

U.S. Department of Education
2020 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 Mrs. Debbie Flora
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Bernice Young Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 301 Pippin Apple Circle
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Springdale State AR Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 72762-9741

County Washington

Telephone (479) 750-8770 Fax (479) 306-2002

Web site/URL https://young.sdale.org/ E-mail dflora@sdale.org

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. Jim Rollins E-mail jrollins@sdale.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Springdale Public Schools Tel. (479) 750-8800

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. Kevin Ownbey
(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. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2020 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. 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.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2014 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, or 2019.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
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 (2019-2020) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

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

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)
 Suburban
 Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2019 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	50	50	100
1	51	56	107
2	42	50	92
3	43	53	96
4	62	46	108
5	48	36	84
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	296	291	587

*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0.8 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 4.5 % Asian
 - 2 % Black or African American
 - 9.3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 3.9 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 78.5 % White
 - 1 % 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 2018 - 2019 school year: 4%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain:

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, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	12
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	11
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	23
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	587
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.04
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	4

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

Marshallese, Spanish, Chinese, Mandarin, Albanian, Vietnamese, Arabic, Laotian, Philippine, Tagalog, French, Indonesian, Turkish, Indonesian

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 10 %
61 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 27 %

Total number students who qualify: 156

8. Students receiving special education services: 12 %

70 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>10</u> Autism | <u>2</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>6</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>8</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>42</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>1</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 11

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	24
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	9
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

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 24:1

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

Required Information	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	96%	96%	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 2019.

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

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.

Bernice Young Elementary's overarching mission is to 'Build Youth Excellence' (B.Y.E.) by supporting students in gaining literacy, numeracy, problem-solving, and decision-making skills.

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

Bernice Young Elementary School opened its doors on August 21, 2000, due to a generous contribution of land from a former teacher, Bernice Young Jones. Mrs. Jones spent many happy hours on her family's farm where she was raised. She walked to school every day and later taught at the Oak Grove School, which was located near the current site of Bernice Young Elementary. It was her dream for the family farm to someday contribute greatly to the community of Springdale. This dream was realized when Bernice Young Elementary was built on land that was part of the Young family farm. Bernice Young Elementary School is named in honor of Mrs. Jones' dedication to community. One of Mrs. Young Jones' quotes that still resonates with the school community is "There are different ways you can share. It's not always even with money. It's with time." The staff, students, and families have continued to move forward with Mrs. Young Jones' spirit of generosity and community. This year over 170 parent and community volunteers have participated in volunteer training and frequently visit the school to support students, teachers, and school-wide initiatives.

Most students come from working families who make time support learning. All students and staff have high expectations for themselves and are willing to spend the time it takes to achieve academically. The culture of learning is one of "all means all". Each teacher's mindset is that "you can do this, and I will help you." While English is the native language spoken by 90% of the students, students with other language and cultural backgrounds enrich the school's learning environment. Students are eager to learn from each other and to work together. Twenty seven percent of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch; yet students at Young Elementary School have the same high expectations for learning regardless of economic status. Bernice Young Elementary School is a neighborhood school. Most of the students walk or car ride to and from school each day. Approximately 170 students live in areas surrounding the neighborhood and ride buses to and from school. The sense of community within the school is strong.

Several key strategies encourage and challenge students to reach their full potential as a whole child. Students (and teachers) have a growth mindset. Teachers guide students to recognize their own growth and achievement. Through the development of personal learning plans (PLPs), students develop academic and personal goals. All student growth is celebrated, regardless of a student's initial achievement. Students complete NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments periodically through the school year. Students understand their achievement and use their progress to reflect upon their PLP goals, make goal adjustments, and share their PLPs with parents twice a year during student-led conferences. Teachers and students conference with 100% of families to discuss progress.

When making instructional decisions, teachers consider student progress, use state standards as outlined for each grade level, collaborate as grade level teams, and develop lesson plans designed with intended student progress in mind. Teachers begin planning by reviewing state standards, determining products students will produce as a result of the learning, and deciding how to include the components of direct teaching, modeling, guided practice, student collaboration, and independent work. Teachers rely on the model of gradual release of responsibility to provide students with lessons that guide student success. Opportunities for focused student conversation are included in every lesson. Students sit knee to knee and eye to eye when talking with partners during guided practice. As lessons evolve, students collaborate in small groups to complete learning tasks, research, produce presentations, or solve problems. Independent working times allow for teachers to conference with individual students about their thinking and work.

Technology fully supports student learning as an integral part of the curriculum with a computer center in the library, a computer lab, iPads 1:1 in kindergarten and first grades, and Chromebooks 1:1 in second through fifth grades. Students do not use textbooks. Learning opportunities occur through workshop models of instruction. Students read fiction and non-fiction books of choice based on their reading readiness, write based on brainstormed topics or to a prompt, problem-solve based on their readiness for mathematical understandings, participate in science investigations, use technology to research, and collaborate with peers to produce products such as Google Slide presentations. Strategies teachers use to guide workshop model lessons include direct teach of mini lessons, guided practice, and conferencing with individual students and small groups. Having gained skills and understandings, students are then capable of working independently.

Teachers are mindful of establishing a positive learning environment. Positive behavior rewards are earned as a class further building a sense of community. Components of Conscious Discipline and Choose Love support students' behavioral choices and social-emotional well-being. Daily life in the classroom illustrates the Bernice Young Elementary theme, "B.Y.E. Is Buzzing at Building Youth Excellence."

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas

The school’s culture is building youth excellence. Young Elementary teachers understand the importance that high expectations play in supporting all students in reaching their full potential. Access to grade level and above standards is a priority for all students. All instruction is based on Arkansas State Standards. A district curriculum guide provides support for sequencing concepts. Key concepts being taught are noted in class anchor charts and are displayed within classrooms as students and teachers add new components when they are taught and learned. Sentence frames, relevant book levels, and peer interaction help support struggling learners. Resources, prompts, and teachers’ focused feedback to students provide challenge for other students who are ready to push ahead.

Teachers plan using a backward design model (consider standards and expected learning first) when making instructional decisions within the workshop model of teaching. Students become independent workers after having the opportunity to participate in gradual release of responsibility lessons. Teachers understand that explicit teaching, guided practice with concepts, and collaborative work among students is necessary before students are asked to work independently. Structured routines make learning possible. Mathematical concepts are taught through a problem-solving model with explicit teaching woven throughout lessons as strategies are shared and justified by students.

Technology is integrated within students’ daily work. Students use Google Classroom to manage assignments. Additionally, technology is used as a tool for research, collaboration, and assessment. Informal classroom assessment, NWEA MAP assessments, and state assessments are used by teachers during Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings to inform instructional decisions. The mindset that “all means all” guides teachers’ collaborative conversations as instructional decisions are made regarding achievement of every student. Remediation, intervention, lessons moving forward, and challenge are considered for each student. Building students’ excellence does not mean that all students benefit from the same strategies or exhibit the same learning evidence. Excellence means every child achieves growth in learning.

1b. Reading/English language arts

The comprehensive literacy approach at Bernice Young Elementary includes all the components of Scarborough’s Rope for both word recognition and comprehension. All literacy instruction is based upon Arkansas State Standards by grade level. Emphasis is on phonological awareness, decoding, word recognition, background knowledge, vocabulary, language structure, verbal reasoning, and literary knowledge. In the early grades, repetition supports flexible thinking as students build phonemic awareness and phonics skills. Resources such as Phonetic Connections and Heggerty provide guidance in structuring early literacy lessons. Additional strategies are used in the early grades to promote reading enthusiasm. For example, students are taught to look for patterns as word detectives before decodable books support early literacy growth. In the upper elementary grades, word study is added to the literacy block. Teachers use Benchmark Assessments and Developmental Spelling Analysis (DSA) to determine students’ readiness for word study. Second, third, and fourth grade students are sometimes flexibly grouped based on word study screenings in order to provide timely instruction based on a student’s current needs. As students make literacy progress, students choose the books they read during reading workshop. Every literacy lesson during the workshop model begins with an explicitly taught ten-minute mini lesson that includes connections to past learning, specific teaching points, and models of the desired reading behavior. Then students are guided in practice of the skill highlighted in the brief lesson. After practice, students are sent on their way to read their choice books and apply newly acquired reading strategies. Students read independently, with partners, or with literature circles. Research is included in the literacy block in some sessions. Each classroom has an extensive classroom library consisting of books at various levels, genres, and interest topics. Teachers have created resources such as anchor charts, past Understanding by Design units, and curriculum calendars.

Other tools used to enhance literacy instruction are anchor charts, advance organizers, note talking tools, and on-line resources such as RAZ Kids, Common Lit, and Edulastic. When asked what makes a difference in producing strong readers, teachers respond that providing ample time for students to actually read is key. Teachers believe that reading aloud to students, thinking aloud with students, and balancing structured time and free reading time encourage strong reading skills as well. Teachers are not passive observers as students are reading. Teachers consistently confer with readers to help students take next steps in becoming confident, fluent readers. Students are complimented for using previously taught strategies and are coached to work toward adding additional strategies as a reader. Developing writers follows a similar workshop instructional model. Writers have writing notebooks with brainstormed ideas. Teachers provide explicitly taught writing mini-lessons, then students are given ample time to write. In both the reading workshop and writing workshop sessions, teachers meet with small groups or confer with students while individual students are reading or writing. Mentor Sentences, summarization, and vocabulary development are integrated into writing sessions. Students are exposed to a variety of quality literature so that they can see connections between reading and writing.

1c. Mathematics

Math instruction at Young Elementary is based on Arkansas State Standards and follows a conceptual progression. Teacher developed curriculum is used. Students do not use textbooks. Units are developed following the model of Understanding by Design. Grade level standards are considered first when lessons and units are designed. Then a series of learning experiences are planned. Our focus is to develop mathematical thinkers. Key components of math instruction are making sense of problems and persevering to solve them, reasoning abstractly and quantitatively, constructing viable arguments and critiquing the reasoning of others, modeling with mathematics, using appropriate tools strategically, attending to precision, looking for and making use of structure, and looking for and expressing regularity in repeated reasoning.

All students participate in an eighty minute math block each day. Math instruction is divided into two components. First, daily number work is emphasized. Student build automaticity skills through number talks, learning to compose and decompose numbers, and working on fact fluency, notation, and equations. The second component is a math workshop time. The workshop consists of mini-lessons, problem-solving, conferencing, purposeful discourse, and a summary with the lesson focus. Similar to the gradual release of responsibility model that is used within all content areas, the mathematics mini lesson consists of connections, teaching points, teaching, active engagement, and a link to past and future learning. Problem-solving related to real world experiences leads the students to investigate solutions and to share out mathematical discovery.

Students must feel that they are in a trusted environment to take risks in justifying their mathematical strategies to their peers. Students are taught to have respectful conversations about math. They learn to agree and disagree with other students' mathematical strategy suggestions. All share time is teacher guided with a clear purpose for selecting student strategies that will be shared with the class. As students work through the math workshop model, teachers are conferring with individual and small groups of students. Students are asked to identify similarities and differences as they clarify and justify their thinking. They learn to draw upon previously learned strategies to make new conclusions about the mathematical patterns they find. Anchor charts, including non-linguistic representations, are visual tools to cement strategies that have been modeled during lessons. While all students may be working on the same mathematical concept, instruction is individualized based on the readiness of the student to understand numeracy, base ten concepts, fractions, geometry, or measurement. Teachers plan for each day's learning based on assessments, observations, and conversations with students. Technology enhances math instruction and is incorporated through programs such as ST Math, IXL, Khan Academy, or IKnowIt.com based on needs of individual students.

1d. Science

Arkansas State Standards guide science instructional choices. A district curriculum is available on the Springdale Public Schools website. Teachers use their knowledge of the Arkansas State Standards to select and enhance science lessons they develop. Young Elementary science incorporates non-fiction reading, topic research, analyzing charts and graphs, and investigations. Students learn to question, make claims,

reason, and look for evidence. Twenty percent of the instructional science block includes hands-on experiences as students experiment and investigate. Students learn to ask questions and define problems, as well as plan and carry out investigations. As students analyze and interpret data, they are integrating mathematical skills and computational thinking. Students learn to describe their findings and show evidence of their thinking. As students research a variety of science topics, they begin to look for patterns and identify cause and effect. Some of the topics that most engage students are ecosystems, earth's systems, matter and interactions, motion and stability, forces, energy, and waves. Students have keen interests in engineering and seek often to construct and code. For example, robotics was added to second grade curriculum because of students' interest. A learning cycle consisting on engaging, exploring, explaining, elaborating, and evaluating is easily implemented during a robotics unit. Resources such as the nearby University of Arkansas Engineering Department and trade books for "Picture Perfect Science Lessons" enrich fundamental scientific knowledge, provide frameworks for scientific thinking, and examples of scientific practice. Other examples of scientific learning are illustrated by third grade lessons about force and magnetism. Students learn the effects of balanced and unbalanced forces on motion and cause and effect relationships of magnetic interactions. Lessons that build toward answering essential questions and enduring understandings might include investigating forces and motion involving ramps, toy cars, or marbles. Teachers work toward building engaging science lessons at all grade levels.

1e. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement

Social studies focus concepts include civics/government, economics, geography, history for students in kindergarten through fourth grades. Fifth grade students study pre-Columbian people of North America, colonization and settlement, the American Revolution, and forming of our nation. Arkansas State Standards are used as the backbone of social studies instruction. District curriculum provides a springboard for the design of lessons that promote good citizenship and decision making skills. Social studies concepts are woven into literacy lessons as students read historical biographies and research about the people who made a difference in our country and the world. For example, after researching a famous American person of choice, third grade students prepare presentations in the form of a living museum. Exhibiting student work in the form of living museums not only supports the presenter in learning their information well as they present to other students and parents, the school's social learning culture is enriched, also. While overarching understandings are similar at various grade levels, the actual lessons provide deeper understandings or extend learning. For example, overarching understandings in civics and government involve institutions, participation, deliberation, processes, rules, and laws. Lessons in kindergarten begin with asking the question "What makes a good citizen?" and extend thinking through discussions about rules and scenarios. First grade lessons extend a national symbols' introduction from kindergarten curriculum and further explain government outside of the school setting. Second grade lessons require students to reflect deeply about interactions through discussions about bullying and class job development. Third grade discussions require more maturity as students discuss democracy vs autocracy and are introduced to leadership systems in other countries. Election processes and the Constitution are key components of fourth grade curriculum. In each of the four main components (civics, economics, geography, and history) students are guided to become wise decision-makers and to be able to site evidence from text or history when forming opinions or judgements.

1f. For secondary schools:

1g. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Bernice Young Elementary has an active arts program. Students have the opportunity to participate in both music and art classes each week. Both art and music curriculum is designed around state standards. During art class, students have the opportunity to work with a variety of media. Communication skills are enriched as students learn to discuss their art pieces with their peers. Art lessons at each grade level build on integrated skills. For example, fifth grade lessons illustrate the Fibonacci sequence integrating math and art. Fourth grade lessons incorporate learning about current events, animals of Australia, and the fire in the country which integrate social studies and art. Examples of other integrated art studies include artists'

birthdays, scavenger hunts, Japan and geography. Music lessons continue to build students' love for the arts. In addition to singing and playing instruments, students learn to read music, create, and apply movement to music. Performance is one aspect of the music curriculum. Students perform monthly musicals for the student body and include an evening performance for families and friends. Both art and music classes reach out to community. Choirs sing at the regional baseball park and at city events. Students' visual art is displayed at the neighborhood Circle of Life Hospice Center to reach out in support of those families.

The overall goal of the physical education program at Young Elementary is to encourage students to be active and to choose healthy foods and behaviors which promote good health and well-rounded individuals. A variety of sports, games, and fitness opportunities are designed around Arkansas State Standards. Students attend physical education classes twice each week. Routines are established so that each session provides maximum student activity. Smiles and student engagement are evident during warm-up time, active game time, and calming time with a review of teaching points. Understandings about healthy food and nutrition are woven into active games that students play. Food for Health lessons provided by Washington Regional Hospital extend lesson resources. Physical education classes connect to community through martial arts guest speakers, Walton foundation's biking program, and First Tee golf lessons. Variety motivates all students to become physically active and healthy.

While foreign language is not required by Arkansas State Standards at the elementary level, student interest has led to the initiation of after-school additions of Spanish and Chinese language clubs. During after school sessions, students learn vocabulary of other languages and begin to build understandings of other cultures. For example, in addition to learning Chinese students sponsored a Chinese lantern festival with riddles, games, and prizes for all students to enjoy. Since English is not the native language of several of our students, participating in the study of other languages has helped bridge friendships and understandings among all students.

The goal of the Bernice Young Elementary media program is to create well-informed lifelong readers. By participating in weekly lessons based on Arkansas State Standards, students learn how to locate resources, use internet safely, research without infringing on copyright laws, and evaluate primary and secondary online sources. Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) opportunities are integrated into the media program through Makerspace rotations. Students have access to 1:1 technology which supplements choice in reading and research materials as well as the ability to produce products representing student learning.

A strong counseling program encourages social-emotional wellbeing for all students. Classroom guidance lessons and a school-wide character building program based on concepts of Conscious Discipline and Choose Love encourage understanding of conflict resolution, kindness, thankfulness, respect, and responsibility. Announcements are made each day to illustrate building good character, and students challenge other students to complete a different act to illustrate positive character. A partnership with Ozark Guidance Center has given the staff professional development opportunities to support development of positive classroom behavior management strategies. Classes collect compliments. When goals are reached, positive incentives such as game times or pajama days provide celebration for the strong class community that is being built. The overall goal of the counseling program is to help each child grow socially, emotionally, and academically to become career ready, successful adults.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

Arkansas students' academic progress is assessed with the state's ACTAspire computerized tests. In addition to teachers' review of individual student's scores to determine specific content support each student needs, the staff reflects on schoolwide achievement using an instructional analysis tool to ensure that desired curriculum is taught and that effective strategies are used. For example, review of ACTAspire English revealed that lessons could be added to enhance English learning. As a result, teachers incorporated Mentor Sentences into daily lessons, began modeling and varying questions types, continued providing sentence frames, small group instruction, and visual supports for struggling students. Progress is monitored in literacy

through Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) analysis, NWEA MAP assessment, Units of Study pre- and post- assessments, students' work compared to progressions, and students' personal learning plans. Tier I intervention for students performing below grade level occurs in the classroom through small group instruction and differentiating for individuals. After reviewing student data and curriculum implementation, teachers determine if a student who is continuing to perform below grade level with little progress could benefit from Tier II intervention. Tier II intervention centers on specific skill area weaknesses. For example, a student's literacy weaknesses are identified by further assessments through NWEA MAP screenings, dyslexia screeners, a Phonological Awareness Screening Test (PAST), Developmental Spelling Assessments (DSA), or a Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) test. Once specific skill areas are identified, students participate in focused, daily pull-out sessions for support with lessons from Phonics First or Levelized Literacy Intervention (LLI). Students with mathematical weaknesses receive small group instruction as well based on drilling down through NWEA MAP screenings or students work during the classroom math workshop model. The progress of all students is monitored frequently. It is the belief of each grade level's leadership professional learning community (PLC) that every child should make academic progress. Our purpose is student learning. "All means All" to staff members as they collaborate to ensure learning occurs.

3b. Students performing above grade level

Students performing above grade level are challenged through rigorous expectations within the classroom. Implementation of math and literacy workshop instruction allows for differentiation of instruction. Students performing above grade level can readily use above grade level text, manipulate challenging mathematical concepts, and delve more deeply into projects and research assignments. Additionally, a program for gifted and talented students is provided to students who benefit from challenge above and beyond what is offered in the classroom. Identified gifted and talented students in second through fifth grade participate in a once a week pullout program with a teacher certified for serving gifted students. Students participate in 150 minute sessions each week. Emphasis is placed on student interest, process skills, critical thinking, creative thinking, and independent research. Higher level thinking skills are integrated with several content area concepts. For example, students design products and compete in an Economics Fair each year. Quiz Bowl provides another competitive way for students to participate in teams to use background knowledge and to extend learning together. Additionally, schoolwide initiatives such as book bowls, Odyssey of the Mind competitions, and Charlie May Simon book challenges extend students' opportunities further. All kindergarten and first grade students participate in whole group enrichment lessons provided the certified gifted teacher. Participation in the enrichment lessons allows all primary students to use creative thinking and critical thinking skills. During the primary students' lessons, teachers work to identify students who exhibit readiness for the advanced sessions available to students in second through fifth grade. In addition to meeting students' academic needs, lessons are designed to meet gifted students' affective needs. Students learn to communicate and problem-solve, evaluate, and justify responses which builds confidence. The goal of the enrichment program is to keep students challenged and engaged through identified strengths.

3c. Special education

The progress of all students is monitored. The staff goal is to ensure positive learning growth for all students. Students with special needs are served in a variety of ways dependent upon each student's needs. Through inclusion models, all students have the opportunity to participate in regular classroom learning experiences and to interact with peers. Special education teachers provide support to special needs students through settings in a resource classroom, a speech/language therapy class, a high needs multiple disability classroom, and physical and occupational areas. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are developed during committee meetings. Parents, special education teachers, classroom teachers, an administrator, and other specialists who can assist with the development of goals specific to each student's needs participate in all committee meetings. Goals are set and monitored through the IEP by the special education staff. Parents receive updates regarding goal achievement progress at a minimum of four times per year. The special education staff provides insight and professional develop to regular classroom teachers. For example, the speech therapist follows a 3:1 service model. One week each month is devoted to providing indirect student support, assessing students, and modeling phonemic awareness and phonics concepts in kindergarten and first grade classrooms. The speech therapist's expertise is multiplied as regular classroom teachers gain

deeper understandings of language development not only for the special education students in their classrooms but also for all students who might be struggling with academic literacy skills. A staff strength for serving special education students and all students is collaboration of the team of teachers serving each child.

3d. ELLs, if a special program or intervention is offered

English Language Learners (ELLs) are included in regular classroom learning experiences. The students' special needs for support in learning English are addressed in two primary ways. First, language needs are met in the regular classroom through the inclusion of visual aids, anchor charts, sentence frames, small group instruction, and partner and peer interactions. Second, language support is provided through a daily small group pullout program using English Language Development (ELD) resources. Placement in the small group is determined through pre-assessment. Students are placed with peers based on the level of language learning readiness. Students learn to speak in complete sentences, use conversational skills, understand new vocabulary, and to begin write in the pullout setting. Both classroom instruction and pullout instruction are taught by certified teachers who have had specialized training in serving the language needs of English Language Learners. In Arkansas, ELLs are assessed each year with a standardized computer assessment in the areas of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Growth is monitored in each of the areas. As students demonstrate English language proficiency, students are exited from the supported services. ELL students who exit the program are recognized with certificate celebrations.

3e. Other populations (e.g., migrant), if a special program or intervention is offered

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Recognizing that students learn best when they feel safe and loved, teachers use concepts of Conscious Discipline and Choose Love to create an environment based on relationships. Teachers get to know their students well. It is not unusual for teachers to support a whole child approach by attending students' personal after school sports, dance, or music activities. The relationships built through connecting with students' interests strengthen classroom interactions academically, socially, and emotionally. As relationships among teachers and students grow in the classroom, a risk-free atmosphere develops. Students approach learning new skills with confidence and perseverance. They learn to problem-solve in mathematics, to share their thinking, and to critique not only their own work but also the work of others. Trust is key. Students learn to agree and to disagree respectfully with their peers. They learn to turn and talk with partners throughout mini-lessons staying engaged with content and topics and to collaborate as they participate in small group projects. Student choice and voice further motivate student engagement. Students choose research topics, reading materials to practice reading skills, and ways to present information they are learning. Additionally, a variety of after school programs provide opportunities for students to engage in topics of choice. These after school opportunities often allow students to integrate skills they have learned in the classroom with special interests. Ongoing projects that promote student engagement include literacy and arts Reflection projects, robotics, Odyssey of the Mind problem-solving projects, STEM experiences, foreign language study, and book clubs. Student voice helps guide schoolwide initiatives. Approximately 30 students participate each year in either a student leadership council or a student advisory council. Students process the needs of the school through contributing to a strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat (S.W.O.T.) process. As students begin to recognize ways to make Young Elementary a better learning environment, students prioritize initiatives they would like to facilitate for improvement. Student developed projects have included anti-bullying, lunchroom behaviors, hallway respectfulness, and community service projects. At Bernice Young Elementary choice and voice promote student ownership and a positive learning environment that encourages students' active engagement in learning experiences.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Families and community members engage in a variety of ways to promote the success of students and teachers at Bernice Young Elementary School. Each year parents and community members attend an orientation supporting a strong system of volunteers. Currently, 170 adults have participated in volunteer training. The orientation includes information about supporting students while maintaining a risk-free learning environment based on keeping students' learning needs confidential and examples of ways to help. Fathers participating as Dads of Great Students (Watch D.O.G.S.) work with small student groups, help with special projects, and provide extra campus supervision. Other volunteers work with small groups of students, support field trips, help with teachers' clerical needs, and assist with special projects in the classroom. The Young Elementary Parent-Teacher Association (P.T.A.) is an active supporter of the school's positive learning environment. The P.T.A.'s strong officer board initiates only one fund-raising project a year. The project is fitness based and draws supportive commitments from forty neighboring businesses. Through their one yearly fundraiser, the P.T.A provides supports such as service projects based from our school, provides books and shelving for classroom libraries, shade structures for safe play areas, and free family activities to further the positive relationships that keep the school's culture strong. School improvement and development of parent involvement plans are among the topics discussed during monthly P.T.A. meetings. In addition to the hard work of the P.T.A. and volunteers, the teachers work to actively engage parents as partners in the students' academic progress. All grade level teachers facilitate parent nights both to inform parents about grade level learning standards and to begin conversations about strategies and concepts. Teachers keep parents informed about students' learning experiences through weekly newsletters or emails. Parents are invited to school periodically as students perform class plays, present research projects, enact wax-museum type exhibits, and perform grade level musicals. One important component of parent partnership at Bernice Young Elementary is participation in student-led parent conferences. Teachers schedule times for parents to attend conferences twice each year. Students prepare for conferences by reviewing personal learning plans and academic growth. They create

presentations showcasing what they have learned and what they want to learn. Teachers participate in the student-led conferences as facilitators, answer questions, and provide information about progress. If a parent would like to schedule a private conference with a teacher, teachers are available to visit privately daily during planning time. Parents are always welcome at school and can be seen daily in the building.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Teachers at Young Elementary give positive energy not only to students but also to each other. The staff relies on the strong support of each other to keep pace with the enthusiasm, evidence-based strategies, and rigor required to keep student achievement momentum. Collaboration and learning together are priorities. Daily common planning times and a professional learning community (PLC) mindset strengthen the professional culture. Frequent PLC meetings are the backbone of the professional culture at Young Elementary. Time is set aside for grade level teachers to meet with the instructional facilitator, principal, and assistant principal. Collaborative conversations begin by celebrating successes that have been noted. Discussions shift from student progress to instructional practices. Progress of all students is monitored on an online database as well as anecdotal records. Student achievement is the springboard for discussing instructional practices. The vision of all PLC participants is for all students to grow academically. Teachers freely ask questions during the discussions. As a result, professional development sessions are developed to answer questions, deepen understanding, or to initiate new practices. For example, a beginning of the year review of students' literacy progress reflected that not all students were reading on grade level. Improving literacy achievement became a priority. Teachers reviewed individual student's achievement and placed some students into intervention groups either within the classroom or with a pull-out interventionist. However, the teachers' collaboration did not stop with a review of students' achievement. The teachers continued to review reading curriculum and determined gaps in instruction existed for supporting phonemic awareness and phonics. Because Young Elementary is part of a large district that is led by instructional leaders, teachers had the opportunity to attend state-approved, district led professional development sessions. The school's grade level PLC structure then supported the professional learning by providing opportunities for digging deeper into literacy understandings, for strategy modeling, and for discussions about resources needed. At Young Elementary, "All means All" does not apply only to student learning. Teachers view themselves as lifelong learners. While professional development is collaborative through the PLC model, professional development is personal also. Teachers develop personal professional development goals yearly. Teachers reflect on their own professional growth and seek opportunities to strengthen their own instructional practices. By setting personal goals, teachers are able to celebrate and see themselves as learners. Teacher efficacy is strengthened. Our professional culture mindset is similar to the mindset we have for students, "You can do this, and I will help you."

4. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy at Young Elementary is to build the leadership capacity of every staff member. By relying on strengths of the instructional staff, all staff members can contribute to school leadership. During professional meetings, staff members contribute through sharing ideas, celebrating successes, discussing instructional strategies, and questioning. As teachers plan together during grade level team meetings or PLC meetings, teachers willingly share strategies they are working to improve. Teachers step up and share their expertise in areas of classroom management, literacy, mathematics, and science during whole group faculty times together. The counselor, speech therapist, and media specialist help facilitate professional development when needed, as well. In addition to leading together, the Young Elementary has a leadership PLC consisting of the principal, assistant principal, instructional facilitator, and media specialist. While collaboration among school leaders is a strength, each leadership role varies. The instructional facilitator plays a key role in leadership. The facilitator organizes student achievement data, observes instruction, facilitates PLC meetings, and leads professional development based on the needs of students and staff. The instructional facilitator stays one step ahead of building needs at all times. The assistant principal leads academic growth by facilitating all special education endeavors, overseeing assessment security and trainings, meeting parents as the parent liaison, participating in leadership PLC conversations, and providing the guiding source of safety for students and staff. The principal is the visible presence of the school's vision: "Building Youth Excellence." Additionally, the principal leads the organization of schedules; professional development planning; meetings of teachers, parents, and students; community involvement;

and, builds budgets and supplies resources based on listening to staff and student needs, The principal serves as an instructional leader by participating in all of the various grade level PLC meetings in order to help connect people, time, and resources as the best support possible to promote student learning. The principal organizes staff evaluations, observes instruction, and gives feedback to teachers to help teachers reflect through Arkansas's EdReflect teacher evaluation system. The purpose of the evaluation system is to support teachers in their strengths and to encourage reflection and growth. All leadership roles at Young Elementary School are equally important. No one person is an expert in all things. We believe that by working together we can accomplish great things for our students.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

While multiple strategies and teaching styles have contributed to learning success at Young Elementary, the embedding of components of Marzano's nine effective instructional strategies has driven rigor, student engagement, and achievement. Students' critical and creative thinking skills have been advanced over time by instruction that consistently includes identifying similarities and differences, summarizing and notetaking, reinforcing effort, providing time for practice, including nonlinguistic representation, collaborative learning, setting clear objectives, generating and testing ideas, and access to questions, cues and advance organizers. Teachers routinely ask students to actively identify similarities and differences when engaging students in collaborative math conversations. Students compare their use of mathematical strategies to others and learn to justify the efficiency of all students' strategies. Students' ability to summarize both orally and through writing are key in all content areas. Teachers use students' responses to determine next instructional steps for each student. Student efforts are reinforced by both peers and teachers as students. Feedback is two-way. Teachers use feedback from students to make decisions and to adjust instruction. Students use feedback from teachers to take next steps in learning. Students practice skills guided by the teacher and collaboratively with peers before working independently. Nonlinguistic cues such as visuals tied to learning support special needs students and those student learning English so that all students can participate successfully in learning experiences. Older students consistently look for visual signposts of author's craft in books they read. Students work collaboratively not only in the classroom but also across grade levels. For example, third grade students researched celebrations, created question and answer booklets, and taught information to kindergarten students. These kinds of learning experiences support all learners. Objectives provide clear focus of learning experiences. Teachers explicitly teach mini-lessons with one teaching point emphasizing clarity and purpose. Students generate and test hypothesis in all content areas. Students learn to communicate and to collaborate with each other through the use of graphic organizers, cues such as sentence frames, and advance organizers. Using Marzano's concepts has strengthened instruction. Most importantly, students have developed thinking skills that prepare them to grow as learners.