

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

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

School Mailing Address 6516 S. Kane Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Hodgkins State IL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 60525-7618

County Cook County

Telephone (708) 482-2740 Fax (708) 482-2728

Web site/URL https://www.d105.net/ E-mail ecrement@d105.net

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. Brian Ganan E-mail bganan@d105.net
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name La Grange Sd 105 South Tel. (708) 482-2700

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. Dave Herndon
(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):
- 5 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 6 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	33	38	71
K	12	6	18
1	4	7	11
2	11	6	17
3	8	7	15
4	10	9	19
5	11	11	22
6	14	11	25
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	103	95	198

*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 % Asian
 - 0.5 % Black or African American
 - 75 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 20 % White
 - 3.5 % 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: 3%

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	4
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	1
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	5
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	175
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.03
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

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

Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 23 %
46 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 77 %

Total number students who qualify: 153

8. Students receiving special education services: 35 %

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>7</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>7</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>28</u> Developmental Delay | <u>6</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>18</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>2</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.	10
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	4
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	10
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

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 13:1

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	96%	95%	96%	96%	89%
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.

Empowering students to make a difference in our world by assisting them to be self directed, passionate, lifelong learners.

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

This history of Hodgkins School dates back to 1886, when one acre of land was established on Old Route 66 to be the site of a one-room schoolhouse. After this first school structure burned to the ground, a new school was established in 1921 on the current site where Hodgkins School stands to this day. This school had two classrooms and held all students in grades 1-8. Historical records reflect first-hand accounts of students waiting for their teacher, Miss Casey, at the train depot each morning. Our current mascot, “Casey the Bulldog,” still makes classroom visits to encourage school pride and celebrate student successes.

As a school, we are proud of our rich history. Many of our students have parents, grandparents, and/or great grandparents who attended Hodgkins School. Many parents and staff members also hold leadership roles within the community, serving in various capacities at the Hodgkins Park District, Hodgkins Public Library, Hodgkins Village Hall, and District 105 Board of Education. These factors are a testament to the deep commitment that all stakeholders have, not only to the school, but to the community at large.

Hodgkins School has seen several renovations and additions since opening its doors almost 100 years ago. Although the building has changed, in many ways, we continue to embrace a two-room schoolhouse mentality; we continue to be a place where a diverse group of people can come together as one community of learners. We continue to be passionate about kids, meeting them where they are and bringing them to where they need to be as individuals. As it was one hundred years ago, the community is a large part of that.

Today, Hodgkins School serves students prekindergarten to grade 6. Our three and four year old students are drawn from across the school district, adding to the diversity of our school. Our kindergarten through 6th grade students all reside in the village of Hodgkins. The majority of our Hispanic students are second and third generation Americans, descended from Mexican heritage. A large number of our students qualify for free or reduced lunch. Our small enrollment enables us to engage the power of personal relationships to nurture the academic, social, and emotional success of our students.

Another benefit of the small size of our school and district is the ability to be responsive to the needs of individuals and cohorts of students. The conceptual framework of Responsive Classroom is descriptive of this approach. As educators, we focus on engaging our students in academics through peer interaction and student choice. We are also very intentional about building a positive community through structures such as our daily Academic Morning Assembly, classroom meetings, and the cross-age Bulldog Buddies activities.

The process of aligning curriculum to the Common Core State Standards has involved teacher-led creation of instructional units. The district’s approach to curriculum has been another opportunity to be responsive to the learning needs of our students. Working together in grade level groups, educators have carefully considered which materials and instructional techniques will have the greatest impact on helping students master grade-level content. A multi-tiered system of supports allows educators, including reading specialists, English Language specialists, special education teachers, and related services to be responsive to students at various points on the learning continuum.

Over the years, there have been many initiatives aimed at addressing gaps in opportunity. A former principal started an after school support program that was financially supported by Hodgkins area businesses. Through this initiative, the entire community came together to offer their time and talent. We continue to offer academic based clubs, including the PTO-sponsored Spanish Club and district-sponsored Bulldogs After 3. A committee of stakeholders, including school personnel, parents, and community members is currently working to develop programming to support our students’ academic achievement and career readiness in the context of community involvement and belonging. This initiative is funded by a donation from Vulcan Materials, which operates the quarry that is adjacent to our community. It is just one example of how leadership is shared across stakeholder groups. Multiple perspectives are encouraged and valued because the community understands that creating opportunities for students is a shared responsibility.

Hodgkins School has a unique character that is reflective of the character of the larger community. A newspaper article from 1977 quotes a former Park District Director as saying, “If you lived in a nearby town

and you went to borrow a cup of sugar from someone, they'd loan you a cup of sugar. But here, they'd give you a five pound bag of sugar and tell you to forget about it." This is a mentality that everyone associated with Hodgkins School shares. Hodgkins School is a place where people go above and beyond for the benefit of students.

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

One of our primary goals in District 105 is that all students demonstrate continuous academic growth leading to college, career, and life success. Our overall approach to meeting this goal is to embrace a professional learning model of curriculum development, instruction, and assessment. This approach began with developing teacher expertise around the learning standards in core content areas. Teachers know where students are supposed to be going, and lead the work in designing curriculum and instruction in pursuit of those objectives.

This philosophy encourages continuous improvement by allowing flexibility for teachers to research, explore, and standardize current impactful and engaging practices. Teachers and administrators must rely on data to assess student progress, and to determine where mid-course corrections are necessary. They continually refine the process of curriculum and instruction, practicing and learning as they teach and assess. They address curricular gaps that cause gaps in achievement, ensuring all students grow, learn, and achieve.

Our overall approach to core curriculum, instruction, and assessment has allowed for deep collaboration across grade levels and subject areas. Participation is integral to the process, which allows educators with a broad range of perspectives to work together to collectively strengthen practice.

1b. Reading/English language arts

Common Core Standards for ELA are addressed through teacher-created units of instruction. These units were developed by grade-level teams through a professional development approach to curriculum mapping. This approach allowed teachers to truly understand the progression of each standard and how standards can be clustered together in meaningful ways.

In 2018, 21% of students met or exceeded state standards on the PARCC test. We knew our students were capable of more. This prompted us to ask, “With all of our knowledge of the Common Core State Standards, are we truly being responsive to the needs of students?” Using Responsive Classroom as a guiding framework, we explored the principle, “Great cognitive growth comes from social interaction.” Knowing that many of our students are emergent bilinguals, and understanding that language is learned through interaction, we adopted a schoolwide strategy called Talk Read Talk Write (Motley, 2016). Teachers created lesson plans using TRTW to engage students, set a purpose for reading, process text through conversation, and communicate understandings through writing. We also practiced interactive learning structures (Kagan, 2015) to promote frequent opportunities for interaction and make grouping configurations more purposeful.

In 2019, 33% of students met or exceeded state standards on the statewide assessment. Building on our success from the previous year, we embarked on a professional learning journey around the Responsive Literacy Framework (Pinnell & Scharer, 2018). This framework allowed us to re-examine and improve upon our existing structures of interactive read-aloud, shared reading, and guided grouping. While not associated with Responsive Classroom, the Responsive Literacy Framework espouses many of the same foundational understandings. A guiding principle of Responsive Classroom states, “How we teach is as important as what we teach.” Responsive Literacy supports this principle by stating that for every instructional routine we engage in, we need to “double the effort and double the explicitness for English language learners”. To assist us in doubling effort and explicitness, we turned to the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP). To widen access to literacy instruction, we ensured that our practices around balanced literacy structures aligned with the SIOP features within Building Background and Comprehensible Input.

The district administers NWEA Map twice yearly. Growth targets are set by individual students, and they reflect on action steps they can take to meet their goals. Each teacher in the district also establishes growth and achievement targets, which are combined with all other teachers in the district to set district-wide goals.

This model of goal-setting and continuous improvement is also reflected in classroom based unit assessments. At the beginning of each unit, students take a pre-assessment to determine their level of performance prior to instruction. At the end of the unit, they take a post-assessment, which allows teachers to engage in zone-analysis with their inter-school grade level teams. Teachers make instructional decisions based on knowledge of student reading behaviors using the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System. All students who score below the 50th percentile in grade-level fluency norms are progress monitored every other week using Fastbridge CBM.

1c. Mathematics

Math learning at Hodgkins school adheres to the overall curricular approach in District 105; it is fueled by on-going professional learning, a commitment to continuous improvement, and responsiveness to student learning. The mathematics learning standards are mapped out in our scope and sequence for each grade level. They are organized by unit and identified by priority or supporting standard. Our Units of Instruction are then built around the scope and sequence, building a coherent instructional model from one grade to the next. Each unit breaks down the learning standards by essential questions, key vocabulary, mathematical learning practices, prerequisite skills, scaffolding and enrichment options.

Math instruction follows a balanced model of shared and guided instruction along with independent learning and number talks/numeracy development. Guided instruction provides the opportunity for teachers to meet in small groups to provide differentiated instruction to build on student's strengths. During this time, our support teachers are able to push in or pull students out for intensive instructional support such as English-language, resource and/or advanced academics. Teachers have access to several instructional resources to use as needed. Resources include opportunities to boost students' skill development, and stretch their conceptual understanding.

Throughout the 2018-2019 school year we had a concentrated professional development specific to math instruction. As an entire staff we attended nine sessions around instructional strategies. Each of these sessions were 90-minutes in length and facilitated by our Curriculum Director, Curriculum Coordinator, Math Specialists, and Math Consultant. Three sessions focused on the Importance of Ten/Place Value, three on Visualizing and Modeling, and three on Fractional Thinking. In each of these sessions we met by grade band to focus on specific instructional strategies for each grade level. We also attended five days focusing on the NCTM mathematical practices.

Each unit, at every grade level, begins with a pre-test. This identifies what skills and standards students are familiar with and helps teachers plan out the unit and meet the needs of all students. Once the pre-test is complete, students and teachers reflect on the data and set goals based on areas of strength and greatest area of growth.

Throughout the unit students complete formative assessments. These may be student interviews, paper-pencil, exit slips, warm ups, or other forms of data where teachers collect information on how students are progressing. The team, made up of resource, EL, and classroom teachers analyzes data on a regular basis, rearranging small groups when applicable. Once instruction has ended, students complete a summative post-test. The results are compared with the pre-test and students reflect on their goals.

1d. Science

At Hodgkins School, we are currently researching and standardizing impactful instructional practices in science. We are closely considering how the Next Generation Science Standards align with the Common Core State Standards and Illinois Standards Aligned Instruction for Libraries. The Library Media Specialist is collaborating with classroom teachers and a science consultant to build cross-disciplinary opportunities so that students can learn science by doing science. We teach them to engage with content in ways that reflect how scientists use literacy to support inquiry. In grades 1-3, we are working together to design units of instruction around phenomenon-based inquiry. The units also feature important literacy skills by using carefully selected science-themed picture books.

Science instruction is delivered in rotations. This allows several groups to be working simultaneously with either the Library Media Specialist, classroom teacher, or paraprofessional. Each group explores one aspect of the compelling questions for the unit. We bridge learning with technology-based support, such as Seesaw, that allows the teacher to provide additional explanation, visual and verbal directions, and students to demonstrate their learning. At the end of the unit, students participate in a formal assessment. These assessments have been constructed to match the NGSS and the skills involved with the unit and inform the planning of future units.

The professional learning gains experienced by the interdisciplinary science team will be used to build capacity for other teachers in the school and district. As the district-level science committee works to design a curriculum, the action-research conducted by the team at Hodgkins will be informative in answering the questions, “How do we create student engagement using an inquiry approach,” “How do we integrate science with literacy and library standards,” and “How do we maximize the expertise of all instructional personnel to have the greatest impact on student learning?”

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

Led by a districtwide Social Studies Committee, Hodgkins School is in the process of shifting to an inquiry approach to social studies curriculum and instruction. We believe that each topic in social studies can serve as a hook or jumping off point to understanding another concept.

There is a strong component of active student engagement in social studies instruction. In the primary grades, students learn about roles and responsibilities of various people in the community through play. The dramatic play area is transformed into a post office, a veterinary clinic, or a bakery. Our youngest learners explore how people impact the world around them through the delivery of goods and services. By second grade, students begin to engage in inquiries using essential questions. By asking, “What is a community”, students develop an understanding of the cultural and environmental characteristics of rural, suburban, and urban environments, and how they compare to one another. In sixth grade, students look forward to the Cave simulation. For the last 15 years, an office space within the school transforms into a cave where students crawl through obstacles with flashlights to study cave paintings.

As students engage in inquiry, they utilize critical literacy skills that are necessary for accessing and communicating information. Our fifth grade teacher is piloting a unit of study around American slavery that seamlessly blends reading and writing instruction with content area knowledge. Using Lucy Calkins Units of Study for Informational writing, students are given the freedom to explore various topics including the Underground Railroad, the origins of slavery in West Africa, and the impact of slavery on the Civil War. The classroom teacher and EL specialist guide students through the research process so that students experience history as historians do - fully immersed in reading and writing.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

Hodgkins School currently houses the District 105 Preschool Program, serving three and four year old students from across the district. Our littlest Bulldogs are enrolled in one of three preschool programs. Our Preschool for All program primarily serves students who have been identified as at risk for academic failure based on screening instruments that measure vocabulary, visual-motor integration, language and speech development, English proficiency, fine motor skills, gross motor skills, social skills, and cognitive development. Other factors, including environmental, economic, and demographic information that may contribute to the likelihood that a child is at risk for academic failure are also considered. Students with specific eligibility for special education services are enrolled in our Early Childhood Education Program. Students who have a primary language other than English are enrolled in our bilingual Early Learning program.

Our district has adopted the Creative Curriculum, which is aligned to the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards. Six developmental areas are addressed: social/emotional, physical, cognitive,

literacy, math, and language. These areas of development are addressed when children are engaged in activities with peers, adults, and within natural contexts. The classrooms use centers or interest areas to organize the students' play and exploration. These areas include circle time, dramatic play, library, art/writing, blocks, manipulatives, science, technology, sensory area, and snack. Using the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards, the preschool team worked together to create a yearlong pacing guide. This guide identified power standards that have the greatest impact on kindergarten readiness and future success in the primary grades.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

In our commitment to educating the whole child, students at Hodgkins School experience robust programming in arts, physical education, and library/technology.

The LaGrange School District 105 K-6 Art Curriculum focuses on the three "Creating" Anchor Standards of the National Core Arts Standards: generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work, organize and develop artistic ideas and work, and Refine and complete artistic work.

The LaGrange School District 105 K-6 Music Curriculum focuses on the three "Performing" Anchor Standards of the National Core Arts Standards: select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation, develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation, and convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.

The Anchor Standards for Art and Music are further broken down by grade level to ensure appropriate application of the skill for that specific age group. Students are allotted 45 minutes once a week to experience the art and music curricula at Hodgkins Elementary School.

Kindergarten through 6th grade students participate in physical education classes for thirty minutes each day. Physical Education classes are designed to meet the Illinois State Standards and progress students through the grades with skills, game play and sportsmanship.

The Library Media program consists of shared foundations including inquiry, inclusion, collaboration, curating, exploring and engagement. Within these shared foundations, students are guided to think, grow, create, and share within the learning community. Co-planning and collaboration with all teachers is a creative and cohesive partnership that bridges the library with the classroom and the school community. Districtwide programs that cultivate a love for reading are evident in our interlibrary loan program as well as our Battle of the Books event. Technology is implemented in a variety of ways to allow students to think, create, share and grow, which enhances and enriches the educational opportunities and experiences for all students and staff.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

Hodgkins staff believes in teaching and supporting the whole child. As such, we have a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) in place for every child. Within our curriculum, our teachers differentiate instruction to enhance learning for our students. The district uses a problem-solving approach that depends on the use of reliable data and the progress monitoring of learners to assess the effects of interventions. Teachers use this information to drive and differentiate instruction. We hold three data meetings and two progress monitoring data check-in days throughout the year. All educators - including classroom teachers, special education, resource teachers, specialists, and the principal - collaborate to provide the best instruction possible for each student. This team works closely with families to create and provide early interventions so that all students can be successful. This is part of a comprehensive plan that addresses student needs and prevents academic and behavioral deficits. With the help of teachers, students set personal goals for themselves throughout the year and have discussions with teachers about how to attain their goals and when to modify them. These achievements are celebrated throughout the year in classrooms and throughout the school.

When faced with an achievement gap of any subgroup of students, it is important to re-examine Tier I curriculum and instructional practices. In response to underperformance of our English Language Learners, we began to consider ways to make our Tier I program more responsive to the needs of our students. Last year, we implemented a schoolwide strategy called Talk Read Talk Write, which encourages the purposeful practice of the four domains of literacy within each lesson. This paved the way for a districtwide focus on Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) during the current school year. Hodgkins continuously evaluates students' needs, tailoring instruction and supporting all students along their educational paths.

3b. Students performing above grade level

District 105 offers accelerated math and advanced English-language arts services to students whose academic needs exceed that which the core curriculum provides. Services are provided by Advanced Academics Department (AAD) teachers, who travel throughout the district. Hodgkins School is served by two AAD math teachers, and one AAD reading teacher. The AAD teachers work with classroom teachers to provide instruction that is faster, deeper, or more complex than the core curriculum at grade level. In grades 5 and 6, students have the opportunity to take math class that is accelerated by one grade level.

In grades K-4 for math, and grades K-6 for ELA, the AAD specialists provide opportunities for extension and enrichment to students who show mastery or potential for mastery on a unit-by-unit basis. This early exposure gives students critical thinking experiences to help prepare them for advanced classes that occur in the older grades. Qualification for these services is determined by examining multiple pieces of student data to make an accurate determination of service. Such criteria include: an achievement test, MAP (Measures of Academic Progress), an aptitude test, CogAT (Cognitive Aptitude Test) , and a checklist of classroom performance indicators.

The specialists work closely with classroom teachers to help them identify students from underserved populations and provide appropriate academic challenges for those learners. We recognize that gaps in achievement oftentimes represent gaps in access and opportunity. For example, we know our students are capable of demonstrating high cognitive aptitude, but may not have had equitable exposure to items that measure their aptitude, such as verbal and visual analogies, number series, or sentence completion tasks. Therefore, we decided to begin our morning assembly two times a week with a “Brain Game” that they discuss with their Bulldog Buddy Groups.

3c. Special education

At Hodgkins School, students enter into special education services through a collaborative problem-solving process involving tiered interventions. If it becomes apparent that students are not making adequate achievement for their age in relation to grade level standards, the problem solving team will move to consider eligibility for special education services.

Each child who has an Individual Education Plan has a case manager, who has the responsibility of monitoring student goals, distributing progress reports to parents, and determining if any further interventions are needed. The case manager facilitates team decisions using a variety of data sources, including Illinois Assessment of Readiness, national norms of NWEA Map in Reading and Math, and classroom pre-and post test data. In addition, student progress is monitored using Fastbridge, which provides curriculum based measures designed to be sensitive to student growth or lack of growth.

At Hodgkins School, we are taking active steps to address the gap in achievement that exists between our students who receive special education services and those who do not. Understanding that meeting the needs of our most vulnerable learners can only be done in the context of true collaboration between all participants, we are in the process of redefining roles and responsibilities, and recommitting to norms for working together to serve the whole child. We will also be setting department SMART goals in NWEA MAP and Fastbridge to monitor growth and proficiency for students who receive various levels of special education support. This will enable us to identify what is working well and what conditions, strategies and resources can be replicated across various settings. It will also allow us to identify students who will need a higher level of support, while maintaining high levels of expectation of growth for all students.

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

At Hodgkins School, we value the unique background and needs of each individual student. As a highly collaborative team, we work diligently to ensure that structures and supports are in place to meet the wide variety of academic and personal goals. At our school, 100% of our EL students are of Mexican descent. Our EL teachers are Bilingual-Spanish Certified in order to provide native language instruction and activate prior knowledge in their native language, as needed.

At Hodgkins School, we see all students as “our” students. Each teacher, no matter his or her discipline, is a part of a consistently collaborative team that meets weekly to plan for instruction and intervention, making content accessible to all. Co-teaching occurs in classrooms with high percentages of EL students. On designated Data Days, the entire team meets to discuss each grade level, assessment data, and appropriate changes to groupings, interventions, and classroom instruction.

To support the language acquisition of EL students, we look deeply into ACCESS scores, identify the greatest area of need for each grade level and focus our instruction accordingly. In addition, EL teachers compile a data profile for each student including test scores and parent interviews to provide a complete picture of the student, both at school and at home.

During the 2018-2019 school year, we focused on a schoolwide literacy strategy called Talk-Read-Talk Write. This strategy was an introduction to what would become a three-year process of implementing the SIOP Model (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol). EL teachers are being trained as SIOP coaches to support all D105 staff. We focus on infusing the classroom with interactive structures that support learning for all students, building background knowledge, and providing comprehensible input. These structures provide increased opportunities for closing gaps in achievement.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

At Hodgkins School, we take a holistic approach to student engagement. We understand that in order for students to be engaged, their brains and bodies have to be engaged. In the 2018-2019 school year, we shifted our breakfast program to the Breakfast After the Bell model. Students can arrive to school a half hour before the bell to have breakfast, read books, and play “brain games” with peers and teachers. When the bell rings, students continue eating breakfast and participate in discussion prompts with cross-age table groups by practicing important pro-social language skills like eye contact and turn-taking.

The focus on brain and body engagement continues throughout the day. Students can visit the sensory room, take meditation breaks with teachers and the principal, and walk the sensory path that was created in the hallway. We encourage students to monitor their own availability for learning by teaching them to identify which “zone” they are in emotionally and physically, providing them with tools to remain in, or return to, the green zone.

This holistic approach to student engagement nurtures a sense of belonging, which allows for students to more fully engage with academics. Educators at Hodgkins School are very intentional about building the sense of belonging by hosting daily class meetings, which include opportunities for students to practice social emotional and academic skills. These purposeful structures create high levels of student-teacher trust. On the Illinois 5Essentials Survey, students report feeling safe and comfortable at school, and that their teachers keep their promises, respect them, and listen to their ideas.

Finally, students are motivated by engaging instructional practices, which promote self esteem and peer support around learning. In the 2018-2019 school year, we focused on a schoolwide strategy of Talk Read Talk Write. This strategy encouraged critical thinking and peer interaction, and paved the way for a district-wide focus on Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP). We provide opportunities for student choice in math and literacy centers, incorporating games and play whenever possible. Students also develop an academic identity by connecting with long-established traditions at the school and district. One such example is the Battle of the Books, which has run for 10 consecutive years. Students await these yearly traditions and enjoy engaging with their peers both within the school and across the district.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

At Hodgkins School, we strive to make our families feel welcome and supported so all parents and families can best support their children at home. Historically, the Parent Teacher Organization has been very active in trying to keep teachers and families working together by planning evening fundraisers, math, literacy and science nights, and all-school field trips. Prior to the COVID-19 school closure, the PTO, principal, and dedicated parents and community members began developing a community-based initiative with three identified purposes: contribute to the future success of our students, nurture pride in Hodgkins, and encourage community members to give back. The task of the committee was to design programming that satisfied these three purposes, while utilizing the resources of our school, park district, library, police department, village hall, and a very generous donation from Vulcan Materials.

During this unprecedented school building closure, these priorities are more critical than ever. We will reconvene in June to plan for how to support each other throughout the summer months, and prepare for re-entry to school. We are called now to leverage the strengths of the community to see us through to the end of this crisis. The strengths of this community are many. We have seen neighbors picking up meals from our distribution sites and delivering to other families. We have seen moms coaching other moms over the phone of how to navigate our newly implemented eLearning platform. We have seen the photos of our students as they enjoy a free pizza delivery from the PTO - a gesture to bring solidarity to the community while supporting a local business. From our windows during a car parade, we saw handmade signs, enthusiastic waves, and elated smiles, all demonstrating how much the school means to the community. As staff members of Hodgkins School, the Hodgkins community means everything to us.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Hodgkins is a small town where people care for one another. This is reflected in the way neighbors interact with each other, within the school walls and beyond. It is not uncommon to enter the teachers' lounge for a birthday party, baby shower, or potluck luncheon "just because." An impromptu baked potato bar might include one person bringing sour cream, another bringing homemade salsa, and another bringing a crockpot of baked beans. The camaraderie shared among all staff members is warm and genuine.

The collective responsibility demonstrated in the staff room is symbolic of the collective responsibility we bring to our professional practice with students. Each member of the team, including classroom teachers, specialists, paraprofessionals and office staff is valued for the contributions they make to the positive development of students. We share responsibility for discipline and school improvement, ensuring that all members of our school community - both children and adults - have the opportunity to learn and grow.

At Hodgkins School, teachers report feeling well supported. Although our school is small, our teachers are connected to a network of support within the district. Every new teacher has the opportunity to participate in a two year mentoring program where they learn from their colleagues about the professional practices that help build the culture of our district. Classroom teachers and specialists meet regularly with their grade or job alike colleagues to share resources and instructional best practices.

Professional development in District 105 is sustained over time and is closely related to the district's strategic plan. Hodgkins School follows the district's year-long professional development agenda, while customizing learning experiences to the specific learning needs of students and teachers in the building. Professional development topics have a positive and immediate impact on classroom teachers. For example, adult learning during the 2018-2019 school year focused on National Council of Mathematics teaching practices, and the content understanding of place value and fractions. This school year, we are delving deeply into responsive literacy practices.

In addition to whole group sessions, teachers are encouraged to assume ownership of professional learning by engaging in self-reflection, collective evaluation of new ideas, and collaborative unit planning with teachers from other schools in the district. Teachers participate in peer observation around the instructional focus to offer feedback and get ideas for strengthening their own practice. We encourage each other to implement new learning, improving learning opportunities for the students we serve.

4. School Leadership:

As part of LaGrange District 105, Hodgkins School strives to be a high performing school that celebrates the importance of each individual student. The principal, teachers, families, and community members work together to implement that shared vision. There are several structures within the school that formally distribute leadership. The Building Leadership Team, which consists of the principal, classroom teachers, and specialists, meets weekly to focus people, programs and resources for sustained improvement. Shared leadership between teachers and the principal results in high levels of trust among colleagues. On the 5 Essentials Survey, 100% of teachers report that they respect other teachers who take the lead in school improvement efforts. The principal also meets monthly with the Parent Teacher Organization. Parents at Hodgkins School report high levels of connectedness, indicating that they feel their voices are heard and that they are a valuable part of improving the school.

The current principal views her role as being the "lead learner." The impact that the principal-as-learner has on a school is well documented in the research. Robinson (2011) found that leading teacher learning and development had an effect size of 0.84, which is double the effect size of any of the other leadership practices she found to have an impact on learning. Through direct participation in professional development, the principal of Hodgkins School is able to learn about the challenges that arise when new learning is implemented, and can then create conditions to succeed in light of those challenges. She models vulnerability by acknowledging her own professional learning needs, and engages in action research by creating safe practice spaces for teachers to implement learning. Teachers are encouraged to initiate school improvement activities, solicit feedback from colleagues, and make contributions to living our vision.

Another critical responsibility the principal holds is increasing professional capacity by recruiting, hiring and socializing new teachers. The principal believes that intentional and selective hiring brings higher levels of human capital into the system, while also serving a symbolic function in pursuit of the vision. Teachers at Hodgkins School are active participants in the selection of colleagues. Hiring decisions are made collaboratively. They are based on the extent to which candidates represent the potential to help us live our shared commitments to be responsive to whole-child development.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The one practice that has been the most instrumental to the school's success has been the intentional nurturing of all relationships within the learning community. Using the guiding principles of the Responsive Classroom approach, we put human relationships at the forefront of our practice. Those guiding principles are operationalized in a set of collaboratively drafted commitments, which we discuss and revise regularly.

Because we value relationships, we believe that “teaching social and emotional skills is as important as teaching academic content.” In our school community, all learners, both children and adults, are treated with kindness and respect. Teachers use Classroom Meetings to teach social and emotional skills, and model those skills all day, every day. Through the power of positive relationships, students believe they can learn, grow, and make their lives better.

Another guiding principle states, “What we know and believe about our students—individually, culturally, developmentally—informs our expectations, reactions, and attitudes about those students.” This principle guides us to intentionally form positive relationships between teacher and students. We have committed to learning about students' interests and cultural backgrounds to make learning meaningful. Teachers use their knowledge of students to differentiate lessons to create equal access to learning.

We leverage the power of student relationships because we know that “great cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.” We teach our students the language of learning and create opportunities for them to practice these skills by planning for peer interaction in every lesson. These social interactions allow students to use common language and build community through interaction, leading to higher level learning and increasing everyone's sense of value.

In addition to student relationships, we intentionally nurture relationships between adult learners. We know that the way we work together as adults will be replicated in the ways our students work together. Adult learners demonstrate collective responsibility when engaged in collaboration by seeking new ideas, looking for solutions, and taking ownership for the success of colleagues and the students we serve.

The intentional nurturing of relationships extends to the families and community we serve as well. We celebrate our assets and honor the contributions of parents and community.

Through the power of the positive relationships we nurture, we build a common identity. As Bulldogs, “We can and we will! Ruff Ruff!”