

U.S. Department of Education
2020 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name James B. Rue Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3326 6th Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Council Bluffs State IA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 51501-0000

County Pottawattamie County

Telephone (712) 328-6540 Fax (712) 328-6556

Web site/URL https://www.cb-schools.org/Domain/120 E-mail cmoran2@cbscd.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. Vickie Murillo E-mail vmurillo@cbscd.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Council Bluffs Community School District Tel. (712) 328-6446

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. David Coziahr
(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):
- 11 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 3 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 16 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 | 23 | 33 | 56 |
| K | 35 | 30 | 65 |
| 1 | 33 | 27 | 60 |
| 2 | 39 | 35 | 74 |
| 3 | 24 | 21 | 45 |
| 4 | 29 | 25 | 54 |
| 5 | 23 | 21 | 44 |
| 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 | 206 | 192 | 398 |

*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 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1.5 % Asian
 - 2.5 % Black or African American
 - 19.3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 69.1 % White
 - 7.6 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2018 - 2019 school year: 27%

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

The mobility rate of the Council Bluffs Community School District is just below 27% reflecting the mobility of our families during the school year. Rue Elementary has several apartment complexes and rental properties in the attendance area boundaries leading to a mobility rate higher than the district average. The proximity to the Missouri River has also led to flooding that has resulted in several families relocating, and having an impact on the mobility rate at Rue Elementary.

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 | 63 |
| (2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year | 45 |
| (3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)] | 108 |
| (4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018 | 398 |
| (5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4) | 0.27 |
| (6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100 | 27 |

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

Tigrinya, Vietnamese, Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 8 %
32 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 67 %

Total number students who qualify: 268

8. Students receiving special education services: 17 %

67 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>22</u> Autism | <u>15</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>0</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>31</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>5</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>16</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 2

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 | 1 |
| Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher. | 22 |
| 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. | 15 |
| Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc. | 3 |

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

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

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

The mission of James B. Rue Elementary is the attainment of Academic Excellence for ALL students. The needs of the whole child will be met through supportive and rigorous learning environments resulting in ALL students making expected growth and closing achievement gaps.

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

Rue Elementary is the true definition of a neighborhood school tucked away in the Southwest corner of Council Bluffs, Iowa. Many students are the second and third generation of families to attend Rue, even when they are residing outside of our attendance area. The 2019-2020 school year has had the highest number of students enrolled since the turn of the century, and several grade level sections in the primary grades have been added over the past two years.

The families of Rue historically come from hard-working blue collar backgrounds, however, in recent years a more diverse student population has been developing. Its higher than average mobility rate, for both the district and state, is from the impact of flooding from the Missouri River over several years. While the attendance area is landlocked, a new apartment complex will be breaking ground soon on a previous industrial site with an anticipated impact on the student enrollment at Rue.

Excellence in all areas is what the staff and students strive for each day at Rue Elementary. The Rue Elementary school community demonstrates excellence in multiple ways, including committing to early student release every Monday for professional development. Over the past years, the staff at Rue has dug into high-leverage teaching strategies in the universal setting to impact student achievement. The ELA, math, and science curriculums have been redeveloped to ensure a high level of rigor, and much time has been spent on utilizing the district-provided resources to implement the viable curriculums. It is common to see individual goal setting in the learning environments at Rue, along with an intrinsic motivation by students to demonstrate excellence in their daily work.

Recent research has indicated a need for Trauma Responsive approaches to work with dysregulated students, and the staff at Rue has taken on the responsibility of implementing approaches to support student behaviors resulting from trauma. As the year has progressed, all instructional spaces have a Peace Place with a variety of regulation strategies for students to utilize while staying in the classrooms. As a result, the time outside of instructional spaces has decreased for the students, and the number of suspensions have decreased when compared to previous school years.

Rue Elementary is unique in multiple ways, and has been an early implementer of initiatives within the Council Bluffs Community School District. At the building level, an integrated Autism Program is housed with students attending from many other district attendance areas. The staff has studied and implemented inclusive practices that ensure the diverse needs of all students are being met. Recently, a Student Family Advocate joined the Rue staff to work with our families to get wraparound services, both in and out of the school setting.

Community partnerships are an integral part of the high-quality education that is provided at Rue Elementary. The Parent Teacher Organization plans engagement activities for families that build a partnership between our families and the school. The staff in the Autism Program have developed several community partnerships for monthly outings so that students can apply social skills in authentic settings. Rue was the second elementary school to partner with a bank in the district to start financial literacy education with students. Our fourth grade students work with representatives from the bank to serve as tellers to learn more about the role of banking at our in-school bank. Several community members supervise after-school clubs that are a part of the 21st Century Grant, and provide unique experiences that students would not otherwise have outside of the instructional school day. Community partners include the Boy Scouts of America, TS Bank, Henry Doorly Zoo, Council Bluffs Soccer Club, Hitchcock Nature Center, and many more in addition to the Rue staff members developing innovative clubs. These experiences provide students with opportunities to apply critical thinking and new skills in authentic situations, while also giving students exposure to potential career pathways to further explore while in the secondary school setting.

The commitment to achieve academic excellence for all students through effective universal instruction and closing achievement gaps ensures that all needs are met for students. Rue Elementary is a Community Eligibility Program school where all students get free breakfast and lunch, participate in a food backpack program, participate in partnerships with medical professionals, and find ways for our community members to directly support the needs of our families. The staff at Rue Elementary takes a collaborative approach with our community to remove the roadblocks for academic 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

All content areas have a viable curriculum aligned to the Iowa Common Core State Standards, New Generation Science Standards, and the Iowa Social Studies Standards to ensure that students master grade level standards by the end of each academic year. The instructional process for all content areas starts by planning for mastery of each standard and developing lessons into smaller chunks for working towards attainment of Grade Level Expectations, GLEs. Learning intentions are designed as individual lesson objectives along with success criteria to assess student learning. As progress is made throughout the school year, learning intentions of previous lessons become success criteria for new lessons until students have met and exceeded the grade level expectations.

Assessment is a key component of ensuring all students are making progress toward the grade level standards, and both formative and summative assessments are used throughout the school year. Three times a year, a diagnostic test is administered to all K-5th grade students to monitor both achievement and growth in the areas of reading and math along with science for 5th grade students. These diagnostic data points serve as the anchor to determine areas to emphasize in the curriculum for explicit whole group instruction, focused small group instruction, and targeted one-to-one interventions. Following each diagnostic testing period, grade level teams identify areas of success in student data, the progress made on focus areas from the last testing period, and new areas of instructional focus. Grade level teams then determine if concepts will be taught soon in the curriculum, or if intervention is needed at this time. Formative assessments are developed to monitor progress between diagnostic periods to ensure that instructional objectives for students are met while still in the learning process.

The Council Bluffs Community School District is also a one-to-one district for devices for K - 5 students. This has shaped our approach on the importance of students applying higher level thinking to process and synthesize information. Rue teachers understand the importance of students being critical of the information they receive when information can be accessed at a moment's notice. In the classrooms, students are observed accessing information through electronic resources, curriculum materials, and through instruction with the expectation to use multiple sources to form hypotheses, determine an author's point of view, get meaning from a graph, or understand the factors that led to historical events. Meaningful integration of technology to enhance the learning for students has been a large area of growth at Rue Elementary the past few years and will continue to be addressed through professional development.

1b. Reading/English language arts

The Council Bluffs Community School District implements a comprehensive reading program called Wonders. Through this program, teachers are given a systematic approach for instruction, focusing on teaching children the strong foundational skills needed to become successful, lifelong readers and writers. Teachers are able to differentiate through the use of supplemental and integrated materials within the program for all levels of our student population...our English Language Learners, Talented and Gifted students, and struggling readers who may need Tier 2 support.

In addition, teachers can access all print resources digitally, as well as, a digital workspace with additional leveled readers, interactive games, teaching/informational videos, songs, and a Writer's notebook for students to compose writing. There are also options for extended lessons for leveled readers and higher level instruction. Within this digital resource, teachers may push out various practice opportunities, like games and other texts to students that allow them to practice the weekly skills. The Data Dashboard gives teachers a way to track students' progress and proficiency on weekly skills to help provide targeted reteaching and lessons for support.

Our reading instruction is composed of several components, including phonics/phonemic awareness,

comprehension, vocabulary, spelling, fluency, grammar, and writing. We follow a five day gradual release cycle in which the teacher provides heavier direct instruction at the beginning of the week and gradually releases the learning to the students as the week goes on. Targeted learning intentions and success criteria help guide students towards independence. An integral part of our reading instruction is small group instruction, where students are grouped based on reading ability and specific skill needs. Daily quick checks are formative assessments given to students that help teachers form these groups. There are different lessons offered throughout each week that focus and support the skills for the week. These flexible small groups allow students the opportunity to practice reading and apply the weekly skill(s) with teacher instruction and support. While some students are being met with in a small group, other students are practicing reading/writing skills through independent activities.

There are daily opportunities for students to engage in writing through Wonders. In our district, we have adapted the Wonders writing components to meet the Common Core State Standards. In grades K-1, students learn how to write to sources on a daily basis. This means that students learn how to write using prompts based on the texts they read. Students practice finding text evidence to answer the prompts while also learning the features of narrative, opinion, and informative genres of writing that are intertwined within the student prompts. In grades 2-5, students experience writing to sources but also get to delve deeper into genre writing. For two of the five weeks in each unit, students learn more in depth about the writing process and specific writing genres, like personal narrative, persuasive essay, research report, and many others.

Overall, our district strives to provide students a rich learning environment that thrives on strengthening reading/writing skills while boosting students' confidence and love for literacy.

1c. Mathematics

Our philosophy is that learning is collaborative and social in nature, constructed through problem solving and conceptual understanding. We provide this structure through safe learning environments created and maintained by teachers and students. We recently adopted the Bridges in Mathematics program as our primary math resource. This program aligns to our philosophy, the Standards for Mathematical Practice, and Iowa Common Core.

Each lesson provides students with opportunities to actively engage in learning while building their understanding through the use of visual models and manipulatives. Learning targets and success criteria are correlated to standards, clearly defined and communicated with students daily. We provide a balance of direct instruction, investigation, exploration, practice, and discussion.

Practice can include workbook pages, Work Places - math stations that provide ongoing practice with key skills, or online games and virtual manipulatives. We also focus on student discourse. These discussions occur while working in partners, small groups, and whole groups. Discussions are enhanced by questioning and feedback from teachers, as well as, peers.

The Bridges Mathematics Program spirals math concepts throughout the year and grades. As concepts spiral, they increase in complexity. Resources are provided to show teachers the progression within the grade level, as well as, previous and subsequent grade levels, therefore teachers know where students are coming in their learning to where they are headed. This understanding helps teachers meet the needs of their students, whether it be intervention support or Talented and Gifted enrichment.

The Bridges lessons begin at the core level for each grade. Teachers are provided differentiation ideas for struggling students, students needing challenge, and English Language Learners. These supports may come in the form of feedback, modifying the task or game, or using specific models or tools. Along with the Bridges in Mathematics program, we use the Bridges Intervention resource to provide additional support. Student support can be determined through any of the following assessment practices: classroom observations, formative assessments provided by teachers, Bridges unit assessments, Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments, and Bridges Intervention placement assessments. Through the use of these tools, we are able to determine the level of support needed, be it grade level support or filling in gaps of missed learning opportunities.

In grades 2-5, pre- and post-assessments are used in each unit. Students reflect on their results and set goals for the unit. Throughout the instructional process, connections are made to the pre-assessment as a way to formatively assess students. Students compare the results of the pre- and post-assessments. This has proven to be significant in student engagement and ownership of learning. Students see how their work correlates to their learning. The assessments at the K-1 level involve more developmentally appropriate observation and interview tasks. These provide students with more opportunity to show higher level skills than written tasks allow.

All of our resources are available to teachers online. Teachers have access to, not only their grade level materials, but other grade level and intervention materials as well.

1d. Science

The science curriculum aligns to the New Generation Science Standards, NGSS, and has been implemented over the past three years throughout the Council Bluffs Community School District. Health education is woven throughout the science curriculum, working in partnership with nutritionists, the fire department, and other related health organizations. This works to support a deeper understanding of nutrition, fire safety, and basic first aid, among other skills.

The lessons students experience through the science curriculum follow the 5E Instructional Model (engage, explore, explain, elaborate, evaluate) which pushes student inquiry to the forefront during science exposure. A cross-curricular approach is also utilized to teach the content within the science curriculum during the reading and math workshops. Participation allows for engagement in building background knowledge, developing skills for data analysis, and constructing critical thinking strategies.

The recent implementation of the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress, ISASP, measures the achievement performance of 5th grade students in science. The Northwest Evaluation Association's Measures of Academic Progress Assessment, NWEA MAP Assessment, measures have also recently been implemented to monitor the effectiveness of instruction, growth, and progress of students in preparation for the ISASP testing. These assessments, both administered for the first time within the past calendar year, have provided a way to measure the effectiveness of instruction in science, and areas of focus for continued growth of all students.

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

The elementary social studies curriculum aligns to many of English Language Arts, ELA, Common Core State Standards, while engaging students in a rigorous inquiry-based approach to prepare the students to be engaged citizens once they leave the walls of the school.

The inquiry approach within the social studies curriculum centers around critical thinking from multiple sources, ability to problem solve, and understanding the ways engaged citizens contribute to their communities. The content covers a wide range of historical events from local, state, and national events requiring students to apply new learning to understanding factors causing past events, the impact they had on society at the time, and how these events continue to impact their world today. The deep analysis of historical events allow students to examine the current issues of their community today, and the duty of citizens to contribute to the well-being of their society. The inquiry approach will allow the students to be analytical of future problems they will come across as engaged citizens to have a positive impact on their community.

Assessment within the social studies curriculum occurs within the ELA block where the content is read for further analysis. For example students read two or more sources with different perspectives from a historical event to determine the factors leading to outcomes. Students are required to use higher-order thinking skills to understand the perspective of others, determine bias from first-hand events, and form opinions of their own based on the text. The performance measures may be demonstrated in a variety of ways from writing an essay, creating a presentation to be displayed, orally sharing out new learning, or adding to the classroom discussion.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

In preschool classrooms at Rue Elementary, developmentally appropriate teaching and learning occurs to address eight critical areas of early childhood development: social emotional; physical well-being and motor development; approaches to learning; social studies; creative arts; communication, language, and literacy; mathematics; and science. This is accomplished through consistent daily routines that provide a balance of experiences and learning opportunities, including individual and social play, small- and large-group activities, self-care skills, and gross motor opportunities. Careful consideration is also given to balancing teacher-directed and child-directed activities.

We utilize a state-approved, research-based curriculum framework to intentionally plan and deliver learning opportunities to address all of these developmental areas throughout the school day. Teachers follow curriculum maps when planning and designing learning activities to ensure all Iowa Early Learning Standards are addressed and appropriately spiraled throughout the year. The Iowa Early Learning Standards are directly aligned with the Iowa Core Standards, providing a smooth transition from our preschool classrooms into our K-5 classrooms. Student progress toward these standards is routinely monitored through the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment system. Teaching Strategies GOLD is the authentic, ongoing, observation-based assessment system that helps teachers and administrators focus on what matters most for children's success. We dedicate preschool professional development time to assist teachers in generating meaningful reports from the online assessment system, analyze data, and develop whole group, small group, and individual student action plans based on their data. While data is collected, entered, and analyzed routinely throughout the year, there are three formal checkpoint periods in the fall, winter, and spring.

GOLD data indicates students who participate in our preschool programs demonstrate kindergarten readiness skills and meet or exceed the widely held expectations for their age groups at high rates. Last year, the percent of students meeting or exceeding widely held expectations by the Spring checkpoint ranged from 88-97% across the developmental areas assessed. On average, this was an increase of 37% of students meeting expectations when compared to the Fall checkpoint data.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The non-core subject areas are key in the education of the whole child at Rue Elementary. All K-5th grade students are engaged in viable curriculums for music, physical education, visual art, and guidance throughout the school year. Each curriculum plays an important role in the development of children and prepares students to pursue elective areas of interest when in middle and high school.

All students average 70 minutes of physical education instruction weekly and, in addition to learning about habits for a healthy lifestyle, are learning leadership skills. The physical education teacher has implemented a team approach where students rotate being team captains to lead warmups for the lesson, has different roles for team members, and creates an environment of working with others to achieve goals. Community partnerships are also present for students to attend events focused on healthy physical activities, movement throughout the school day, and a connection to the nutrition education embedded in the science curriculum. The focus of physical education curriculum along with the instructional approaches provides students with essential skills for collaborating with each other and provides an avenue to focus on the basic needs of students.

All students average 70 minutes of music education weekly and experience variations of music including singing, playing instruments, and engaging in a performance annually. Each grade level has a developmentally appropriate curriculum to engage students in music education focusing on building upon the knowledge of the previous year. Community partnerships are also a key component to exposing students to music and the performance arts outside of the school walls. Fourth grade students participate in a unit of study on playing the recorder and then join many metro area students to play along with the Omaha Symphony. Fifth grade students practice for an All-City Music Festival involving a guest conductor where

many technical singing skills are highlighted on a large scale. In addition to the music festivals, all students participate in a unit of study on playing the violin, and the district employs a music instructor to teach students to play. The essential skills students learn through music instruction include collaboration when singing and playing, application of multiple skills at one time, and the start of pathways for further elective study in the secondary setting.

Students in Kindergarten engage in visual art lessons 30 minutes each week, while 1st-5th grade students participate in 45 minute weekly lessons. The curriculum exposes students to key concepts in the visual arts world such as how application of lines, shading, perspective, color, and so much more lead to visually stimulating pieces of work. Each unit is designed with a completed art project as the end result and starts often with analyzing artwork that emphasize the key concepts of the unit. The inquiry approach leads students to ask questions, analyze art with new lenses, and a safe environment for applying new learning to their own artwork. Community partnerships connect the learning in the classroom to seeing artwork in museums, the practicable applications of art, and potential careers opportunities in the future.

Students in Kindergarten engage in a guidance curriculum 30 minutes weekly while 1st-5th grade students participate in 45 minute lessons every other week. The curriculum teaches students about understanding themselves by focusing on the socio-emotional needs of students. This curriculum directly aligns to the School Improvement Plan of implementing trauma responsive practices in all areas of the school. As students understand their own social-emotional needs along with strategies for regulation, less time is lost managing behaviors in the classroom by the teachers, and students are able to focus on the academic goals of each lesson.

The Council Bluffs Community School District has developed and implemented technology standards in grade-level bands for K-2 and 3-5 students. All students have their own device provided by the district resulting in the focus on incorporating the technology standards across all content areas. Technology coaches shared across multiple buildings, instructional coaches, and professional development focus on the integration of technology to enhance the learning of all academic curriculums.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

At Rue Elementary, a Multi-Tiered System of Support, MTSS, is in place to identify students consistently falling below the grade level expectations, GLEs, in reading and math. A building team consisting of the classroom teacher, instructional coaches, reading interventionist, and principal meet every six weeks to identify interventions for students, monitor the effectiveness of the interventions, and determine the next steps. The interventions range from targeted support provided to a small group or individual students several times a week up to intensive interventions for 30 minutes a day in small groups or an individual student.

Each intervention is tailored to the specific needs of individual students, has outcomes for growth over the six-week period, and progress monitoring data points are reviewed by the building team to determine the impact of the intervention. To ensure quality interventions, the literacy and math instructional coaches work alongside teachers using diagnostic assessments from a math intervention resource designed to close the achievement gap or the tiered intervention resources aligned to the language arts resource. These resources meet the needs of providing a systematic progression for learning to close the achievement gap for most students in the area of math and reading.

Rue Elementary also has a full-time reading interventionist to provide early intervention to our Kindergarten through 2nd grade students. Students are identified as needing intensive interventions through the building process described above. The reading interventionist provides intervention typically in thirty-minute blocks to small groups of students during unprotected times in the instructional schedule. The unprotected times ensure students are not missing universal instruction or access to the grade-level curriculum.

The Multi-Tiered System of Support is in place to monitor all students using multiple measures and ensures

that quality systematic interventions are in place. This system is effective in closing the achievement gaps for many students where intervention is no longer needed for students to meet the GLEs for learning.

3b. Students performing above grade level

At Rue Elementary a Talented and Gifted, TAG, building team meets quarterly to review student progress on multi-data points in literacy, math, and science to determine if interventions are needed to support students performing consistently above the grade level standards. The building team consists of one representative from each grade level in 2nd-5th grades, a TAG teacher, and the principal. Diagnostic data from district assessments, building-level formative assessments, classroom observations, and teacher input are all key factors to determine additional support for students performing above grade level.

Supports and interventions for students fall on a continuum from collaboration with general education teachers along with the TAG teacher to whole grade acceleration. At Rue Elementary, the TAG teacher helps to modify the curriculum and performance task while students work in the general education classroom, co-teaches daily in grade levels that have many students performing above grade level, provide small group enrichment activities, and monitor the Personalized Education Plan for students that are subject or grade accelerating.

The pursuit of academic excellence is a driving outcome the staff at Rue Elementary has for all students, including those achieving above grade level. To achieve Academic Excellence, all students are to make a minimum of one year's growth each academic school year with the understanding that those achieving above grade level continue to excel above the grade level expectations.

3c. Special education

Special Education services are an integral part of the pursuit of academic excellence for the students at Rue Elementary. In addition to the expectation of a minimum one year's growth, the staff takes on the responsibility of closing the achievement gaps for students falling below the grade level expectations. When the gap is significant and on-going intervention is required, special education services are provided to eligible individuals. Services are provided on a continuum from consultation with general education teachers to more restrictive specialized programming as determined by each student's individual education plan.

At Rue Elementary, the majority of students' special education services are provided in a pull-out small group setting using district-approved intervention materials to close achievement gaps. The specially designed instruction is provided by highly qualified teachers with experience tailoring instruction to the needs of students achieving below the grade level standards.

On the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress, the students with disabilities sub-group was just over ten percentage points below the building average for achievement in the area of English Language Arts. Action has been taken to provide specially designed instruction that better aligns to front loading the grade level curriculum for students with disabilities and has resulted in higher levels of engagement from students during universal instruction. While this achievement gap is being closed, the special education sub-group out-performed the state average for growth by over 11 percentage points.

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

The English Language Learner, ELL, population continues to grow in both the Council Bluffs Community School District and at Rue Elementary. Over the past several years, support through an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher has been provided, and the allocation of the teacher's time has increased due to more students with English language acquisition needs. As with other areas, the continuum of services is tailored for the individual needs of students. Many students show adequate or accelerated growth through a coordinated effort between the classroom teacher and ESL teacher. In some instances, a more focused approach is necessary. Students who may need additional services in acquiring language are monitored more closely through the development of a Language Acquisition Plan.

Through the plan, the continuum of services can range from increased consultation and support for general education teachers to daily ESL services for students new to the English language. A diagnostic assessment is administered annually to monitor growth of students in the areas of listening, speaking, writing and reading. The English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century, ELPA21, guides the planning for our continuation of services and diagnostic data to plan for support in the general education setting.

As the population of students with limited English increases, ongoing professional development focuses on how to effectively implement targeted and intensive supports. Also, an emphasis on immersion to both a new language and culture takes priority when determining the level of services needed. As students make progress through mastering social language acquisition, the focus changes to acquiring academic language.

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

Rue Elementary hosts an inclusive autism program for students in kindergarten through fifth grades for the district making Rue Elementary unique when compared to other district schools. Two special education teachers with specialized training in working with students requiring restrictive settings, have instructional spaces outside of the general education setting. Several paraprofessionals work in each setting to provide accommodations and modifications in both the general education and specialized classrooms.

All staff members at Rue have received training in working with students with Autism and skills needed to support students with communication barriers. The amount of integration in the general education classroom varies by each student, and socialization with typical peers is a key component of the effectiveness of the specialized program. Some students may integrate for short times to socialize throughout the day during lunch and specials while other students are in the general education setting for up to eighty percent of the school day. Sensory plans are developed for each student to implement effective sensory breaks throughout the day, including access to a dedicated sensory room. The sensory plans provide detailed information on the types of interventions for students to deescalate along with proactive sensory interventions as needed.

Students' Individual Education Plans, IEPs, drive the services provided within the autism program, and the range of academic abilities varies from student to student. Several students are performing significantly below grade level standards and receive an alternate curriculum through dynamic learning maps. While other students receive support from the talented and gifted teacher for performing above grade level standards. The range in both academic and social support within the autism program highlights the range of services, and skills of the staff to integrate all students into the general education setting.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

When you walk in the front door of Rue Elementary, you will see a giant family tree filled with class pictures and hear students being greeted by staff. There is a feeling of mutual respect between students and staff. Primary students greet the intermediate teachers by name in the hallway even though they have never had them in class. Students comment how much they enjoy coming to school and would rather be at school than at home when vacation time approaches.

The students have a voice at Rue. Class meetings are held each week where topics about bullying, respect, building a classroom community, and issues from the week can be addressed. Anti-Bullying Program surveys are given four times a year asking students such questions as if they like school and have been bullied. Teachers use this information for future class meetings and to help the child that may be feeling bullied. The school counselor also creates small groups for intervention to help students who are struggling on dealing with their anger, the death of a loved one, or how to make friends.

Teachers use data from various assessments throughout the year to confer with students and set learning goals. Through this teacher feedback, students are able to set individual learning goals. When they reach these goals, and students meet with the teacher again to reflect on what strategies, resources, or changes in their behavior affected the growth, and in this way, students develop a growth mindset. They feel rewarded for their hard work and set growth goals in areas they need to improve and areas they need to maintain. If they did not reach their goal, the teacher works with them to self-reflect on why and to set goals to change and improve before the next testing period. Students understand, through this partnership between the teachers and the students working together, they can be successful.

Many of our Rue students depend on the school to meet their basic food needs. Rue participates in the Community Eligibility Provision Program, CEP, where all students receive free breakfast and lunch. Students receive free fruits and vegetables daily as a snack. On Fridays, with our community partner, Food Bank for the Heartland, students receive meals for the weekend. Our district also participates in the Mobile Food Pantry once a month where our families receive food. When students' basic food needs are met, they can focus on their academics.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Families and Community Partners are essential to the success of Rue Elementary, and involving these key stakeholders is the backbone of educating the whole child. Every year the teachers open up their classrooms to the parents and guardians to learn with their children during curriculum-focused events. In the past several years, there have been revisions and implementation of new language arts, mathematics, and science curriculums for the elementary grade levels. The curriculums have also been accompanied by new resources, including many components that can be accessed at home online. Each grade level plans events for parents and guardians to come into the classroom for a lesson, learn about a focus area of the curriculum, and leave with resources to engage with their children at home. The focus areas are determined using diagnostic grade-level data to identify the grade-level standards that the students still need to master, and that teachers can partner with parents to provide meaningful practice opportunities at home. These grade-level events are well attended, and everytime feedback is provided from the parents and guardians about the positive benefits from grade- level curriculum events.

The Parent Teacher Organization, PTO, plays a large role in supporting the education of all students and supporting individual classroom needs. The PTO regularly holds family nights providing a social opportunity for our families while carrying on many traditional events that have been in place for many years. One example is the Boo Bash that is an annual event going back well over a decade that also involves multiple community members. The past two years a local church has partnered with the PTO to provide a Trunk or Treat event ensuring a safe setting while helping build upon the sense of community at Rue Elementary.

The social-emotional well-being of our students is a top priority, and there is deep commitment to addressing these needs so that our students can focus on academic progress. The community partners are integral in helping to provide wrap-around services to students in collaboration with the school counselor and student family advocate. Staff members work with parents and guardians to find the needed services, and partnerships have led to therapy sessions both inside and outside of the school setting. Partnerships with churches have helped provide basic needs to families during unexpected life changes and shows that our community values the importance of education for the students.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The development of a supporting and welcoming professional culture has been a priority of the Council Bluffs Community School District and is exemplified at Rue Elementary. The professional culture at Rue Elementary provides a multi-tiered level of support for teachers and has created an environment with low teacher turnover every year. The average age of the staff is one of the highest in the district with many staff members teaching well over 20 years in the profession.

Developing teachers is a top priority at Rue Elementary, and resources are provided for capacity building of both veteran and novice teachers. Every Monday is an early dismissal so that certified and classified staff members can receive job-embedded professional development. Professional development often focuses on the culture or academic action steps of the School Improvement Plan, SIP, led by building staff. This year, the math instructional coach along with the early implementer teachers from last year have been leading the staff through the implementation of the new math curriculum and resources. Learning objectives are developed that are manageable for implementation, feedback follows from classroom observations, and teams bring back student data to monitor effectiveness.

Teachers can also take charge of their own learning by requesting teacher quality funds for professional learning materials and substitutes for teachers to learn from experts/coaches and be able to apply the new learning in the classroom. When professional growth opportunities align to the goals of the School Improvement Plan, teachers are eager to apply new learning. Staff members have attended conferences where new learning is brought to all teachers, created building-level book clubs of current education research, and grade levels have worked with district experts to respond to student data. The school district also offers optional learning opportunities through the Council Bluffs University where professional development is provided by the experts in the district.

This past year the workday was extended to provide teachers with daily collaboration opportunities with instructional coaches, grade level learning teams, behavior support staff members, and the principal. The extended structure has created a sustainable cycle for monitoring student progress, developing lessons based on student data, implementation and fine-tuning of viable curriculums, and emphasizing the power of collaboration.

4. School Leadership:

Empowering the staff at Rue Elementary is a key component for the staff members to demonstrate leadership in both formal and informal ways. Through Teacher Leadership Compensations, (TLC) funds provided at the state level, there are many opportunities for staff members to move into leadership roles. At Rue Elementary the formal leadership roles include the principal, math instructional coach, literacy instructional coach, behavior consultant, guidance counselor, and three classroom strategists. Each position has unique leadership aspects focusing on the academic and cultural goals of the School Improvement Plan, SIP, and ensuring that the school is making progress throughout the year.

There are several teams within the school that plan for professional development, review student data, make recommendations for the development of the SIP, and help determine how to best use the resources to have the largest impact on student achievement. The Leadership Team consists of instructional coaches, teachers, and the principal, and who regularly meet to review progress on the SIP, plan for the next year, and review and evaluate if professional development is meeting the needs of the building. During this time, the

members are providing information to the principal and are a key component of the school improvement process.

This year, the cultural goal focused on becoming a trauma responsive school resulting in the Trauma Leadership team being developed. This team consists of both certified and classified staff members to monitor the implementation and impact of trauma responsive strategies working with students. The impact has been noticeable with each instructional space having a Peace Place where students can apply regulation strategies without leaving the classroom. The work of this team has directly led to less disruptions in the classroom, fewer students requiring assistance during instructional times, and a proactive instead reactive approach to supporting the social-emotional needs of students.

While there are many areas in which staff members demonstrate leadership at Rue Elementary, the support of teachers new to the district, both veteran and novice, highlights the leadership of many staff members . Each new staff member is assigned a mentor to work alongside in the classroom throughout the year, and mentors are skilled in helping teachers implement solid classroom management and academic practices. The instructional coaches work in collaboration with the mentor to help new staff members learn the curriculum, utilize the resources that support the curriculum, and implement high-leverage instructional practices. New staff members will go into the instructional settings of a classroom strategist or grade level peer to see management or instructional practices in action, and reflect with the teacher on implementation in his/her own classroom. The principal is engaged in an ongoing coaching cycles throughout the year with all teachers and provides bite-sized feedback to build the capacity of the instructional staff. This system of support is strategically layered throughout the year as directed by the principal to ensure that new teachers are not overwhelmed.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The Council Bluffs Community School District has had a district focus on providing quality feedback in all aspects of educating students for the past several years. At Rue Elementary the School Improvement Plan has evolved from last year focusing on Teacher-to-Student feedback into encompassing Student-to-Student Feedback.

The staff understands that quality feedback includes action taken by the students to add to their learning and results in applied changes to show mastery towards the grade-level standards. In order to provide feedback to students, both from the teacher and peers, there must be clear learning intentions and success criteria developed during the planning of every lesson. Within the planning phase, teachers are anticipating feedback to provide on each success criteria, identifying possible misconceptions, and preparing for prompts to support individual students. The grade-level Professional Learning Communities are developing rigorous lessons that provide a productive struggle for all students and understand how quality feedback leads to higher-order thinking in the classroom.

In addition to planning for quality feedback, the staff at Rue Elementary understands the nuances of providing quality feedback while students are still learning. Waiting until the learning has ended to review student work provides missed opportunities along with incorrect application of the learning to be applied during practice opportunities. Visitors to our classrooms will see teachers implementing pathways to monitor all students during guided practice where individual feedback is provided to every student, referencing success criteria, and the students articulating the next steps for meeting the learning intentions of the lesson.

The focus on quality feedback has impacted student achievement across all content areas as it has allowed for self-assessment by students. Students are able to articulate the purpose for the lesson, how they will know they are successful, and areas they need to focus on for improvement. This has led to students being open to feedback from teachers and peers and striving for improvement no matter their current performance level. Our journey started by understanding that students are receiving feedback all of the time and that often the feedback is inaccurate from peers. Our focus on providing quality feedback has helped students to take control of their learning through self-assessment and is a driving force in why Rue Elementary is being recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School!