

***U.S. Department of Education***  
***2017 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program***

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. David M. Scholz

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

Official School Name Phillips Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 400 Turner Street PO Box 70

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Phillips                      State WI                      Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 54555-0070

County \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (715) 339-3864                      Fax (715) 339-2295

Web site/URL http://www.phillips.k12.wi.us                      E-mail dscholz@phillips.k12.wi.us

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\*Mr. Rick Morgan                      E-mail rmorgan@phillips.k12.wi.us  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Phillips School District                      Tel. (715) 339-2141

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. Jon Pesko  
(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. 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.)
2. 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 and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2017 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.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2011 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.
12. 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 (2016-2017) unless otherwise stated.

### DISTRICT

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

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

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
  - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
  - Suburban
  - Small city or town in a rural area
  - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2016 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	23	30	53
K	24	23	47
1	32	26	58
2	26	23	49
3	18	25	43
4	30	32	62
5	29	28	57
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>	182	187	369

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 1 % Asian
  - 1 % Black or African American
  - 1 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 95 % 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 2015 – 2016 school year: 12%

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, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	27
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	17
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	44
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	369
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.119
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	12

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1 %  
5 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):  
Chuukese, Gujarati, Adopted from Tagalog, Kosraean

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 48 %  
Total number students who qualify: 178

8. Students receiving special education services: 18 %  
69 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.

- 7 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 3 Emotional Disturbance
- 0 Hearing Impairment
- 5 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 3 Other Health Impaired
- 3 Specific Learning Disability
- 39 Speech or Language Impairment
- 1 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 2 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 6 Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 4
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to 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	18
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	11
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

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 20:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	96%	95%	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 2016.

<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 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.

To inspire and empower all students to reach their greatest potential.

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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Welcome to Phillips Elementary School (PES). PES is part of the School District of Phillips. Our school is located in a rural setting in Price County in North-Central Wisconsin and is part of the 6th largest district geographically in the state covering over 600 square miles. Residents of Price County enjoy the many outdoor spaces of our city and county parks, ATV and snowmobile trails, federal and county forests, lakes, rivers, and streams as well as mountain biking, cross-country skiing, hiking, and snowshoe trails on our 200-acre school forest.

Price County was opened by the lumberjacks in the 1870's when the first settlers came seeking their fortunes in the harvesting of the virgin pine. In 1875 the first school in Price County was started in a warehouse in Phillips. By 1906 there were 79 school districts in Price County. On July 1, 1950, many of these school districts integrated to establish Joint School District No. 1 and the Phillips "Loggers" were born!

Phillips Elementary School currently serves 366 students 4K-5th grade. The ethnic and cultural diversity of students attending PES is limited with ninety-five percent of our student population white with the other five percent other minorities. PES has seen a slow increase in the minority population in recent years. Currently, forty-eight percent of students at PES come from economically disadvantaged homes, and 18% of the school population is receiving special education services.

We have a staff that considers themselves to be positive change agents and believes in a balanced program that ensures that each student is healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged to promote the development of the whole child. This includes aides finding appropriate clothing for students in need, our custodian seeking out every child on their birthday to give them a treat, and our secretaries nursing our students when they come to the office not feeling well. Our staff has high expectations of all students while at the same time creating an environment in which error is welcomed as a learning opportunity.

A foundational component that sets us apart from other schools and contributes to the success of PES developing the whole child is the strong ties our students and staff have to our families and community. The Phillips community has traditionally been a strong supporter of our schools and there is a sense of "Logger Pride." Our students are the heart of our community and are viewed by many as our most precious assets. Many of our families in the community have sent three generations through the School District of Phillips. Many graduates from the School District of Phillips return to our community to raise their families and "make a difference" in our student's lives. Forty percent of our current teaching staff along with our principal have returned home to teach, demonstrating how deep our roots run in the Phillips Community. We have a rich legacy due to the longevity of our faculty with over sixty percent of our professional staff having worked at PES for over 20 years. The majority of our staff knows every student, parent, and grandparent in our community by name.

Monthly family engagement activities boast an attendance rate of over fifty percent of our student body and include immediate and extended family members as well as community members. An active parent outreach planning committee takes these opportunities to engage caring adults in ongoing conversations on the importance of developing a growth mindset in our students. This involvement clearly shows in the way children achieve and in how attentive our school is to the needs of our students. We believe the combination of students who believe they can "get smart" and parents who are intent on them achieving is what produces results.

The importance of active community involvement in our children's education has been documented by research. PES is proud of the numerous community connections we make every year: visiting the nursing home weekly, hosting breakfasts, writing to veterans, raking lawns and picking up litter for the elderly, fundraising for various local causes, planting trees around the community, developing a trail system at our school forests for community use, and many more. Our community gives back to our schools by partnering with us in motivating students to take school seriously and striving to achieve and celebrating our successes with us. Local corporations encourage employees to come into our school during the work day to share their

expertise in their field. Businesses take it upon themselves to organize school supply drives. Our local newspaper routinely promotes school successes and activities on a weekly basis. Civic oriented groups such as Lions Club, Knights of Columbus, and AmVets, organize numerous family engagement activities to promote academics, athletics, and holiday celebrations. Foundations have been set up by local corporations and private individuals to provide financial support for educational opportunities. This culture of community supports augments the efforts of teaching the whole child.

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

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### **1. Core Curriculum:**

At Phillips Elementary School we believe in teaching the whole child. It is important to provide learning experiences that will give every child the opportunity to be successful. In our classrooms, we encourage children to be self-motivated learners and provide them with a variety of methods and strategies to become lifelong independent learners. Problem solving and collaboration is a daily focus in our classrooms.

At PES we follow the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). This curriculum is very demanding and challenges our students and prepares them for the rigors and demands they will encounter in their future.

For literacy, PES follows the scope and sequence of Reading Street. In addition, we use Reading A to Z, and Benchmark books in our daily guided reading. Literacy Links and Orton-Gillingham are also used in the primary grades. Our reading instruction includes phonemic awareness and phonics instruction.

Within guided reading groups teachers build upon word study/phonics by doing a variety of word work activities. This instruction allows them to apply strategies and problem solve when they encounter unknown words. Along with this component, guided reading groups allow for the opportunity to build background, activate prior knowledge, make connections and expand vocabulary.

For writing, we have incorporated Expanding Expression Tool (EET) which provides students with a hands-on approach to their writing. It provides a visual and tactile approach which facilitates improved language organization. EET follows a hierarchical approach from words, to paragraphs, to reports which enable it to be used at all grade levels. This writing program works well with both regular and special education students.

PES follows CCSS for math and uses Math Expressions as our scope and sequence. This resource incorporates a balance of standards-based learning as well as best practice approaches to learning. This program enables students to use a wide array of manipulatives and visual models to deepen their understanding of mathematical processes. Real world situations are also incorporated frequently.

Science instruction at PES includes a focus on life science, earth science, and physical science. We recently have incorporated a focus on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) into our K-5 classrooms. A theme based approach is very prevalent and allows for student exploration and for teachers to expand on current events and topics of interest or expertise. This approach allows classrooms to make a community connection with local industries and business including agriculture, manufacturing, and forestry. We also utilize an outdoor classroom in our local school forest.

Social Studies at PES, similar to science, focuses on understanding our community and the resources we are surrounded by. We are a community with a rich history in logging, manufacturing, and agriculture. This allows our students to have a role in our initiative to make community connections. Students sense of belonging is impacted by engaging visits to places including but not limited to a local dairy farm, cranberry marsh, maple syrup production site, local parks and natural areas.

We are fortunate to have a 4K and Head Start program in our building. These early childhood programs follow Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (WMELS). These programs have a theme based approach to teaching kindergarten readiness and social skills. Literacy and math are incorporated into weekly themes as well as activities that promote social and emotional development. Four-year-old kindergarten and Head Start has made great strides toward our students early learning skills such as letter recognition and early number sense which has enabled our five-year-old kindergarten classrooms to focus on reading, writing, and math problem-solving.

Last but not least is the high-quality civics learning that takes place at PES. Quality civics education that crosses subject areas helps our students become globally competitive, workforce ready, STEM/STEAM



proficient, and possess the skills necessary to take on whatever comes their way in the 21st century. Instruction in the classrooms is reinforced by hands-on experiences in the school and outside in the community as well. Students in fourth grade conduct yearly elections for the entire school that coincide with our local and/or national elections. Over the last 8 years when it's either been a gubernatorial or presidential election our elementary school has accurately elected at school the same candidate as the official elections have had for the winner. In the spring of the year several grades go out planting trees in the community while other grades go out picking up litter. In the fall students learn about our veterans and our country and then host a breakfast honoring them both. We have students of all ages going to visit and work with our elderly at the nursing home year round. The Phillips Elementary staff truly believes that civics education even at the youngest age can benefit everyone.

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

At Phillips Elementary School, each student participates in one hour of specialist classes each day. Specialist classes include art, music, physical education, library, keyboarding, and other technology. Our specialists are available every afternoon to meet with each classroom on a rotational basis. Our specialist teachers are certified in their content areas, and many serve our entire school district.

Students participate in one hour of art education once per week. They are provided opportunities to explore and develop skills using various mediums as well as learning art history and genres. Art work is displayed throughout our building and showcased during music concert performances and community involvement activities. Lessons presented on a mobile SMART Board seamlessly allow for the integration of concepts from core classes.

The goal of Physical Education in the Phillips School District is to teach the entire student, not just their body and movement. Physical Education provides the unique opportunity to teach students about movement, strategies, teamwork, problem-solving and health-related fitness. These are skills that are not only valuable to students right now, but skills which they can learn and implement into their lifestyles for the remainder of their lives. Exposing students to a wide variety of physical activities, sports, and fitness techniques can improve the enjoyment of physical activity, along with building social, psychomotor, and cognitive skills. Physical Education at PES strives to safely provide the means for students to enjoy physical activity, become more confident in their physical abilities, increase their knowledge of health-related fitness, and help them find ways to continue to be physically active for a lifetime.

Our music education program is well-known in our community for our winter and spring performances. All students kindergarten through fifth-grade sing, dance, and accompany with percussion, selections of music based on a theme for the season. Dress rehearsal is open to the community to view, and the gymnasium has standing room only on performance night. Students begin to learn to read music in kindergarten with the complexity of skills increasing through fifth grade. Skills are taught using a variety of methods including traditional teaching methods, games, activities, and technology. In addition to the music curriculum, our music director coordinates an extracurricular choir including students in grades four through six. These students meet weekly after school to practice selections to perform at concerts.

In keyboarding and technology, for 30 minutes per week, students learn skills to enhance their ability to keep up with today's technology demands. Beginning in kindergarten students learn basic computer skills such as navigating a keyboard, logging into a computer, and completing basic web searches. As students progress through fifth grade, skills become focused on more complex tasks including coding and preparation for the Wisconsin Forward Exam.

## **3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:**

Four years ago Phillips Elementary School made a shift in instructional delivery which transformed our literacy block and increased student independence and success through the implementation of the Daily Five / Cafe reading structure. This reading framework for structuring literacy times allowed students to select from five authentic writing and reading choices each day. While the students work independently the teacher is able to work with large groups, small groups, and individuals conferring, facilitating guided

reading, and goal setting. After researching and observing other schools at the elementary level, a group of teachers was asked to pilot the use of The Daily Five/Cafe structure. Thus, we began our journey in improving our literacy instruction schoolwide. We moved forward with teaching staff participating in a book study on the The Daily Five and Cafe. We implemented The Daily Five and Cafe in grades kindergarten through second grade. This included the transformation of our classroom arrangement and environment to allow for students to make independent choices in their learning. The next year, teaching staff attended the Daily Five and Cafe seminars in Chicago with Gail Boushey and Joan Moser, authors of the book. Teachers brought back ideas and a better understanding of how to implement the Daily Five and Cafe structure in our classrooms kindergarten through fifth grade. Paraprofessionals and substitute teachers were given the opportunity to further their knowledge of the framework through book studies and informational workshops.

Today, when entering a classroom kindergarten through fifth grade, one would see the Daily Five structure being the driving force behind our literacy instruction. In our classrooms, one would see students working independently on differentiated word work or writing assignments, reading 'Good Fit Books' to self or with someone, and working in small groups or individually on skills and strategies specific to the needs of individual students. Small groups are formed by students' reading levels or by targeted skills allowing for all students to experience success at their level. In order to successfully assess student needs, teachers have been trained in providing guided reading instruction and the use of running records to determine reading levels.

Since implementing the Daily Five we have seen an increase in student independence, stamina, and accountability. There has also been an overall increase in schoolwide literacy achievement as demonstrated by both our STAR quarterly reading test scores and our Fountas and Pinnell benchmark assessments of individual student reading levels. Best of all our teachers and parents both have seen an increase in students interest and love of reading.

The shift in instructional delivery in literacy has influenced our methodology in teaching mathematics as well. The successes we have experienced with the Daily Five structure has led us to incorporate Math Daily Three into our classrooms.

The use of Chromebooks, iPads, and SMART Boards in every classroom has enhanced instruction and has provided the ability for blended learning to be ongoing as students make independent choices to complete their work on writing, word work, and listen to reading.

Phillips Elementary School is a Title I school and provides intervention times for both ELA and mathematics. Upon training and research on the Response to Intervention model, our district set aside this time in our day to provide Universal, Tier Two, and Tier Three interventions. Grades kindergarten through second receive one and a half hours of intervention time per day. Third through fifth grade receives the support of Title services for one hour per day. Many of our ELA interventions are taught by staff with Reading Recovery training and reading specialist certifications. The use of research-based school-wide interventions in the areas of reading, math, and emotional regulation have significantly impacted our student achievement and have been a major component in closing achievement gaps. Intervention programs are specific to students' needs determined by formative and summative assessments.

Phillips Elementary has worked hard at closing the achievement gap for our economically disadvantaged students. In the 2011-12 school year, point-based proficiency rates in ELA for economically disadvantaged students at PES (0.457) compared to economically disadvantaged students at a state level (0.698) resulted in an achievement gap of 0.241. Throughout the next four years at PES, we have steadily closed the achievement gap. In the 2015-16 school year, our proficiency rate in ELA for ECD at PES (0.726) compared to state ECD (0.770) resulted in an achievement gap of 0.044 and a difference in rate of change of 0.048 over the five years. Our achievement gap for economically disadvantaged students in math has also seen a steady decrease over the last five years. In the 2011-12 the achievement gap was 0.251 between Phillips and State, and this had decreased to a gap in 2015-16 of 0.024 and difference in rate of change of 0.047 over five years.

Phillips Elementary School uses a range of formative and summative assessments and views them as an

invaluable element in classroom practices. Collecting and interpreting information through formative assessments assists teachers in monitoring student understanding and allows teachers to make adjustments to their instructional planning.

PES teachers also use both informal and formal assessments. Informal assessments include such things as asking students to use hand signals to indicate their degree of understanding, talking to students to check for understanding, and observing students working on a task. Informal assessments are useful in giving teachers a look at how the whole class is doing. Formal assessments include surveys, quick writes, quizzes, and exit cards and are useful in providing data on how all individuals are doing on a particular learning target.

Star reading and math assessments are administered quarterly with the data used to discuss and plan for individualized interventions for students at all levels. Students are formatively assessed monthly on their reading level either using informal running records, Fountas and Pinnell benchmark running records, or Literably.

Teacher created common formative assessments for both ELA and mathematics are used to pre and post-assess students on a unit of study. Pre-assessments are used to determine what the student already knows and adjust instruction accordingly. Post assessments are used to assess the outcome of the instruction.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

A positive climate at Phillips Elementary School is something both staff and students work hard to create. We have a number of students who are third and fourth generation children, staff who are former students and now teach here, and we are looking to create that sense of community that has been such an important part of our school environment for many years.

At PES we strive to maintain a positive climate. We have vigorous expectations for quality work, academic growth and behavior. To foster our school culture and climate, all school members are expected to meet a high standard of professionalism because we believe our students and staff have a right to reach their highest potential. Staff members can be recognized as “Rock Star” staff each month. A decorated rock is passed on to recognize individuals for exceeding expectations. Staff are also encouraged to participate in culture/climate activities each year. Staff members need to find three other staff that would be interested in participating in the activity. Some past activities include such things as bowling, snowmobiling, book club, painting a picture on a canvas, running in snowshoe race, building a staff float, and ice fishing. The goal of this is to build positive relationships among all staff members in the Phillips School District including teachers, paraprofessionals, custodians, bus drivers, kitchen staff, secretaries, and administrators. These activities take place outside of our normal school day within our community. In the past three years, over 90% of our staff have participated in one or more of these activities each year.

At PES we believe “When we work together, our journey is more enriching and fulfilling.”

Something we do to fulfill this mission is to have weekly “crew” meetings. During this time, all school staff meet in a designated classroom and discuss various topics that are pertinent to our school and our community.

Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies (PBIS) is another tool we use at PES to promote a positive climate and culture in our building. Our area was developed due to the logging industry in the 1800’s and we are known as the Phillips Loggers. In turn, our students are awarded Logger Logs for positive behaviors such as walking in the hall, a zero voice level when appropriate, picking up litter on the floor or playground, opening the door for someone else, and helping a friend in need. Once 100 Logs are accumulated by a classroom they are placed on a logging truck mural at the front of our school. Anyone who enters PES can see all the positive behavior students are engaged in by looking at this display. When students get to fifth grade they are given the opportunity to be Logger Leaders. These students go to classrooms that have received 100 logs and celebrate their accomplishments. Students at PES strive to become Logger Leaders and follow our PBIS motto to be “Respectful, Responsible and Safe.”

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

Our parents and families play a very important role in our school. PES builds relationships with our families and our communities through a variety of engagement activities during and after school to further support students and community.

Community support is demonstrated in a variety of activities including our Veteran’s Day Program. Each year our fifth graders begin the day by hosting veterans at a breakfast which is held in their honor followed by an all school assembly, which community members are invited to participate in. Students and staff bring in photos of family members who have served and we create a “Wall of Honor”. We have local community choirs and singers perform, students recite poems and writings, and we also have a local veteran as our guest speaker. It is a very moving assembly that we are proud to be a part of each year.

Our Christmas and spring vocal programs show off our student's musical talents each year. The gym is packed with families and community members anxiously awaiting to see our talented students give an uplifting performance as well as view the wonderful artwork that is displayed.

Throughout the year we hold numerous family engagement opportunities at PES. These include family orientation night which welcomes families to a new school year. In addition to this we have themed monthly family engagement nights and performances. Towards the end of the school year we hold our annual Grandparents Day, a Spring Fling, and a Spring Carnival where volunteers from the community and high school students help us celebrate a successful school year. In addition, we partner with district science teachers and local businesses to host a STEM night at which students have the opportunity to participate in activities and experiments.

Our four-year-old kindergarten hosts bi-weekly events to make families first interaction in the school environment a positive and welcoming experience. The 4k classes also travel to the nursing home twice a month to do art projects, entertain, and to socialize with the residents. Both groups look forward to spending time together.

As a result of having a variety of parent and community involvement our students and families know that PES is a place where they are always welcome. By working together we build positive connections in our school community creating an environment where every child matters.

### **3. Professional Development:**

Our professional development committee is a staff led group that focuses on creating meaningful experiences for our entire staff. Their goal is to create beneficial learning experiences that are connected to student learning based off of a needs assessment which is administered at the beginning of the school year to all staff members. Staff development is ongoing with a long range plan driven by staff needs and feedback. Our most recent focus has been on small group instruction, guided reading, and depth of knowledge assessments. Another area of focus is developing our ability to use technology to provide blended learning activities and enhance home to school connections. Most recently our staff has received training on developing Facebook pages, use of Smartboards, and interactive websites such as See Saw and Class Dojo.

Each summer, staff participates in a two-day inservice at which the first day's theme is 'Cultivating Community Connections'. In the past we have participated in activities such as community scavenger hunts, local business tours and interviews, riding our district bus routes, and creating activities to foster soft skills to prepare our students for college and career readiness. On the second day staff had the opportunity to choose from a variety of professional staff development opportunities to fit their professional growth goals.

After reviewing current effective instructional practices, PES implemented the Daily 5/Cafe structure. In order to efficiently run and implement this curriculum structure, staff were given the opportunity to visit and observe schools where Daily 5 was already in practice. After visiting the schools our principal provided the professional development opportunity for all elementary teaching staff to attend a weekend workshop in Chicago to participate in a Daily 5/Cafe seminar put on by the creators of this program. Professional development with this is continuous and opportunities such as gallery walks and peer classroom observations are always made available.

Additional professional development is built into our calendar in the form of monthly half day district wide networking. Teachers work together in large groups to discuss current trends or student needs followed by each grade level collaborating to develop plans and analyze current student needs.

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

PES is navigated by an instructional leader that sets a tone of high expectations and standards for the academic, social, emotional, and physical development of all students. Promoting and participating in teacher learning and development to ensure student learning is a top priority of our building administrator. An example of this is the before mentioned recent change our school has made moving from teacher centered classrooms to student-centered classrooms with the implementation of the Daily 5 / Cafe structure.

Our building administrator scheduled and participated in all visits to observe other schools using the Daily 5 (two of which were National Blue Ribbon Award winners). He worked with our teacher led staff development committee and other lead teachers to develop an implementation timeline for PES. He, along with staff, attended the weekend workshops in Chicago, conducted staff surveys on implementation needs, organized and participated in classroom gallery walks, provided several literacy consultant trainings for staff to ensure greater understanding of guided reading, a crucial component of the Daily 5. Our building administrator continues seeking feedback for additional needs. Our principal continues to monitor and evaluate the progress of this new initiative by conducting walkthroughs using “look fors” to provide teachers with regular feedback and ongoing support at each stage of the Daily 5.

The administration at PES works collaboratively with lead teachers to develop the capacity of all professional staff to manage data to enable teachers individually and collectively to analyze student work, to make informed decisions, and measure student progress and school performance. Staff development on the quarterly use of data boards to document and analyze a variety of factors involved in student performance is ongoing. Focusing on behavioral and attendance data, state summative assessments, and local formative student assessment data clearly identifies the target population for instructional interventions and the desired level of improved performance for all students. Developing a culture of collaboration while focusing on essential understandings of using data to make instructional decisions to improve student achievement has proven to be an effective means of strengthening teaching and student learning.

Throughout Phillips Elementary School there is a commitment by both teachers and administrators to continually improve instructional effectiveness. Our school community recognizes we must engage in collaborative processes that result in organizational learning. Closely linking school improvement practices to teacher development, administrator development, and student achievement has been a key to sustaining these change processes.

## **Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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After administering literacy assessments to our students we saw a need for intervention beyond what we were currently providing during the regular school day. We had been researching Academic Parent Teacher Teams and the importance of goal setting with students. We realized we did not have the luxury of specialized training in these areas, so we contacted schools that had already established Academic Parent Teacher Teams. We explored options and developed our own model to best fit the needs of our students and their families. Thus, Logger Learning Teams were born. These teams are a partnership designed to encourage a TEAM relationship between school and home. Through this partnership, parents are taught about the learning to read process, including reading levels, strategies and how to help their child at home. Parents, teachers, and students work together to set individual goals for each student. These goals provide ownership and direction in learning and help ensure literacy success.

Logger Learning Teams meet throughout the year with the same format each time. A handwritten invitation is sent to all parents. A meal and childcare are provided for the whole family to help remove any “barriers” to attending. After the meal, a brief parent meeting is presented in which parents receive data about their own child. Parents are given resources and information on strategies to use at home to help their child. Every child receives a book at their reading level. Parents meet with their child’s teacher to have the data explained and set individual goals for their child to achieve by the next Logger Learning Team. At each meeting, goals are set, data is reviewed and accomplishments are celebrated. Families receive new resources and children receive a new book. A big celebration is held in May to recognize the success of our students and our Teams. Additional resources are given to families to help avoid the “summer slump.”

We have a high percentage of family involvement (over 80%). With this partnership, we have seen very positive results with most students reaching and/or exceeding their goals and grade level benchmarks. Students who do not reach grade level benchmark have still shown significant growth. Parents are grateful to have a part in their child’s learning and students are proud of their accomplishments. The relationships built with families are PRICELESS!