U.S. Department of Education
2021 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 Mrs. Kierstin Hurtt
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Valley-Edinburg Elementary School - Crystal
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 4013 Euclid Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Crystal
County Pembina
State ND
Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 58222-0000

Telephone (701) 657-2163 Fax
Web site/URL https://sites.google.com/valley-edinburgk12.com/valleyedinburgschools/home E-mail kierstin.hurtt@valley-edinburgk12.com

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* Mrs. Kierstin Hurtt
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

E-mail kierstin.hurtt@valley-edinburgk12.com

District Name Valley-Edinburg Public School District
Tel. (701) 657-2163

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. Andrew Gullickson
(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, leave blank.
PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The electronic signature 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 2021 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 must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.

4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2015 and grades participating in statewide assessments must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2019.

5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 or 2020.

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 current school year (2020-2021) unless otherwise stated.

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

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

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not the district.)

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/](https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/) (Find your school and check “Locale”)
   - [ ] Urban (city or town)
   - [ ] Suburban
   - [X] Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2020 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th># of Males</th>
<th># of Females</th>
<th>Grade Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PreK</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 or higher</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Students</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*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
- 5% Asian
- 0% Black or African American
- 5% Hispanic or Latino
- 0% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- 90% White
- 0% 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 2019-2020 school year: ≤1%

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Number of students who transferred to the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Number of students who transferred from the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

   - Spanish

   English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 6%

   8 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 58%

   Total number students who qualify: 76
8. Students receiving special education services: 25% 

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. All students receiving special education services should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- 0 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 4 Developmental Delay
- 6 Emotional Disturbance
- 5 Hearing Impairment
- 7 Specific Learning Disability
- 2 Other Health Impaired
- 2 Intellectual Disability
- 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1

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. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

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

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 8:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily student attendance</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduation rate</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 2020.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-Secondary Status</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduating class size</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled in a 4-year college or university</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled in a community college</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled in career/technical training program</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Found employment</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joined the military or other public service</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes , No X

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.

Valley-Edinburg Public School's mission is to inspire, engage, and challenge students to reach their maximum potential.

16. Briefly describe how your school has been operating during the current 2020-2021 school year (e.g., open as usual, online only, a hybrid model, etc.)? If different grade levels in your building operate in different ways, include this. If the school began with one model and switched to another partially through the year, include this as well.

For the 2021-2022 school year, Valley-Edinburg Public School has been open as usual. We have taken on extensive procedures to protect our students and staff while continuing to provide top-notch education.

17. For public schools only, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.
PART III - SUMMARY

The small towns of Crystal and Hoople, North Dakota's economies are fueled by agriculture. Most community members are employed by some aspect of agriculture: Hoople Farmers Grain employs elevator and agronomy managers, salesmen, operators, accountants, business managers, and mechanics. Butler Machinery employs service technicians, salesmen, diesel mechanics, service, store, and parts managers; Hillier Tire employs technicians and mechanics; Valley-Edinburg Public Schools employs many spouses of these workers; our local bars serve meals to farmers working around the clock to get the job done. The list is endless and most of it comes down to serving our farmers. In recent years, we have been fortunate to see an uptick in the number of families who are choosing to stay in our rural community, and the results have been nothing short of impressive. Our school's class sizes are growing, and our general community involvement is on the rise.

The Crystal School building first opened its doors in 1939 and has since seen two important consolidations: first, with the Hoople School District, then most recently, with the Edinburg School District. Today, the Crystal and Hoople school buildings serve students in grades Pre-K through eight.

Although our school district is considered small, we are committed to our vision of rural excellence in education and opportunity. We offer many opportunities in extracurricular athletics (football, basketball, volleyball, track and field, and baseball); however, we are most proud of our commitment to co-curricular opportunities. Our small school is well known for its accomplishment in the sciences and STEM-related activities, whether it is through science fair and robotics competitions, to place-based learning experiences such as River Watch through the International Water Institute. Our students are taught the importance of environmental awareness, as well as their role in sustaining their rural environments. We work tirelessly to create partnerships with local entities so that our students receive continuous quality hands-on experiences year-round; these experiences will ultimately help us reach our goal of creating conscientious rural citizens.

Our three towns each have their own unique history and physical environments. We do not look at three buildings in three separate towns as a hindrance; instead, we see it as an opportunity to give our students a real-world, hands-on opportunity to become the caretakers of communities that desperately need caretakers. Our students take part in quality leadership programs that require them to take a close look at what communities need to ultimately sustain. Our school building in Crystal is arguably the center of civic involvement. Our ultimate goal is to transition our school's youth from students to civically engaged and progressive-thinking citizens.
PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

Although our school was able to keep its doors open for the entirety of the 2021-2022 school year, we invested heavily into creating viable online distance learning opportunities for all of our learners. This has helped us greatly throughout the school year as our students have sporadically been required to quarantine in a moment’s notice. We have received acknowledgment from our local learning consortium for our excellent online learning opportunities; other schools were recommended to seek our advice when setting distance-learning standards for their own districts.

In each curricular area, we made available funds for adopting costly curricular supplements our teachers found necessary to teach adequately through an online platform. Our teachers felt empowered to make the important choices they needed to make at any given moment, as administrators stood behind them all the way. Conversations concerning rigor and standards continued throughout the year, and our staff was allotted ample the necessary time to meet with their content PLC’s to ensure effective scope and sequencing, particularly when it came to prioritizing standards early in the year. Our greatest achievement this year has been our adoption of our MTSS program. We have complete buy-in and support from our staff into our MTSS process, and the results have been phenomenal. Our students continue to be assessed and re-tiered according to their progress, and our test scores continue to affirm this method for success. We use progress monitoring every month to help us make important curricular and instructional choices among our staff.

In our Crystal 4-8 building, a large emphasis has recently been placed on using critical concepts provided by our local RRVEC (Red River Valley Educational Cooperative). These critical concepts come from the Marzano framework, another initiative that has been well received in our district.

Our ELA curriculum uses Journeys for our fourth through sixth grades, and our seventh through eighth grades uses a Houghton Mifflin series called Collections. We use NWEA and Fastbridge to complete various screenings and assessments every quarter, and progress monitoring for our students under the fiftieth percentile is done quarterly as well. Our Fastbridge assessment program provides our teachers with specific interventions needed for each level, and our teachers and administrator work together to give each student what is needed during our MTSS time every day. For our students who do not require intensive intervention for ELA, we offer various enrichment experiences organized and taught by teachers (TED Talks for kids, Socratic Seminars, theater units, Genius Hour, etc.).

Our math curriculum consists of McGraw Hill My Math for our fourth through sixth grades. Our math teacher shares access to the program’s online digital resources so that all teachers in the building are able to provide enrichment throughout the day. We use our online assessments provided through the curriculum, and we screen each student quarterly using Fastbridge to target interventions for each student as well. For our students who do not require intensive intervention in math, we offer enrichment experiences like district and state competitions through Math Counts and project-based learning experiences, like our online Geometry project.

Our science curriculum also uses McGraw Hill, and our teacher follows the New Generation standards. She works regularly with our high school science teacher to incorporate various STEM projects into her classroom, including building machines and simulations of various types. Place-based field trips allow our students to study their rural communities and habitats closely as well. Finally, our science teacher completes a cross-curricular project each year with our ELA teacher.

Our social studies curriculum also uses McGraw Hill. Our social studies teacher primarily assesses his students using project-based experiences as well, such as writing assignments, media creation, as well as hands-on projects.

1a. For secondary schools (middle and/or high school grades):
1b. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:

Our preschool serves all attending four year olds in our district as well as three year olds who have special education access through our local special education consortium, Pembina Special Education Unit. During the 2020-2021 school year, however, the pandemic forced our school to not offer the socialization experience to our three year olds who have special education access. These students accessed their special education services inside the school building, but did not take part in regular preschool with their four year old peers. Our preschool curriculum is designed to meet the North Dakota Early Learning Standards, Birth to kindergarten, and our preschool teacher meets regularly with our kindergarten through Grade 3 teachers to ensure alignment of curriculum throughout our primary grades.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Our school has invested heavily in our visual and performing arts programs this year, as we find it essential that students receive this form of education during a pandemic. Because of this, we have ensured that each student in our middle school has participated in a full-length drama piece during the 2020-2021 school year. Students chose their performance pieces, designed costumes and sets, and made important directorial decisions for themselves and their peers. Our Student Council has also adopted various student-led organizations, such as Drama Club and Art Club. These clubs are developed, organized, and run by students, and each club is well attended by our middle school students of all ages. This experience has given our students the autonomy and agency to lead without restraint. Finally, our school has a student-run library in which students make the important decisions needed to provide literary experiences for all students.

Our final class of the day, seventh period, runs from 2:50 until 3:35 in the afternoon. Each teacher is assigned a quarterly special class to be taught each quarter. When the quarter ends, students rotate to another special. In total, each student in our buildings enjoys a robotics course, a study-skills course, a health (social-emotional) course, a STEM Science and Engineering Fair course, a theater course, a life-skills course, an entrepreneurship course, a computers course, and a Genius Hour course. These classes are taught every day during our school year.

Our fourth through sixth grade students are required to be in choir and have the option to participate in band. Our seventh through eighth grade students are offered the option to be in both our school’s band and our school’s choir. Our band practices two days per week, and our choir practices three days per week.

Every student is required to take Physical Education throughout the year. This class meets every day.

We find each of these classes to be essential in providing students with choice as well as the necessary skills needed to find success in the future.

We know that these are the tangible experiences our students need, and being on-site for the year has allowed us to embrace this.

3. Academic Supports:

Our primary motivation for academic improvement began during the 2013-2014 school year. At this point, Valley-Edinburg's Crystal 5-8 building did not make AYP for two consecutive years. Our school district needed to improve, and we took aggressive action to make that happen. Our students' deficiencies were numerous: lack of a research-based consistent reading curriculum, lack of Title I time, lack of appropriate reading leveled literature for students, lack of a quality writing curriculum, lack of consistent expectations, lack of parent involvement, and the list continues. We immediately made a plan to solve these deficiencies. We hired a part-time instructional coach, worked extensively with our regional education cooperative, and assessed each part of our district's curricula. Next, we adopted an intensive MTSS intervention program to address our gaps in reading proficiency. We ensured that our special education and ELL students were given the above-required instruction and assistance needed to help bring these students closer to proficiency. We
prioritized communication between the school and the students' families and ensured that we
invested in the resources needed to keep parents informed of their student's academic progress. We
monitored progress diligently, hired additional staff when needed, and worked extensively to create
a class schedule that reflected the urgency we felt to improve. When our students required less
targeted intervention, we offered various enrichment experiences: higher-level novel studies,
theater experiences, “come-alive” days, as well as gallery walks for our students project-based
learning presentation. We incorporated various specials into our schedule that would prove useful
for students: Robotics, Career Exploration, Theater, Genius Hour, etc. Slowly but surely, we began
to see progress. By continuing to progress monitor, our teachers were encouraged to explore the
world of project-based learning. We knew that our process for monitoring our students' learning
worked well, so this gave us the confidence to become more creative.
1. Engaging Students:

Our middle school building's 2020-2021 Student Council has played an integral part in engaging, motivating, and providing students with a positive environment throughout the year. We have given these students the time and resources necessary to provide important experiences for our students.

Our preschool through eighth grade students are highly engaged throughout the day. At any point, one can find our students tending to plants they've started from seeds, building a greenhouse, organizing events for students, helping out in our staff/student-run library, working with our custodian to tend to the needs of our school, and planning events for the rest of the student body. We find that when our students take ownership of their environments, they feel productive and purposeful. When they feel productive and purposeful, we find that students are less anxious and sad. By keeping our kids busy with productive and purposeful work, we ensure positive engagement throughout the year. Although our students remained in-person throughout the pandemic, we knew that their social and emotional health was indeed affected this year. Our staff made it a goal to communicate regularly with students and our counselor so that we could offer the mental health supports needed. We were able to coordinate tele-counseling to various students throughout the year; this was offered anonymously throughout the school day. This initiative is something we would like to continue to grow into our future.

We are aware that these students know best what their peers need, and we eagerly accept our role as supporters, not facilitators. This trust has helped to create an incredibly progressive, productive, and empowering school culture for all students. Our students know that they are the caretakers of their school, and they will guide us in the direction in which we should go.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Now more than ever, we find inviting families into our classrooms essential to maintaining transparency, trust, and a collaborative relationship. While we have not been able to have family and community members in our school as much as we would like, we have exponentially increased our social media presence, our website presence, our text and email communication, and our daily phone call volume. Our social media pages and our school's website have become the source of joy for many community and family members in our district. We find it essential that these people know and see the outstanding things that are happening every day in our school building, from art expositions to school plays. Our families have been able to interact with us from the safety of their own households while continuing to enjoy and appreciate the exceptional experiences their students have with us. Each decision we make to communicate is rooted in our district's vision and mission.

Our school buildings work also closely with our Hoople and Crystal city councils. Each year our students complete various projects that directly help our school’s community. In the fall, our students work with the city council to paint buildings, rake yards, weed the baseball diamond, pick up garbage, and clean the city hall. In the spring, our students plant the city’s planters and pick up garbage. Our community enjoys this relationship and often looks to the school for civic engagement opportunities.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Our school prides itself on providing its employees above-average wages and a positive, collaborative working environment. For this reason, we see extraordinarily low turnover, especially compared with neighboring districts. When surveyed, our teachers express that they feel empowered to educate to the best of their abilities; they feel that, with the school’s vision in mind, they are trusted to work together to solve problems that arrive within the school. We survey our staff regularly, and we are sure that our professional development path reflects our school’s vision and our staff’s knowledge of how to get there.

Our staff engages regularly in our educational cooperative’s Coffee Tech Talks, which allows them to
communicate with other educators from our region. Our technology coordinator consistently receives feedback and reports needs to administration. We know that technology is the core of moving forward with our intervention work, and our staff feels the same.

Our staff also knows that data analysis and multi-tiered systems of support training are essential to providing the best possible educational experience for each student in our school. For this reason, we invest heavily in data collection professional development as well as multi-tied systems of support professional development for our staff. Our teachers regularly observe other school systems and report back with new ideas we can incorporate into our own system.

We found that addressing our teachers’ social-emotional needs this year was just as important as addressing our students’ needs. For this reason, we provided multiple book studies for our teachers (Nice Bike and Self-Care for Educators). We were also able to provide a full work day each month for our teachers. These work days began with a nutritious meal and yoga for all staff. This appeared to have a significant impact on our teachers’ positive mental health this year.

4. **School Leadership:**

Valley-Edinburg believes in developing shared leadership and fool-proof communication. We believe that failing to communicate, especially during the time of a pandemic, leads to total institutional breakdown. Therefore, our principal and our staff have clear and understandable communication expectations. Each member of our teaching team is determined to work communicate often with our school’s mission as our inspiration.

Our school’s leadership philosophy is to lead by example: take ownership, work hard, and persevere. In a very small, rural school, an administrator “does it all” for the school. A school principal will teach classes, drive a bus route, coach a sport – anything it takes to keep a school going. Leading by example means taking ownership in every way possible. Because this philosophy is so clearly demonstrated at the top levels in administration, we see it in both our staff and our students.

5. **Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:**

Because we are located in the heart of the Red River Valley, our farming economy’s need for seasonal help is dire. From late spring until late fall, many Hispanic families return to our communities seeking employment in the farming industry. These workers are the backbone of our communities; without them, many agricultural operations would cease to exist.

Because our school is well known for providing excellent education and a positive environment for students, we find ourselves receiving more and more migratory students each year. We are always excited to have these students in our school; however, we know that there is more we can do to better serve them. Although our migratory students’ academic needs are very well addressed in our district (through intensive ELL services and summer school program), we know that we can do better at addressing their social-emotional needs.

This is why our school plans to better educate our staff on diversity, equity, and inclusion for the 2021-2022 school year. As part of our upcoming professional development plan, our teachers will address their own implicit bias in the classroom. We will also study and discuss the history of migratory students in our region and the effect this has had on their culture today. Our staff is eager to begin these discussions; we are confident that our determination and commitment to change will make a difference for our migratory students in the future.
PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Our school’s leadership program has been the backbone of our student motivation and ultimate success. This was organically developed by the entire staff; therefore, it is a program that is entirely bought into. For this reason, we believe we have the most positive school culture in our region.

As we move towards a post-pandemic future, Valley-Edinburg is more committed than ever to serving the best academic experience in our region. Our preschool through eighth grade staff is committed to growing our MTSS intervention time for all students, and our school board and administration will invest heavily to see this process through. We also believe that our commitment to our Extended School Program (beginning in the Fall of 2021) will ultimately compliment our intervention endeavors throughout the school day. Again, unbridled support from our school board and administration is crucial to this program’s success as well.

Valley-Edinburg is committed to quality data analysis and providing differentiated learning experiences to meet students where they are. Again, we know that providing our teachers with the essential support they need, whether it is through professional development or investing in instructional materials, will be the ultimate determinant of our students’ success.

We also know that student choice is vital to student academic success. We are committed to offer electives and specials that reflect the needs and the desires of our students. By forming close relationships with each student, we are able to tailor learning experiences based on intelligence types, interests, and abilities. Our preschool through eighth grade staff is committed to project-based learning for all students, as we have seen great success with this.

Ultimately, Valley-Edinburg will always put our students and their needs first, and we will continue to take the necessary actions that will bring each student success.