

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name The Children's Reading Center
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 7901 Saint Johns Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Palatka State FL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 32177-1730

County Putnam

Telephone (386) 326-2762 Fax _____

Web site/URL
https://www.putnamschools.org/o/crccs E-mail jengland@my.putnamschools.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.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Richard Surrency E-mail rsurrency@my.putnamschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Putnam Tel. (386) 329-0538

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.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Justin Edwards
(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.

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

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):
- 9 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 4 High schools
 - 2 K-12 schools
- 16 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	37
1	40
2	43
3	35
4	39
5	31
6	32
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	257

*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
 - 1 % Asian
 - 23 % Black or African American
 - 7 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 61 % White
 - 8 % 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: 2%

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	0
(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)]	5
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	243
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.02
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

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

Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
1 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 42 %

Total number students who qualify: 109

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 13 %
Total number of students served 34

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>1</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>1</u> Developmental Delay	<u>5</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>27</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: 8 %
Total number of students served: 20

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 7

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.	14
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	3
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
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 18:1

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	94%	95%	96%	95%	95%
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 ☐ No ☒

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

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

All adults work together to promote high levels of learning for all students in a caring, respectful, and disciplined environment.

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

<https://www.putnamschools.org/page/non-discrimination-statement>

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

Students are randomly selected through a lottery. Students who are not chosen in the lottery are put on a waiting list and are admitted as vacancies arise.

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

The Children’s Reading Center Charter School (CRCCS) was established in Palatka, Florida in August 2003. Our school consists of five domes, all connected to make an inviting educational environment for our kindergarten-sixth grade students. Our school educates 254 students, and because we have a reputation in the community for high educational standards for all children, we have a constant waiting list of children wishing to join our school. Since 2003 we have received a grade of “A” from the Florida Department of Education eleven times. This is a great feat for our children and staff. As a team, we continue the vision of making gains for all students.

Our school is located on eleven acres of property in a very rural community. In 2021, the average annual median household income in Putnam County was approximately \$39,000, which was much below the 2021 state average of \$61,000. In Putnam County, 26.3% of people live in poverty, whereas the state poverty percentage is 13.1%. Not only do we continue to remain one of the poorest counties in Florida, we are also one of the counties in Florida with the most health concerns. We rank second to last in overall health and are higher than state average in obesity, physical inactivity, sexually transmitted diseases, and teen births. Thirty-five percent of children in Putnam County live in poverty and we have a higher rate of single-parent households, unemployment, and violent crime than the state average. Because of these factors, we often have children who are significantly behind when starting kindergarten.

The mission of CRCCS is to encourage all adults to work together to promote high levels of learning for all students in a caring and disciplined environment. We strive to encourage children to become productive, responsible citizens of not only our school, but the larger community. We encourage students to be respectful, dedicated, and honest. We encourage them to make changes and take responsibility when they make mistakes and not to resort to violent solutions. In order to support students emotionally and mentally, each student participates in lessons centered on social-emotional health. These lessons, taught weekly, are focused on self-esteem, conflict resolution, coping skills, mental health awareness, and body autonomy. In order to help students reach their physical potential, students participate in physical education classes daily. During these classes, students are challenged to learn new skills that help promote their physical health. From cardio-based activities to stretching, students learn new ways to move their bodies to encourage physical improvement. Incorporated into these physical education classes, there is also the opportunity for students to participate in health lessons. These include good eating habits, the importance of rest, and personal hygiene, habits that are not always taught in these student’s homes.

Highly qualified teachers, data analysis, and a constantly evolving curriculum have contributed to the success of our students. Each grade level uses a self-created pacing guide in conjunction with the Florida B.E.S.T. (Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking) standards to guide student learning. Standards are taught utilizing trade books to provide students with real texts to build their love of reading while working on grade-level appropriate skills. Within our culturally-diverse curriculum, students are exposed to the practices and traditions of many different countries and cultures from both the past and the present. This allows teachers and children to have open discussion centered around student backgrounds and encouraging connections to the world on a large scale. We have empowered our teachers to take control of their teaching and to educate all children to their highest potential. Each of our teachers has dedicated themselves to all students in their classroom, regardless of any special needs. All special needs students are educated in the regular education classroom.

During the school day, we provide students with activities focused on improving academic performance. These include differentiated small groups for all students, the Rocket Reader program (which encourages all children to read daily), creative and academic contests, and science lab (which incorporates hands-on activities). After-school programs like STEM camp, gifted enrichment, robotics, and 4-H encourage curiosity and investigation.

Our principal has an open door policy. This encourages students, parents and teachers to openly discuss any issues and share any excitements or victories. Children often visit the principal to share their classroom achievements. Children can also ask to visit the principal when they feel themselves escalating to a point of

inappropriateness. The principal attempts to defuse all difficult situations without referrals or prolonged punishment through discussion and alternatives. This has a positive effect on student and school success, as it encourages trust and working cohesively. The principal also works to build relationships with staff through participation in professional development sessions, team-building activities, and personal connection. This leads to staff that is able to openly discuss all issues without fear of judgment.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

At CRCCS, our integrated curriculum includes teaching science and social studies standards through the reading curriculum. Teachers create and modify lessons based on the Florida B.E.S.T standards. Rather than using a “boxed curriculum”, teachers teach reading through the use of trade books, which are aligned with social studies and science standards. Along with informational trade books, teachers also focus on incorporating authentic fiction literature into their lessons. Teachers design lessons to include reading, writing, vocabulary, and speaking. Kindergarten and first grade teachers place a strong emphasis on phonics as they teach reading through whole group and guided reading experiences. Discussions, group activities, and independent work all begin with the end in mind.

In kindergarten through second grade reading lessons, students are guided through a text each day. Students participate in repeated readings of the same text throughout the week. These repeated readings encourage younger students to make strong associations between the word they are hearing and the word on the page. This also allows for daily comprehension discussions focused on varying parts of the text and encourages students to dig deeper, rather than focus on surface level understanding. Additionally, students participate in small group guided reading in order to continue to build reading skills. These groups are focused on what each student needs individually in order to advance their expertise as determined by in-class running records and occasional Developmental Reading Assessments (DRA). In an effort to transition students from ‘learning to read’ to ‘reading to learn,’ beginning in third grade more independent reading is expected of students during reading lessons. Focus is put on reading more complex texts, pulling out meaning, and making real-world applications using the text as a springboard. In the upper grades, daily small group is focused on dissecting texts in order to better understand information and provide appropriate scaffolds to encourage in depth comprehension. These small groups are also used to assess student reading fluency and determine skill deficits.

All reading lessons, both whole group and small group, incorporate a variety of questioning stems, techniques, and assessments to ensure that students understand the depth and rigor of the texts and standards. In order to continually track student learning, kindergarten through sixth grades give weekly assessments to determine student learning and progress based on the B.E.S.T. standards. These reading assessments are designed to evaluate student learning in comprehension and reading ability in order to drive instruction.

English Language Arts standards are also met through the use of the writer’s workshop methodology. Teachers use the B.E.S.T. standards to guide students through this writing mindset. Students are taught skills and methods in a whole group mini-lesson, and then are released to write. Teachers provide support through small group and one-on-one conferences with students. After the prescribed writing time, students are encouraged to share their writing pieces. This share time allows for teachers to authentically evaluate student speaking and presentation against the B.E.S.T. standards. Students in kindergarten through third grade focus on methods associated with opinion, narrative, and informational writing. Students in fourth through sixth grades focus on text-based opinion and informational writing along with narrative writing incorporating their own experiences.

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

At CRCCS, students are taught each math skill in whole group lessons and then provided sufficient time for supported practice. This supported practice happens both in whole group and small group. Then students are encouraged to try these skills independently. It is during this independent practice that the teachers evaluate student understanding and determine further needs surrounding the skill. This can mean an entirely re-taught lesson or can be a focused small group lesson based on how students perform independently. Because our teachers have been empowered to make curricular decisions, we are in constant motion to evaluate student

needs and performance in order to guide instruction. The ability of teachers to change lessons allows them to spend the appropriate amount of time on each standard based on their student performance. Each week students are assessed on what they learned for the week in addition to spiraled skills. It is the spiraling of these skills that allows teachers to gauge long-term retention of skills and skill practice. This helps drive future classroom instruction. Additionally, our teachers understand that mathematics concepts are interdependent and build upon each other; therefore, teachers review material from prior years during introductory lessons to activate prior-knowledge and ensure that students have the proper background necessary to master the grade-level concept. This type of knowledge building and assessing prevents our teachers from teaching concepts that are not yet achievable by our students.

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

In our science instruction, we use trade books to allow our children to discover how science relates to our environment. In each grade level, science concepts are covered as students read trade books for the reading block. This encourages discovery of science concepts and provides sufficient opportunity to read and reflect as to how those sciences are incorporated into everyday life. To guarantee a deeper understanding of science concepts, many standards are introduced in younger grade levels and are revisited by students in older grade levels. This provides a basis of understanding, prolonged practice of vital concepts, and discourages students from trying to learn all components of multiple major concepts in a short period of time. Science concepts are also reinforced in our science lab where children conduct hands-on experiments to investigate using the scientific method. Each week children participate in an experiment that is connected to the unit being studied in reading. These range from short-term experiments to long-term, multi-week experiments. During lab time students investigate and write like a scientist using information gathered through experimentation, as well as research. Students are encouraged to discover science concepts and processes through trial and error, both in lab and during in-class experimentation. In recent years, students have been more able to expand their scientific knowledge with the addition of an agriculture class, complete with raised gardens, hydroponics, and livestock. All of these experiments and educational opportunities help the children learn how the science concepts in a book become reality as they observe, ask questions, hypothesize, and experiment. Science assessment does not stem from the results of experimentation; rather it comes from the use of the scientific process and participation in experimentation. Student scientific understanding is evaluated through reflective practices such as exit tickets and journaling. Basic scientific knowledge is also evaluated with questioning built into daily reading assignments and weekly assessments.

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

Our social studies curriculum is also taught through trade books, and focus is placed on local and world content, along with knowledge of how to apply concepts learned to become productive, integral members of our society. Social studies standards are taught with special care to connect these concepts to various cultures of people. The social studies standards are taught authentically and with connections that encourage students to remember the ideas for years to come. Many of these social studies concepts spiral throughout our grade levels, but each time the concepts are more in-depth. Teachers support learning through community speakers, videos, and/or field trips whenever possible, as these activities solidify what the children have discussed in class. We are fortunate to live in an area that has access to historically significant locations just outside of our county. We utilize this in teaching our students about Native American cultures, early settlements, and the local community and its leaders. This gives students the ability to make real connections through their own experiences. To enhance our social studies curriculum, our students participate in a contest using clues to determine where a community partner has visited. This community partner has visited various countries, and he brings back knowledge to share and gifts for students who are able to determine his location. This authentic activity has given our students a chance to learn specific map skills while learning about unfamiliar countries. As with science, social studies concepts are assessed through reflection and are often a portion of each student's weekly reading assessment. This practice of reflection continues to tie learning together for our students, contributing to long-term retention of concepts and the ability for our students to utilize this learning as they navigate the world.

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)

All of our kindergarten through sixth grade students attend 30 minutes of art class each week. Lessons include art history, sculpture, painting and traditional drawing, along with various art activities geared towards increasing developmentally appropriate motor skills. Various mediums are used, including acrylics, oils, water colors, and clay. Students are encouraged to use their own creative skills to interpret and complete art assignments. Additionally, all students participate in 30 minutes of music class each week. During music time, students are introduced to various composers and music styles. Students learn the basic pieces of an orchestra and learn how each of the instruments contributes to the overall sound created in a musical masterpiece. Students also learn how to keep a beat, match tone and pitch, and how to sing. Music class provides children with an alternative way to learn information through educational lyrics. Students also gain self-confidence through music instruction and performance. This life-skill carries over into the classroom when children are expected to present information and projects. Each of these arts classes provides our students with a means of expression and encourages creativity throughout other facets of their lives. These classes also develop problem solving skills that are useful for students in school and in the community.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Each CRCCS student participates in physical education daily. Organized games and activities provide an opportunity for our physical education program to emphasize team building skills. In addition to team-based games, students are also taught how to properly stretch and participate in cardiovascular-building activities. These activities are not meant to be of a competitive nature, but instead address individual self-improvement with emphasis on avoiding heart disease and other health ailments. Our physical education program emphasizes being active each day and learning how to incorporate movement into daily activities. Keeping students active contributes to their overall well-being, and it is vital that we educate students on the necessity of exercise and remaining active as the body develops. Health and nutrition are also taught through our physical education program, giving our students the knowledge they need to live healthy lives. Not only are students instructed on how to care for their bodies, whether it be through the food they consume or personal hygiene, but also on the dangers of alcohol and drug use. Students are educated on how their body works and why good habits are vital in order to keep their body and brain in the best shape.

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

2d. Technology/library/media

Technology is used in the classrooms to supplement the core curriculum. All kindergarten through sixth grade classrooms have a 1:1 student to device ratio. Children are taught to make slide presentations, research information, and complete projects. Along with the intensive use of computers in the classrooms, students also attend computer lab 30 minutes weekly to practice keyboarding skills and to reinforce curriculum. Our technology goal is to authentically use these tools in ways that students will use them in the future. We strive to teach our children to be confident in the twenty-first century where technology is at the forefront of daily life. We want our children to have the skills to be successful not only in school, but in the workplace.

Each class formally visits the library for 30 minutes each week, where our librarian presents a lesson

typically focused in either social-emotional learning or cultural education. Discussions are held and connections are made to books that may interest children. Our school encourages reading on a daily basis to educate our children, and also to develop a life-long love of reading. To foster this love of reading, children are encouraged to independently visit the library to explore books of personal interest.

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

CRCCS also utilizes other programs to encourage student learning and foster creativity. Morning centers are available for students in the library each day. During this before school experience, activities focus on science, technology, engineering, art, and math (“STEAM”). These activities provide extensions to standards taught in the classrooms while encouraging students to use critical thinking and interpersonal skills. For students who are not available to utilize these experiences in the morning, after-school programs are offered that focus on STEM skill building. This includes robotics, which is a program offered for fourth-sixth grades. During robotics, students work to problem solve and program their robot to achieve particular tasks. During the summer, third through fifth grade students were offered a two-week STEM camp. This camp focused on building, engineering and science skills and allowed for students to explore concepts. CRCCS also offers gifted school, an enrichment program for high achieving students. During each session, students are expected to research and create to answer questions or make connections. Gifted school allows for students to extend their thinking with deeper levels of understanding on science or social studies topics. Each of these additional activities helps solidify knowledge for students.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

At our school we provide specific focus on improving students who are below grade level. Below level students receive instruction with their peers. These students are also given supports and scaffolds based on their individual academic needs. Students receive interventions based on skills and strategies within identified academic gaps. These interventions are not only provided by the classroom teacher, but are also provided by the highly qualified reading and academic coaches. For below level students, small group activities in all areas of reading, from phonics and word recognition, to comprehension and text analyzation, provide students the opportunity to practice essential reading skills with support. Similar approaches are utilized for math instruction. Students who perform below grade level in math are given scaffolded assistance throughout each lesson and activity. Teachers use this information to guide instruction. These students are expected to test on grade level standards, but support is provided. Students can clarify questions or utilize various strategies to formulate a response. Each grade level is also assigned a paraprofessional. It is the job of the paraprofessional to monitor whole class independent practice in order to allow the classroom teacher to administer small group instruction and intervention. These students also have access to IXL which is a computer program that provides intervention. Teachers can assign students specific standards and skills. Teachers then analyze and track progress to determine the need for further instruction. In both reading and math, the demographic subgroup of black students performed ten percentage points (or more) lower than the overall test scores of all students. In order to close this gap, more small group time is allotted for these students. This has led to more practice of specific skills and has given students the opportunity to practice skills that were deficient in previous school years. This instruction is administered by our most qualified instructional staff.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

We also pride ourselves on educating children who are performing above grade level. We search for opportunities to enrich our high achieving students in order to provide them with a deep and well-rounded education and to continue to encourage learning at high levels. In daily instruction, students who are above grade level are challenged to explain their thinking and reasoning. This practice allows for these students to better understand connections from text-to-text and from school to the real world. Above grade level students are also given extension activities. In first and second grades, small groups are centered on higher order thinking, problem solving, and learning content in conjunction with skills. These groups read texts with real life implications and are involved in deep discussions about how the text or information is

impactful. Students in upper grades are provided opportunities to extend their skills beyond the grade level requirements. This often entails passages and activities that are created based on higher level standards. Students accomplish the tasks with teacher and peer support. In math above level students are continually challenged to solve more complex problems, usually in the form of word problems, to increase deductive reasoning skills. To provide further enrichment, after school programs are offered for these students. In these programs, students are challenged to research, create, and collaborate with peers to increase higher order thinking skills. All students are assessed based on Florida B.E.S.T. standards, however, teachers notate what students are able to understand and accomplish at deeper or more complex levels. This allows the teacher to plan for higher level questioning in future activities. Above grade level students are often asked to explain their thinking and self-evaluate their understanding of the standards. This self-awareness of strengths and deficits allows our above level students to reflect and goal set.

3c. Students with disabilities:

Students with disabilities are another subgroup of significance at CRCCS. During regular instruction, these students are accommodated in keeping with their Individual Education Plans (IEPs), but are also given access to small group instruction and guided practice multiple times a day. Within these groups, students are taught on their instructional level and are met with tasks that will extend their thinking without frustration. Teachers, paraprofessionals, and the reading and academic coaches work to build relationships with these students. It is these relationships that lead to students feeling confident in asking for assistance. Although our students are incorporated into the regular classroom 100% of the day, CRCCS employs four certified Exceptional Student Education teachers. These include the principal and three classroom teachers who willingly provide support and expertise to colleagues to troubleshoot potential barriers to student achievement. In reading, scores for children with disabilities were 1% lower than overall reading test scores. In math this subgroup performed twenty-three percentage points lower than the average. This gap in math has been addressed through extended small group practice and one-on-one interventions. Additionally, these students have been offered after-school tutoring in order to close the achievement gap. This tutoring provides students with another opportunity to practice skills in a smaller setting. Although these children are assessed based on Florida B.E.S.T. standards. Testing accommodations are provided to ensure that the children understand the questions and what is expected of them. Students with disabilities are typically tested in an environment apart from the regular classroom in a small group setting. Though this practice is not exclusive to CRCCS, small group testing provides significant opportunity to understand student thinking and evaluate student understanding. This information proves to be vital for the continuation of instruction and the analysis of deficits. Small group assessment allows students to feel more comfortable asking for clarification or assistance with their testing.

3d. English Language Learners:

CRCCS did not have any ELL students in the 2021-2022 school year.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

We understand the importance of an effective, positive school climate and culture, where children feel socially, emotionally, and physically safe. We want our children to be excited about attending school. Our school culture conveys that we have high expectations for all children, and we encourage them to be awesome, not ordinary.

Positivity begins as soon as our children enter the school. Students are greeted and addressed by name and every adult from the principal to the janitor, strive to make personal connections with each child. We believe in starting each student's day positively, and that this practice enhances their learning experience. It is a priority in our school to stop, listen, and make eye contact when speaking to our students. We want to convey that all comments, questions, and concerns are important, which in return makes them feel safe when sharing. We have created a school culture where smiles and respect are part of our norm and are a natural part of our school day.

In building relationships with students, we also discover student preferences. This information is used to modify classroom assignments to increase student interest. In math a teacher may use a child's name in a word problem or in reading a teacher may choose a whole-group text focused on a subject of high student interest. This willingness and ability to alter curriculum based on student interests allows for our students to feel valued and important and increases student academic engagement.

Students are held to high behavioral expectations at CRCCS. Students are rewarded for positive behaviors and are instructed on methods of altering negative behaviors. We create an environment in which students can acknowledge their mistakes and feel comfortable doing so. This environment has been created through years of cultivated relationships and honest conversations with students. By recognizing our short-comings and working on them as a team, we create an environment in which emotions are embraced instead of dismissed. These practices encourage maturity and social-emotional growth and increase student self-awareness.

Our school leadership has an open-door policy for students, which leads to students being motivated to share their academic achievements with administration. It is celebrations of achievements that encourage our students to remain motivated. In addition to academic achievements, students often share exciting information and events from their home lives. It is this level of trust that we aim to achieve with each one of our students.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

CRCCS has made it a priority to include parents and community members as integral parts of educating our children to their greatest potential. We value parents as partners in educating their children academically and emotionally. We understand the importance of on-going communication between parents and school and how it makes a difference in educating a well-rounded child. We promote phone conversations and parent/teacher conferences to discuss academic, emotional, and behavioral concerns as needs arise. To accommodate parent's schedules, we also communicate using methods such as the Remind App to keep parents apprised of pertinent information. We understand that open communication with parents is the key to a successful school.

We encourage parents to be an integral part of our learning community. We ask our parents to have input on our parent involvement plan, which provides guidance to school officials for overall school improvement. We also encourage parents to volunteer and participate in classroom activities. This presence of parents in our school increases student motivation and contributes to increased student achievement.

Each year CRCCS holds a Math and Literacy Night where family members learn about math and reading standards and strategies. This gives parents an understanding of what is being taught in the classroom so

they are able to help their child at home. This allows for students to have sufficient at-home supports to continue to increase academic knowledge. Empowering parents to help their child has made a great impact on our school community and student achievement.

It is important to us as a school to include the community in educating our children. We often have members of the community, such as the mayor, sheriff's department, and fire department speak to classes to motivate our children to do well academically and make curriculum connections.

Many local businesses donate materials and money in order to provide for our students. Donations of school supplies and backpacks ensure our students have what they need to be successful in the classroom. Monetary donations have been used to purchase new playground equipment and meet technology needs. Each of these donations has contributed to an increase in student success both academically and socially. Students take pride in themselves and their school community when new experiences and tools are offered. This involvement from family and community helps our children maximize their academic potential which contributes to overall school improvement.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

We believe that professional development is at the heart of a successful education for all children. By educating ourselves and reflecting on our continuing education, we have become successful educators who meet the needs of all of our children. It is also our belief that professional development goes beyond simply making an individual better, but should make our entire professional learning community stronger.

Each year our staff analyzes data and needs of students to determine professional development needs. The Coronavirus pandemic led to significant changes in how learning happened for students. In the 2021-2022 school year, we focused our professional development goals on re-incorporating collaborative learning strategies into lessons and assignments and meeting post-COVID learning gaps of students. Additionally, professional learning centered on how to track and interpret student data, and best practices for whole and small group instruction. Each of these professional learning opportunities was designed to meet the needs of our classroom teachers and paraprofessionals as they complete their daily work with students. This professional development has been successful, as we see students continue to make gains and interact with one another academically.

During this same school year, teachers across grade levels participated in virtual professional development offered by outside sources. These teachers shared with our staff what they learned and how it could be used to benefit the entire school. Allowing teachers to take on leadership roles in presenting information to the entire faculty increased investment in the school culture and contributed to a feeling of professional self-confidence.

By sharing our reflections on professional development and classroom experiences, we strengthened each teacher's ability to create an efficient and effective classroom environment. This contributed to an overall sense of success and accomplishment for our educators.

Our educators' main source of additional support comes from school leadership. The principal and coaches support teachers with lesson plans, teaching, and other concerns. Staff members are not intimidated and know they are always encouraged to address questions and concerns with administration. The leadership team continually works to listen attentively and address problems as they arise to ensure a continuously positive environment. This support not only makes them feel valued and happier, but it also provides a high level of commitment by staff. We are fully committed as a team to educating children to their fullest potential in a positive environment where they feel safe and worthy. Each of these contributes to a positive school culture.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy at CRCCS is that all staff shares the responsibility of leadership. As professional collaborators, we all possess leadership skills, and we each use those skills to ensure our school operates as a

cohesive unit. All stakeholders are highly valued and are crucial in our efforts to become an educational institute that cultivates a positive school culture and has high expectations for all children and adults. The principal is cognizant of the strengths each stakeholder brings to our school and capitalizes on those to improve the school as a whole.

It is the principal's responsibility to ensure a productive and focused environment for all. It is also her job to promote positivity and encourage students, parents, and stakeholders to discuss concerns so that a problem can be resolved immediately. With the quick resolution of issues, the school day can continue with minimal interruption. Her goals are to make all children successful academically and to ensure all staff members feel appreciated and supported. The principal strives to ensure that resources and programs are aligned with standards in order to promote student success. Flexibility in the classroom means that resources are often modified to meet the needs of the current student population. The principal vets new tools and resources to ensure alignment with school and classroom goals. The principal constantly checks in with teachers at weekly teacher meetings to address cohesion of school policies with classroom rules, procedures, and needs.

Within our administrative team are the academic and reading coaches. Both of these coaches participate in discussions with students and staff and are constantly working to provide tools, resources and support. Additionally, these coaches in conjunction with the principal provide extra support for parent conferences. This participation allows the administrative team to provide additional information and data while supporting the concerns of the teacher, as meetings with parents and guardians are typically complex.

School leadership roles have evolved and become more hands-on. Students are coming to school with more emotional and social roadblocks. Our principal takes the approach of talking through issues in a non-judgmental and non-accusatory way. Our leadership aims to re-teach behavior expectations, rather than simply punish negative behavior. Therefore, it has become pertinent to provide more adults for these students to confide in. This helps them to reset and continue their learning day.

Our leadership philosophy allows us to be strongly committed to educating all of our children.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Meeting the needs of all students is at the forefront of our mission at CRCCS. These needs include recognition of diversity in our students, parents, and staff. We aim to create an environment in which students are not discriminated against or receive adverse treatment as equity and inclusion are practiced.

We encourage inclusivity through the education of various cultures and by providing access to reading materials that outline the experiences of various diverse backgrounds in an age-appropriate manner. Within our curriculum we educate students on the importance of equity, inclusion, and respect through the evaluation of non-fiction and fiction texts. Students use firsthand accounts, fact-based articles, and other resources to learn the importance of anti-discrimination practices and policies for people of differing race, color, national origin, religion, disability or sex.

We also strive to meet the diversity of students by working to establish background knowledge. Often students do not have consistent background knowledge due to lack of access or information being outside of the students' cultural norm. Because our county is socio-economically disadvantaged, our school often provides unique supports for students in order to acquire necessary knowledge for academic success. This includes providing multiple means of accessing and building background knowledge, including videos, photographs, field trips and presentations from volunteers.

We also meet the needs of our diverse students by providing necessary supports. This includes counselors who discuss socio-emotional issues specific to diverse students. Additionally, some of our students have parents or guardians who do not speak English. We employ multiple Spanish-speaking staff who can provide necessary support or translation services so we can guarantee information is given effectively, and stakeholders feel they are still participatory in their child's education.

Equity is a very important part of the decision making process at CRCCS. It is the responsibility of teachers

and staff to ensure that all students are treated equally. We believe that every student can earn merit and exhibit strong work ethic as it is fundamental to the right of the pursuit of happiness. We guarantee that these ideals are upheld by providing ongoing staff training centered around diversity and inclusion and by promoting professional conversation surrounding equity and what it looks like in a welcoming school environment. This aspiration for equity allows all students to feel their needs are being addressed, and the validation of these needs increases student investment in their education.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

The one practice that has been most instrumental to our school's success is empowering teachers to take control of the curriculum and use what they know about their students and the learning process to make the biggest impact on children. We know as professionals that no one "boxed program" is best to teach any subject or grade level. It is up to us to make a difference in a world where all children learn differently, and mass produced programs are not our answer to educating all children. Our school is different in that we have always exclusively used trade books to teach reading. However, seven years ago the principal met with staff and together decided to omit ALL textbooks from our school. Now teachers are asked to research and develop ways to teach the Florida B.E.S.T. Standards to ensure all children are educated to their highest potential.

Teachers are often brought together to discuss how our curriculum can be updated in a way that will help meet the needs of our changing times and children. Our teachers take the initiative to dig deep, understand the standards and become committed to teaching those standards.

At this time, teachers teach all science and social studies standards through reading; therefore, they not only need to know their English Language Arts standards, they also need to know their science and social studies standards. Although teachers use trade books which can be reassessed at any time, they also use other resources such as videos, passages from various locations, other teacher made resources, and websites. This empowerment also extends to math as teachers work to find and create engaging activities. Teachers rely on their ability to find effective resources to teach all standards. In all areas teachers take the responsibility to write their own assessments, therefore, making it easy to spiral and review past information continuously. It is through this empowerment that student outcomes have improved because the children's needs are always being addressed.

Because our teachers are entrusted to take control of educating our children, they find ways to do so without progressing systematically through a text book or having all children on the same educational program for a prescribed number of minutes. We understand that allowing our teachers to have flexibility in educating their students is substantially more productive than using "boxed programs."