

U.S. Department of Education
2013 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School - 13SD3

School Type (Public Schools): Charter Title 1 Magnet Choice

Name of Principal: Mrs. Vicki Harmdierks Ed.S

Official School Name: Gertie Belle Rogers Elementary School

School Mailing Address: 1301 N Kimball Avenue
Mitchell, SD 57301-7760

County: Davison State School Code Number*: 17-2

Telephone: (605) 995-3091 E-mail: vicki.harmdierks@k12.sd.us

Fax: (605) 996-6610 Web site/URL: http://mitchell.k12.sd.us/gbr/

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

_____ Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*: Dr. Joseph Graves Ed.D. Superintendent e-mail: joseph.graves@k12.sd.us

District Name: Mitchell School District District Phone: (605) 995-3091

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

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mrs. Theresa Kriese

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, Director, National Blue Ribbon Schools (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, National 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

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 configuration 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 (AYP) or its equivalent 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 AYP requirement or its equivalent in the 2012-2013 school year. Meeting AYP or its equivalent must be certified by the state. Any AYP 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 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 2007 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for that period.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 or 2012.
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

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district 5 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
1 Middle/Junior high schools
1 High schools
0 K-12 schools
7 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 5200

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: 6
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2012 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	43	40	83
1	47	32	79
2	36	29	65
3	39	46	85
4	31	42	73
5	27	23	50
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	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:			435

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 5 % American Indian or Alaska Native
2 % Asian
1 % Black or African American
3 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
88 % White
1 % 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 2011-2012 school year: 9%
This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Step	Description	Value
(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	14
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	25
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	39
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2011	423
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.09
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	9

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 1%
Total number of ELL students in the school: 3
Number of non-English languages represented: 1
Specify non-English languages:

Spanish

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 39%

Total number of students who qualify: 174

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

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

Total number of students served: 55

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>3</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>2</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>16</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>23</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>2</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>3</u> Developmentally Delayed

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

	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>19</u>	<u>1</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>10</u>	<u>3</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>9</u>	<u>1</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>
Total number	<u>44</u>	<u>10</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:

22:1

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

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	96%	97%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

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

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2012.

Graduating class size: _____

Enrolled in a 4-year college or university _____%

Enrolled in a community college _____%

Enrolled in vocational training _____%

Found employment _____%

Military service _____%

Other _____%

Total _____**0%**

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?

PART III - SUMMARY

The mission of the Mitchell School District is to offer a well-rounded educational program with emphasis on reading, writing, mathematics, science, communication, and technology. The Mitchell School District believes that people are society's most valuable resource. We further believe in the supreme worth, dignity and unique qualities of each individual. It is the ultimate purpose of the educational process in the Mitchell School District to prepare each student to accept responsibilities to self, community, country, and thus to become a contributing member to our changing society. It is our philosophy that we can attain this educational result through a joint effort of student, parents, staff and community.

Mitchell is located in the heart of South Dakota, with rich rolling farmland leading into wide open prairies. Our population is just over 15,000 residents. Mitchell was incorporated in 1881; it was named for Milwaukee banker Alexander Mitchell, President of the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad. It is home to the world famous Corn Palace and to the Mitchell Prehistoric Indian Village. Mitchell is a vibrant, friendly place to live with abundant educational opportunities.

The district has 2,540 students at six school sites, three kindergarten – fifth grade elementary schools, two kindergarten – eighth grade colony schools, a sixth - eighth grade middle school and a ninth – twelfth grade high school. At the Mitchell District, 88% of the students are white, 49% of elementary students, 41% of middle school students and 28% of high school students qualify for free or reduced meals. All Mitchell teachers are highly qualified, sixty-four percent of teachers hold a Master's degree or higher.

WE BELIEVE IN KIDS! Gertie Belle Rogers is one of three kindergarten – fifth grade elementary schools within the Mitchell School District, we have 435 students with a student/teacher ratio of 22:1. Of the 435 students, 39% qualify for free or reduced meals, 13% of our students receive special education services, the daily attendance rate is 96%. Gertie Belle Rogers has been recognized by the South Dakota Department of Education as a Distinguished/Exemplary School for eight consecutive years, but not by accident, it is a real team effort. The dedication of the teachers is second to none; they go above and beyond to build relationships with the children and families. A remarkable paraprofessional team supports the teachers; they work with small groups or individuals to help them achieve their potential in school. The support staff; including the librarian, secretaries, school nurse, food service workers, crossing guard, volunteers, and custodians all work to keep our children safe and healthy. The parents make school a priority in their child's life, by being involved in their education. They are the **POWER** their child's education; they are their first and most important teacher.

Boost-Up at Gertie Belle Rogers! In addition to the 60 minutes per week in the Boost-Up room, we start every morning with announcements and group spinning to help the children get focused for the day. This program promotes the maximum development of the whole child through innovative, individualized, and comprehensive brain-centered programs and services. Boost-up was created as a multi-sensory approach towards gaining the readiness skill needed to excel in the classroom. All staff have all been trained in Boost Up and truly believe that physical movement can directly influence children's ability to learn, think and remember. Research shows that after doing 80 hours of balance/vestibular, gross and fine motor, and visual acuity exercises, children on average make a six-month reading gain. Students go to the Boost-Up room and do researched based activities for two-30 minute sessions per week. Teachers are encouraged to do Boost-Up activities throughout the school day in and out of their classrooms. The best aspect of Boost-Up is that children love the activities; it is a fun approach to learning.

Gertie Belle Rogers is a Positive Behavior Intervention Support school; our common language is **Be Safe, Be Responsible, and Be Respectful** at school. Our PBIS committee meets monthly to monitor, review, and use data to address behavior issues. We focus on various parts of the building and give positive reinforcements to reward children for expected behavior.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

The students in grades 3-5 at Gertie Belle Rogers take the South Dakota State Test of Educational Progress (Dakota STEP) each spring as a means of assessing students in several curriculum areas with emphasis placed on both reading and math. The Dakota STEP is a version of the Stanford 10 achievement series test. Students are scored in four achievement levels: Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, and Advanced. Students are expected to be proficient or advanced in reading, math and in some grades, science based on scale scores.

The accountability system is based on a 100-point index, called the School Performance Index, or SPI. The SPI consists of indicators; a numeric value is assigned to each of the indicators. The indicators used for measurement were in math, reading and attendance. These values are added to create a total SPI score out of 100 points. Gertie Belle Rogers scored 94.45 of 100 points during the last assessment as a school. The SPI score for math was 37.48 out of 40 points 37.71 points out of 40 points in reading and 19.26 points out of 20 points for attendance for a total of 94.45 out of 100 points.

South Dakota's accountability model takes a thoughtful, balanced approach to defining the indicators of a strong education system. Rather than focusing almost exclusively on student proficiency on a single assessment, it encompasses multiple indicators that are critical pieces in preparing students for the rigors of the 21st century world.

2. Using Assessment Results:

The Mitchell School District publishes and disseminates an annual report to all community stakeholders. This document includes district and school achievement Dakota STEP information, ACCESS results, Eighth Grade Technology Assessment results and ACT results Each school's D-STEP achievement results are published on the state's accountability template. Dakota STEP test results from Mitchell School District each of its schools, Mitchell High School, Mitchell Middle School, Gertie Belle Rogers Elementary, L.B. Williams Elementary, Longfellow Elementary, Rockport Colony School and Rosedale Colony School, are published. These assessment reports contain information for student sub-groups including all students, poverty, LEP, gender, economically disadvantaged, migrant, students with disabilities, and any ethnic groups that apply. Essentially, the Central Office gathers all of the information provided in this report card and publishes a document. A copy of the report card is hand delivered, sent home with students or mailed within 30 days of the beginning of the school year to every family with a child in the district. Additionally, a copy is provided to every district employee. School superintendent reviews the annual report with the Mitchell Board of Education. A copy is mailed to all major office holders in Mitchell (mayor, city and county Council members, Chamber of Commerce, news media, etc.) and a large number is provided to the Chamber of Commerce for distribution. The local newspaper, The Mitchell Daily Republic, publishes an article about the district's student achievement results. Finally, a digital version of the report card is also available on the district's website, www.mitchell.k12.sd.us Each school in the district has a colored copy of its Dakota STEP results posted for anyone to view.

Each year, the Mitchell School District has a data retreat before the school year begins. Gertie Belle Rogers has a data team who attends the summer data retreat. The data team is represented by one teacher per grade level, a special education teacher, a Title I teacher, a reading coach and the principal. The team digs deep into the Dakota Step data for students in grade three through five, they look at DIBELS, OLSAT data for the lower grades. They share the results with all the staff members at in-service before school.

At the in-service before school begins, all teachers review the Dakota STEP scores of their incoming

students as well as their last year's students. We look at longitudinal data and compare grade levels from year to year. As the cut scores are broken down by content standards, core standards and specific areas, teachers are able to determine areas of concern at the curricular level as well as for specific students who did not perform well. The teachers make a list of students who are 10 points above and below proficiency and look specific standards of concerns. The teachers make action plans to ensure these curricular areas are emphasized more throughout the year as well as make individual plans for struggling students to re-teach areas of need.

The data team shares sample goals that they developed at the data retreat with the entire staff, with the input of the entire staff, school goals are set for math and reading focusing on a percentage goal along with areas of concern. We set school-wide goals for all students in kindergarten through fifth grade, not just students in grades three through five. Each month the Gertie Belle Rogers School Leadership team discusses the progress of the school goals and collaborates to make sure we are on track to meet the goals. If we have a concern or a roadblock we use the 10-90 rule, we spend 10% of the time on the problem and 90% of the time on the solution.

Teachers use progress monitoring tools throughout the year to monitor student growth, i.e. Star Assessment, Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literature Skills (DIBELS) and the South Dakota Assessment Portal (SDAP). These measurement tools help us efficiently screen our students and help make the vast amounts of data collected manageable for our regular meetings to discuss academic progress and to place students in Intervention groups. Every grade level has a 30 minute Intervention/Growing Block where students are grouped according to ability to help with student growth. We use classroom teachers, special education teachers, Title I teachers, paras and volunteers to help with the 30 minute Intervention Growing Block.

When we start to see drops in achievement, whether it be over several weeks of progress monitoring, or a drop in percentage points on our yearly standardized tests, we take it seriously and look for reasons and solutions. With the input of teachers, leadership teams, and parents we have been able to keep our scores high. We have a Teacher Assistance Team (TAT) that meets to discuss students with academic concerns and a Behavior Assistance Team (BAT) that meets to discuss students with behavior issues and a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) that staffs and discusses SPED students.

Along with a rigorous curriculum in our core subject areas, we look to supplement our curricular lesson whenever possible. This helps in creating real world life experiences which get our students engaged and interested as they make connections to the world and themselves. We try to incorporate the core subject areas of reading and math into all areas of the curriculum.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

The Mitchell School District is fortunate because the teachers have a wealth of knowledge and are willing to share their knowledge with their peers and surrounding districts. We have a progressive professional development committee who organizes the traditional staff development opportunities during in-services before school and during the school year. But also, the committee has created a Red Apple classes and Green Apple classes that are taught by teachers and administrators of the Mitchell School District. Red Apple classes are offered for graduate credit or under-graduate credit through Dakota Wesleyan University in Mitchell. The Green Apple classes are offered for no credit. The Red Apple classes cost \$90 per credit hour; the teacher receives \$45 per student to teach the class. The Green Apple class instructor receives a minimum fee.

This is a nice way for teachers to make a little extra money if they teach the Red Apple or Green Apple class and it is very reasonable for a graduate credit for the teacher who decides to take the class. We recently expanded and opened the classes up to teachers in surrounding districts, the Mitchell teachers have first chance, but other teachers are allowed in if there is room. The para-educators have taken advantage of the under-graduate classes. Some of the Red Apple and Green Apple classes that have been

offered are: *Smart Board Basics, Web Page Design, Differentiated Instruction, Book Studies, iPad Basics, MS Office, and Bullying.*

We have monthly grade level meetings with the other two elementary schools in the district; teachers collaborate and share ideas with each other at the monthly meeting. We encourage teachers to observe other teachers in the district. We use experienced teachers to teach the new teachers at the new teacher in-services before school begins. Several school districts are curious about our Boost-Up program and have observed our Boost-Up room and Boost-UP classroom activities.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

Gertie Belle Rogers is extremely lucky to have an amazing parent organization that is very supportive and is always looking for ways to enhance student learning. Gertie Belle Rogers has 39% of the students that are either free or reduced. Unfortunately, we are sometimes overlooked for grants because of our socio-economic status of our students. I have been able to tap into our parent organization as a resource to help fund several projects to enhance student achievement, i.e. helped purchase Smart Boards for every classroom, designate funding to allow every classroom to take a field trip, purchased playground equipment and incentive prizes for positive behavior.

We stress to parents that they are their children's first and most important teachers. We sponsor Parent Parties in the evenings where we model teaching techniques in math and reading. We have given away games, gift certificates to the Book Fair to the parents who come to parent/teacher conferences and a Kindle e-reader. Parents were able to sign up for the Kindle at every Parent Party, Parent/Teacher Conference or PTA event throughout the year. We noticed an increase of parent participation with the prize incentive. Parents are always encouraged to volunteer in their children's classroom, many parents volunteer on a weekly basis.

We have a school web-site and Facebook page that has schedules, lunch menus, special events and pictures to inform parents. Some teachers use personal web-sites and blogs to communicate with parents. All teachers send a weekly newsletter to parents informing them of what curriculum they will be teaching the following week along with hints, and information for the parents. The office sends home a monthly newsletter to every family.

Community members play a huge role in the success of our 30-minute Intervention Growing Blocks. We work with our local retired volunteer organization to match volunteers with students and classroom teachers. Volunteers do a variety of activities to support student achievement, i.e. *work with individual students, small groups or help supervise the computer lab.* Through the federal Experience Works program, we secured a library aide to help with the Growing Blocks during the school year and to keep the library open during the summer to support our Summer Reading program.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

Gertie Belle Rogers follows the South Dakota State Standards and the Common Core Standards in all curriculum areas. Curriculum Units were developed by staff members for all content areas, the Curriculum Units are updated with curriculum reviews or when changed by the South Dakota Department of Education. The curriculum and instruction is driven by assessments, data and collaboration. Our teachers know and understand where they need to be at any time throughout the year as stated in the Curriculum Units.

Formative assessments determine the path our teachers take in developing and differentiating instruction. Our summative assessments ensure and reinforce that our formative assessments and planning allow for student growth. We instill in our students knowledge, problem solving, and a positive attitude. Higher order thinking skills are embedded into all areas of the curriculum. We want our students to be creative, have the ability to think and solve problems, and leave our school with a strong foundation for a successful life.

To make sure our students are ready and capable to take on the challenges of our curriculum, we have a number of support systems in place. We have a Before and After School Empowerment (BASE) program that allows students to use technology to reinforce math and reading strategies or to get help with homework. We have an after school tutoring program after school and summer school program for students who are Intensive according to DIBELS and our Star Reading Assessments. Students are offered breakfast to start their day, weekend snack packs are provided to students who qualify for free or reduced meals. We have a GBR Student Council and a GBR Character Counts Team for students in fourth and fifth grade. These groups lead assemblies and do community service projects throughout the school year. Every classroom is paired with another classroom, we call them buddies and they meet once a month and do an activity, we try to pair younger students with older students.

The reading curriculum has a basal as the core foundation of our reading program, keeping in mind the big 5 reading strategies (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension). Reading and language arts instruction include a mixture of reading strategies including large group, small group, guided reading, and modeling. A variety of reading materials are available to students including fiction, non-fiction, and online texts. Reading and writing assignments are intertwined throughout the curriculum. Often times, reading and writing assignments will cross into math, science, or social studies curriculum. In addition to our 90 minutes of uninterrupted reading, every student receives an additional 30 minutes of reading Interventions/Growing Block, students are divided up into groups according to their needs.

Math curriculum includes an understanding of the eight mathematical practices as stated in the Common Core Standards. Concepts are taught through use of manipulatives, text-based instruction, and technology. Teachers use games to reinforce concepts learned. Using these strategies makes it easier for students to make visual representations of the mathematical concepts.

Science and social studies curriculum are based on the South Dakota's content standards and built on a scaffolding process. Higher order thinking skills and interactive and engaging activities provide for a well-rounded curriculum. Teachers are always supplementing with additional real life and relevant content, and cross-curriculum lessons are common.

Art, physical education, computer education, guidance and music are a part of Gertie Belle Rogers curriculum. Students have 60 minutes of physical education, computer education, and music per week, 40 minutes of art per week and 30 minutes of guidance per week.

Technology is embedded into all curriculum areas. We have two computer labs with 25 computers each, 50 laptop computers on a carts, each classroom has at least 4 computers and a Smart Board. In addition, our school has 35 iPads that are available to students and teachers.

2. Reading/English:

We use Treasures Reading Curriculum because it has a good framework, but yet allows for teachers to pull in other resources. The reading curriculum has a basal as the core foundation of our reading program, keeping in mind the big 5 reading strategies (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension). Reading and language arts instruction include a mixture of reading strategies including large group, small group, guided reading, and modeling. A variety of reading materials are available to students including fiction, non-fiction, and online texts. Reading and writing assignments are intertwined throughout the curriculum. Often times, reading and writing assignments will cross into math, science, or social studies curriculum.

We set lofty goals for our students in language arts; we want 100% of students to be at benchmark in reading by the end of the year according to the DIBELS assessment with the exception of SPED students with severe needs. Instruction is vigorous, engaging instruction that is explicit, systematic, modeled and practiced in whole and small group settings. All students receive 90 minutes of un-interrupted reading daily and 300 minutes of writing weekly.

Students come to us at different levels, some students are behind, some are at grade level and some are above grade level. We created a 30 minute Growing Block to meet the needs of every child at all grade levels. Students are screened and grouped according to data by grade level. Students who are behind need more instructional time to get caught up, their Growing Block time is small group direct instruction; the focus is on “catch-up time” on the skills they are lacking. Students who are at grade level are grouped by needs to maintain and build skills. We call students who are above grade level our “High Flyers” their Growing Block groups are larger, they are able to do more independent work and pull in multidisciplinary units. We continually look at data and monitor student growth. At the end of last year, every kindergarten and first grade student was at grade level, we are working hard to meet our goal again this year. The highest achieving students are eligible to participate in our Gifted and Talented Program; the students meet weekly in small groups.

3. Mathematics:

Our math curriculum covers both the South Dakota State Standards and the Common Core Standards in grades three through five, kindergarten through second grade covers only the Common Core Standards. Concepts are taught through use of manipulatives, text-based instruction, and technology. Teachers use games and technology to reinforce concepts learned. Using these strategies makes it easier for students to make visual representations of the mathematical concepts. Math concepts are reinforced by our Title I and SPED teachers. Students also gain additional access to the concepts through our tutoring program and our BASE program.

We are piloting Pearson’s Investigations curriculum, next year we will be fully implementing the program and our curriculum will focus on the Common Core Standards and the eight Standards for Mathematical Practice. The Standards for Mathematical Practice focuses on varieties of expertise that mathematics educators at all levels should seek to develop in their students. These practices rest on important “processes and proficiencies” with longstanding importance in mathematics education. The first of these are the NCTM process standards of problem solving, reasoning and proof, communication, representation, and connections. The second are the strands of mathematical proficiency specified in the National Research Council’s report Adding It Up: adaptive reasoning, strategic competence, conceptual understanding (comprehension of mathematical concepts, operations and relations), procedural fluency and productive disposition.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Boost-Up at Gertie Belle Rogers! In addition to the 60 minutes per week in the Boost-Up room, we start every morning with announcements and group spinning to help the children get focused and start their day. This program promotes the maximum development of the whole child through innovative, individualized and comprehensive brain-centered programs and services. Boost-up was created as a multi-sensory approach towards gaining the readiness skill needed to excel in the classroom.

Our staff have all been trained in Boost Up and truly believe that physical movement can directly influence children's ability to learn, think and remember. Research shows that after doing 80 hours of balance/vestibular, gross and fine motor and visual acuity exercises, children on average make a six-month reading gain. Students go to the Boost-Up room and do researched based activities for two-30 minute sessions per week. Teachers are encouraged to do Boost-Up activities throughout the school day in and out of their classrooms. The best aspect of Boost-Up is that children love the activities; it is a fun approach to learning.

5. Instructional Methods:

The teachers at Gertie Belle Rogers differentiate instruction by using a variety of methods, *i.e. cooperative learning, small group instruction, peer tutoring, think, pair and share, oral presentations, role-playing, teacher led discussions, student led discussion*. Our special education teachers and paras collaborate with the regular education teacher to differentiate as needed to include their students in the classroom. Teachers also use a variety of technology within their classrooms including computers, iPads, SmartBoards to differentiate instruction. Students are able to work independently at the computer or on an iPad while the teacher is working with a small group of students, the independent worker could be a struggling student working on a reading or math program or a high flyer doing research on a topic.

Interventions/Growing Block is another example of differentiated instruction across the grade level that our school uses to promote student growth. Students are screened and grouped according to data by grade level. Students who are behind need more instructional time to get caught up, their Growing Block time is small group direct instruction; the focus is on "catch-up time" on the skills they are lacking. Students who are at grade level are grouped by needs to maintain and build skills. We call students who are above grade level our "High Flyers" their Growing Block groups are larger, they are able to do more independent work and pull in multidisciplinary units.

Data from all forms of testing, progress monitoring, student work and observation of students is constantly being analyzed to drive instruction. Gertie Belle Rogers teachers have a weekly planning meeting, they meet at least twice a month with the principal and reading coach and discuss data and instruction. In addition, they meet with the other two Mitchell elementary schools to learn instructional methods in math, reading, technology and writing strategies.

6. Professional Development:

The Mitchell School District believes in hiring and maintaining exemplary teachers, we do not keep average teachers in our district, only outstanding teachers are teaching our students. We know that we need to provide our teachers with professional development time to train in the latest techniques and professional practices in order for them to grow. Our district has a professional development committee made up of administrators and teachers who meet monthly throughout the school year to discuss what areas need to be addressed and what we can do to enhance professional development for our staff. Our professional development team is progressive by sending out surveys and meeting the needs of the staff. There is professional development when there is new curriculum or a new initiative, *i.e. one-to-one technology initiative, new reading curriculum, new teacher in-service, school safety, etc.*

The committee has to be creative because of limited resources. We are lucky that many of the teachers have advanced degrees along with the administration and are willing to share their expertise with the teachers in our district. We offer graduate credits through Dakota Wesleyan University in Mitchell at a reduced rate. One example at Gertie Belle is that we are able to offer from one to three graduate credits for the teachers who run the Before and After School Empowerment program (BASE). This is an incentive for the teachers because there isn't money to pay them to teach during BASE, this small incentive to the teachers is making a huge difference for students at Gertie Belle Rogers. The teachers track attendance and measure student growth. This helps the teachers grow professionally by looking and analyzing the data and it helps the student make growth.

All of the development opportunities are meant to provide our staff with the skills necessary to enhance their teaching abilities and provide our students with skilled professionals who are using the latest researched based techniques that have been proven to work.

7. School Leadership:

The philosophy of school leadership at Gertie Belle Rogers is that of collaborative leadership. The principal serves the role of facilitator and coach. As a former coach for over 20 years, this principal looks at her staff as her team. Just as the players on her team had different personalities and needs, so does her staff. She works hard to develop strong, positive relationships with each and every staff member and focus on their strengths to help support student achievement.

It is important that the right teachers are in the leadership roles, she carefully choose teachers to sit on her Leadership Team, she wants staff members who are respected by peers and who are willing to immerse themselves in student data and draw conclusions from the data that will help drive instruction. She strives to have the team beliefs in data and decision making contagious to their peers, which leads to conversations about a team vision of values, goals and beliefs throughout the year. The leadership team meets once a month to address needs of students, staff and to talk about our school goals.

She leads by example for her staff and students; she is always researching, looking at and sharing data to drive decisions that reflect our vision and goals. She purchases books for her staff for book studies on current issues and encourages teachers to attend workshops or take advantage of our in-house professional development.

Building positive relationships with every child is imperative to the principal; her goal is for every child to think that they are her favorite. She loves spending time and connecting with the students and making them feel safe, important and part of the Gertie Belle family while teaching the three "B" expectations at Gertie Belle Rogers, ***Be Safe, Be Responsible and Be Respectful.***

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: Dakota Step

Edition/Publication Year: 2008-2012 Publisher: Pearson

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient and Advanced	87	96	86	94	91
Advanced	30	56	31	21	33
Number of students tested	71	48	65	62	46
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
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	81	92	75	85	83
Advanced	19	38	10	0	24
Number of students tested	19	12	16	17	16
2. African American Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient and Advanced	74			82	
Advanced	33			0	
Number of students tested	12			11	
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3 Test: Dakota Step

Edition/Publication Year: 2008-2012 Publisher: Pearson

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient and Advanced	92	98	80	86	98
Advanced	47	52	47	44	36
Number of students tested	71	48	65	62	46
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient and Advanced	95	58	65	75	94
Advanced	33	18	15	0	18
Number of students tested	19	12	16	17	16
2. African American Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient and Advanced	83			54	
Advanced	33			9	
Number of students tested	12			11	
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4 Test: Dakota Step

Edition/Publication Year: 2008-2012 Publisher: Pearson

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient and Advanced	98	94	90	92	86
Advanced	61	52	32	33	28
Number of students tested	49	65	61	50	62
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
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	100	94	71	76	68
Advanced	44	26	6	35	26
Number of students tested	17	15	16	15	16
2. African American Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient and Advanced		30			
Advanced		10			
Number of students tested		10			
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4 Test: Dakota Step

Edition/Publication Year: 2008-2012 Publisher: Pearson

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient and Advanced	98	88	90	88	93
Advanced	59	56	39	45	34
Number of students tested	49	65	61	50	62
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient and Advanced	100	79	77	71	79
Advanced	44	42	6	24	21
Number of students tested	17	15	16	15	16
2. African American Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient and Advanced		40			
Advanced		10			
Number of students tested		10			
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5 Test: Dakota Step

Edition/Publication Year: 2008-2012 Publisher: Pearson

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient and Advanced	94	88	92	92	91
Advanced	65	41	32	40	34
Number of students tested	64	59	47	65	62
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
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	87	81	83	83	93
Advanced	40	19	22	22	7
Number of students tested	15	14	16	15	13
2. African American Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient and Advanced					60
Advanced					10
Number of students tested					10
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5 Test: Dakota Step

Edition/Publication Year: 2008-2012 Publisher: Pearson

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient and Advanced	92	83	87	95	93
Advanced	44	33	34	51	39
Number of students tested	64	59	47	65	62
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
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	94	71	78	87	92
Advanced	27	14	11	35	21
Number of students tested	15	14	16	15	13
2. African American Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Proficient and Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					