

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

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

School Mailing Address 5701 Benton Avenue South
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Edina State MN Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 55436-2501

County Hennepin County

Telephone (952) 848-4700 Fax (952) 848-4701

Web site/URL <https://countryside.edinaschools.org> E-mail karen.bergman@edinaschools.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. Stacie Stanley E-mail stacie.stanley@edinaschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Edina Public School District Tel. (952) 848-3900

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 Ms. Erica Allenburg
(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):
- 7 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
2 Middle/Junior high schools
2 High schools
0 K-12 schools
- 11 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	119
1	95
2	90
3	106
4	94
5	103
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	607

*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):
- 0.5 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 5.1 % Asian
 - 10.4 % Black or African American
 - 7.2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 70.7 % White
 - 6.1 % 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: 8%

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	11
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	35
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	46
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	607
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.08
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	8

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

Amharic, Farsi, French, Hindi, Korean, Mandarin, Somali, Spanish, Swahili (Kiswahili), Tibetan, Urdu

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 5 %

31 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 17 %

Total number students who qualify: 105

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 15 %
Total number of students served 89

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>15</u> Autism	<u>2</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>3</u> Deafness	<u>3</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>4</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>4</u> Developmental Delay	<u>10</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>10</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>34</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>4</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: 15

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 12

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.	27
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	22
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	27
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	7

12. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 24:1

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

Required Information	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018
Daily student attendance	96%	98%	97%	96%	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.

Edina Public Schools and Countryside Elementary School are a dynamic learning community delivering educational excellence and preparing all students to realize their full potential.

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

<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1652817830/edinaschoolsorg/lgxmlqydqrxjkmnesvzl/522.pdf>

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

Our vision at Edina Public Schools (EPS) is that we believe each student will discover their possibilities and thrive. Edina Public Schools is a dynamic learning community delivering educational excellence and preparing all students to realize their full potential. Through academics, activities, and opportunities, we encourage creativity, foster curiosity, and develop critical thinking skills. We support every student's educational journey by creating a caring and inclusive school culture that supports the whole student.

Edina Public Schools advances its continuous improvement strategies while providing consistent academic quality that has been a hallmark of the district for decades. To maintain the high-quality education our community has come to expect, the current Strategic Plan outlines our goals and priority strategies. These five priorities include advancing academic excellence (growth and readiness), ensuring an equitable and inclusive school culture, fostering a positive learning environment and whole student support, developing leadership throughout the district, and engaging our schools, families, and the community. Sustaining this quality and reputation into the future can only be achieved by evolving to meet the diverse needs of students, who will live and work in a world that is constantly changing. That has been, and will continue to be, the definition of excellence in Edina.

Edina Public Schools (EPS) serves a large portion of the City of Edina, a first-tier Minneapolis suburb of approximately 47,900 residents, with a rich history of supporting all students. There is a strong connection between Countryside and local city leadership which contributes to a deep sense of tradition. Our community consists of many EPS graduates, many of whom stay or eventually return to live in Edina so their children can also graduate from EPS. In addition, several Countryside alumni are now part of the staff and many current staff enroll their children at Countryside. This exemplifies the commitment and trust our residents have in Countryside, our school system, and the city.

We are a nationally recognized suburban school district with approximately 8,500 students. Countryside is one of six elementary schools in the district, and currently serves 607 students and their families in grades kindergarten through fifth grade. In 1967, when the school was built, Countryside Elementary was originally named for the neighborhood in which it is located. Over time we have transitioned and now offer multiple programs and welcome students from across the southwestern Minneapolis area. While Edina is a relatively affluent suburb, each school has its own unique population. Approximately one quarter of students at Countryside live outside our neighborhood attendance area and the school district boundaries. Our students and families contribute to our diverse school community by bringing a variety of cultures, languages, socio-economic backgrounds and traditions.

At Countryside there are a variety of programs available to support every student. We started as a neighborhood school primarily serving families in the immediate proximity. In 1991 a multi-age pathway called Continuous Progress was created that allowed families across the district to choose this program at Countryside. At this time, five classrooms are a part of this program. This structure allows students and families the opportunity to be connected to the same teaching team for grades one to five in multi-age classrooms and develop long-term partnerships between teachers, students, and families. Programming continues to evolve in response to student and family needs. Countryside was selected to implement the new Spanish Dual Language program, which began in the fall of 2022 and will continue to grow over the next five years until there are two sections in each grade level. As Countryside grows and changes, we continue to nurture a sense of belonging for students, families, and staff by creating "One Countryside" which will incorporate the best elements from all classrooms. The goal of this work is for students in both the English speaking and Spanish speaking pathways to have a similar and consistent experience that incorporates the best of Countryside.

It is a shared belief in one another that creates "One Countryside." This collective culture of high expectations for ourselves and others contributes to the conviction that we will succeed together despite all other circumstances. We do this by intentionally focusing on the social emotional aspects of learning, alongside attention to academics. We rely on each other in interdependent ways to problem-solve, overcome

challenges, and positively influence student outcomes, and as a result, we foster a caring school environment that supports students' academic, personal, and social growth.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

Edina Public Schools (EPS) literacy mission for kindergarten through fifth grade is to nurture and enhance literacy development to ensure that every Edina learner meets or exceeds developmental milestones in literacy achievement. The unified vision is that all learners in EPS become lifelong learners with the rich literacy, language, and comprehension skills necessary to be engaged, motivated, critical thinkers and communicators, thriving through rigorous learning opportunities. The foundation of a literacy classroom is seated in research- and evidence-supported practices in the development of reading and writing to equip learners in critical thinking, problem solving, and communication.

Countryside's comprehensive literacy program is a powerful pathway so all students become successful communicators and thinkers. The instructional delivery of comprehensive literacy begins with developing lessons with clear, standards-aligned learning targets, and success criteria. Expectations and goals are clearly articulated, explicitly taught and modeled by the teacher, as well as scaffolded and supported through varied texts and learning opportunities across the Gradual Release of Responsibility. This method shifts the ownership of the learning from the teacher to the students. Throughout the process, the teacher observes, confers, assesses, and provides actionable feedback, providing re-teaching and intervention, or enrichment and challenge, as needed.

The Countryside K-5 literacy framework is anchored in the National Reading Panel's five pillars for a balanced literacy approach. These pillars include phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension. Our school uses the Collaborative Literacy curriculum published by the Center for the Collaborative Classroom. Making Meaning, which is a strategy-based comprehension program, is taught in kindergarten to fifth grade. Foundational reading skills are taught using Being a Reader in kindergarten through grade two. These tools help our learners broaden their vocabularies and learn to communicate effectively. Countryside follows district literacy commitments that require 120 minutes of literacy instruction at the primary level and 90 minutes of literacy instruction at the intermediate level.

In kindergarten through second grade, students receive large group instruction and small group instruction with guided reading and phonics. Sonday Essentials, a multisensory phonics curriculum, is incorporated into daily routines. Heggerty (a daily phonemic awareness curriculum) is implemented with individual students, small and large groups. In grades three to five, students engage in large group reading instruction, guided reading groups or novel studies, and whole group lessons that develop vocabulary through reading, writing, and oral language. Independent reading is modeled and embedded into all grade levels at Countryside, which helps students build stamina and critical thinking skills. Countryside is committed to fostering a love of reading for all students.

In writing, we align instruction to the Minnesota state standards using the Being a Writer curriculum in for kindergarten through grade five. Countryside ensures that every student has the opportunity to develop skills in multiple writing genres including narrative, opinion, and informative/explanatory writing.

Differentiated instruction meets the needs of individual learners in developmentally appropriate practices. Reading instruction is a collaborative effort between classroom teachers, interventionists, special education, Title 1 and Minnesota Reading Corps. Teachers communicate through Professional Learning Communities to make sure the needs of all students are being met.

At Countryside Elementary, teachers in kindergarten to grade two implement the strategies learned from LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) training. Teachers at Countryside use a sound wall to support speech to print categorizing and teaching the 44 English phonemes. This explicit phonemic-based instruction strengthens the brain's phonological processing system and a student's ability to read and write.

Countryside teachers collect and analyze information to improve student learning. Data are used to inform researched-based instruction. Teachers are child-centered in creating individualized goals for each learner. FastBridge is used schoolwide as a universal screener at the beginning, middle, and end of each school year. These formative assessments guide interventions and provide progress monitoring to make sure students are achieving adequate growth.

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

Countryside believes that all students are capable of being mathematical thinkers and problem-solvers. The Math in Focus curriculum used is based on the Singapore Math philosophy. The math curriculum was carefully chosen by a design committee of classroom teachers to strengthen number sense and have an increased emphasis on algebraic thinking with the intention of producing mathematical thinkers and problem-solvers.

Singapore Math focuses on mastery, which is achieved through intentional sequencing of concepts. Some of the key features of the approach include the CPA (Concrete, Pictorial, Abstract) progression, number bonds, bar modeling, and mental math. These key features are intended to instill a deep understanding of mathematics. Generally, students begin learning a new concept using manipulatives before progressing to increasing levels of abstract representation, such as equations using symbols.

Students participate in daily lessons where they are challenged to think mathematically and apply reasoning to their thinking. Math lessons provide multiple approaches to problem-solving which include visual and creative strategies to build deeper mathematical understanding. Many alternative curriculums or instructional strategies may focus on algorithm-based approaches, with an emphasis on memorization, speed and fact drilling. In contrast, students at Countryside engage in various instructional methods which include a combination of teacher facilitated direct instruction, cooperative learning activities, guided and independent practices. Countryside teachers act as coaches and facilitators to support students' growth of flexible thinking and persistent problem-solving skills. A growth mindset approach is used to embrace the importance of making mistakes being a key component of the learning process.

Teachers guide students toward success by providing encouragement, feedback, and support both in school and at home. Classroom newsletters provide an opportunity for families to support their students' learning in math. These communications include specific information regarding what math standards students are learning, key vocabulary, a chapter pacing guide of content skills as well as math opportunities for extra practice for home use. Teachers and support staff work together to provide students with personalized learning opportunities for math enrichment, intervention, and reteaching practices.

Math proficiency is assessed using both formative and summative assessments; this includes pre- and post-unit tests, teacher observations, and standardized assessments. All students are screened three times per year using various developmentally appropriate FastBridge assessments. Data from these assessments are used to monitor student progress and identify opportunities for growth and enrichment. The curriculum has embedded resources available for reteaching, extra practice, and enrichment in response to student performance. Online research-based resources such as IXL are also used with students in grades two to five as an additional way to provide personalized individual recommendations and practice through technology.

Our rigorous curriculum, trained teachers, and school-to-home partnership prepare Countryside students to be successful mathematical thinkers and lifelong problem-solvers.

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

The goal of Countryside's science curriculum is to maintain a standards-based, coherent, rigorous curriculum which incorporates authentic assessment and thus challenges and inspires each student to achieve their potential as a citizen, consumer, and continuing learner.

At present, Countryside primarily uses FOSS (Full Option Science Systems). FOSS provides hands-on

activities through investigation modules. Students are learning first-hand through observation, and are encouraged to ask questions, explore, and make discoveries. Students learn by doing. However, FOSS is being phased out in response to updated science standards.

As the Next Generation Science Standards and Minnesota State Science Standards are being implemented, teachers in kindergarten and grade three are piloting Mystery Science this school year which will be implemented schoolwide in the fall of 2023. Inquiry-based questions are posed at the beginning of each lesson. Videos are then used to initiate class discussions. Each lesson incorporates an activity using supplies typically found in the classroom or around the house. Activities engage students in working through problems. Students question, investigate, analyze, and interpret data. This innovative curriculum teaches children to think like a scientist. The purposeful hands-on curriculum enables students to understand and communicate learning about the world through exploration, discussion, and writing.

At Countryside, students are exposed to high quality standards-based science at appropriate developmental levels. Students are encouraged to become increasingly independent and autonomous learners. Student assessment is ongoing and used to direct science instruction. The curriculum integrates technology in its planning and delivery. Countryside students have a solid curriculum taught by teachers who create an engaging learning environment with various effective instructional and assessment strategies.

Each spring Countryside holds a Science/Imagination Fair. All students are encouraged to participate either individually or with a group. Students create a project which is displayed at school during the day for all students to view. The event is open in the evening for the community to view, and students take great pride in their projects. Viewing the projects motivates students to be active learners.

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

The social studies lessons at Countryside Elementary align with the Minnesota State Standards and units are created by teacher teams. The district provides some common teaching materials, such as read-alouds related to the social studies concepts. These include the study of citizenship and government, economics, geography, and history. At Countryside, our main goal in social studies is to teach students to become good citizens. We are living in a diverse society that requires knowledge of the world around us to succeed.

In kindergarten, students learn the importance of rules and demonstrate basic skills that reflect civic values. They use simple geographical tools and historical stories to explore various places and times.

Students in grade one explore how the federal government begins with the elected office of president. Fundamental geography skills are introduced including making sketch maps of places and comparing their physical and human characteristics, and identifying locations.

Students in grade two learn the purpose and services provided by the government, the principle of separation of powers, and the need for fair voting processes. They learn about communities and how our economy can impact them. Second graders also learn about indigenous people and cultures in our society.

In grade three, students explore the civic relationship between an individual and the community in the United States in which he or she lives, the three branches of government, and the functions and funding of government. Third graders also learn about Ancient Civilizations and the impacts they have made on our world today.

In grade four students learn about tribal government and develop a better understanding of the multiple players involved in the United States government. They create and use various kinds of maps to identify the United States, Mexico, and Canada.

In grade five, students explore the history of North America in the period before 1800, which includes learning about the interactions between Indigenous peoples, Europeans and Africans during the period of colonization and settlement. Students become immersed in inquiry; learning to think historically.

Teams at Countryside use a wide variety of formative assessments to evaluate student knowledge of Minnesota State Standards. Examples of these assessments include rubrics, surveys, reflections, and end of unit projects. The goal of these assessments is to analyze student learning while it is happening and improve teacher instruction.

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)

Students receive direct instruction from a licensed art teacher for 45 minutes per week. Students build artistic literacy in an art form by applying foundational knowledge and skills while working in four fundamental processes: creating, responding, performing/presenting, and connecting. Students generate and develop original artistic ideas, create, revise and complete original artistic work, develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation, and make artistic choices in order to convey meaning through presentation. Students also analyze and construct interpretations of artistic work, and evaluate artistic work by applying criteria. In addition, students integrate knowledge and personal experiences, along with demonstrating an understanding that artistic works influence and are influenced by personal, societal, cultural, and historical contexts, including the contributions of Minnesota American Indian tribes and communities. Countryside art teachers regularly display student artwork throughout the building. Visitors to the building frequently comment on the high quality of the student artwork displayed.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Edina Public Schools refers to The National Health Education Standards (NHES) to select, develop, and implement units of study for health education. These units establish, promote, and support health enhancing behaviors for students. The units include a variety of safety topics. In addition, there is a focus on healthy routines, nutrition, emotional regulation, mental health, the importance of sleep and rest, and conflict resolution.

Students receive 90 minutes of direct instruction in physical education (PE) per week. The goal is to develop physically literate individuals who have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of activity. This includes the skills necessary to participate in a variety of kinesthetic activities and know the implications and the benefits of involvement in various types of activities. The goal is for our students to participate in regular activity, be physically fit, and value physical movement as a meaningful component of a healthy lifestyle.

When the weather allows, students experience physical education (PE) classes outside. Countryside is fortunate to sit on 14 acres of land which provides ample space and opportunity for a variety of outdoor activities. Each spring, Countryside PE teachers organize a Field Day where students participate in a progression of different games and activities with their classmates. Adaptive physical education is provided to students who have individual education plans. All students participate in 25 minutes of recess per day (outside as weather permits) and teachers incorporate a variety of movement breaks throughout the day, and encourage students to bring a healthy snack.

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

In February 2022, Countryside welcomed the first 48 families to the new Spanish Dual Language (SDL) program in Edina. September of 2022 was the official start for students in this eagerly anticipated program. The SDL program teaches academic content in two languages, helps children become bilingual, and offers a host of other benefits. Dual language programs facilitate biliteracy, which is the ability to speak, listen, read, and write proficiently in two languages. Offering a dual language program for elementary students takes advantage of young children's propensity for language acquisition.

The goal is for each classroom to consist of a half-and-half mix of native English speakers and native speakers of the target language, which is Spanish. Ninety percent of instruction is conducted in the target language during the first year, with the remaining 10% taught in English. Research by Thomas and Collier has also shown that, as students progress through the upper elementary grades, both native English speakers and English-language learners do better academically in a dual language setting than their peers in traditional classrooms.

As previously stated, there were 48 kindergarten students enrolled in the SDL program during the 2022-2023 school year. These kindergartners will move to first grade and 48 new students will be accepted to become kindergartners in the fall of 2023. The program will be built over time in this way. Each subsequent year the program will grow by one grade level (two sections) until Countryside has two sections of SDL in all grades (kindergarten to grade five). The program has proven to be so popular that a randomized lottery for interested resident families has been put in place. Initial data show tremendous growth for the participating students. There was a significant investment from the district to make space for this new program by initiating a major construction project that is scheduled to be complete in December 2023.

2d. Technology/library/media

Speaking, viewing, listening, and media literacy is taught as an embedded component of the English Language Arts Standards in regular education classrooms. With prompting and support, students create an individual or shared multimedia work for a specific purpose in the early grades. As students progress through the grade levels, they share multimedia work with an audience. In the upper grades, students distinguish among, understand and use different types of print, digital, and multimodal media including making informed judgments about messages in mass media, locate and use information in a variety of formats, check sources for accuracy, and recognize safe practices in communications.

In addition to embedded media classroom instruction, students receive instruction once a week by a licensed media specialist. The grade level articulated scope and sequence of instruction for all students includes library/media procedures, reading for love and personal growth, digital citizenship, technology, and information literacy. The units include enduring understandings, essential questions, knowledge/skills, resources, alignment to the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) standards, and some common assessments. These units are consistently taught across all elementary buildings in the district.

At Countryside, students experience direct instruction in a Makers' Space and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). This includes the introduction of coding as early as kindergarten. Some of the items students use are Botley robots, Spheros, and Osmo. Some technology tools students use are Scratch, Book Creator, and BookFLIX.

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

Staff throughout Countryside use a research-based preK through grade five social emotional learning and character curriculum called Character Strong: Purpose Full People. This is the first year of implementation of this curriculum and there is evidence that students are engaging, responding, and using the content. There are nine characteristics that are taught throughout the program: respect, empathy, cooperation, responsibility, perseverance, courage, gratitude, honesty, and creativity. The instruction of the nine characteristics pervades our school through classroom activities, buildingwide activities, and staff pursuits (monthly). The materials are grade level specific and low burden, with high impact lessons and activities articulated by grade level and developmentally appropriate. In addition, each classroom has a set of posters displaying the nine characteristics with their definitions. Additionally, a large banner outlining the

characteristics is displayed in a prominent location in the building. Families are engaged through monthly communications highlighting the characteristic and monthly activities.

To begin the implementation year, staff attended an in-house two-hour training delivered by the school social worker who attended a three-day national Character Strong training during the summer of 2022. A Social Emotional Learning (SEL) team was created and meets monthly to guide the work with a focus on supporting and sustaining staff capacity for the new initiative. For this initial year, the minimum classroom expectation was a 10-minute lesson at least three times per week. On the daily schoolwide "news" recording, lessons are modeled, quotes are discussed, and role plays model, teach and reinforce the learning. Efficacy of implementation will be measured by a student survey given twice this year and an educator survey given three times this year.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Countryside teachers, administrators, and support staff place a high level of importance on making sure that all students receive the instruction needed to be successful in their learning. Staff carefully look at all students to determine which individuals may require additional instruction and support to be successful in meeting grade level benchmarks in both reading and math.

Countryside has developed and implemented a daily block intervention schedule for students in kindergarten through grade five referred to as WIN (What I Need). During this time students are given the opportunity to receive instruction that is tailored to individual student needs. By scheduling additional student support during the WIN block, teachers can create schedules that ensure all students are present for core instruction.

Universal screening assessments are given to all students to help identify those who may need more explicit instruction or targeted interventions in the content areas of reading and/or math. Students are screened each fall, winter, and spring using the FastBridge Assessment System. Within the appropriate grade level screenings, students are assessed on items such as concepts of print, phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, orthography, morphology, as well as number sense, number operations, algebra, data analysis, measurement, and geometry. A team of educators triangulate student data by reviewing screening information, student history, current classroom math and reading levels, as well as classroom performance in order to determine intervention candidates and the appropriate course of action for the selected students.

Interventions are typically delivered in small groups of two to four students by highly trained, licensed teachers. Interventions concentrate on explicit and sequential instruction in the curricular areas of reading and math. Interventions are provided via a pull out model where selected students leave the classroom during their daily WIN block. Students receiving academic interventions are progress monitored weekly or bi-weekly in order to monitor success and growth, as well as determine any necessary adjustments that might be required.

In addition to the support opportunities happening during the school day, Countryside has programs available outside of the school day. Success Center is an after-school program where qualified students receive additional reading support two days a week. This program is accessible for students in grades one to five and it is delivered by licensed teachers. Crew is another after-school program offered to any student needing help with homework completion. Crew is offered twice weekly and is led by a licensed teacher with help from community volunteers.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

The Countryside Talent Development program identifies a child's strengths early on and provides experiences and support to develop student abilities and interests into high levels of achievement. At the primary level, classroom teachers and the Talent Development educator look for potential areas of giftedness and use talent development strategies to draw out student strengths and interests. Additionally,

the Talent Development program intentionally opens doors for underrepresented students who have not accessed gifted and talented programming in the past. These students may include African American/Black, Hispanic, multilingual, special education (twice exceptional), female (math), and other student groups who might experience opportunity barriers.

Countryside is staffed with three part-time Talent Development specialist teacher positions for math and reading. Student placement in the Talent Development program is determined by gathering multiple data points. These data points can include universal screener data, observation protocols, summative assessments, formative assessments, teacher feedback, classroom engagement and performance, parent and student feedback, and extenuating circumstances.

Talent Development includes three components: Accelerated Math, Extended Reading, and Curiosity Lab. Accelerated Math is offered for students in grades three to five. It provides direct instruction for identified learners with compacted standards and lesson delivery at an accelerated pace. Extended Reading is offered for students in grades four to five and provides direct instruction for identified learners using an award-winning curriculum from the College of William and Mary. The curriculum provides an in-depth exploration of grade level and extended standards with an emphasis on inquiry-based learning. Curiosity Lab is an opportunity provided to every student in kindergarten and first grade. The purpose of the Curiosity Lab is to teach all students higher-level thinking and problem-solving skills. In kindergarten, the entire class experiences lessons in a whole group setting. In grade one, every student is given further opportunities to engage in deeper exploration of the higher-level thinking skills via small group lessons. Curiosity Lab for students in grades two to three is provided to select students that represent underserved populations. In grades four to five, the Talent Development teacher facilitates activities related to advanced curriculum and learning strategies in both math and reading. The groups are flexible and may change over time. Students that participate in Extended Reading, Accelerated Math and/or Curiosity Lab programming have a regularly scheduled time to access the resources and scaffolding in order to ensure success in extended and accelerated classes.

3c. Students with disabilities:

Students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) are valued members of the Countryside community. Ensuring students are predominantly in the least restrictive environment is important at Countryside. Students are supported through two program models—the resource room and a uniquely outfitted site-based classroom for students with more significant intellectual and/or physical disabilities. Students spend time in both their regular education classroom with their peers and special education classrooms to receive instruction pertinent to the goals and objectives on their IEP.

Countryside participates in the Unified Schools program that is affiliated with the Special Olympics. Unified Schools empower schools to create a more inclusive world and help end the stigma around intellectual disabilities. At Countryside, there is a focus on creating a community of acceptance and respect in order to build an inclusive school community for young people of all abilities. The goal is to create an environment where everyone feels welcome and valued.

Several times a year, Countryside participates in whole school engagement activities that positively impact school climate by promoting social inclusion. One of this year's engagement activities was "Spread the Word Day" on March 1, 2023. The theme was "Go All In(clusive)" which focused on ensuring that everyone who walks into the school feels connected and celebrated. Students participated by writing or choosing five things they can do to "Go All In(clusive)." The responses were then displayed on a giant poster in a prominent location. On that day staff also wore shirts saying WORDS MATTER to draw attention and create awareness for Spread the Word Day.

3d. English Language Learners:

Countryside celebrates the diversity of our learning community by providing equitable instruction for all learners including those that speak multiple languages. All enrolled students at Countryside have a parent/guardian complete a Minnesota Language Survey. If the survey indicates a language other than

English is spoken at home, the Multilingual (ML) teacher will reach out to the student's family and administer an English Language Proficiency screener with the student.

Countryside's ML teacher works closely with Tier 1 classroom teachers to ensure students get the instruction they need to improve their language acquisition. Collaboration happens on a weekly basis between the ML and classroom teacher regarding curriculum and preteaching of skills. The program addresses two important areas: language acquisition and cultural adjustment for Multilingual Learners. In the area of language development, students are provided with the opportunity to develop academic skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing, contributing to success within the academic mainstream classroom. The ML students are active in their Tier 1 classroom for the majority of the day. The ML teacher provides direct instruction as a pull-out model during the grade level WIN (What I Need) intervention block. The trained ML teacher works with small groups of students to target specific language needs. The amount of direct instruction minutes varies based on the student's language needs. Students are monitored with a yearly ACCESS assessment to determine continued eligibility and gauge progress. This assessment measures the students' listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

Countryside promotes community, solidarity, and family engagement for our non-English speaking families. This is accomplished by providing school communications in multiple languages, cultural liaison specialists, a cultural fair to share student cultures and traditions, and access to interpreters for parent teacher conferences.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Student engagement is an important part of the student experience at Countryside that we believe leads to a deep sense of belonging. The adults at Countryside ensure student engagement by planning and offering continuous and consistent opportunities for students to positively interact in classrooms and building-wide.

There are many elements of Character Strong that engage students socially and emotionally. Daily, students recite the three outcomes we want for all students, "Be Kind, Be Strong, and Be Well" during the pre-recorded morning news. These three skills function as a motto, of sorts, and provide the framework for the nine characteristics explicitly taught in Character Strong program. The daily news provides a reminder of the monthly characteristic and is planned and recorded primarily by the school social worker and media specialist. Students are engaged by the songs, videos, and quotes used to teach and reinforce social skills and conflict resolution, executive functioning, and wellness strategies. Students are often observed both saying the motto and performing the actions, which are a heart made with fingers (Be Kind), arms in a "flex" position (Be Strong), and a "thumbs up" (Be Well). To reinforce the monthly characteristic, students participate in a buildingwide activity. Character Strong provides multiple ways for students to engage individually and collectively around a consistent framework.

Engagement in expected ways is a focus at Countryside. A framework was collaboratively created by a staff focus group that provides a clear and consistent behavior system which includes expected student behaviors in different settings and situations, outlines the staff response, and rewards students for following expected behaviors. Expected behaviors were taught over a series of weeks in all classrooms at the beginning of the school year and are reinforced as needed individually, in classrooms, or entire grade levels. There is a focus on recognizing students displaying expected behaviors using "Behavior tickets." The tickets include the motto of Be Kind, Be Strong and Be Well, along with the nine characteristics mentioned earlier and students are able to determine why they were recognized. Students earn tickets from staff as they go about their normal routines and can trade them for rewards that are experiential and low cost. When unexpected behaviors occur, a restorative justice stance is employed with a focus on restoration and reflection. Engagement leads to a sense of belonging, which is the foundation for higher level learning.

For new students, an affinity group is offered three times per year with the first gathering during the first few weeks of school. These opportunities offer a chance for students new to Countryside to connect with each other and ensure they have an early and strong connection to at least two adults in the building. With nearly 11% of students being new to Countryside in the fall of 2022, it was important support for new students.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Countryside has strong community and parent support which enhances the impact our educators can have on students. The purpose of the Countryside Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is to support and enhance the educational programs and strengthen the partnership between home and school. The PTO organizes fundraisers, coordinates enrichment programs, and plans several service-learning projects. The PTO has a strong commitment to building a community where all families and students feel welcome and belong. The PTO encourages parents to get involved by attending monthly meetings, organizing staff appreciation events, and hosting parent grade level get-togethers.

The PTO organizes fundraisers that include a Walk-a-thon, Countryside Bash, All School Party, annual Countryside Carnival, and a Read-a-thon. Not only do these events provide us with money to support initiatives, they also build a strong sense of community. One main initiative is Countryside's Day of Service, where funds from our Walk-a-thon are used to provide the resources to do service projects. These initiatives teach Countryside students that they can make a real difference in the lives of people, animals, and organizations in need. Service allows our students to connect to our community and make it a better place. The money raised allows the PTO to enhance the classroom experience by providing grants to teachers for

supplemental supplies. Money is available for each classroom to purchase or request items which specifically support student learning. This money also supports families that need financial support for school supplies, field trips, yearbooks, and school pictures.

In addition, Edina Public Schools has four cultural liaisons to help engage and enrich the academic experience of students and families of Native American, Spanish-speaking, Somali and South Asian cultures, the district's largest bilingual/multilingual demographic student groups. This team helps engage and enrich the academic experience of students and families. The liaisons, in collaboration with Countryside staff, help connect students and families with school sites and programs in an effort to develop and sustain a trusting and supportive relationship that will benefit students, families and the district. They also serve to facilitate communication between school and home, field questions from families as they navigate the school system, as well as partnering with teachers and staff to identify strategies that will improve student outcomes.

Lastly, Countryside is supported by community members who are hired through the MN Reading and Math Corps. This program is a research-based initiative to help every Minnesota student become a successful reader by the end of third grade or become proficient in math by the end of eighth grade. Targeted Countryside students receive the benefit of the consistent one on one or small group support ensuring they are getting what they need to achieve adequate growth.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Countryside seeks out highly skilled and qualified individuals to join our staff. All new certified staff participate in an induction program that provides professional development along with support for their role. In addition, a building level mentor is assigned to assist new staff in acclimating to the Countryside school community. All staff members participate in a districtwide cognitive coaching model with their administrator or a peer coach on a yearly basis. This also serves as a vehicle for an evaluation tool for probationary staff. Non-certified staff also receive onboarding guidance from building level staff along with professional goal setting on a three year cycle.

Building goals are determined each year by our building leadership team who review student data in order to create school wide goals for the upcoming school year. This team meets for a day during the summer to prepare information before the school year begins. These building goals are aligned with the district strategic plan. Certified staff engage in weekly collaborative teams to review progress toward these building and team goals. Countryside staff work together as a whole to ensure student growth and achievement. In the most recently completed school year, staff were eligible to receive financial incentives as a result of meeting those goals. Mid-year assessments indicate that Countryside has made significant progress toward meeting our current building goal.

Edina Public Schools continuously develops innovative, committed and exemplary leadership at all levels. Staff are provided with opportunities for continued professional growth and development. For example, all teachers who work with students in kindergarten to second grade are involved in Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS). This professional training course is designed for teachers who work with beginning readers in order to impact student achievement by focusing on the science of reading, turning research-based instruction into practice, enhancing teacher effectiveness, and transforming instruction by building a common language with evidence-based research.

Staff at Countryside collaborate with a literacy coach to engage in differentiated, job-embedded professional learning aligned with the district's Comprehensive Literacy Instructional Framework. The literacy coach supports staff in creating, administering, and reviewing grade level common formative assessments using student work from standards-aligned learning targets to ensure students are meeting and/or exceeding standards. The coaches fully ensure all staff know and recognize reading deficits as they appear, and most importantly, know how to respond in ways that ensure literacy success for all.

Countryside has a building literacy team consisting of one designated administrator, one primary and one intermediate teacher leader. These site leaders partner with the literacy coaches and district leaders to further

ensure each building has the systems and resources needed to support effective implementation of the PreK-12 Comprehensive Literacy Plan while allowing for consideration of the varied factors that impact adult and student learning at each site. The Countryside level leadership team joins other site level teams to form a district literacy team, which creates consistency and ensures implementation efficacy.

4. School Leadership:

School leadership, in alignment with Edina Public Schools (EPS), focuses on continuous improvement strategies while delivering consistently high academic quality. To maintain and improve upon the excellent education our community has come to expect, the current Strategic Plan outlines our goals and priority strategies. Countryside's leadership philosophy aligns tightly with the district's vision, mission and strategic plan, and it is the principal's duty to connect this focus to the daily functioning of the building. Countryside has a strong history of collective leadership. The building is guided by one elementary principal and one instructional dean of students, with a well-established and highly effective collaborative team model in place. Teacher and support staff leaders work cooperatively with the principal and dean of students in support of site decision making in the areas of instruction, assessment, intervention, social emotional learning, our equity mission and vision, building operations, and future planning. The Building Leadership Team (BLT) is a representative group of staff members who lead and advise on a variety of topics, and the structure of this team ensures there is a voice from all stakeholders in the building. This group also serves as the conduit between other building level teams, guaranteeing all efforts are in line with our building level goals for equity, inclusion, and academic growth.

In addition to the Building Leadership Team (BLT), our commitment to shared efficacy can be seen in the presence of other collaborative teams who concentrate their efforts on specific areas of focus that contribute to the success of students, our building as a whole, and the vision and mission of Edina Public Schools. Many standing teams at Countryside have strong ties to district level groups, and this connection ensures continuity in curriculum and instructional practices, district policy, and community initiatives. Some teams with district level connections include: Equity Leadership, Professional Development, Literacy Leadership, specific curriculum areas and grade level partnerships.

This shared efficacy is also present in the building level teams created to sustain Countryside programs and initiatives. In recent years, the impact of the pandemic on our students, families, and staff has created urgency around social emotional learning (SEL) and has solidified our commitment to planning well for student engagement and that sense of belonging we want all of our students to have each day as they enter our school. To propel this work forward, there is a consistently implemented curriculum called Character Strong. The full-time status of both a School Social Worker and School Psychologist helps support SEL program implementation and student success. Each collaborative team within the building, no matter their focus area, holds student engagement and SEL at the center, which is the foundation for academic success.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

One main way Countryside creates a welcoming environment for all is by utilizing the Tools of Cultural Proficiency in the Culturally Proficient School Systems Framework, which is used throughout the district. The tools included in the framework support organizations in examining their policies and practices in order to enable the person or institution to engage effectively with people and groups who are different from them. The framework provides language to describe unhealthy and healthy values and behaviors of persons, along with the policies and practices of organizations. The curriculum in the Edina training has been built in partnership with outside consultants. Thirteen staff members from Countryside received four days of training using the tools during the 2022-2023 school year in an effort to become a Culturally Proficient School System. New cohorts continue to receive training, because the district's goal is to have every staff member trained in The Tools of Cultural Proficiency over the next several years. The Cultural Proficiency School Systems Framework consists of four main tools: the Barriers, Guiding Principles, the Essential Elements, and the Continuum. Unfortunately, due to word count constraints, it is not possible to go into greater detail regarding each tool in the framework.

The tool from the framework that has been most impactful to Countryside's climate and culture is the NBRS 2023

Continuum. The Continuum provides language to describe unhealthy and healthy values and behaviors of persons and policies and practices of organizations. It can help assess an organization's current state and projected state. Movement along the continuum represents a shift in thinking from tolerating diversity to transformative action for equity. It is used when discussing a particular situation or a specific policy, knowing that neither individuals nor organizations occupy one point on a continuum. The goal is to move from unhealthy to healthy practices and policies so that educational professionals can be effective in providing education to diverse student populations, some of which have been historically marginalized and underserved. The training has been invaluable in supporting staff on their journey to becoming culturally proficient and the Continuum guides our daily and long-term work.

Countryside is committed to cultural proficiency. In addition to the district work outlined above, there is a building equity team that meets regularly, and each Professional Learning Community team has an equity goal. We engage students and families by holding a Celebration of Cultures event each year. This optional event is planned in coordination with our Parent Teacher Organization and students can select a country or culture to research and present at the event. Some students and families choose to explore a significant place from their heritage and others want to find out more about a place of their choosing. In January 2023, we had over 100 student participants showcase various countries and cultures. It is a day to honor and learn more about each other, our community, and our world.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

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