

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 435 Broadway  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Bangor State ME Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 04401-3927

County Penobscot

Telephone (207) 941-6290 Fax (207) 941-6299

Web site/URL https://marysnow.bangorschools.net/ E-mail bbannen@bangorschools.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. Betsy Webb E-mail bwebb@bangorschools.net  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Bangor School Department Tel. (207) 992-4150

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. Warren Caruso  
(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**

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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

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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):
- 7 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 10 TOTAL

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools)

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

- Urban (city or town)  
 Suburban  
 Rural

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

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	73	50	123
5	65	55	120
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
<b>Total Students</b>	138	105	243

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0.8 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 2.5 % Asian
  - 3.8 % Black or African American
  - 3.3 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0.4 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 85 % White
  - 4.2 % 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: 7%

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.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	12
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	5
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	17
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	228
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.07
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

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

Marathi, Chinese, Spanish, Portuguese, Swahili

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 2 %

6 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 39 %

Total number students who qualify: 95

8. Students receiving special education services: 19 %

45 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>2</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>15</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>12</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>6</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>1</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>2</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5

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:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	13
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	7
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	7
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 19:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	96%	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.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
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 Mary Snow School will offer high quality instruction and comprehensive programs to provide academic excellence for all students.

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**

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As you walk through the hallways and peek through the classroom doors at Mary Snow School during a school day, you'll notice students on task, engaged, and eager to learn. This is no easy feat, as Mary Snow School is a Grade 4-5 school whose students are in transition. Grade 4 is the first time that Bangor students come together from diverse neighborhood schools; Mary Snow's fourth graders advance from Abraham Lincoln and Fruit Street, two smaller schools that serve Pre-K to Grade 3. Students at Mary Snow navigate this transition so well because the staff is committed to the shared vision of academic, emotional, and behavioral success for every student.

Bangor is a small city of 33,000 that serves as a regional service area for Eastern Maine. Bangor draws individuals and families from Maine and beyond to access educational programs, social supports, and medical care. Bangor is comprised of distinct neighborhoods that can range from public housing projects to more affluent areas.

Students at Mary Snow come from two types of neighborhoods: one with older housing, many converted into apartments, in which the poverty rate is between 24-34%, and another consisting of single family homes, in which the poverty rate is 10-14%. Most of the students are middle class, and their parents are working professionals. The families value education, and have high expectations for the education of their children.

Mary Snow parents are active in their children's education and eager to be a part of the school community. The school has a robust PTO that hosts multiple, well-attended events per year and provides funding for co-curricular and extra-curricular programs.

The key strategies used to challenge all students are differentiated instruction, a robust extra-curricular program, and strong school pride.

The Bangor School Department's mission is "Academic Excellence for All," and at Mary Snow School, all students are encouraged to develop to their full potential. Every classroom teacher utilizes the workshop model to assess each student's grasp of the concepts being taught. This enables the teacher to tailor instruction to the learning level of the individual student, and allows acceleration to take place immediately so that every student is challenged. This practice of constantly challenging students academically satisfies the parents' high expectations for their children's education.

Students at Mary Snow have the opportunity to reinforce and extend their learning through a strong extra-curricular program. The program is led by dedicated teachers who have a passion for niche activities, including art club, mentor club, chorus, student council, Lego robotics, and 3D printing. Ninety-five percent of students attend at least one extra-curricular offering each year, and 76% of teachers elected to lead an activity this year. These activities generate enthusiasm for learning among students and give students concrete examples of how concepts learned during the school day can be translated to lifelong hobbies or inspire career pathways.

As mentioned previously, grade 4 is the first time that Bangor students from smaller neighborhood schools attend school together. After four or five years at their PreK to grade 3 school, students have formed friendships and an identity surrounding their neighborhood school. To ease the emotional and social transition, Mary Snow School leadership and staff promote a strong school climate and encourage students to take pride in their new school. Students are no longer "Abraham Lincoln" students and "Fruit Street School" students, but rather one school community pulling together. Community building within the school is accomplished through social-emotional learning lessons delivered in the classroom by the guidance counselor, school spirit activities such as wearing the school colors of red and white, and whole-school challenges such as an attendance challenge, a reading challenge, a math fact fluency challenge, and kindness challenges.

What sets Mary Snow School apart is the focus on data to drive instruction, opportunities for acceleration at

all levels, and a strong faculty emphasis on professional development. At the classroom level, grade level, and school level, teachers and leadership use formative and summative information to constantly monitor and adjust instruction so that it's tailored to challenge every student. This ability to challenge the student at his or her level creates opportunities for every student to demonstrate growth and accelerate.

Finally, the faculty at Mary Snow School has a strong work ethic, and is committed to learning new evidence-based concepts and techniques that will benefit their students. Professional development is embedded in bi-weekly meetings through the assistance of a literacy coach, and teachers participate in book studies. Recent book study subjects include math running records, math problem solving in action, the importance of language, and trauma informed teaching.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.**

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

The overarching philosophy at Mary Snow School is that students are here to learn, and as part of that learning environment, students need to feel safe to take risks and make mistakes. The principal and staff at Mary Snow School provide a supportive environment so that students feel secure enough to extend themselves and try new things.

Common approaches across subject areas include aligning curriculum with Maine Learning Standards, utilizing the workshop model of instruction, differentiating instruction, and the acceleration of learning. In order to nurture academic excellence, all curriculum areas are aligned to the rigorous standards of the Maine Learning Results as well as national content standards. Each curriculum has been chosen to meet the Maine Learning Results and to provide students with project based learning, inquiry-based instruction, and real-life applications. The workshop model of whole group, small group, and individual instruction allows for differentiated instruction based on each student's grasp of the material. Through the workshop model, formative assessments may take the form of journaling, group projects, academic games, and hands-on activities. Teachers use formative assessments to differentiate instruction at the student level to keep every student challenged and engaged. Summative assessments vary by subject area, and are used by teachers, grade level teams, and the principal to inform school, grade level, and classroom instruction and goal-setting.

**1b.** Reading/English language arts

The English language arts (ELA) curriculum for grades 4 and 5 provides students with multiple opportunities to practice reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills on a variety of authentic literary and informational texts that address STEM, history, social studies/civic engagement, and social-emotional learning. This curriculum was chosen because it provides clear alignment with Maine's Learning Results in ELA and emphasizes the five pillars of instruction: comprehension, fluency, phonological awareness, phonics, and vocabulary. Teachers use the workshop model for instruction with differentiated texts chosen to support and accelerate students. Writing instruction occurs through the use of Lucy Calkins, which also addresses thinking and speaking. Students write narratives, opinions, arguments, and memoirs. They work in pairs or teams to read out their responses, and then they work together to improve their successive drafts.

Additionally, the ELA curriculum engages students in writing daily as they have a written response to their reading as part of the workshop. The Read Aloud -- which is part of the Language Study -- asks students to think critically about a text and to respond orally to questions posed by the teacher.

Unit assessments and literacy assessments (Scholastic Reading Inventory) are used for summative assessments to provide detailed data based on specific students skills. The data is used to further drive instruction for individual students and small groups, and to guide goal-setting at the students level and grade level.

**1c.** Mathematics

Mathematics at Mary Snow School is a rigorous curriculum that provides students with multiple opportunities to demonstrate different strategies to solve complex mathematical problems, with strong instruction in math vocabulary. There is a heavy emphasis on word problems, and students are taught to apply math skills and concepts to solve multi-step and complex real-world math problems. For example, when students learn about area and perimeter they measure a room or a rug to compare both the perimeter and the area. Also, when students learn about fractions, they work with baking recipes to understand practical application of fractions. This curriculum was chosen because it aligns to Maine Learning Results and the National Council of Mathematics Standards, and supports Bangor's commitment to college and/or

career readiness for all students. The workshop model allows teachers to reinforce skills, improve upon previously learned skills, or provide students opportunities to extend their thinking and knowledge. Formative assessments, including problem-based challenges, mathematical games, and group projects, are used at the classroom level for differentiated instruction and acceleration. Summative assessments, including unit assessments and math fact fluency, are used at grade level and schoolwide meetings to ensure continuity of learning for students as they progress from fourth to fifth grade, and to ensure they are ready for transition to middle school mathematics.

#### **1d. Science**

Science is taught through hands-on, inquiry based activities in which students investigate a claim by gathering evidence and use reasoning to justify scientific conclusions. For example, when students learn about weather and natural processes, they have to design and build a structure to keep a family safe during a tornado, earthquake, or volcanic eruption using cardboard, wooden craft sticks, clay, construction paper, and aluminum foil. When students learn about gravity, they create a parachute prototype using an egg, string, a plastic bag, bubble wrap, and boxes to see if the egg survives a fall from a height of eight feet or more. And when students learn about electricity and electric currents, they have to create complete circuit designs using wires, batteries, and light bulbs. Students have opportunities to think critically about applications of science knowledge relevant to their daily existence. Topics covered include human footprint, electricity, senses, rock patterns, energy and speed, gravity, energy and current, water, properties of matter, natural processes, and matter and energy in plants. STEMScopes Science was chosen because it aligns with Maine Learning Results and Next Generation Science Standards, challenges students with real world problems, and requires higher order thinking skills. Formative assessments, including hands-on activities, experiments, and science journal entries, are used to differentiate instruction. End of unit summative assessments are used at grade level meetings to guide instructional pacing.

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

Social studies topics include the State of Maine, regions of the United States, geography, mapping skills, and westward expansion. Students engage in project-based learning, research, and writing. For example, students participate in a real-life “Oregon Trail” activity where they track their progress as they travel westward using only the materials, tools, food, and medicine that were available to people during Westward Expansion. Also, students study a certain region of the United States, then write and draw an informational book about that region. These books are shared with classmates as part of the classroom library. Specially themed days, such as Constitution Day, Veterans Day, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Day are filled with activities for students to learn about history and civics. The curriculum was created by Bangor teachers, aligns with Maine Learning Results, and complies with the Maine Department of Education’s mandate to teach selected Special Observances and Commemorative Days. Formative assessments such as activities, projects, research, and written reports, are used to differentiate instruction so that every student is challenged. End of unit summative assessments are used to monitor student growth and to guide instructional pacing.

#### **1f. For secondary schools:**

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

### **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

The visual and performing arts program at Mary Snow School includes art class for 60 minutes once per week and music class for 30 minutes once per week for all students. The music curriculum advances students’ skills in identifying and reading musical notation, listening to and describing elements of music, and performing various styles and genres of music. The art curriculum is aimed at increasing students’ skills in using a variety of media, tools, techniques, and processes to create original works of two- and three-dimensional art, and to describe features of composition, art forms, and genres. Students are eligible for Gifted and Talented art or music, which is embedded in the class to provide “challenges” or extension activities for all students. Student artwork is displayed publicly throughout the year, and there is an end of

year art show. Chorus, orchestra, and band are elective options. Chorus students gather with other district schools for a combined chorus concert at the end of the year. Fourth and fifth graders can take strings class, twice per week before school, and perform in the end of year orchestra concert with other schools in the district. Fifth grade students can choose from a variety of instruments to learn in band class twice per week before school. Band students perform at a concert with other district schools at the end of the year. Art and music are aligned to Maine Learning Results.

All students take physical education classes twice per week for thirty minutes. The physical education curriculum adheres to the Maine Learning Results, and the PE teacher is trained in adaptive physical education for students needing modifications. Students participate in health-related fitness assessments, learn to identify the physical and mental benefits of regular physical activity, and participate in physical activities that address flexibility, cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, and body composition.

Integrating technology into students' education is one of the core competencies of the school department's Ten-Year Strategic Plan. The goal is to enhance students' awareness and curiosity about a changing world and to equip students with practical computer skills. Technology is not a separate curriculum, but technology skills are woven into other curricular areas. Every student at Mary Snow School has a Chromebook, and students learn keyboarding through an online typing program. They also learn how to effectively research a topic online with the help of the school librarian.

All students visit the library once per week where they learn to avoid plagiarism, choose books that are a good fit, and participate in a weekly read-aloud.

Social-emotional learning is essential to build the social skills and character necessary to excel in school and in life. Classroom teachers embed SEL lessons in their regular instruction, and the guidance counselor provides social-emotional learning instruction to all students every other week for thirty minutes. Topics include empathy and skills for learning, emotion management, problem solving, saying no to drugs, and bullying prevention. All students participate in Alcohol Awareness Day, a special observance day designated by the Maine Department of Education.

An important component of the district's Ten-Year Strategic Plan is to prepare students for post-secondary education or career aspirations. Careers are addressed through the study of literary characters, scientists, and historical figures in ELA, science, and social studies, and through visits from guest speakers and volunteers. The school participates in the district's annual College Gear Day, when students and staff are encouraged to wear apparel from their favorite college and discuss education beyond high school and the importance of lifelong learning.

### **3. Academic Supports:**

#### **3a. Students performing below grade level**

The principal and a team of teachers, called the School Core Competency Team, meets monthly to review data of student achievement and to plan for the support and instruction of students that are not meeting benchmarks. At each grade level, teachers meet bi-weekly to plan instruction and adjust support for struggling students. Every three weeks, the principal and teachers meet to formulate a response to intervention (RTI) plan such as determining appropriate strategies to address learning needs in reading or mathematics, engaging students in small group instruction, and providing foundational skill support. For example, a student who is reading below grade level may receive additional support in decoding or encoding of words, learn strategies to determine main idea, learn how to use words in context for unfamiliar vocabulary, or increase reading fluency. A student who needs math support may work on math facts, determine important detail in word problems, or reinforce learned skills or concepts. Support may also include Title I services or other forms of extra help for students performing below grade level. On a daily basis, teachers recognize, through the workshop model, which students are struggling to grasp the content being taught, and provide support and differentiation to move students to a better understanding of the content.

### **3b. Students performing above grade level**

Similarly to the identification and planning for students performing below grade level, the School Core Competency Team of principal and selected teachers meets monthly to review student assessment data to identify students performing above grade level. Students are accelerated in a subject based on a teacher's observance of their grasp of the content during class. Teachers use the workshop model on a daily basis and can gauge each student's understanding of the subject matter being taught. The teacher can provide acceleration to multiple students by grouping those students together for a more challenging experience. Mathematics classes are tiered to provide students with opportunities for acceleration. In addition, students may be enrolled into the Gifted and Talented program, which provides eligible students with more challenging work or activities related to the subject in which they are gifted. Students in Gifted and Talented Mathematics classes participate in STEM challenges such as building a tower of spaghetti, creating a catapult to launch a piece of paper, or designing a wind powered car. Students in Gifted and Talented ELA learn more complex thinking skills around literature including literary analysis of author's intent, mood and tone through writing stories, and creating "Black Out" Poetry where they use a page from a text and "black out" all but eight to ten words to create a new poem to express mood.

### **3c. Special education**

Nineteen percent of Mary Snow students receive special education services. Special education classes are offered to assist students with foundational skills and provide academic support. Over the past two years, special education students at Mary Snow School scored 19% above the state average of special education students in the state ELA assessment, and 15% above the average of special education students in the state math assessment. However, the gap between special education students at Mary Snow School and the general population at Mary Snow School is more than 10 percentage points (27% special education students are proficient in ELA compared to 76% general population proficient in ELA, and 9% special education students are proficient in math compared to 65% general population proficient in math). We address this gap by utilizing the workshop model in the special education classroom as well as the regular classroom. The special education teachers are able to identify exactly where students need assistance and differentiate instruction appropriately for that individual. Also, at bi-weekly grade level team meetings, teachers will discuss appropriate interventions for special education students.

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

Three percent of students at Mary Snow School are English language learners. ELL students still access grade level curriculum; however their education is supplemented with ELL tutorial support several times per week. Each student receives a customized, structured ELL tutorial plan that is tailored to his or her individual needs. The gap between ELL students at Mary Snow School and the general population at Mary Snow School is more than 10 percentage points (50% ELL students are proficient in ELA compared to 76% general population proficient in ELA, and 0% ELL students are proficient in math compared to 65% general population proficient in math). We address this gap by having the ELL teacher accompany the students in the regular classroom. Students receive regular classroom instruction from the classroom teacher using the workshop model, and then, when students break out into smaller groups, the ELL teacher will work directly with that small group to work on skills and techniques to understand the content.

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

Thirty-nine percent of students at Mary Snow School are eligible for free and reduced lunch. The school social worker provides resources and support to students and their families on an as-needed basis. Resources may include referrals to government sponsored programs or nonprofit agencies, assistance filling out paperwork, and access to necessities such as clothing and food. The goal is to prevent the student's economic situation from becoming a roadblock to academic success. Last year, 66% of economically disadvantaged students at Mary Snow were proficient in ELA on state assessments compared to 42% of economically disadvantaged students statewide. On the state math assessment last year, 57% of economically disadvantaged students at Mary Snow School were proficient, compared to 23% statewide.

## **PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE**

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### **1. Engaging Students:**

In the Bangor School Department, students attend neighborhood schools for grades PreK to 3, then transition to a grade 4-5 school before entering middle school (grades 6-8), and then high school (grades 9-12). Students arrive at Mary Snow School from two very different neighborhood schools where they have spent their first four or five school years in a comfortable routine. To help students to feel secure during this first transition, leadership and staff work hard behind the scenes prior to the students' arrival. Teachers at Mary Snow contact the students' previous teachers for insight, the guidance counselor goes over student SEL with the previous schools' guidance counselors, the principal convenes with the two sending schools' principals, and special education and Title I staff hold transition meetings. In addition, Mary Snow School hosts a step-up day/night for students and parents to familiarize themselves with the new school and new teachers.

Building a positive environment in which students can learn begins with the teachers from the first day of school. Teachers dedicate time to creating a classroom community built on respect and kindness, enforcing routines and structures so that students feel comfortable and know what to expect each day.

Students are challenged every day at their own individual level through the use of the workshop model. If students are either struggling or easily grasp the content being taught, the workshop model enables teachers to immediately provide either support or acceleration, so that every student receives an individualized academic plan.

Students have access to caring support staff, including a guidance counselor, social worker, and nurse, who all work together to anticipate and meet the social, emotional, and physical needs of the students.

Mary Snow School hosts popular and well-attended extra-curricular activities that nurture closer connections to school, and provide opportunities for academic enrichment and leadership. Overall, there is a focus on community at Mary Snow School, from the classroom level to the city level. Students are encouraged to promote kindness by participating in charitable activities that help the community. For example, Student Council sponsors a Red Ribbon Week promoting a drug-free America, Read Across America Week, Bangor Week collecting food donations for local families in need, and fundraising events for the local homeless shelter and animal shelter.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

Parents of Mary Snow School students value education and have high expectations for their children's education. The principal and teachers at Mary Snow School create an environment in which parents feel welcome to communicate frequently with the school, learn about students' achievement, and pose questions or concerns. To encourage parent involvement, the school's goal is to host ten family engagement activities over the course of the year. For example, parents are invited to the school for an Open House night at the beginning of the school year, Art Show, Chorus Concert, Family Supper, Family Game Night, Book Fairs, Literacy Night, Math Night, and an Academic Showcase. Parents and teachers have worked together to build a strong PTO that supports the school in its efforts to maintain and enhance a positive school experience for students.

The school also encourages family and community participation through volunteering. Approximately 50 individuals per year complete the volunteer training and help out at the school in a variety of ways, either during the school day or with after-school activities. Bangor High School students serve as volunteer mentors for Mary Snow students.

The school keeps the community informed about student achievements through the school website, school newsletters, and the district's biannual newsletter, "The Communique." The principal at Mary Snow gives a presentation of the school's achievements at School Committee every year, which is broadcast to all

community residents via a local television access channel and available to view from the district website. Finally, parents and community members are invited to Academic Showcase every spring, an evening in which students showcase their work and what they've learned throughout the year.

### **3. Creating Professional Culture:**

Mary Snow School uses a data-informed approach to professional development. Bi-weekly team meetings of grade level teams, special education teams, and educational technician/paraprofessional teams discuss student, school, or district needs. Results from these team meetings are brought to the School Core Competency Team, which is a diverse leadership group of teachers from different grade levels, including gifted and talented, guidance, the literacy coach, and the principal. The SCC team uses the bi-weekly team information and analyzes student assessment data to determine where students need help, and therefore where the teachers may need professional development to address the students' struggles. For example, when data analysis showed that students were struggling with multi-step word problems, the Title I teacher and a fifth grade teacher attended a workshop in math problems solving, and then led professional development for the rest of the staff to help them with techniques to assist students with word problems.

There is a clear spirit of collegiality and professionalism among the staff. They care about each other's well-being, openly communicate with the administration, and work together as a team to serve the needs of the students. The principal has an open door policy, and solicits input from staff when setting goals or making decisions.

Teachers are also supported by the district. To raise up leaders from within the district, the Bangor School Department worked with the University of Maine College of Education to create the Bangor Educational Leadership Association (BELA). BELA is an opportunity for teachers to earn a Certificate of Advanced Study in educational leadership as a cohort, and to apply the theory and practice they learn in their studies directly to their classroom.

### **4. School Leadership:**

The leadership philosophy at Mary Snow School is that maintaining good relationships is the cornerstone to a school that functions efficiently and effectively to achieve academic excellence for all students. The principal's open door policy applies to staff, parents, and community members alike.

The principal's role is to ensure that the school meets the district mission and vision through instructional leadership, awareness of curriculum, communication with teachers regarding data, scheduling and supporting team meetings, and facilitating resources such as Title I, RTI, and special education. The principal meets weekly with the Student Assistance Team, consisting of the guidance counselor, social worker, and school nurse, to review attendance, address teacher concerns about students, and plan for communication with families to assist students with their academic or social/emotional needs.

In addition, the principal meets monthly with the School Core Competency (SCC) team. Several teachers serve as leaders on the SCC leadership team, and their roles are to gather student assessment data from the grade level teams and voice teacher feedback regarding grade level goals and schoolwide goals. Together, the SCC team analyzes instructional impact through data review, and formulates plans for supporting teachers as they address student needs. Goal setting is a collaborative effort, and in communicating goals and decisions to staff, the principal "unpacks" the thinking behind decisions so that staff understands the thought process behind them.

For example, the SCC team analyzed student scores on the Scholastic Reading Inventory and found that scores were not growing as much as anticipated. The Literacy Coach and Title I teachers led professional development and coaching cycles to help students identify words in context to assist with their understanding of vocabulary. Another example of how the staff uses data and collaborative problem-solving to support student achievement happened after analysis of math assessment scores. Staff noted that students were making errors with multi-step word problems. The Title I teacher and a fifth grade teacher attended a workshop specific to this issue, and then led professional development for the rest of the staff in math

problem solving to help identify how to help students build their word problems skills.

Every staff member is committed to the best interest of the students, and to the Bangor School Department's Ten-Year Strategic Plan. All initiatives and activities are filtered through the four goals of the strategic plan: academic excellence, professional excellence, quality instructional program, and environment for success.

## **PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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The one practice that has been most instrumental to the school's success is the strong framework of support for the social and emotional needs of students. Mary Snow School is a two-year transition school between the student's formative PreK to grade 3 neighborhood school, and their emergence into middle school. Academic success can't happen during this period of transition if students don't feel safe and supported socially or emotionally.

Teacher and staff support for students begins even before the students enter the school through consultation with teachers and guidance counselors at their previous school, and a preparatory step up day/night for students and parents.

Once students are enrolled at Mary Snow, they receive bi-weekly classroom lessons in social-emotional learning from a caring guidance counselor. Teachers support students daily by meeting them where they are academically and encouraging and challenging them to accelerate their learning in a way that's appropriate for each individual. Students are encouraged to take risks and try new things.

Every morning, over the public announcement system, the principal at Mary Snow School reminds students to take a deep breath and to tell themselves, "You've got this." And at the end of every school day, students and staff thank each other for a great day. It is this type of constant affirmation that reminds students at Mary Snow School that they can achieve academic success.

Weekly meetings between the principal, social worker, guidance counselor, and school nurse, along with open communication with parents, ensures that every student's social, emotional, and physical needs are being addressed. Every three weeks, the RTI team identifies and creates a plan for students who need academic and behavioral supports. Finally, the SCC team meets monthly to review student assessment data and formulate appropriate, data-driven goals and plans for instruction.

The high level of social and emotional support for students has resulted in 76 percent of students meeting or exceeding proficiency on state assessments in ELA compared to the state average of 56 percent, and 65 percent of students meeting or exceeding proficiency in math compared to the state average of 38 percent.