All students recite the “Character Counts” pledge each morning, and during the school day, each child earns tickets from their teachers as recognition for showing good character. Classes earning a certain amount of tickets get their names announced on the morning announcements. While walking through the halls, you will see staff members interacting with students in a variety of ways. Students often get to have lunch with their teacher or principal, read to an adult or a “book buddy”, and even shoot basketball with an adult during their recess time. Our staff truly goes the extra mile to build relationships with kids.

Our teachers and staff are the reason our students are succeeding at the highest level, and we make every effort to thank and recognize them for their hard work. Our school-wide theme this year is “TEAM”, meaning, “Together Everyone Achieves More”. To build staff relationships, our staff has had three staff team-building events this year; bowling, rock climbing, and a "Paint Night". We believe that fostering positive relationships among staff members help us all work together more effectively. We have numerous special dress up days for faculty and staff, provide snacks and surprises for a job well-done, and have a designated "Employee of the Week" parking space for a lucky staff member! Each principal recognizes outstanding teaching by nominating teachers for various awards such as the “Golden Apple”, “Salem/Roanoke County Chamber of Commerce Educator of the Year”, and “Virginia Lottery Superteacher.”

Most importantly, we strive for our teachers to feel supported. Administrators give teachers the opportunity to voice concerns and areas of weakness, then we provide them with opportunities for professional growth and collaborative planning time. Each school year, EVERY teacher is provided with an opportunity to attend a conference or specialized learning opportunity outside of the school building to refine educational knowledge and skills. Additionally, the administrative team provides a staff book study each year on a topic in which the teachers identify as a weakness. Teacher input is always welcome and teachers have the opportunity to vocalize their ideas and suggestions during bi-monthly grade level meetings with administrators. As a result, teachers are empowered - their opinions really do matter. Ultimately, administrators and staff share a common vision/belief that all students can be successful.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Green Valley could not be the successful school we are today without the development of effective partnerships with parents and businesses in our community. We believe that by involving parents in our school community, our students will be provided with more opportunities within the building, but more importantly, the importance of education will be modeled for the children.

Green Valley has a very active and supportive Parent Teacher Association (PTA)! Our parents spend countless hours planning and volunteering to raise funds for our school. To kick off each year, the PTA hosts a "Fun Run" for our students and their families. Each child is sponsored to participate and all funds go directly to our school. Additionally, we have a Spring Carnival each year for families in the community. The PTA plans "Family Fun Nights" once per month, where teachers, parents, and students meet at a local restaurant or other establishment for food, fellowship, and fun. Additionally, our parents plan a "Read-a-Thon" each year in collaboration with the "Read Across America" team, encouraging students to gain sponsors to support them in their reading at school. These much-needed funds raised during these events provide us with materials for our project-based learning or STEM lessons, new high-interest literature and tradebooks for our guided reading program, field trip assistance, and even cultural programs each year. Beginning this year, our PTA is funding a program for second grade students to attend the local YMCA for water safety classes. Lastly, our parents have worked diligently over the past two and a half years to raise \$55,000 for a new playground to replace the existing structure. PTA members have sought out support from various businesses and organizations in our community. It is evident through their dedication and efforts that our parents are passionate about their children and the well-rounded education their students receive at Green Valley.

Our surrounding community is actively involved in supporting our school. We believe in recognizing students for their success, and we have partnerships with Wendy's, Domino's Pizza, and Carrabas, for students to earn free products based on their academic success! Several local businesses such as Kroger, Brambleton Computers, and Wood's Service Centers have been instrumental in providing prizes for students who fundraise for our school. Green Valley has been awarded the Exxon-Mobil Educational Alliance grant of \$500 two years in a row, providing funds to strengthen math and science skills. Finally, local churches provide "Weekend Backpack" meals for approximately 60 students living in poverty. These meals are kid-friendly and healthy alternatives for weekend dinners. These churches also provide much-needed school supplies to disadvantaged families at the beginning of the school year and daily snacks for students in need.

3. Professional Development:

For teachers and school administrators to be as effective as possible, it is imperative that they continually expand their knowledge and skills to implement the best educational practices, better their performance, and raise student achievement. Green Valley empowers teachers to grow through professional development opportunities that are specifically aligned with the school's strategic plan. It is the administrative team's goal every year to allow our staff members to attend at least one inservice, conference, and/or workshop that expands their knowledge of the most current, effective instructional practices available in the educational field. Our most recent focus at the school level has been on research-based strategies that support the delivery of top-notch instruction in the areas of math, reading, and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics). After teachers return from a professional development training, they are expected to share the most meaningful activities/ideas with their colleagues during a faculty meeting. As a result, our faculty and staff benefits through exposure to effective strategies that are, in turn, implemented throughout the building - truly a win-win situation for all involved via a "train the trainer" model of professional learning!

The principal prepares a book study every year based on a survey of interest circulated to staff members. This year, teachers examined the book, "Grading Smarter, Not Harder" by Myron Dueck to critically examine the fairness of our practices related to assessment and grading. Staff responded in WIKI format (online) to questions/scenarios posted by teams of teachers to generate thought-provoking discussions on topics presented throughout the book. Ultimately, this book study enabled our staff the opportunity to tailor their own policies of grading/assessment to address what really matters: student understanding of content/curriculum. Book studies over the past several years have addressed issues such as active engagement strategies, behavioral modification of challenging students, and Project Based Learning that were identified as areas of interest and/or weakness by the GVES staff. Additionally, professional development is offered at the building level in the form of classroom observations of peers,

coaching/mentoring new teachers, during grade level data meetings, and after-school college courses taught by adjunct professors who teach at Green Valley.

At the district level, Central Office staff provide training related to our division-wide literacy plan, "Number Talks," to encourage deeper understanding of mathematical procedures and the development of number sense, and the implementation of Children's Engineering procedures K-5. Furthermore, Central Office administrators allocated resources for these professional development activities in the form of funds for registrations to conferences, substitutes to cover classrooms, and recertification points that count towards teacher licensure requirements. Through collaborative efforts, GVES and Roanoke County Schools have proven their commitment to ongoing professional development to support the acquisition of best practices in elementary education.

4. School Leadership:

Leadership at Green Valley can be summarized in one word: TEAMWORK. Both administrators are actively involved in the planning, implementation, and coordination of instructional practices. Our administrators are enthusiastic leaders, who believe in empowering the school staff through opportunities for growth, active listening, and visible support systems. Our principals are visible throughout the building and in classrooms each day, monitoring both teacher and student performance.

Our principal, makes every effort possible to build relationships with students, teachers, and parents. Her first priority is the students, and both she and our assistant principal have a hands-on approach to leadership. Our principal commonly invites students to have lunch with her, provides them with support during difficult times, and even attends their afterschool or weekend events! In addition to building relationships with students, the principal also builds positive working relationships with her faculty. She conducts bi-monthly data meetings with each grade level team of teachers or our special education staff. During these PLCs, each teacher has the opportunity to discuss each child in his/her class and provide the most recent assessment data. The principal believes meaningful staff development keeps our staff up-to-date on the most current instructional practices; therefore, she makes a point for every teacher to attend a professional learning opportunity each year. Most recently, the principal organized two book studies for our teachers: "Total Participation Techniques" and "Grading Smarter, Not Harder". Additionally, all of our teachers have received training in the areas of STEM, writing, differentiation, and active learning. Our principal goes the "extra mile" to communicate with parents. She commonly discusses student performance or behaviors over the phone or in person, making each parent aware of their child's performance. She is an active member of the PTA Board, where monthly meetings are held to discuss needs for our school.

Our assistant principal works in collaboration with the principal to carry out the planning, safety, and instructional needs of our school. The assistant principal teaches reading half-day to third, first, and second grade students, which allows her to collaborate daily with teachers and students throughout the building. Like our principal, our assistant principal serves as an instructional leader for our staff. She commonly observes both teachers and students during class, meets with parents, participates in all community/PTA events, and helps the principal to coordinate proper remediation schedules for the school.

Overall, our administrators serve as instructional leaders, by providing opportunities for growth for our teachers, and being visible throughout the school for our students. Because we believe in a team approach to leadership, all members of our school staff have a "voice" in all instructional practices. Our reading coordinator, special education staff, English as a Second Language teacher, and guidance counselor commonly meet with teachers and administrators to provide their expertise. We believe that by working together, nothing is impossible!

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The one aspect that sets Green Valley Elementary apart from the rest is our strong focus on INDIVIDUALIZATION. It is our mission to get to know our students, both academically and personally, by building trusting relationships both inside and outside of the classroom. When we know our students interests, strengths, and weaknesses, we are able to select high-interest literature, plan meaningful science and social studies lessons, and relate mathematics to their everyday lives. In other words, we are able to design our learning environment based on the students' interests and needs. This practice cannot be done without knowing the students far beyond what we see in the classroom.

During the school day, teachers, specialists, administrators, and our school counselor conduct numerous activities which aid in the building of these strong relationships. Daily, teachers have students eat lunch with them in the classrooms, allowing them to get to know one another far beyond the academic world. During these "lunch dates" teachers and students crochet, work on art projects, participate in a "Secret Reading Society", tutor students in weak areas, or simply talk and get to know one another. Our music teachers spend each morning before school working with students and helping them learn to play instruments. Several teachers run a Lego League group after school, where they work with students to complete challenges using Legos. Additionally, during the spring, several of our teachers host a fitness club, where they walk or run with students on the track after school or serve as sponsors for "Girls On The Run," a program that encourages fitness and positive body image for female students. Each and every staff member in our building goes the extra mile to be with the students, to build strong relationships, and show the students we CARE. By spending this quality time with each child, we are able to learn more about them as individuals, which leads to us planning more meaningful instruction.

Outside of the school building, our administrators and teachers regularly attend extracurricular activities, such as sports games, horseback riding shows, and concerts. Our teachers offer to transport students home from after-school tutoring when their parents are unable to pick them up. We have "Green Valley Nights" in the community, where teachers, students, and their families have dinner together at various local restaurants. We want our students and their families to know that they are important to us, and this naturally leads to higher academic success.

Due to these strong relationships, our teachers know our students well, which naturally leads to stronger instruction. When we know a child's interest, we can select learning material in which the students are interested. We can plan activities that are meaningful to each child. We can educate the WHOLE child, both academically and emotionally. We can prepare our students to be UNSTOPPABLE!