

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

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

School Mailing Address 205 Crescent Road  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Beckley State WV Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 25801-3322

County Raleigh County

Telephone (304) 256-4585 Fax (304) 256-4576

Web site/URL https://ces.rale.k12.wv.us/ E-mail tblewis@k12.wv.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. David Price E-mail cdprice@k12.wv.us  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Raleigh County School District Tel. (304) 256-4500

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. Larry Ford  
(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**

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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

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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):
- 17 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 5 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 4 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 26 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/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)  
 Suburban  
 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:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
<b>PreK</b>	22	17	39
<b>K</b>	18	29	47
<b>1</b>	22	23	45
<b>2</b>	29	25	54
<b>3</b>	29	19	48
<b>4</b>	31	27	58
<b>5</b>	36	13	49
<b>6</b>	0	0	0
<b>7</b>	0	0	0
<b>8</b>	0	0	0
<b>9</b>	0	0	0
<b>10</b>	0	0	0
<b>11</b>	0	0	0
<b>12 or higher</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	187	153	340

\*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
  - 0.8 % Asian
  - 12.7 % Black or African American
  - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 75.3 % White
  - 8.2 % 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 2019 - 2020 school year: 12%

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, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	26
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	21
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	47
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019	381
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.12
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	12

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

Spanish, Chinese

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1 %  
4 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 47 %

Total number students who qualify: 159

8. Students receiving special education services: 17 %  
57 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.

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>3</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>10</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>5</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>8</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>6</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>2</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

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

	<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.	17
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	6
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	6
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

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>	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
Daily student attendance	94%	90%	96%	97%	95%
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 2020.

<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.

We believe all students must be exposed to a rigorous curriculum through the provision of high quality instruction with high expectations.

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.

Our school has been on a hybrid model. We started with a blended schedule then went full remote, and now we are back to a five day a week schedule.

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**

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Crescent Elementary is located in the heart of Beckley, West Virginia. Our area boasts a strong tradition of hardworking residents who want to better their families and community. We are rich in the heritage of coal mining, but with the loss of the largest part of that industry our area still struggles with redefining itself and the economy. Beckley's population is 19,000 people. According to US Census Data 19% of our population lives in poverty. Our students come from a plethora of backgrounds and socioeconomic groups. The West Virginia Department of Education reports that 47% of our student body lives in poverty. Our staff, students, and families rise above these challenges and truly work together to keep Crescent Elementary consistently performing at the highest levels.

Our school has a strong Leadership Team that has a student-centered focus. This team works closely to research strategies that can be implemented to truly grow the whole child to have the academic, social emotional, and physical health needed to launch them to becoming lifelong learners who will become their best selves. Our school family uses the bucket filling principles in the book *Have You Filled a Bucket Today? A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids*. This philosophy embraces the idea that everyone has an internal bucket that is filled when we say or do kind things or someone does or says kind things to us. The opposite, bucket dipping, occurs when we are mean spirited or others are mean to us. This teaches our youngest of students that our words and actions can have a negative impact on others in a tactile way. Our school day begins each day with a "Bucket Filling Thought of The Day" announcement.

The staff believes that time on task is the most important function of a school day and is driven to make the most out of each instructional moment provided. Our classrooms are filled with rigorous instruction that focus on the content standards for our state. We have utilized Eureka Math to lead students to develop number sense while not forgetting that math basics and memorization still have an important place in the classroom. Our English Language Arts programs focus on building strong early reading success through students acquiring phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. We have redesigned reading instruction to have a focus on student exposure to language rich traditional stories as well as factual passages that can spark discussion and writing skills. We strongly embrace the idea that STEAM, Music, and Physical Education programs strengthen the core areas which increases our academic success. Faculty embraces families! We know that family involvement is essential to our successes. Teachers have created lessons and trainings to help parents and caregivers to understand lessons in order to complete assignments at home. We strive to support our families through communication, trainings, and an open-door practice.

March 30, 2020 forever changed the way we educate children! The COVID-19 crisis caused all schools in West Virginia to be closed. Our staff came together to make sure students were fed and educated to the greatest extent possible during an unsure time in our children's lives. Our teachers quickly transformed public education with a strong focus on emotional needs from the start. We continued to broadcast our daily announcements using social media, taught from our living rooms and kitchens, and provided a physical presence during food distribution. As we drifted to summer and back into the beginning a new academic year once again, the need to reinvent school became an ever present problem to be tackled. The school leadership team planned social distancing measures, playground protocols, and breakfast and lunch procedures, and developed new instructional strategies to teach half of our students every two days while providing bridge activities to be completed at home. Just as we were comfortable, the rug was pulled out again and we were placed on full remote for two months. A true focus was placed on teaching for mastery of skills rather than covering excessive content. Our school has shown growth even in these very difficult times. As we move forward our focus is to meet our students where they are both emotionally and academically to continue our school's success.

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

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

The reading and language arts instruction at Crescent Elementary is driven by a deep desire to engage and educate our students through rigorous curriculum and focus on college and career readiness standards, while using teaching strategies that reach the myriad of learning styles our students possess. Fluency, phonics, phonemic awareness, comprehension, spelling, writing, vocabulary, and grammar are the key components that make up our daily reading and language arts instruction. Working vertically up the grade levels, all skills spiral and increase in complexity and depth of knowledge.

Each grade level utilizes a variety of instructional materials including, but not limited to the county adopted reading series (Journeys), Storyworks and Storyworks Jr. by Scholastic, Saxon Phonics, Evan Moor Daily Language, and the Accelerated Reading program. Core reading instruction occurs daily in every grade level. Grades kindergarten and first grade also support their reading instruction with a focus on phonics and phonetic awareness utilizing the Saxon phonics program. Comprehension strategies are at the forefront of reading in grades 2-5 with the implementation of the county adopted text series (Journeys) and Storyworks, as well as novel studies and integration of informational texts based on current events that help our students make real world connections. The Journeys reading series includes a library of Leveled Readers that teachers use in small group or direct instruction to enhance fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The Storyworks program includes paired reading passages, dramas, high interest fiction, and relevant up-to-date informational texts that engage students and make reading meaningful.

Crescent Elementary uses the Accelerated Reader program to allow our students opportunities to read at their own independent level and encourage growth by challenging them with weekly quizzes. Students are motivated to read and earn incentives quarterly based on goals achieved within the program and in the classroom. To enhance grammar, spelling, and sentence building skills, Crescent teachers in grades 2-5 utilize the Evan Moor Daily Language program. A strong foundation in grammar is essential to effective writing. Crescent Elementary teachers use the Six Plus One Writing traits to model and teach students the specific skills necessary to be effective writers.

Crescent teachers in grades preschool through first grade use the PALS assessment format to evaluate the progress of their students. Teachers in second through fifth grades use interim STAR assessments for school-wide benchmarking assessments. The assessment data is used to identify students who need additional instruction and support. Teachers then form skills-based instruction for small groups to meet the needs of the students. Interventionists work closely with classroom teachers to help provide individualized lessons and targeted instruction to at risk or struggling students.

The heart of the mathematics curriculum is the Eureka Math program, IXL Math, Zearn, and weekly math spiral review. All grade levels use Eureka's comprehensive curriculum and its intense focus on key math concepts to build a solid foundation for number sense and understanding. Strategies are introduced and built upon through meaningful lessons every day. Teachers challenge students to take the concepts they learn and apply them with higher level thinking skills to solve problems. The 90- minute mathematics block includes fluency, concept development, application of skills, problem solving, and independent practice. Teachers use exit tickets to identify students who may have struggled to master the content of the lesson, then small groups are formed for more personalized, specific instruction and reteach of skills. The Core math curriculum is supplemented by a teacher created resource, Weekly Math, which spirals through and lets students practice and master essential math skills and concepts. Crescent Elementary also implements the online learning programs IXL Math and Zearn. The use of technology creates a higher level of student engagement. It allows scaffolded practice at an independent pace to enhance and refine the understanding of concepts taught in the core lesson.

Students at Crescent Elementary receive high quality Social Studies and Science instruction in all grade levels through the implementation of county adopted texts, school-purchased supplements, Scholastic News magazines and informational cross curricular texts. In Social Studies, teachers consistently expose students to informational and historical texts, cultural studies, current events and provide self to text and self to world



connections through classroom activities and field trips. We believe students need opportunities to engage with the world around them. This year, teachers are utilizing virtual field trips to ensure our students are still exposed to those opportunities. Our students also participate in a school Social Studies Fair, winners at the school level then compete at the county and regional fairs. Cross curricular writing is also a key focus in our social studies and science classrooms. Crescent Elementary science instruction embraces STEM educational models including the teaching of coding and engineering concepts. We fulfill all College and Career Readiness Standards as students engage in hands on learning opportunities, experiments, and STEM Fairs. We were also fortunate enough to host an Engineering Professor from a local university to teach engineering design to our fifth-grade students. Crescent Elementary provides a combination of technology usage, scientific inquiry concepts, and hands on experiments to ensure our students gain the scientific knowledge they need to be successful.

**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 provides a rigorous learning environment five days a week where learning occurs incidentally through centers, group work, circle time, and technology. We engage learning daily with The Creative Curriculum, this curriculum strives to stimulate all learning areas. The curriculum goes hand in hand with the Early Learning Standards assessment that is a tool for observing and providing accurate assessing in the areas of social- emotional skills/social studies, language and literacy, and math/science.

During the Covid-19 pandemic pre-K made some adaptations and modifications that would ensure the safety of all our students. Pre-K communicated via Seesaw placing activities and work to be completed weekly. Pre-K also did TEAMS meetings with students twice a week, where pre-K attendance was exceptional allowing learning to continue while in a remote learning model. Once students were placed back into full week instruction students were taught to wear masks, social distance, and good hand washing. Adjustments to the number of students in each center was minimized, yuck tubs were provided where toys were placed to be sanitized before returning to play area, and lastly wiping and cleaning multiple times a day. We know that pre-K is very hands on, so diligent cleaning was essential to keep students safe and healthy.

Pre-K is the foundation to learning and the steppingstone to our future success at Crescent. We have found that early childhood intervention is key to ensure all students are kindergarten ready. Crescent pre-K has risen above and beyond to provide developmentally appropriate practices where every child can continue to kindergarten and excel.

**2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

Preschool through fifth grade students receive physical education, STEAM, or music instruction daily. Classes are on a rotating schedule to allow students to have one of the three subjects every day they are in school.

The STEM/STEAM teacher blends multiple subjects into her curriculum. She often uses a green screen to allow children to make videos about their assigned topics. Students have also participated in solo cup tower building competitions. Many science and engineering skills are developed in the STEM/STEAM program.

The physical education classes at Crescent are something special. The P.E. program is led by a young man with a huge personality, a love for children, and his job. His positivity is contagious.

The preschool through third grade activities often includes counting, letter, and word identification. He stresses cooperative play through his various activities.

During the COVID-19 shut down and ensuing blended schedule our physical education teacher posted weekly videos on See Saw and Schoology to keep the students physically involved. He and our music

teacher teamed up to make school public service announcements.

Our music program features another outstanding young teacher. She blends movement, mindfulness, and social and emotional intelligence with music standards and objectives. Students often play quiz games that involve moving around the room. One activity example is a musical obstacle course review game. In this game students move around obstacles set up around the room while music plays. When the music stops students stand on a polypot. She chooses students standing on certain colored spots to answer review questions.

Listening and movement activities promote mindfulness and social and emotional intelligence. For listening exercises, she turns the lights low, plays a song and asks students to relax and think of nothing besides the music. After students listen to the song, they discuss how they felt before and after listening to the song, or they draw an illustration to represent their emotions. They often discuss how music can impact your mood.

For blended learning educational videos for students were created to view on See Saw and Schoology on remote learning days with accompanying questions to check for understanding. The videos taught students concepts including note durations, rhythms, instrument families and high and low pitches. The videos included exciting characters including detectives, chefs, and superheroes.

She frequently communicated with students and parents through See Saw and Schoology to answer questions and comment on students' remote work. Due to COVID-19 she had to travel from classroom to classroom. This posed many challenges as classrooms are not usually set up ideally for movement activities but adjustments were made for successful classes.

Normally, fifth grade students perform an annual winter concert that involves singing, dancing, and reading of stories and poems written by students. This did not happen this year due to COVID restrictions. Students submitted videos of themselves singing their favorite Christmas songs to See Saw and Schoology. Students participated in a virtual talent show, where they had the chance to upload a video of them performing their talents to See Saw and Schoology.

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

Crescent Elementary provides academic support for our students in many ways. The needs of diverse learners are met through a variety of means. We have special education teachers working with students that are struggling in the general education classroom. These students have been evaluated and deemed to need individual instruction. We also have a reading interventionist that works with students that are falling behind or at risk. This gives the students small group and one-on-one instruction on the skills that they are missing.

In addition to these, we are at the beginning stages of implementing the Sonday System based on Orton-Gillingham, which uses intense intervention strategies to target the foundational needs of struggling readers and non-readers. This program uses in-depth direct instruction of foundational reading skills to rebuild skill deficits for readers both with and without exceptionalities.

Students who are working above grade level are provided enrichment activities through TEAMS meetings. The speech language teacher provides services of children ranging from language, phonological disorders to fluency and communication skills. Some students may also receive services from other providers, such as occupational and physical therapists.

Crescent also has a small population of Spanish speaking students. We utilize a community member who volunteers her time to translate during meetings with parents. It helps to breach the language barrier between teacher and parents.

During Covid all students were required to attend TEAMS meetings with their classroom teachers

daily. This course of study continued without interruption. Discussion and participation were encouraged for all and instruction was adjusted for each learner participating at the time. Direct planning and collaboration between classroom, resource teachers and interventionists were always in place to deliver instruction and material that correlates from classroom to classroom and build from one another.

Children attending Crescent Elementary who require special education services are served through a pull-out model. This model consists of two separate classrooms where students receive specialized instruction on I.E.P. goals and reinforcement of skills learned in the general education setting. The students only attend the pullout classes during a non-core curriculum time frame. These services are provided by two excellent teachers who go above and beyond to ensure their students are given the best opportunity for academic and personal success.

The teachers use the county adopted curriculum as a basis for their instruction. They modify their instruction using scaffolding to ensure the student is continuing to work on the essential outcome of the goal.

This model allows teachers supplement their basic curriculum with a variety of materials that assist in student achievement. Both teachers, during the COVID-19 lockdown and remote learning scenarios have utilized various forms of technology to assist their students. Daily TEAMS meetings along with an individualized program called education.com which helps to provide explicit skill reinforcement. Other programs used by at least one of the teachers include Nearpod.com, Reading A-Z, YouTube Kids, and Super Teacher worksheets. We are also in the beginning stages of implementing the Soudy System based on Orton-Gillingham which uses intense intervention strategies to target the fundamental needs of struggling and non-readers.

Our special education department uses the motto that we do not try to fit the children into a program, we find a program that fits our children.

The other population of special needs children served at Crescent Elementary are children with more involved academic and adaptive needs. The one percent children being served in a self-contained classroom for students with what West Virginia classifies as moderate needs. These students work daily or alternative standards in English language arts, math and science along with functional life skills. These children usually have behavior issues that also are addressed daily through social skills activities. The moderate program curriculum is based on the state standard for students taking the DLM test (Alternate Assessment). The curriculum used is Edmark Reading, Basic Picture Math, Reading A-Z, Touch Math and Touch Money. Super Teacher worksheets are also used to reinforce student achievement. Raleigh County Office of Special Programs has recently purchased an online program that was used during the virtual scenario.

Uniquelearning.com is an online program which provides individual activities that can be completed at home or during the school day. Weekly learning packets were also sent home with basic skill materials for each week. Daily TEAMS meetings were held to touch base with parents and students to touch base and reinforce learning packet content.

Some of the students in the moderate program at Crescent Elementary receive monthly speech, occupational therapy (fine motor), and physical therapy (gross motor) services. Before the shutdown and virtual scenario these therapists worked directly with the children in various parts of the school. During the virtual and blended weeks these therapists would hold TEAMS meetings with the students in the moderate classroom. The teacher or aide would assist the student with the activities.

All special education teachers at Crescent consult with general education teachers about how to modify instruction and materials in the general education setting. Our administrator spends time in the special needs classrooms and works with individual children.

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

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

Crescent Elementary School keeps students engaged by creating a supporting and family like atmosphere. Our students know they are loved, cared for, and supported by all their teachers and all the staff in the building. Teachers, as well as service personnel, including each custodian, cook, and aide make every effort to get to know students in our school. We pride ourselves on building relationships and providing a warm, welcoming environment to each and every child that calls Crescent home.

The teachers at our school have put in countless hours of work to come up with creative ways to engage our students. Students are offered praise when they have achieved a certain goal and offered help and encouragement when they fall short. Teachers and staff encourage all students to do their best and excitedly acknowledge children for attendance, conduct, and grades through school incentives. Semester Awards are presented by our principal for the Most- Improved student and Top-Munk student in each classroom. Accelerated Reading goal meeting accomplishments are celebrated with incentives each grading period. Art activities, student dances, and special prizes are opportunities that students look forward to each quarter. Students are encouraged to master basic math facts through an elite honor called the 100's Club. Students receiving a 100% on all multiplication quizzes will receive a special award provided by the teacher. In years past, Crescent's Student Council has helped to plan exciting activities for the whole school including the "12 Days of Christmas," taken ownership in decisions made concerning school events, and organized community service projects that request donations or collect donated items to present to local charities.

Social-emotional lessons are frequently delivered by our school counselor and we have adopted the "Bucket Filler" philosophy. Bucket Fillers say and do nice things for others which fills both the recipient's and the bucket filler's "bucket." This widely popular philosophy teaches our students kindness and respect for themselves and others around them. Each morning, our principal provides our students with a "Bucket Filling Thought of the Day" that encourages positive social and emotional skills. Our students are excited to learn and perform well academically because of our approach to supporting each child's social emotional well-being.

Our school continued to provide this support, love, and encouragement through the Covid-19 pandemic. Students in each grade level were still able to connect with classmates and school staff through online Zoom meetings and class groups. Many pre-kindergarten through second grade teachers created videos that included movement to engage kinesthetic learners and were able to reinforce previously taught concepts through games, digital lessons, and online class meetings. Science project tutorials were created and captivated students' attention through engaging topics. Classes were provided the ability to view a teacher's farm and her animals, while connecting with one another online.

Recordings of songs by our music teacher, encouraging messages from numerous staff members and teachers, and check-ins with the school counselor made students feel loved and valued. Students were engaged in rigorous assignments and easily able to continue learning in third through fifth grades because they were already familiarized with the use of technology, including 1:1 Apple iPad devices and many online programs. Reading passages focusing on science and social studies standards were enjoyed by students while providing meaningful instruction. Teachers created a variety of videos and engaging lessons to cover content standards and provided learning opportunities for students at home. Students participated in teacher created virtual field trips and used a variety of online resources to sharpen math and reading skills. Teachers encouraged participation in online class meetings and the completion of activities by sending mail to different students weekly. Students who were completing assignments and actively participating in class earned chances to have their name selected for the weekly "Happy Mail" drawing. Students were given the opportunity to reach out for support through Weekly Check-Ins that allowed for open communication concerning the emotional and physical well-being of the child. Even though students were separated from their classmates and teacher, they were able to celebrate achievements and support one another while strengthening their class community.

When school returned to the Blended Model of instruction, students were learning in their classrooms for two days a week, and at home learning remotely three days a week. “Remote Learning Stars” were celebrated for completing lessons and assignments that were provided through Seesaw and Schoology. Students were engaged with their classmates and teachers through weekly online meetings. Teachers were able to choose online programs that would assist in individually personalizing learning for each student, including those struggling without parental support. Learning from home became less complicated, as the content was provided on a level the child could understand independently. Many of the lessons involved fun games, cute songs, and exercises that helped to break up any mundane feelings brought on by learning from home.

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

Crescent Elementary does wonderful work supporting families, and there is not a single staff member that has not gone out of their way to provide some form of extra support for students, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Faculty and staff assisted in handing out meals, work packets, and technological devices to students. We provided an opportunity for graduating 5th graders to receive the ceremony they deserved at the culmination their elementary school years. A drive-thru graduation provided students with their diplomas and awards, while families could take photographs from the safety of their vehicles. This event was held at our school’s Partner in Education- Cross Point Church. In addition to allowing our drive through graduation to take place in their breezeway during the quarantine, they also open their doors for Welcome Back staff meetings, a Pre-K Mommy and Me Tea, yearly graduation ceremonies, and faculty retirement celebrations during a regular school year. Cross Point Church aids families in our school through “Bags of Love” on a weekly basis. These food bags are given each Friday to students and their families who are in need of nutritional assistance. This discreet program brings a smile to the face of numerous children at our school and ensures that each student can attend school without the worry of food insecurity and hunger.

Our school has an active Parent-Teacher Organization that works throughout the year planning special activities for students. This group runs from funds that have been donated by parents to make these activities successful. The PTO plans parties and celebrations provides numerous parent volunteers for our annual Field Day and makes even the smallest occasion more exciting. Balloons were hung over classroom doorways and streamers draped the halls to welcome our students back to their normal five-day school week. Social distancing protocols and COVID-19 guidelines have put a temporary hold on in-class parties where parents have previously been allowed to come in and do exciting activities and crafts with students, but that has not stopped the PTO from providing fun for the students in our school. They have still been presenting activities for teachers to do with the students in the classroom, snacks, and goodie bags for holidays. In years past, the Raleigh County Read Aloud Program has been a welcome opportunity for local professionals, parents, and retired members of our community. Each month, these volunteers would schedule a time to visit classrooms and conduct a read aloud of students’ favorite books. This is something that children look forward to and enjoy. Crescent also has parents that go above and beyond for our students in STEM education. A chipmunk father, who also happens to be an engineering professor at a local university, came in with three senior students to teach the engineering design process to our fifth-grade classes. On another occasion, he conducted science lessons for fourth grade classes and engaged students in hands on learning activities.

Many teachers have hosted one-on-one TEAMS meetings with parents to assist with student assignments and have made countless connections with families to provide technical support. Teacher made video tutorials were created to explain and offer “How to” assistance for parents learning to navigate new online learning platforms. Step-by-step handouts were created when introducing students to the video conferencing app utilized by our school district. Teacher’s hand delivered differentiated learning packets to children who were absent from school and made themselves accessible for nightly/weekend correspondence with parents in need of assistance with technology. This year, we have increased contact with parents due to the Remote Learning schedule. Weekly phone calls were made to the families of struggling students to offer additional assistance, if needed. In addition, each student in Kindergarten through fifth grade keeps a Daily Agenda and Behavior Log that is also used as a quick and easy way to correspond with families.

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

The staff members at Crescent Elementary work alongside one another to provide the absolute best for our students. Teachers are treated and trusted as professionals, ideas are respected, and freedoms are given to try new innovative methods. Grade level meetings support teachers and encourage opportunities for new ideas and collaboration amongst staff. Strong collaboration can be found within each grade level at our school. In addition, teachers across grade levels work with one other to ensure concepts and skills are taught in a consistent and scaffolded way. Teacher-led trainings have been provided for Apple Teacher Certification, to help in implementing a new online grading platform, and to promote new learning opportunities by using online resources to create assignments. Many times, teachers choose to learn these new teaching skills and help one another on a volunteer basis using their own time (after school). Any materials, supplies, and teaching supplements are made readily available by school leadership.

Raleigh County Schools hosts an Innovation Team that includes four teachers from Crescent. These staff members attend trainings and actively participate in learning new, innovative ideas. After the trainings, teachers are happy to provide other staff members with lesson plans, tips, and helpful instructions so these activities can be used across grade levels.

When the pandemic first began, fellow teachers taught one another how to use Zoom so it was possible to stay connected with our students. While transitioning to remote and hybrid learning models, professional development has been different due to social distancing protocols. Conducting meetings via Teams has been a very effective way to collaborate without gathering in a small space. Many of the professional development opportunities coming from the board office have been revisited and reinstructed by classroom teachers wanting to ensure their fellow teachers have the best support available.

From professional aid to personal relationships, the staff at our school is much more like a family than a group of coworkers. Every part of that family is valued at Crescent Elementary. When any staff member experiences the death of an immediate family member, is celebrating a marriage or the birth of a child, or is undergoing a hospital stay/procedure, the Thoughtfulness Committee does what they can to make that staff member feel loved and supported. Teacher and Service Personnel of the Year as well as retirements are celebrated by the committee. It is exceptional to find a building of professionals excelling at their jobs who are willing to help anyone in any way they can. Our staff is a team, and we all work together to make our school a successful place for all.

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

Crescent's principal is the backbone of our school and the essential component that keeps our school running so well. She sets high standards that are to be met by all staff members and students. She is respected among our school community; our students love to please her, and our staff enjoys working under her. Our principal provides support to staff and encourages students during classroom walk-throughs. It is not unusual to see her help serve food at lunch, monitor the lunchroom, handle disciplinary issues, host staff meetings, and serve bus duty in a single day, all in addition to her normal daily tasks. During the pandemic, our principal recorded videos of the Morning Announcements, the Pledge of Allegiance, and birthdays to keep students and families connected daily.

Our school also has a leadership team of teachers that assists in making decisions for the school. This team has really been put to the test this year with the pandemic and the changes that occurred to schedules and procedures. Crescent's Leadership Team, comprised of five faculty members, began the 2020-2021 school year ahead of other staff and faculty to brainstorm and create an effective reentry plan. Everything from cleaning to parent drop-off and pick up to recess to curriculum were included. This insured that staff members were presented with a plan to secure the safety, organization, and success of all staff and students.

We also hire using a committee of teachers in addition to our principal. This committee usually consists of someone from the leadership team, our principal, and an applicable co-teacher. So far, they have done a phenomenal job of selecting a group of talented, passionate professionals to guide this school through such a difficult, fluid time in education.

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

While most of our students are white or African-American, we do serve many families from various ethnic backgrounds and socioeconomic classes. To provide an environment that is welcoming and aware of differences, students are presented with culturally diverse curriculums including Eureka Math, Journeys, and Storyworks. Students receive age-appropriate news articles integrated into social studies through Scholastic News and are captive audiences during Read Alouds that introduce various countries, cultures, and religions around the world. Classes study holidays from other countries including Cinco de Mayo and Chinese New Year and watch appropriate world events such as the presidential inauguration and the landing of the newest rover on Mars by NASA.

Crescent Elementary has several Spanish speaking students. These students receive an education that is personalized to their learning needs. Accommodations, such as translation, made to assessments and assignments do not lower the expectations of these students, but support them for success. An ESL teacher aids these students and their families, as well. We have also been able to utilize the graciousness of a local Spanish-speaking woman to help with translating important notices, completing important paperwork, and any additional area needed. This has been especially helpful in navigating frequent county-wide schedule changes during hybrid and remote learning.



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

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The one key factor to our academic success through the COVID-19 crisis is communication. It is said that distance does not separate people, silence does. No truer words were ever spoken about education during this pandemic. Our students left school on a Friday and did not return. Administration, teachers, and staff had to scramble to ensure learning could continue. We took to our school's Facebook page to get out the first wave of information. Our state nor county was equipped to handle virtual schooling on such a short notice. Teachers called homes, created learning packets, and organized food pickups. Students who did not have transportation had deliveries made to homes. Our parent interaction was the most crucial it had ever been. The county provides our schools with a messenger system for telephones, this system was utilized heavily to disseminate information as accurately as possible. As a school we learned Zoom so that face-to-face interaction could occur. It is important to note that at first the largest concern was for the health and safety of students. As it became clear that school would not resume as usual, we moved to better technology, and academic progress became the focus. Teachers were in constant communication through Schoology, Seesaw, school agendas, social media, School Messenger, email, and the good old-fashioned telephone to ensure that families knew expectations and assignments. We refused to take "no" or "I cannot" as an answer. Schedules of TEAMS meetings were given to parents and local daycare centers to provide every opportunity for students to be present during instruction. It was through the perseverance of ensuring that clear, concise communication was taking place that we have seen continued academic growth.