

U.S. Department of Education
2023 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 15001 Mountain Air Drive
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Anchorage State AK Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 99516-4439

County Anchorage Municipality

Telephone (907) 742-5900 Fax (907) 742-5909

Web site/URL <https://www.asdk12.org/bearvalley> E-mail scherer_nicole@asdk12.org

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* Jharrett Bryantt E-mail officeofthesuperintendent@asdk12.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Anchorage School District Tel. (907) 742-4000

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 Margo Bellamy
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, leave blank.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2023 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 2018 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2022.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 or 2022.
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. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

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.

The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the current school year (2022-2023) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools. For charter schools: If a charter school is part of the public school system, information should be provided for the public school district. If a charter school is considered its own district or part of a charter district, the information provided should reflect that.)

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

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. **Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not for 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 in the school as of October 1, 2022 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 Students
PreK	0
K	53
1	57
2	56
3	57
4	60
5	57
6	60
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	400

*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):
- 3 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 3 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 9 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 71 % White
 - 12 % 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 2021 - 2022 school year: 7%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain:

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	22
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	5
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	27
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	384
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.07
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Korean, Arabic, Spanish, Russian, Finnish, Lao, Inupiaq, Ukraianian, Romanian, Thai, Tongan

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 6 %

Total number students who qualify: 22

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 10 %
Total number of students served 40

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 with an IEP should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

<u>4</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>5</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>2</u> Developmental Delay	<u>14</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>13</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 4 %
Total number of students served: 14

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 1

11. 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.

	Number of Staff
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.	7
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.	0

12. 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 24:1

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

Required Information	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018
Daily student attendance	92%	96%	94%	93%	94%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

14. **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 2022.

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

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

Yes X No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 2015

16. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

Bear Valley has a strong commitment to providing a learning environment that emphasizes a philosophy of sincere dedication and meaningful support from both the community and parents. The students and staff at Bear Valley live by the core values of safety, responsibility, and respect. These values are essential to preparing the youth of Bear Valley for their futures.

17. Provide a URL link to the school's nondiscrimination policy.

<https://www.asdk12.org/Page/7976>

The School Board is committed to equal opportunity for all individuals in education. District programs and activities shall be free from discrimination based on sex, race, color, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, changes in marital status, pregnancy, parenthood, physical or mental disability, Vietnam era veteran status, genetic information, good faith reporting to the board on a matter of public concern, or any other unlawful consideration. The Board shall promote programs which ensure that discriminatory practices are eliminated in all District activities.

18. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Bear Valley Elementary School has been a part of the Anchorage School District since it opened its doors in 1984. With the backyard displaying the beauty of the Chugach mountains and tall spruce trees, students are surrounded by a picturesque landscape that nurtures a love for Alaska and community-based learning opportunities. Bear Valley staff and community have remained true to the tradition of providing a solid, well-rounded program and were awarded the Blue Ribbon of Excellence in 2015. Pride in the 2015 Blue Ribbon award can be seen throughout the halls each and every day. Next year Bear Valley will celebrate its 40th anniversary. Over the course of almost four decades our school has maintained an emphasis on a philosophy based on sincere dedication and meaningful community and parent support. Bear Valley is committed to, and focused upon, the task of preparing its youth for the future.

Most of our student population enroll as kindergarteners and remain through sixth grade. Our low transient population helps provide stability among staff, students, and their families and strengthen our home to school connections. Our school serves around 400 students and employs 42 staff members. Our low transient population applies not only to students but to staff as well. This school has a family atmosphere, and the average staff member has been at Bear Valley 15 or more years. The deep roots that students and staff plant contribute to our strong educational foundation. Even retired teachers continue to serve our community as long-term substitute teachers and tutors.

Bear Valley Elementary has been recognized as a high performing school based on the State of Alaska AK Star Test 2021-2022. Seventy percent of students in grades 3-6 were performing at or above grade level in English, Language Arts, and Mathematics. According to the State of Alaska Report Card to the Public, Bear Valley ranked high for school success in Alaska's education accountability system. It includes each student group individually, creating a holistic vision of a school through two lenses: the performance of all students and that of their student group populations. Bear Valley ranked 6 out of 498 schools on the total school index score. Our interim benchmark assessment, Measures of Academic Progress (MAP Growth) spring 2021-2022 had a significant percentage of students in the average to above average range in Reading and Math. In Reading 85% of 3-6 grade students were in the average to above average range. In Math 80% of 3-6 grade students were in the average to above average range. At Bear Valley we provide students with a comprehensive educational program utilizing the Anchorage School District curriculum and Alaska State Common Core Standards. In addition to the curriculum, Bear Valley offers a variety of learning enrichment opportunities for students during and after school hours. The amount of teacher preparation, parent involvement and volunteer hours contribute to our overall academic success.

During the school day many services are provided to students including ELL, speech, gifted and special education services. There are also a variety of additional programs offered to students including author visits, animal encounters, Alaska Native programming including Native Youth Olympics and Dancing, explorations day, STEM activities, student council and music opportunities. To further challenge students and engage them in learning, we offer grade level specific activities including the Kenai Challenger Center, Kids Don't Float, themed centers, outdoor education, Artist in Residence and Salmon in the Classroom, to name a few. Our Bear Valley Parent Teacher Association (BVPTA) has also offered learning and social opportunities including Fall Carnival, Science Night, ice skating and Winter Carnival, Fun Run and dances. These enrichment activities are interwoven into the basic curriculum to create a myriad of positive and engaging opportunities for our community.

At Bear Valley we are fortunate to be a school community. We strive to set high expectations for students while providing a solid, culturally diverse instructional environment. Our safe, responsible and respectful motto sets students up for success in school and life as productive citizens in the Anchorage community. Our embedded social emotional learning routines encourage a place for students to understand their self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, and social management. We explicitly embrace and teach lessons on self-worth, growth mindset, healthy habits, positive friendships, recognizing diversity, problem solving, accountability and coping strategies.

Over the school's existence, we have had limited turnover in administration. Since the opening of the school

almost 40 years ago, we have had less than ten administrators. Not only does our administration take time to get to know each student, they are also supportive of staff and parental needs. Our current administrator has been here for only one year but has been with the Bear Valley community as a parent for seven years. The leadership of our administration has contributed to Bear Valley's high standard for educational excellence over the years.

Bear Valley Elementary continues to exemplify all the key attributes of a Blue Ribbon School since we were first recognized in 2015. Our mission of excellence in education continues to be the focus coupled with an environment of clear communications between faculty and parents and the desire to create an environment that unites our students, staff, parents, and community.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Reading/English language arts curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

At Bear Valley, we pride ourselves on educating our students by implementing the Common Core State Standards and utilizing the district Math and Reading programs to carry out our mission. Each year, staff participates in training sessions which keep everyone current on the implementation of curriculum and best practices. In addition to district level training, staff participate in staff meetings two times a month in which they engage in professional development and grade level discussions.

Our K-5 teachers utilize Cengage Reach for Reading and overlay instructional routines for phonics skills and vocabulary work. In the past few years, our staff has been engaging in more training and professional learning with our Instructional Coach surrounding the Science of Reading. This SOR foundation gives our staff the ability to provide strong phonics skills in grades K-2. Our teachers in grades 3-5 extend the Science of Reading by developing comprehension and enrichment activities for the students to begin to read to learn. Our 6th grade utilizes Springboard. Students are engaged in a variety of ways during reading instruction including whole group, choral response, individual turns, partner work, small groups and independent work. Students complete text dependent analysis and understand ways to cite evidence to support their answer in well thought out ways.

Our reading curriculum offers an opportunity for both reteach and enrichment for students who need specialized instruction to meet their needs. Throughout the reading block, students have the opportunity to participate in a structured literacy approach with modeled reading, shared reading, guided reading, and independent reading instruction. Students are given time in text at each grade level daily to practice their reading skills to become proficient independent readers.

Our writing program is intertwined with our reading program. Classes are given an additional writing block each day to instruct students in skills such as grammar, spelling and the conventions of writing. Students are given an opportunity to participate in writer's workshop with the level of difficulty and expectations increasing during each year of instruction. Students are given formative and summative assessments in reading and language arts. Students are given weekly exit tickets and monitored for comprehension, interim benchmark assessments on foundational skills and summative assessments in grades 3-6 for the state.

1b. Mathematics curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Anchorage School District adopted Ready Mathematics in 2020. The program includes a classroom instructed portion and a computer supplemented program with iReady. During classroom lessons students engage in rich discourse around math. The computer-based lessons are customized at each child's instructional level and provide re-teaching skills and extended learning opportunities for those students that have reached grade-level proficiency. Classroom teachers review their work and adjust lessons/instructional pace as needed. Math is taught for 60 minutes in grades K-6 each day. Students are given formative and summative assessments in mathematics. Students are given weekly unit tests on standards and foundational skills, interim benchmark assessments on foundational skills and summative assessments in grades 3-6 for the state.

1c. Science curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The science department in the Anchorage School District strives to develop in all students the science process skills and content knowledge necessary for the successful navigation of the modern world. Authentic science experiences are provided to students through a place-based curriculum and science kits aligned with adopted standards. Instructional approaches focused on inquiry and engineering design build student capacity to solve real-world problems that impact their lives and our community. Themes center around engineering design or scientific inquiry. Aside from our science kits, 6th graders participate in a

middle school model with a set science class daily in preparation for 7th grade. Other grade levels find time weekly to engage in science curriculum including guest speakers and the opportunity to utilize the school STEM cart. The STEM cart includes a digital microscope, circuit boards, STEM building kits, gears and connectivity kits, programmable robots and mazes. Our reading program also includes non-fiction text alternating themes between science and social studies. Science is assessed through quizzes, activities and demonstrations of knowledge. At the 5th grade level students participate in a state summative assessment each year.

1d. Social studies/history/civic learning curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

The core social studies themes for grades K-6 are history, geography, and government/civics. Through these themes, students have an opportunity to examine their lives in the world. Within each theme, grade levels have different areas of study. The social studies curriculum allows students to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to prepare them for their community, world and life. Students learn social studies through a variety of hands-on project-based learning opportunities including presentations, special guest speakers, field trips, and in-depth units of study.

In social studies, students are evaluated on the specific standard being taught using the success criteria outlined by the teacher. Assessment varies from content knowledge assessments, demonstration of understanding using project-based learning and participation.

1e. For schools that serve grades 7-12:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

Visual art is a component of our curriculum that students engage in for two weeks during the month. Visual art lessons within the curriculum are based on both the National and State standards; create, respond, connect and present. Some lessons are also created with classroom teachers to be cross-curricular, including STEM, social studies, writing and other components of the core curriculum. We have had artists come into the school and work with our students on installation piece(s) for our school. Our students also participate in Anchorage School Districts YAM (Youth Art Month) annual show at the Anchorage Museum and other locations. Artwork is also displayed at the Anchorage Schools District Education Center. Our program aims to provide students with finding their artistic voice and a love or at least an appreciation for the visual arts.

Students are also able to participate in performance art and music. Classroom music for students in grades K-6 occurs weekly for 60 minutes. Music classes offer students the ability to learn music theory and understand the history of music. They play percussive instruments, recorders and ukuleles at various levels. They learn singing and vocal art. 6th graders are given the choice to participate in band or orchestra throughout the year and students attend three 45-minute sessions. Our school produces a school musical each year alternating between primary and intermediate age students. At the end of the year we have a talent show which seeks to showcase all of the various talents within the school community grades K-6.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Students receive 90 minutes of physical education instruction each week. In Anchorage School District students demonstrate competency in three areas associated with the state standards. The standards are motor skills and movement patterns, physical activity and fitness, and personal and social behavior. Each day,

students are challenged to demonstrate their ability in all three skills areas at each grade level. Another piece of our physical education curriculum is a healthy lifestyle. We promote healthy lifestyles through the Alaska Healthy Futures Program. Students are asked to participate in two challenges each school year, one in the fall and one in the spring. Our physical education teachers are able to utilize the outdoors and teach students cross country skiing, snowshoeing, and ice skating.

Health classes are provided to students for two sixty-minute classes a month for grades K-6. The health class uses the ASD adopted curriculum, The Great Body Shop. Health education is rooted in providing students with knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy life decisions. Students are empowered to think critically and engage in activities that enhance their healthy choices. Student lessons are centered on the Alaska Healthy Living Standards. These standards, along with social and emotional standards provide the framework for academic success in health. Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) involves teaching and facilitating skills that students need to be successful at home, at school and in life.

2c. Foreign language(s), if offered (if not offered, leave blank)

2d. Technology/library/media

The Bear Valley library has a robust up-to-date collection of books and other materials that are continuously available for students, staff, parents and other community members. The Bear Valley library typically circulates 18,000 books and other materials per school year.

The Alaska Digital Literacy Standards provide a framework for leveraging technology tools for learning and participating in a digital society. The standards are organized into seven concept areas, by grade bands: Kindergarten through 2nd grade, 3rd grade through 5th grade, and 6th grade through 12th grade. The standards cover empowered learning, digital citizenship, knowledge construction, innovative design, computation thinking, creative communication, and global collaboration. Our grades 3-6 have a 1:1 ratio for students to Chromebook which allows students to use technology for Google Classroom, Google Docs and curriculum enrichment. Students in grades 3-6 have access to Code.org and Sphero.edu for coding. Several of our students are proficient in designing items for 3D printing. Students in grades K-2 are able to utilize Chromebooks for math intervention and iPads. iPads are often used in learning stations to supplement the work students are learning in class. Our K-2 students are able to use KIBO programmable robots to learn about coding. Bear Valley has a radio transmitter and we broadcast our radio station which includes announcements for the week, student stories, podcasts, and inspirational clips. Our radio station is also available weekly as an online podcast. Teachers have access to guest speakers and presenters via Zoom to connect to communities outside of Alaska and the United States.

2e. Any other interesting or innovative curriculum programs you would like to share

We have many innovative curricular programs offered to our students at Bear Valley Elementary School. Outside, we have an open space outdoor classroom with benches and picnic tables and our BVPTA is currently fundraising to create a permanent outdoor classroom pavilion for the 2023-2024 school year. This area allows teachers and students to study in the picturesque landscape that surrounds the school. Students are able to work on all types of projects including STEM, writing, and reading. Teachers have an opportunity to check out STEM cart activities to complement their curriculum including circuit kits, building materials, gears, legos, digital microscope, 3D printers, coding robots and maze challenges. We offer numerous before and after school opportunities as well including lego robotics, Battle of the Books, guitar, choir, volleyball, basketball and cross country running.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

We strive to meet the individual and diverse needs of our students through our multi-tiered system of support, or MTSS process. Bear Valley's instructional methods are inclusive to all, and every student has an opportunity to participate in WIN (What I Need) time daily. Through MTSS, rich data discussions amongst staff, and WIN time; students can and do reach high levels of academic achievement. Student performance is monitored through a series of data points. By collecting multiple data points on a student, we can accurately address their needs. We use Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), Fastbridge, iReady diagnostic, phonics screeners and the Alaska Developmental Profile (K) to assess student interventions. Students who are not making adequate progress in academic areas such as math and reading are brought to our Student Support Team or SST, and we begin a collaborative problem-solving conversation. This might lead to more targeted intervention support with progress monitoring above and beyond the WIN support groups. If students need additional support after they are monitored through collaborative problem solving, Special Education testing could be the next step. All staff can be seen often using their own time before and after school, in addition to their duty-free lunchtime supporting all students as needed with tutoring, homework help, and positive relationship building for learners needing emotional support and increased positive adult interactions. As a part of our WIN plan, we utilize specialists for small groupings, creating an All Hands on Deck atmosphere. Parent volunteers can be found in numerous classrooms during the week assisting teachers with tasks including material preparation, centers, small groups, and additional positive adult role modeling in the building.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

For students who are performing above grade level, a similar MTSS process takes place for WIN time. In above level groupings students are able to work on literature circles and reading analysis, enrichment math including pre-algebra in 6th grade and enrichment in other subject areas including STEM, social studies or science. These enrichment opportunities challenge students to keep rising above the mark. Students who fall into the 90th percentile or are identified through our gifted screener qualify for the IGNITE program.

The IGNITE program is an enrichment based pull-out program for gifted learners who have met the eligibility criteria under the Anchorage School District's Plan of Service for Gifted Students. The program is available to students in grades 2-6, offering enrichment opportunities that incorporate universal themes with classroom learning in alignment with the Common Core State Standards and goals. IGNITE students are in their regular classrooms for core instruction and attend IGNITE classes for a 2-3 hour session per week. In IGNITE, a certified teacher and students work on thinking outside the box, encouraging advanced learners that require additional enrichment opportunities. Our IGNITE program works on engineering, chess, coding, 3-D printing, micro-gardening, and advanced problem-solving skills. The IGNITE program also teaches financial literacy. Currently, Bear Valley has sixty-four students in the IGNITE program.

3c. Students with disabilities:

Special Education Services are provided in both inclusive and pullout groupings to support the least restrictive environment for each child. Our talented Special Education Team utilizes a variety of strategies and research-based interventions to support students. Reading Mastery, Corrective Reading, Connecting Math Concepts and Fundamentals of Sentence Writing are just a few of the programs our special education staff utilizes for students' specific needs. Special education staff collaborate with general education staff to support teachers in delivering accommodations and to help with curriculum modifications that may be needed by specific students. Social skills, study skills, and SEL is also supported by special education staff with support in and out of the general education classroom depending on the specific needs of our learners.

3d. English Language Learners:

Bear Valley has a diverse group of English Language Learners (ELL) who share a wealth of cultural experiences and language backgrounds. We currently have 24 students who qualify for the ELL Program, speaking ten languages. The ELL program strives to help students attain English proficiency in the four domains of language—listening, speaking, reading, and writing to ensure success in all academic content areas. Per state and federal guidelines, students are assessed annually to measure and monitor language growth and help guide future instruction. Alaska is part of the WIDA Consortium, a network of 41 states

dedicated to the research and implementation of high-quality language instruction. At Bear Valley, we utilize the WIDA Can-Do Descriptors to tie formal language assessment to specific classroom instruction. We have a .5 FTE ELL Tutor who provides language support to students every morning in small groups. These groups are flexible and tailored to specific student needs through collaboration with classroom teachers.

3e. Other populations, if a special program or intervention is offered:

Bear Valley students in foster care or experiencing homelessness or temporary housing changes are supported through our Child in Transition program. Our leadership team and school nurse work to support families who may need assistance so that students are supported and external factors they are experiencing will not be a barrier to their education. Assistance through CIT can include rides to school, school supplies, snacks and other needs that arise.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Bear Valley utilizes various strategies to engage our families, staff, and community to support student achievement and growth. This variety of strategies helps to maintain our positive school climate and culture of learning. BVPTA is an essential supporter of our school community and utilizing the BVPTA is an important strategy for engagement. Daily, parent volunteers are present at school helping students and teachers to accomplish various tasks in the classroom. Our BVPTA enriches the program at Bear Valley so that students have access to additional learning opportunities. BVPTA supports teachers with mini grants for projects and enriching projects for the school as a whole. BVPTA offers many opportunities for parents to connect with the school community including teacher appreciation, enrichment and guest speakers, fundraising and social events.

Teachers use a variety of creative ways to engage students. While using the core curriculum, teachers enrich it with creative lesson planning and field trips. Teachers tell personal stories to create classroom community and build relationships. In grades kindergarten and first grade, students are recognized for their hard work on a project each week with a Bear Paw Award. Work is displayed in the hallway on a recognition board. Kindergarten also selects a "Beary Important Person" for the week. The student is highlighted in the classroom, given a chance to share, and students in the classroom create a special book about each BIP. Kindergarten and fifth grade students are reading buddies each year and the students pair up with their reading buddy each week. They participate in fun activities each quarter and the book buddies help dismiss their Kindergarten buddy daily. This helps develop a strong relationship with a mentor student in the school. On Fridays, the principal reads a joke from the Joke Jar located in the office. Students, staff, and parents have an opportunity to submit a joke each week for the announcements.

Building positive character is important to our staff and community. Using the pillars of character from the National Character Counts program and SEL skills, students are instructed in these core areas and then recognized by staff for their exemplary deeds and actions. Teachers review the pillars of character and social emotional learning skills with students weekly so that students have an understanding of the skills needed for successful citizenship. With the impacts of Covid- 19, social emotional learning has become a stronger focus in the school. Each month a new social emotional learning skill is focused on through a book study with the principal and a school-wide service learning project. Students earn Principal 200 Club coupons when they are recognized for their good character efforts. Students are invited to a special character celebration upon receiving their certificate. Students share what it means to have good character and how they fit our safe, responsible and respectful motto by sharing their efforts on our weekly podcast for the radio station. Students are able to use their character development, leadership skills, and social skills as members of our student council. Student council organizes spirit days and service learning projects each month. Some examples of service learning projects include, organizing a food drive for the local food bank and contributing over 5,000 pounds of food, tying fleece blankets in classrooms to donate to the women's shelter, collecting gifts for an adopted school in Anchorage School District at the holiday time, and purchasing wreaths to lay on graves at the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson National Cemetery. These service projects help our students feel connected to the community in meaningful and engaging ways.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

To keep families engaged in multiple ways Bear Valley sends a monthly Bear Valley Bugle newsletter. Bear Valley maintains a Facebook page as well as a school radio station/ podcast. Teachers send classroom newsletters, and some have websites as well. Teachers maintain relationships with families by making phone calls, using the Remind App and emails. Parents can log on to Q, our parent portal to check grades, communicate with teachers, and school staff. This parent portal allows parents to interact with their child's grades in real time and teachers update the gradebook and progress weekly. Families can stay connected and engaged through parent teacher conferences. These conferences happen two times a year and in 2021-2022 we had a 98% participation rate in fall and 90% participation rate in spring. Teachers are open to having conferences anytime during the school year as needed and many offer informal conferences during pick up

and drop off. We begin each year with a back to school night and an open house. At the back to school night, parents and students have a chance to meet their teacher and other students in the class. At the open house, we gather in the gym for a presentation on the school's data and information, then move to classrooms for formal presentations by the teachers about their particular grade level, program, and expectations. Throughout the year, families are able to engage in the school community through our special monthly events. The Bear Valley Community Association (BVCA) offers before and after school opportunities as well as engaging community events. As a business partner within the school, they offer a before and after care program, and do special family activities to keep everyone connected.

Bear Valley is strong in partnerships. We are able to keep the community engaged in the school through several partnership opportunities. Aside from Bear Valley Community Association, we partner with other non-profit organizations including Girl Scouts, The Bird Treatment and Learning Center, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Alaska Resource Education, Boy Scouts of Alaska, Alaska Native Heritage Center, and Junior Achievement. We hold an explorations day where parents, teachers, and community members offer sessions for students to participate in. This gives students a chance to try new things and mix with grade levels to encourage community within the school setting. Partnering with our community helps set the educational foundations to prepare our students for success in life.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Bear Valley is supportive of teachers and other professional staff. Professional development is delivered to staff weekly via the Monday Memo, where leadership communicates important initiatives that are going on in the school, their progress and relevant articles or professional development. Biweekly, staff engage in professional learning through staff meetings and grade level meetings. The meetings include relevant topics, book studies and discussing problems of practice. Staff at Bear Valley are committed to individual growth and can pursue additional opportunities during ASDSA (Anchorage School District Summer Academy), state and national conferences and collegial cohorts for small group discussions.

Bear Valley nurtures the professional culture by offering gatherings monthly for staff to strengthen their relationships with colleagues. Working with business partners, our social committee organizes events for staff. During the year, staff are recognized by their colleagues as Staff of the Month. Using Bear PAWS, staff are recognized in the areas of putting kids first, achieving instructional success, working for the team, and seeing, doing, and leading. Staff complete a nomination form and several staff are highlighted each month on our Facebook page and by special award. All staff who are nominated are recognized with a Bear Paw in the teachers lounge. At the end of the school year, staff are recognized for their more "humorous" interactions with each other through "Lollipop" awards.

4. School Leadership:

Bear Valley Elementary has historically used a collaborative leadership approach with the combined effort of all stakeholders, principal, teachers, students, and parents. Our principal fosters this relationship and oversees the building's functions and programs to ensure all that occurs is aligned directly to our mission, goals, and student achievement. Our principal's collaborative approach ensures staff meetings, goal development, budget allocation, grade level planning meetings, professional development planning, student activities, and parent involvement plans are purposeful and enable stakeholders to have voice in outcomes. Throughout the year, she collaborates with the instructional coach and attends our grade level data meetings to ensure continuous focus on instruction, school goals, data, assessment, and student achievement. During these meetings, teachers analyze their current benchmark or progress monitoring data to develop and modify intervention groups for students. Staff work together to align grade level standards and instruction to meet the needs of students. The principal develops and facilitates professional development trainings that supports the needs of our teachers and students, and is aligned with our district's initiatives. She works alongside our instructional coach, using a team teaching approach to plan and offer relevant and purposeful trainings. Monthly, the principal meets with the BVPTA Board and BVPTA membership to offer guidance with activity planning, budget allocation, and fundraising efforts in support of school and student needs. These collaborative efforts foster a purposeful focus on our school mission, goals, and student achievement.

At Bear Valley Elementary, teachers take on a variety of volunteer and addenda positions in order to focus on the school's mission, goals, and student achievement. Teacher leadership is woven throughout the school, with teachers taking on before-school, during-school, and after-school enrichment opportunities. Addenda and volunteer positions range from facilitating foundations work to running student council elections. In addition to district-level professional development sessions, our instructional coach assists teachers with implementing best practices in their classrooms. Informal mentoring also takes place from veteran teachers to new staff members.

We value student leadership and offer inclusive opportunities during the year. Students in grades 3-6 have the opportunity to run for student council each fall. Student council meets monthly to plan engaging community service projects and activities. Students in grades K-6 have an opportunity to attend lunch bunch and student advisory meetings to share concerns or successes at their grade levels. Students share information with the public on our school radio station and podcast. Providing opportunities for student leadership fosters an atmosphere that helps to ensure activities and instruction remain student-centered.

Parents are an integral part of our school's leadership team. At Bear Valley we are proud to have over 180 volunteers enter our building each year. Our school has a very large and active BVPTA. The BVPTA board and principal meet monthly to discuss priorities and needs. The general membership of the BVPTA meets with the principal, teacher liaison and board regularly to determine the funding allocations in support of school initiatives. Parents are invited to meet with the principal for parent advisory meetings each semester to share their voice. All stakeholders are invited to participate in the School Climate and Connectedness Survey providing data that is used for strategic planning and improving school-community relationships.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Bear Valley is an inclusive community and students with diverse needs and backgrounds are welcomed and included. Establishing relationships with students and families helps create a strong cultural foundation by understanding our student population and needs. Bear Valley follows the State of Alaska standards for culturally responsive schools. These standards serve as a guideline for schools. Bear Valley staff focuses on standards for educators, specifically standard B. Culturally-responsive educators use the local environment and community resources on a regular basis to link what they are teaching to the everyday lives of the students. Bear Valley embraces Traditional Tuesdays, a day which encourages students to wear cultural regalia that resonates with them. Starting each Tuesday, a land acknowledgement is given with the announcements, highlighting an Alaska Native subgroup or other culture represented in the school. Our staff brings in members of the community to present on relevant topics. Our BVPTA brings in enrichment opportunities that relate to Alaska and beyond. Our outdoor classroom serves as a place where students can learn and connect with the natural world through experiential learning strategies. Staff organize field trips to make meaningful and enriching connections to the curriculum, community, and State of Alaska.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

Bear Valley Elementary was recognized as a Blue Ribbon School in 2015 and has maintained high levels of academic achievement each year. Our strategy of excellence is our strong community and family involvement steeped in tradition. Our students, families and staff feel a sense of belonging and pride at Bear Valley. Each member is value-added, appreciated, and contributes to our success. When you walk through our hallways, you can feel this genuine community connection.

Parent involvement occurs in all aspects of the school day. We have over 180 family volunteers. These volunteers are in classrooms working with teachers to help with multiple tasks from reading with students to preparing materials. Grades K-6 include projects each quarter that encourage parents and students to work together. Students are encouraged to participate in reading programs/ competitions throughout the year and parents help keep students motivated and organized during these challenges. These home enrichment activities support the curriculum and allow parents to be engaged in the learning process with their child. Parents help support field trips and in some cases drive students as necessary. Parents have opportunities to come in quarterly at each grade level for holiday centers, celebrations and potlucks.

Parents are seen as an integral part of the education of the students. Bear Valley Elementary is at the heart of our community. Set in a remote section of Anchorage, Bear Valley is not a walking school, students arrive to school by bus or parent drop-off. Our playground, ice rink, and walking trails surrounding the school are open to the public. These amenities make the school an inviting place for families. The BVCA operates out of the school and offers additional opportunities to families to meet each other and stay engaged and connected. Bear Valley staff works tirelessly to create a school community. Our BVPTA encourages parents to join at the beginning of the year and sign up for committees and special events. Our Student Council works to create monthly service projects that help to involve the parents in donations and community support. Staff work across grade levels and departments to encourage a cohesive feel.

Our staff has been deeply rooted in tradition and community. At the drop of a hat, staff are willing to help each other out in times of hardship or need. If someone is out for the day it is common to see multiple staff assisting the substitute teacher or in some cases, covering the class if they have extra planning time during the day. Traditions have been passed down for decades. Our low staff turnover helps maintain the consistency of the values that Bear Valley holds true and the continuity needed to achieve excellence by setting high standards for education. As the population changes within the school and Anchorage becomes a more diverse community, these traditions and expectations are still maintained due to the consistency of the staff. All of these pieces help to cultivate a culture of community and working together to support the success of each student in their educational journey.