

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 [] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

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

Official School Name Stephens-Argyle Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address PO Box 279
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Argyle State MN Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 56713-0279

County Marshall County

Telephone (218) 437-6616 Fax (218) 437-6617

Web site/URL http://www.sac.k12.mn.us E-mail cmills@sac.k12.mn.us

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Dr Christopher Mills E-mail cmills@sac.k12.mn.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Stephen-Argyle Central Schools Tel. (218) 478-3315

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Steve McGlynn
(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):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
0 Middle/Junior high schools
1 High schools
0 K-12 schools
- 2 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	19
K	24
1	27
2	21
3	21
4	18
5	26
6	18
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	174

*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):
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 96 % White
 - 0 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 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	2
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	3
(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	304
(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: 1 %
1 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 67 %

Total number students who qualify: 116

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 24 %
Total number of students served 41

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>4</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>4</u> Developmental Delay	<u>6</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>24</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>2</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: 2 %
Total number of students served: 3

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 19

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	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	22
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	2
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	14
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

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 19:1

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	96%	88%	95%	94%	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.

Educational Excellence, Technology Exploration, and Global Understanding for Tomorrow's World Today

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

<http://www.sac.k12.mn.us/school-board.html>

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

Stephen-Argyle Central (SAC) School District is a small rural school system in Northwest Minnesota. The high school, serving grades seven to twelve, is located in Stephen, MN, and the elementary school, serving pre-kindergarten to grade six, is located in Argyle, MN. Stephen-Argyle Central is one of three school districts in the state that operates with fewer than 300 K-12 students and efficiently operates two school buildings. The PK-12 school system currently serves 315 students. The school offers a variety of extra-curricular programs at the elementary and secondary levels including: flag football, volleyball, basketball, a 21st Century after-school enrichment program, summer theater residency and performance, artist in residence programs, daily vocal and instrumental music, and physical education programs. At the secondary levels SAC offers football, volleyball, basketball, track, golf, baseball, softball, vocal and instrumental music, school musical, Trap, JETS academic competition, Robotics, Riverwatch, Envirothon, 30-40 College in the High School credits as juniors and seniors, artist in residence, and 21st Century after-school enrichment programs. In addition, SAC boasts a 1:1 technology program K-12 that provides iPads for grades kindergarten to fourth grade and laptops for students in grades five to twelve.

Stephen-Argyle Central started the Storm Foundation in 2020. The foundation has five current scholarship funds that have assets of over \$500,000. The Storm Fund, The Connie and Merece Champions Club Fund, the Andi Osowski Scholarship Fund, The Tiger Fund, and the Thomas Szczepanski Memorial Scholarship have evolved in this short time period to provide support for our graduate's secondary educational opportunities.

The community of Argyle is located about 40 miles from three regional centers: East Grand Forks, Crookston, and Thief River Falls, MN. A highlight of the summer months for Argyle is summer baseball and the local community celebration – “Meet Your Neighbor Day” on the last Saturday of June. The community celebration includes community parade, street dance, vendors, and many class reunions. The baseball field in Argyle is a major source of pride for the community. Through two Minnesota Twins Community Field grants and local foundation support, the baseball park has evolved into an outstanding facility that host over 100 games each summer for youth ages five to nineteen. The school is a center point of the community hosting activities such as Veteran's Day programs, Memorial Day Programs, Hall of Fame Banquets for the Storm Foundation. The Argyle baseball park is also host to Veteran's Memorial Park.

The community of Stephen is located about 50 miles from three regional centers: East Grand Forks, Crookston, and Thief River Falls, MN. A highlight of the summer months for Stephen is summer baseball and the local community celebration – “Stephen Days” on the second Friday and Saturday of July. The community celebration includes community parade, street dance, vendors, and many class reunions. Stephen takes pride in being able to offer a RV Park, golf course, swimming pool, curling club, community playground, and baseball field for recreation in the community. Stephen has a community performing arts center to provide arts activities for youth and adults throughout the region.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

At Stephen-Argyle Central Elementary we have been using the Reading Wonders curriculum that is an inclusive curriculum that addresses reading, spelling, and grammar. In addition, we have implemented a Response to Intervention program that includes small group instruction with the classroom teacher and technology software (IXL, RAZ Kids, and Accelerated Reading). The programs are used with regular education and special education students. The curriculum is directly in line with the MN academic standards.

The data proved that it has been beneficial for our students and in 2021-2022 we updated our focus in the science reading to update instructional methodology. The training is based in a series of online trainings that are support by our PLC/Q Comp staff development programs.

A typical day in our elementary school classroom involves starting the day homeroom time that is focused on phonics, language development, and comprehension activities. Depending on the age and levels of the students, there may be small group, large group, or individual activities focused on reading and language development. These activities are 20-25 minutes, followed by classroom reading instruction that focused on the Reading Wonders curriculum.

The SAC Response to Intervention program serves students in grades K-6 who are in need of extra reading support based on their STAR Reading, STAR Math, and NWEA Data. Students receive 25 minutes each day with either a teacher or para for the instructional support. During this time, students are assessed for deficiency area, and their instructional program is individually developed and supported with direct instruction and technology.

SAC does not currently offer a separate gift & talented program currently. We have successfully implemented programs based on Accelerated Reading, Freckle, and IXL Math for all students. In addition, we have program opportunities such as STEM Fair, Young Authors conference, Spelling Bee, Math Masters, and Creativity Festival. These creative programs are geared for each individual to progress at their own pace and continue to provide challenging opportunities for students.

Academic growth is measured three times a year through the Northwest Educational Assessment in grades kindergarten to sixth grade. In addition, students in grades three to six are assessed yearly through the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment. During the 2022-23 school year, 93% of the students met their AR reading goals in the fourth quarter and 86% for the school year. In addition, 82% of students in grades two to six met their growth goals for the Fall to Spring assessments.

Our school board believes that there is a need for our students to be prepared for life in the age of technology. Over the past eight years, we have progressed from computers labs to 1:1 access to laptops and iPads to support the technology software programs being used by students and staff. They provide significant opportunities for all students to grow academically.

The Stephen-Argyle Central School District was created in 1996 to deal with issues in small rural districts facing declining enrollment and school finance. The small rural communities of Argyle and Stephen value education and are committed to providing outstanding opportunities for all students. This is demonstrated through the recent approval of an excess operating referendum of \$1,000 above the state average at an 80% passage rate. We take pride in being held in high regard and celebrate with our students and staff their accomplishments. We strive to provide a safe and supportive learning environment while continuing to make improvements to our system to provide the best education for our students.

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

At Stephen-Argyle Central Elementary we have been using the Envision Math curriculum, an inclusive curriculum that addresses math computation, problem solving, and mathematical reasoning. In addition, we have implemented a Response to Intervention (RtI) program that includes small group instruction with the classroom teacher and technology software (IXL, and Freckle). The programs are used with regular education and special education students. The curriculum is directly in line with the MN academic standards.

The data collected from the NWEA assessments proved that it has been beneficial for our students to participate in the small group and individualized programming in the RTI program. Our staff goal in the Q-Comp professional development plan is to support student growth by five percent in 2022-23.

A typical day of instruction in our elementary school classroom for math involves starting the classroom session with a facts timing each day. The timing is based on individualized goals that focus on growth rather than on time of tests. Class continues with a review of previous lessons, reteaching sessions with students, and new instruction. We are a one section school so grades kindergarten through two are based in large group instruction and grades three through six are based in small group leveled instruction. Depending on the age and levels of the students, there may be small group, large group, or individual activities focused on mathematical development through the daily RtI program. These activities are 20-25 minutes in length, followed by classroom instruction focused on the Envision curriculum.

The SAC Response to Intervention program serves students in grades K-6 who are in need of extra math support based on their STAR Math, and NWEA Data. Students receive 25 minutes each day with either a teacher or para for the instructional support. During this time, students are assessed for deficiency area and their instructional program is individually developed and supported with direct instruction and technology.

SAC does not currently offer a separate gift & talented program currently. We have successfully implemented programs based on Freckle, and IXL Math for all students. In addition, we have program opportunities such as STEM Fair, Young Authors conference, Spelling Bee, Math Masters, and Creativity Festival. These creative programs are geared for each individual to progress at their own pace and continue to provide challenging opportunities for students.

Academic growth is measured three times a year through the Northwest Educational Assessment in kindergarten through sixth grade. In addition, students in grades three to six are assessed yearly through the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment. During the 2022-23 school year, 83% of students met their Freckle goals in the fourth quarter and 86% for the school year. In addition, 71% of students in grades two to six met their growth goals for the Fall to Spring assessments.

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

Stephen-Argyle Central Elementary uses Pearson Interactive Science for its science curriculum. The science curriculum is delivered through classroom instruction and supported with technology software applications such as IXL, Generation Genius, and hands on learning opportunities that are culminated with a yearly STEM Fair for students in grades three to six. Students in grades three to six are assessed yearly through the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment.

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

For Social Studies, Stephen-Argyle Central Elementary uses different curricula for different grade level. For kindergarten, we use Brainpop Jr., for grades one to five, we use McGraw Hill, and for sixth grade, we use Northern Lights, The Stories of Minnesota's Past, Minnesota Historical Society.

The social studies curriculum is delivered through classroom instruction and supported with technology software applications for research opportunities. Students in grades two to six participate in yearly research projects that results in a Living History Museum project yearly.

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

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

The School Readiness Preschool Program at Stephen/Argyle currently has a Four-Star Parent Aware Rating. Our program provides a developmentally appropriate, play-based learning environment that focuses on all five developmental domains: social, cognitive, physical, communicative, and adaptive needs. In order to ensure we are creating appropriate opportunities in each of these areas, we use the Creative Curriculum. We also use Teaching Strategies Gold to assist in our assessment. These are both Parent Aware approved programs that help both teachers and families understand each child's development. These programs individualize their learning plans. Twice a year we are able to hold conferences with families to share child development and set goals together, based on these two programs. During these conferences, we also begin to discuss transition to kindergarten.

In addition to our classroom curriculum, we also incorporate a variety of tools that address the social, emotional, and cultural needs of our students and families. In our preschool program, we are currently using the Project 11 curriculum. We are fortunate to be a part of this schoolwide program through the MAX Foundation. We also utilize the Little Spot of Feelings curriculum to address additional social-emotional needs. We work closely with our school social worker in order to implement these programs to meet the varying social and emotional needs of our students.

In our preschool classroom, we have been able to sustain a low student-teacher ratio with qualified teachers and paraprofessionals. This has been possible due to the support from our administration and school board who understand the value of early childhood education. We also collaborate with our district Early Childhood Special Education teacher who provides weekly early intervention services within our classroom routines. Together we are also able to identify children who may not be meeting their developmental milestones through Help Me Grow and Early Childhood Screening.

Our preschool program promotes healthy living by providing a balanced breakfast and lunch at school. Our preschoolers also benefit from daily physical activity with our licensed physical education (PE) teacher each day. They also get daily opportunities for gross motor exploration during recess either in the gym or on the school playground. We also collaborate with the occupational therapist to provide opportunities for sensory input and regulation as well as fine motor modifications.

Parent involvement is another key component of our preschool program. We communicate with parents daily and involve families whenever possible. Parents often join us in the classroom to share their expertise with our class. They also join us for off-site field trips throughout the school year. For example, this year, we were able to invite our local fire department to discuss fire safety. We also had the grandfather of one of our students share his experience as a pilot. We were able to participate in three field trips to the pumpkin patch, dental office, and bowling alley. In addition to collaborating with other staff and parents, we also partner with our sixth grade students for a variety of activities throughout the school year. They have been able to work together with our PE teacher to assist our preschoolers during gym, help with bus safety and join us in the classroom for STEM projects and reading as well. All these pieces help us to build a preschool program that offers high quality learning through a variety of activities. Within these activities, we strive to promote social engagement, independence, curiosity, and a love for learning which will provide them with a strong foundation as they continue through school.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

Stephen-Argyle Central Elementary offers various art programs. There is Summer Safari residency of performing arts, a yearly program that serves twenty-five to thirty-five kindergarten to six students. It offers a drama club – to provide a performing arts program for students in grades three to six, with- 25-40

participants each year.

Lastly, we offer an Artist in Residency program, which serves students from kindergarten to sixth grade for four to five days per year. The program has - one-hour sessions each day.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Students in pre-kindergarten through sixth grade have thirty minutes of daily physical education. In addition, students in grades three to six participate in health and nutrition classes for forty-five days each year.

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

2d. Technology/library/media

Students at Stephen-Argyle Central Elementary have access to 1:1 technology, from with kindergarten to fourth grade students receiving an iPad, and students in grades five and six each receiving a Laptop.. - Students in kindergarten to grade six have thirty minutes of structured library access weekly, and students in grades three to six have open library time daily during the school day..

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

Stephen-Argyle Central provide a daily after-school enrichment program that provides academic support, academic enrichment, and social/emotional development opportunities.

Project 11 is a mental health intervention program that is implemented in grades kindergarten to twelve with our school system.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Staff discusses the needs of students that have been identified as performing below grade level at our bi-weekly Student Assistance Team (SAT) meetings. In many cases, the first identifying data for performing below grade level are from K-6 Northwest Evaluation Assessment given in the fall, winter, and spring each year. In addition to this assessment, a dyslexia screener is given to all kindergarten through third grade students each year. If progress is not made during the year, a student will be referred back to the SAT team for additional interventions and possible special education evaluation referral.

Our SAT team meets bi-weekly as a kindergarten through sixth grade team of representatives and specialists (school social worker, special education staff, and building administrators). Students are evaluated in academic, social, and emotional areas of concern. Interventions are recommended to teaching staff who has identified students in need. The interventions are recommended for six weeks and then additional assessments take place. If there are two or more failed interventions, the student is referred back to the SAT team for additional interventions and possible special education evaluation referral.

If the student does qualify through the SAT team process to move forward with potentially being a special education student, a referral will be made through the SAT team. The parent is contacted by general education and special education teacher about the additional referral beyond the present interventions. A pre-evaluation meeting is held to plan the student evaluation. There are 30 school days to complete the evaluation testing. A final determination meeting will be held with the evaluation team to determine qualification for special education and plans for services.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

We do not have a formal program for students that are performing above grade level. We focus on differentiating instruction to challenge all students through the classroom curriculum. Students are provided opportunities to extend learning in Accelerated Reading program, Young Author's conference, accelerate software options to enhance learning in reading and math, and participation in the Creativity Festival.

SAC used the Accelerated to challenge all students at their reading levels and implement four different goal periods. At the end of each goal period, students who accomplish their goals are rewarded with schoolwide celebration activity. Schoolwide incentives include a movie, water park, in-house bingo activity, and community pool/park trip. The celebration activities support and motivate students to reach their goals. After the goal period ends, STAR tests are given to set new goals for the next quarter.

IXL Math and Freckle Math are self-paced math programs that allowed students the opportunity to work at their own levels to further math skills and develop skills to meet the state standards. The additional practice supports teachers knowledge of student skills and the needs for re-teaching of math standard areas. IXL and Freckle math have worked well with student individualized plans.

3c. Students with disabilities:

Students with disabilities are served in and out of the classroom by highly qualified certified and support staff. They deal with multiple disability areas including Learning disabilities (LD), Emotional Behavioral Disorders (EBD), Mild Mentally Disabled (MMD), and Other Health Impaired (OHI). The special education teacher manages approximately 15-20 students on her caseload. In addition, contracted staff offers services in Speech, Early Childhood Special Education, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and Autism. These staff members are employed by the Area Special Education Cooperative and provide service to students as specified in their Individualized Education Program (IEP). All student programming is individualized and driven by the team-developed IEP.

Students are served by paraprofessional as part of their support in the IEP. Paraprofessional's job responsibilities change each year depending on student needs, grade level needs, and priority of disability areas. Most paraprofessionals support student development in the core academic areas. They work with students individually and in small groups.

In addition, SAC supports student and staff with a full-time school social worker, who works with students individually and in small groups addressing social and emotional areas of growth for students.

3d. English Language Learners:

Students are served through small group learning plan, supported with technology programs to enhance learning opportunities. We are very fortunate to have two bi-lingual support staff to work with our ELL population.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Stephen-Argyle Central works diligently to provide a positive environment that focuses on the growth and development in all social, emotional, and learning areas. Students are recognized regularly for achievements academically and behaviorally. We host a quarter awards program that recognizes students for leadership, academic achievement, meeting classroom and school expectations, and displaying respect and appreciation for peers and staff.

We have successfully implemented programs based on Freckle and IXL Math for all students. In addition, we have program opportunities such as STEM Fair, Young Authors conference, Spelling Bee, Math Masters, and Creativity Festival. These creative programs are geared for each individual to progress at their own pace and continue to provide challenging opportunities for students.

Students have the opportunity to participate in flag football, volleyball, basketball, archery, snow shoeing, cooking classes, visual and performing arts, track and field, golf, summer, swimming pool, baseball and softball. All these activities are sponsored through our community education program.

We have activities quarterly as well that motivate and engage students such as field trip to science museum, movies, and at the end of the year a trip to a swim park, and in-house bingo activities.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Stephen-Argyle Central works to develop relationships with families and community members through community Bingo nights, student volunteer activities such as senior meal deliveries, Earth Day community clean-up, food self-collections, Veteran's and Memorial Day programs in the school, and other community volunteer activities by students and staff.

We currently have a parent advisory committee that meets twice each year to review school academic data, activities and opportunities for students, and areas of improvement for our school system as a whole. In addition, our Pre-School program and Early Childhood Family Education program have an established advisory committee that meets three times per year to review the program and family engagement opportunities.

Parents are encouraged to visit our school building for activities, and we welcome parents and grandparents for lunch with our students on a regular basis. We have strong partnerships with our city leaders, local Lions groups, American Legion's, and business community. We host Memorial Day programs each year and open the school buildings for the community "Meet Your Neighbor Day" celebration in June.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Professional development is a major priority of Stephen-Argyle Central. The school district participates in the state of Minnesota Q-Comp program which supports monthly school early-outs for professional development and weekly PLC opportunities for staff in small groups. Two percent of the our state aide is set aside to support professional development opportunities.

An important part of our staff development activities is a peer review program, a mentorship program, and professional goals setting. All certified staff visits two classrooms within the district and one classroom outside of the district as part of their professional development and peer review program. All staff members have a mentor teacher assigned to ensure that all staff members have a professional colleague to communicate with at our sites. Each staff member completes two professional and one personal goal for the school year as part of our Q-Comp professional development process.

Staff members are supported to apply for up to 40 hours each summer of professional development time to

work on curriculum and classroom initiatives that support growth and development of students and staff. We also provide two days each August for technology training for all staff. The training is a mix of small group and individualized training to support the professional development of all staff members.

Staff Wellness program is in place to support all building staff. A district committee develops and facilitates monthly themes to support staff. They have brought in massages for staff, facilitated wellness activities that include workout Wednesdays, step challenge, and water challenges. Mental Health Mondays brings motivational messages to all staff, which has also been a terrific way to support staff.

4. School Leadership:

As a small school, our school leadership positions are very collaborative and wear many hats during the year. Our superintendent and dean of students serve as the primary administrators in the pre-kindergarten-six elementary building. Our school leadership model is centered in our mission and vision.

Our vision is "Educational Excellence, Technology Exploration, and Global Understanding for Tomorrow's World Today." Students will strive to reach their full potential of academic and social excellence, and demonstrate personal accountability, parents will be responsible to set high expectations and provide structure and guidance to maximize student potential; and they will be accountable for involvement and communication in their child's educational and social growth. Staff will strive to meet individual needs by individualizing instruction, and will provide a challenging and stimulating curriculum that sets high expectations for all students.

Community support is vital to student and school success and community and school partnerships are priority relationships.

SAC is supported by a full-time superintendent and full-time Dean of Students. In addition, a leadership team is comprised of three staff members; the superintendent and the Dean of Students meet monthly to review activities and make plans for upcoming activities and celebrations.

The superintendent is responsible for all certified staff and the building safety and security. The superintendent is responsible for personnel evaluation, staff development, and curriculum facilitation.

The Dean of Students is responsible for all support staff, students, and the daily activities that happen in the building. The Dean of Students facilitates the SAT Team, leads PLC trainings, and facilitates special education program.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Staff members have been immersed in training and strategies to increase cultural awareness, equitable opportunities, and respect in their classrooms and our school for the past five years. We have focused on five strategies. 1) Build meaningful relationships with all students, and staff has mentorship meetings with students quarterly to generate conversations that are beyond the academic expectations of the classroom; 2) make learning real and teach strategies to activate student personal and families experiences to engage and motivate students interests; 3) individualize assessment plans so students are encouraged to demonstrate mastery of topics through multiple means throughout the school year; 4) classroom is student driven to ensure an environment driven by student interests where all students have the opportunity to work with classroom staff to develop theme based learning, and 5) staff works with students to develop classroom expectations that focus on respect of everyone. Students are encouraged to question to learn. Building expectations are posted throughout the building "The Storm Way."

In our rural areas we do not have a very diverse population. We are approximately 91% Caucasian, 4% Hispanic, and 5% identify as multi racial or other. Our diversity is seen in the economic status of our community. We have 42% of our kindergarten through sixth grade students qualifying for Free & Reduced price meals.

Our school social worker has facilitated a weekend backpack program through our food service program and community donations. The program sends food home each weekend to assist students and families. The program serves 10-15 families each weekend and holidays. Families are very thankful for the assistance.

Mental health services for students, staff, and families is a critical need in our region. We have worked to increase services through the Marshall County, Alluma, Sanford Mental Health services, and school social worker and school leadership team. The needs are very diverse for students, staff, and families and the partnerships developed provide a diverse level of services for all of our stakeholders.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

"It takes a village to raise a child!" The communities of Argyle and Stephen have an incredible dedication to this concept. The communities of Argyle and Stephen are incredibly invested in the families of the community. This is very visible in the dedication and support provided by community civic organizations, churches, local business, and the extended alumni that support our Storm Foundation.

The most instrumental strategy that we implemented is the expectations of our community - "The Storm Way!" High expectations by staff, parents, and community members for behavior, achievement, and engagement have an incredible impact on the youth in our school system and our staff. We have posted signs throughout the building highlight this focus, and we also started a scholarship foundation that is focused on the ideals of the "The Storm Way!" This movement has been driven in the community and has produced a great deal of engagement from families and community stakeholders.