

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Edwin W Chittum Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 2008 Dock Landing Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Chesapeake State VA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 23321-3512

County Chesapeake City

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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. Jared Cotton E-mail Jared.Cotton@cpschools.com
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Chesapeake City Public Schools Tel. (757) 547-0153

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 Mrs. Angela Swygert
(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):
- 28 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
10 Middle/Junior high schools
7 High schools
1 K-12 schools
- 46 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	17
K	106
1	131
2	126
3	154
4	124
5	147
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	805

*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
 - 2 % Asian
 - 16 % Black or African American
 - 8 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 63 % White
 - 10 % 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: 11%

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	43
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2021 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year	42
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	85
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	805
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.11
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	11

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

Spanish, Arabic, Vietnamese, Marshallese, Gujarati, Lithuanian, Haitian

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 19 %

Total number students who qualify: 156

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 19 %
Total number of students served 153

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>33</u> Autism	<u>2</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>32</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>14</u> Developmental Delay	<u>45</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>28</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>4</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 4 %
Total number of students served: 30

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 5

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.	32
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	19
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	29
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	6

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 25:1

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	95%	96%	96%	96%	96%
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.

At E.W. Chittum, we are committed stewards of the Chesapeake Public Schools mission to promote educational excellence by engaging all students in meaningful and innovative learning experiences.

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

<https://cpschools.com/discrimination-policy/>

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

Edwin W. Chittum Elementary was established in 1958. Our school is located in the Western Branch Borough of Chesapeake, Virginia. Chittum Elementary is a true community school where the roots run deep. Our school is a place where we unite our staff, students, and families to ensure success for all stakeholders in our community. It is not uncommon to hear multi-generational stories from our families currently attending Chittum, as many of our students' parents and grandparents attended our school. We also have several teachers on our staff who attended Chittum as young students. This long-standing and unique family and community aspect at Chittum has built an impressive legacy and sense of immense pride. At Chittum, we are committed stewards of the Chesapeake Public Schools mission to promote educational excellence by engaging all students in meaningful and innovative learning experiences.

Chittum Elementary supports a diverse community of learners. Our school serves students with a wide range of disabilities. Currently, 19% of our students (153) have been identified and are served under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). We also provide educational services to students from neighboring schools that have low incidence special education programs.

In 2022, we opened the doors of a brand new Chittum Elementary next to the original school site, which opened in 1958. Our school community was thrilled to join various planning construction committees, which culminated in a dedication ceremony on December 7, 2022. This state-of-the-art facility is where architectural innovation meets academic innovation. The design and features of our school emphasize design thinking, collaboration, creativity, and citizenship at every turn. With an open concept, various creative learning spaces, and flexible furnishings, we have increased the opportunities for our students and staff to work in collaboration to ensure we are meeting and advancing the needs of all learners.

We identify and implement several key strategies at Chittum Elementary to support our learners. First and foremost is the core belief that every student is special. Our staff take the time to get to know each student as an individual. Teachers use ongoing formative and summative assessment practices to identify student areas of need and adjust instruction accordingly. Administration meets with teachers on a six-week rotation to discuss each student by name and identify specific areas of need. Progress data is shared and interventions are put in place to meet specific needs and support each student's academic growth. Our teachers use their designated common planning time, as well as the teachers' collaboration workspace in each neighborhood, to co-design learning experiences and lessons, as well as identify appropriate and necessary resources. Our reading specialist and special education teachers are partners in these planning meetings to ensure continuity of instruction for our students and support inclusive practices. In addition, our technology integration specialist collaborates with all grade level teams to guide the teachers to opportunities to enrich lessons with technology tools and resources for integration, engagement, and student-centered learning.

Our classrooms utilize morning meetings as an effective and caring strategy to build community and set the tone for the day ahead. We use this time to build and foster relationships within our classrooms and practice mindfulness strategies as a part of our morning routines. We also use this time to meet the various social and emotional needs of our students through our positive behavior interventions and systems (PBIS). We have equipped each neighborhood hallway with a sensory area containing flexible seating options and sensory buckets to support students who require a quiet space to pause and regroup. Our school counselors are hands-on and readily available to support our learners. In addition, our highly dedicated school counselors provide guidance lessons to our students emphasizing topics such as friendship, zones of regulation, and problem solving. Our counselors also host lunch bunch groups to guide our students in making friends and practicing taking turns and other social skills.

Within our physical education program, our teachers build the concept of teamwork and collaboration with our students. Our school hosts a run club for our students, which is currently our most popular club with over 150 students participating every year. Our students meet before school once a week to run for 30 minutes. The culmination of this club is to complete the final mile in the Virginia Beach Shamrock Marathon each March. This is a highly anticipated event every year that gives our students and families a source of great pride and cause to celebrate.

We also offer many ways for students to socially interact with one another. As part of our positive behavior intervention support (PBIS) program, we have monthly resource recess, which is a time for students who have shown positive behavior all month to select engaging team building or STEAM activities to participate in across classrooms and grades. Through this program, students are able to collaborate with their friends and make new friends. We also offer other clubs for our students such as student ambassadors who welcome and help new students transition into our school; our Student Council Association (SCA) plan service projects such as canned food drives, Toys for Tots drives, and our kindness week activities. We also have a book buddies program which pairs our older classes with younger classes to promote friendship, community, and reading. Chittum Elementary also boasts a very active parent teacher association (PTA) that consistently offers monthly social activities for our families.

Our school leadership and educational leaders understand that there is no such thing as a one size fits all model when it comes to addressing the needs of our students. Our approach is decidedly more of a one size fits one model, focusing on the individual. This year, we have implemented a peer mentoring program, Bears and Cubs, to address the academic, behavioral, and social needs of our kindergarten through second grade students. This program partners model fourth and fifth grade students with primary-aged students who have been selected by teachers as needing more support and guidance in the areas of academics, behavior, or social needs. This mentoring program meets weekly and works on activities tailored to the student's area of need. We have also implemented a student/staff mentoring program to address the tier two academic, social, and behavioral needs of intermediate students. Identified students are invited to select a staff member who will partner with them to determine goals, track progress, and increase accountability in targeted areas. This check-in/check-out approach forges trust with an adult in the school and gives each student a safe, consistent time and space in the week.

As a school, we proudly participate in a popular and competitive literacy program, Battle of the Books. Select fifth grade students are offered the opportunity to compete against other schools across the district. Students commit to reading ten books, attending bi-weekly meetings, and agree to participate in the battle at the conclusion of the program. Our staff sponsor meets with students to review the summaries, practice battle questions and responses, and review sample questions. Once again, this is a collaborative experience that engages whole families around a fun, competitive, literacy-oriented event.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

Chittum implements the division's curriculum which is aligned to the Virginia Standards of Learning and includes transfer goals, instructional learning outcomes, and connections to the five Cs from the Profile of a Virginia Graduate (critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, and citizenship). The division's curriculum is a fluid instructional road map that offers a variety of assessments to measure ongoing student learning, approved and aligned resources in support of designing lessons, and flexibility pacing guides to guide the learning over time. Chittum teachers use this curriculum to design meaningful and innovative learning experiences for all students in their school community.

The teachers at Chittum build opportunities for all students through their instructional design and rely on the division's curriculum for guidance and direction. What matters most in their collaborative lesson design and independent execution is the experience of the students. We seek to answer the following questions in planning: What will our students DO to advance their learning? To what extent, will our students make their own decisions about learning and next steps? How will we, the teachers, respond to their quick success or need for additional support and practice? We feel these are the questions that will yield truly authentic and student-centered learning experiences, and most importantly, they are questions that keep students at the heart of the planning and execution of learning.

The environment and instruction at Chittum are best described as flexible. The classrooms are full of flexible seating features that allow for student choice and quick redesign by the teachers in response to what they have planned or emerging needs they identify mid-lesson. Students are not seated in rows but in team circles or collaborative huddles which foster the communication and collaboration that is expected and even demanded in all core curriculum. Students are on the move, following the flow of instruction and shifting the environment as appropriate. Our classrooms and teachers are equally flexible; they are able to fold dividing walls to combine classes for team teaching or "spill out" into the neighborhood hallways which have collaborative spaces for small group instruction, one-on-one support, and independent practice. Such a dynamic environment impacts learning behaviors, learning experiences, and the delivery of core curriculum.

In reading/English language arts, Chittum students are taught to read, write, research, and communicate. These skills are cyclical and ongoing throughout reading/English language arts class time, but the skills are also integrated throughout the day in all subject areas. Students progressively build on their skills day to day and from one grade to the next. Students are taught through various modalities, such as direct instruction, guided instruction, independent practice, and cooperative learning. To monitor and measure student understanding of concepts and application of skills, assessments are formative and summative in nature. Chittum teachers collaboratively design quick formative assessments for daily monitoring and adjusting, such as quick writes, exit tickets, graphic organizers, elbow partner talks, and mini conferences. Monitoring and measuring learning through summative assessments relies heavily on performance-based assessments, (PBAs) that offer the students the opportunity to transfer skills and concepts into action and allows them to see the connection of all learning and skills. Taking on the role of storyteller and creating an original fairytale, with original visuals or video content, is an example of an engaging fifth grade PBA that challenges our students creatively and collaboratively. Another integrated PBA leads our third graders to design and produce a news interview with one of the twelve million immigrants entering the US at Ellis Island. Our teachers have discovered that PBAs, such as these two examples, are not as cumbersome and unwieldy as once assumed; rather, they give students the means to operate in learning with some choice, creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking.

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

Math instruction at Chittum is grounded in student understanding and reasoning. Nearly every learning experience in a math lesson at our school is explicitly designed to increase student understanding and

provide opportunities for students to communicate and test their reasoning. Our teachers facilitate number talks to guide students in collaborative discussions that allow them to explain their thinking to their classmates, justify their reasoning for the steps and approach taken, and make sense of the strategies others used to reach a solution. Math instruction at Chittum is also characterized by the rich and regular use of manipulatives in the hands of our students, providing opportunities for students to represent mathematical ideas and make connections to the concrete, representational, and abstract. One example of learning with manipulatives is the use of connecting cubes, centimeter cubes, or inch blocks to determine the volume of a cube or rectangular prism, which allows students to build conceptual understanding in order to solve for the volume. Our students are also constantly challenged to make connections to previously learned concepts for scaffolding and understanding; for example, our students are challenged to determine which number does not belong in a set of four numbers. Students justify their process and answer, as they strengthen skills in comparative thinking, connecting, communicating, and critical thinking. They are also working on a challenging problem with no correct solution. Additionally, our students are led to solve problems using schema-based instructional strategies, which allows them to uncover the underlying structure of a word problem and apply it to future problems.

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

Our science curriculum and instruction includes introductory experiences in all core areas of science, including Earth science, physics, chemistry, and biology. Our Chittum science lessons are designed with inquiry, specifically with a model known as 5E that demands students construct knowledge and meaning from experiences. The 5E model stands for engage, explore, explain, elaborate, and evaluate, which is exactly what we want our Chittum students to do every time they are “doing science.” Our students investigate questions by exploring through a hands-on approach; for example, our students engage in coding and LEGOS to investigate pushes and pulls. Students test and measure distance while gathering and comparing data during the investigation. This is one way in which our teachers meet the state’s requirements for integrated scientific and engineering practices while performing hands-on laboratory investigations and STEAM design challenges. Student learning is assessed and measured through balanced assessments consisting of performance and problem-based assessments, as well as written unit assessments.

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

Social studies/history/civics learning is centered on the development of history, geography, civics, and economic knowledge and skills. Our kindergarten instruction focuses on the local community, first-grade focuses on the Commonwealth of Virginia, second grade focuses on the United States of America, and third graders are introduced to world cultures. In grades four and five, our students come to understand Virginia's history from the founding of Jamestown to the present. Chittum teachers build learning experiences that engage students in comparisons, note taking, graphic organizers, integrated reading strategies, technology-enhanced worksheets, video clips, and exposure to analysis of primary sources. As indicated in the other core curriculum areas, we are driven to assess student learning through a diverse manner, relying on PBAs with rubric evaluation, as well as short-answer or multiple-choice assessments. This learning, like all learning, is made richer and deeper when teachers collaborate to integrate the knowledge, skills, and experiences across multiple contents. They strive to do this regularly, which is more easily achieved in their seamless ability to team teach, thanks to the movable structure of our classroom walls.

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

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

Chittum boasts a PK program which provides inclusive placement opportunities for preschoolers. Our PK teacher serves eight students with disabilities and eight students who have been identified as role model students. Our two PK classes are held in the mornings and afternoons with eight students in each class, which allows Chittum to divide the two classes equally among students with disabilities and students without for a 50/50 ratio. The supreme purpose of such PK classes is to provide specialized instruction to

students with disabilities while simultaneously providing developmentally appropriate instruction to students without disabilities. The PK teacher at Chittum is committed to creating a successful path to kindergarten for all her students and analyzes data of former PK students to inform and adjust her instruction. Data gleaned from the state's phonological awareness literacy screening (PALS) and information gathered from frequent conferences with kindergarten teacher colleagues guides the Chittum PK teacher in responding to needs expressed in assessment, as well as classroom learning behaviors. Though the total number of students served in a year may be considered small, the impact is not; it is a powerful primer to public education and the Chittum learning community.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

Art instruction is vital in the development of young children, as it teaches them about their place in the world around them and provides an invaluable outlet for creative expression. Chittum schedules 45 minutes of art instruction weekly, integrating STEAM through creative inquiry, coding, and technology-enriched art lessons. The art teacher at Chittum is also masterful at integrating core curricular concepts and school themes or initiatives into the students' art experiences, which reinforces the idea that art is an expression of the world in which we live. Students in all grades learn and build upon the art process as an individual's response to big ideas, concepts, and inquiry. Whether it is art related to seasons, nature, portraits, landscapes, or countless other ideas, students learn that art is a method of storytelling where they are the author. Assessment and evaluation of art at Chittum is varied with a high value placed on models, rubrics, self and peer evaluation or critique, and portfolios. The Chittum art classroom plays a vibrant role in the success of our students as well-rounded, healthy, expressive citizens.

Music instruction at Chittum is our other humanities resource class that, similar to art, is essential to the development of young children. Music is a powerful outlet for student creativity, communication, community, and expression. Our students experience patriotic music, as well as music representing different cultures, so there are common lessons in music about pride and inclusivity. Our music teacher develops learning experiences that require students to perform, listen, respond to, and analyze music using instruments, movement, and voice. One exciting music initiative that our teacher has piloted for the division is the ukelele program. She has developed lessons used across the district to introduce fourth and fifth graders to the proper handling, placement, fingering, and strumming of the ukulele. This has created a new, energizing approach to instrumental performance that has been engaging for both our students and their families. Our Chittum students, under the watchful eye of our dedicated music teacher, build a solid foundation of musical concepts that they carry forward to secondary school and beyond.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

The physical education program at Chittum includes both indoor and outdoor activities that enhance students' awareness of and commitment to physically active lifestyles through movement, play, and collaboration. This is such a priority at Chittum that students receive PE, in addition to recess, 45 minutes, twice weekly, above the average of other elementary schools in the division. This is a result of a conscientious effort to increase health and fitness while giving students an outlet beyond core academics.

Additionally, Chittum also offers adaptive PE for 21 students with disabilities. The adaptive PE classes are designed to offer fitness and movement with appropriate modifications of equipment, duration, collaboration, and activities. Similar to the PE schedule, adaptive PE students engage weekly for an average of 45-60 minutes. The ultimate goal is to transition students into mainstream PE when it is appropriate and safe for the learner.

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

2d. Technology/library/media

Central to the design of our school is our library media center, which functions as the community hub of a school and as an extended classroom for our students. All of the classes are scheduled for approximately 45 minutes of library instruction weekly. Our librarian media specialist is a teacher, collaborator, instructional leader, and resource to all staff and ensures that our students have regular, flexible, and equitable access to materials that support academic growth and achievement. Our librarian designs lessons to support, enhance, and extend the core curriculum through read alouds, use of print and digital media, inquiry, research, and hands-on activities. The typical literacy experiences of the library are enriched with STEAM activities and challenges in a designated makerspace with Keva planks, Brainflakes, LEGOS, makey makey kits, puzzles, and games. Each activity is explicitly connected to a read aloud or current curricular concept. The Chittum library is a dynamic center for literacy, collaboration, connections, creativity, and community with an empowering teacher librarian who engages every student each week.

Although technology is not a separate resource class offered at Chittum, technology is a tool that enriches every class and is thoroughly integrated throughout all instruction. All of our students receive a Chromebook for their academic use during their time at Chittum. Our teachers, with the expert partnership of our technology integration specialist, guide students to use technology tools to enhance and demonstrate learning, elevate productivity, and boost communication and creativity. Examples of such integration include coding LEGOS, robotics, data collection during hands-on investigations, storyboarding, electronic note taking, online assessments and gamification, virtual art galleries, virtual field trips, and research. We find that tech tools and integration are only limited by the imaginations of our teachers and students. Moreover, we find that technology is a path to innovation, expression, and future learning.

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

We also boast another class for music instruction: strings, as an opt-in commitment by fifth grade families. As with our regular music instructional program, students experience an empowering path for creative expression, critical thinking, and community with the additional benefits of learning music reading, hand-eye coordination, and pitch discrimination. Our students gain understanding of the role an individual musician plays in an ensemble and how to contribute collaboratively to a common goal. Our students participating in strings build a more comprehensive understanding and ability to perform rhythms and musical styles while setting a course that will be nurtured in middle school and high school orchestra.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

The leaders and teachers at Chittum are committed to the success of all learners, which is evident in their focused approach to designing a structure for academic support for those students who require more than core instruction. In order to guide students in meeting the demands of the core competencies and standards, teachers must meet the diverse and individual needs of students by tailoring instruction, interventions, and assessments.

One way we strive to meet the needs for academic support is through the Chittum master schedule, which embeds daily “Power Up” time for all students in all grades. These 20- or 30-minute daily sessions provide time for teachers to design mini-lessons for additional guided and independent practice. Teachers collaborate with their designated teacher assistants and fellow teachers in “the neighborhood;” they strategically arrange small-group experiences based on current formative and summative assessment data in the areas of mathematics, reading, and science. This structure allows the academic support to dovetail nicely with the core instruction, so our students see the explicit connections between “Power Up” time and core time.

We utilize an all hands on deck approach to meet the needs of our students who require interventions. Our reading specialist works closely with the grade levels to develop small group instructional support aligned with ongoing universal screening results to target specific reading skills such as phonemic awareness,

phonics and comprehension. These supports are provided by not only our reading specialist, but our part time equity tutors and teacher assistants. Our reading specialist provides targeted training to the support personnel providing instruction in the research based intervention being provided and monitors ongoing progress monitoring data to ensure students are responding to the intervention.

The majority of our special education students are serviced in the general education setting through an inclusive approach with minimal time being removed to the special education classroom for targeted specially designed instruction. There is close collaboration between our special education and general education teachers to ensure students are being instructed in the Standards of Learning and receiving their much needed accommodations and support to access their learning.

Chittum teachers are also supported in this structure for academic support, which requires quick and responsive data analysis and instructional planning. All of our teachers are engaged in professional learning communities with grade level peers, as well as with colleagues who represent expertise in the area of literacy, coaching, technology integration, special education, gifted education, English learners, and administration, as needed and appropriate. These powerful communities are collaboratively led by teachers, guided by a set of predetermined norms and goals, whose purpose is to reach instructional decisions for the individual students on that grade level based on various, immediate, relevant data points. The heart of what the Chittum professional learning communities accomplish weekly is student growth and student achievement.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

We are also committed to providing challenging opportunities for our students who are performing above grade level. We do not rely solely on a gifted identification to create learning experiences that accelerate learning, rather we embed those experiences into our classrooms through team-teaching methods, small group instruction, independent exploration and inquiry, as well as opportunities designed to push our high achieving students to connect learning across contents and transfer the learning into new situations. STEAM challenges with our librarian or technology integration specialist, high-interest reading in novel studies or book circles, and project-based learning that yields products students can display and share with classmates are just a few examples of challenge activities we use to push our students to deeper learning. Several of the online instructional platforms we implement are self-paced and adapt to the performance level of students, which gives students an evolving and responsive online experience tailored to their progress.

Our gifted learners receive extended learning experiences throughout the week provided by the gifted specialist, who is also responsible for professional development, teacher support, and co-teaching opportunities. This layered partnership ensures we are meeting the needs of our gifted learners through enrichment, extension, and acceleration. These are just a few of the differentiated learning opportunities we make available to our students who are performing above grade level and identified as gifted learners.

3c. Students with disabilities:

One student group is the students with disabilities at Chittum. We currently have 153 students who have individual educational plans (IEPs) in place to guide the additional support they receive to achieve the core standards and competencies. Our students with disabilities are served in the least restrictive environment, which may mean an inclusive, co-teaching classroom with both a regular and special education teacher or teacher assistant or it may mean a self-contained classroom with a special education teacher and teacher assistant. In each environment, the goal remains consistent, to deliver standards-based core instruction in a way that is accessible and measurable in spite of identified disabilities. This often requires additional programming to deliver the core instruction differently with necessary scaffolding and chunking of information; it often requires accommodations to learning inputs and outcomes which may materialize in adjustments to assignment steps, timelines, and testing duration. It absolutely requires dedicated monitoring and a collaborative effort by Chittum educators.

3d. English Language Learners:

Another such student group is the English learners at Chittum. We currently have 11 EL students, representing five diverse languages. To strengthen their access to core curriculum and provide additional academic support, our EL students work frequently with designated EL tutors who support academic vocabulary, writing, and communication goals, as well as provide support related to current core instruction and assignments. Our EL tutors support our students primarily through small group instruction designed around their targeted needs based on their WIDA scores. The EL tutors also administer EL assessments and share assessment data with core teachers to inform instruction. Our English learners need time more than they need programs, time in language, time in exposure to academic dialogue, time in small group practice, and time for additional independent and guided practice. The EL tutors provide that time to ensure equitable access to core instruction for all English learners no matter the level or time in American schools.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

A cornerstone for Chittum is our commitment to positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) to create a positive environment in order to advance the academic, social, and emotional development of our students. Our teachers incorporate daily morning meetings that allow our students to begin the day with a focused and positive outlook; it is an opportunity to care for the social and emotional needs of their students. Students frame the day and become more aware of their feelings and determine the best way to manage them. We also have a mentoring program for our students in grades third through fifth that pairs students with a staff member of their choice who checks in on the students weekly and helps them achieve their academic, social, or behavioral goals. We have also instituted a peer mentoring club, Bears and Cubs, that partners students in kindergarten through second grade with a fourth or fifth grade peer mentor. Such a partnership among peers gives students an opportunity to share goals, challenges, and successes related to their academic, behavioral, and social progress. We host a variety of clubs for diverse student interests, such as a running club, a student leadership council, student ambassadors, STEAM, and Battle of the Books. Our clubs support student socialization, community, and team building, as well as the academic development of our students.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Chittum has forged a strong, dedicated partnership with our parents and families, as demonstrated in a very active PTA. This group of school community members works tirelessly to bring the school and the community together. They are a very supportive group of parents and grandparents who advocate for the goals of our school through fundraising activities, family nights, special events, and overall support of the well-being of our students and staff. We are both grateful and fortunate to have such a responsive PTA; we have yet to encounter a staff or student need that we could not address and serve through this powerful partnership.

We are also proud of our family engagement efforts through our Watch DOGS program, which is our Dads of Great Students. These fathers and father figures volunteer on a regular basis to support school operations and safety during morning drop off, bus duty, hall duty, and cafeteria duty. They serve as a second set of eyes to monitor our school, our students, and assist in keeping us all safe.

Our school counselors and school social worker are highly dedicated professionals who serve our families by maintaining relationships with students to care for and monitor the physical and emotional well-being of our students and their families. These highly skilled professionals work tirelessly to connect our families in need with appropriate community resources, as well as a layered support system within our school.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Our open and ongoing communication with our families and our community is key to building and maintaining healthy relationships and family engagement. At Chittum Elementary, we utilize a variety of communication methods with our families to include weekly emails to parents, our PTA communication, our social media accounts, and frequent teacher communication about class progress and happenings.

Chittum teachers are empowered to be active decision makers in the instructional practices and professional development needs of our school. Our professional development needs are discussed during the development of our school improvement plan and our teacher leaders are co-developers of our annual schoolwide professional development plan, which is in alignment with our school improvement plan, based on staff needs and interest, and delivered in small groups through our PLCs and our faculty meetings. This year our staff has been focusing on professional development centered around the multitiered system of supports, structured literacy and the Science of Reading, and social and emotional wellbeing for staff and students.

Chittum is proud and honored to have many talented educators on staff. In an effort to build capacity at our school, we highlight and celebrate those talents. We encourage our teachers to take the lead in providing professional development during our faculty meetings and PLC meetings. Teachers participate in activities such as peer coaching and instructional rounds, which give them the opportunity to visit, observe, collaborate, and learn from others in our school for professional growth and learning.

As a school, we recognize the importance of also supporting the social and emotional health of our staff. We work closely with our PTA to support efforts to increase morale and encourage our staff through monthly staff breakfasts, luncheons, snack carts, and small tokens of appreciation. We also post shout outs in our weekly staff newsletter to celebrate the accomplishments and achievements, both professional and personal, of our staff.

4. School Leadership:

Our administrators are servant leaders. The principal and assistant principal work diligently to be present and accessible for our teachers. Administrators maintain open doors and will stop to lend a listening ear or a helping hand to all staff. As shared earlier, a core belief at Chittum is that every student is special; the administration applies that approach to our teachers as well. This vital work does not exist without teachers; so the administration prioritizes their needs and are committed to being their partners throughout everything that happens at Chittum.

Our principal's mission is to ensure accessible learning for all; it is her why, her driving force. She is accessible, visible, hands-on, and collaborative with her staff. They acknowledge her as their leader and partner. Our assistant principal prioritizes the creation and development of an equitable learning environment where all students are encouraged and given the time and space to learn and grow. She believes that creating an atmosphere where teachers are equipped for success and enjoy what they do translates into more meaningful learning experiences for the students we serve. This is accomplished by prioritizing relationships with the Chittum staff and the deliberate maintenance of a positive school climate.

Both administrators regularly participate in the various professional learning communities and support the unpacking of the curricula and designing of lessons, as well as reviewing resources and best instructional practices. They also regularly participate in meetings on the multitiered systems of support and know students who are in need of support by name and need. During these meetings, our administrators will join in the analysis of student progress data and lead discussions around interventions to ensure the supports appropriately match the student's learning needs.

When our principal started at Chittum Elementary, she realized our staff did not have access to research-based interventions to support struggling learners or to provide specially designed instruction for our students identified with disabilities. She worked closely with her teacher leaders to research and identify interventions appropriate for our student needs. She then utilized our school funds to purchase literacy and math intervention resources to support the implementation of specially designed instruction for our students with disabilities, as well as other intervention needs. Professional development remains a commitment to ensure implementation with fidelity.

Collaborative leadership marks the leadership style of the Chittum principal. She maintains an open door policy with her staff, provides teachers a voice in the decision-making process through conversations, team meetings, faculty meetings, and her leadership advisory council. She is a leader who models a consistent cycle of planning, doing, studying, and then acting, with adjustments to follow. This is her approach when analyzing data, determining the root cause of our current reality, gathering feedback, and developing goals and action steps for improvement. This is a process that is modeled with the entire staff to ensure an understanding of our focus for student growth. Our parent teacher organization is another resource our principal utilizes for building relationships within the community and gathering feedback for decision making. Our principal meets regularly with the PTA and shares the goals for our school, as well as provides updates of our progress. She works closely with the PTA to align their goals with our goals as a school, which allows our PTA to raise and use funds for the advancement of those goals.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

During the 2020-2021 school year, our school developed an equity committee to examine our biases as a staff and begin courageous conversations around equity within our school. We started as a small group of staff who engaged in professional reading and dialogue around equitable practices and set growth goals as a school community. During the 2021-2022, we opened these conversations up to the entire staff and worked as a school community to have open dialogue around our equity mission, our identity, and personal biases. In addition, we asked teachers to identify what they perceived as inequitable within our school community. We used that data to further the conversations and develop a schoolwide equity statement to identify what we stand for as a school community. This statement is shared with our parent community and our student council. Although this work is far from complete, our staff continues to discuss how we can be more inclusive and representative of all cultures and needs.

Chittum Elementary has been recognized as a Purple Star School for our support to our military connected families. We celebrate the contributions of our military families throughout the year through our recognition wall that honors our veterans, hosting reunifications when our deployed parents return, and celebrating the month of the military child. Our student ambassadors support not only our military connected students, but all of our new students in building relationships and feeling connected to our school from their very first day at Chittum.

As Chittum maintains a very high special education population, we strive to ensure we are inclusive of all students throughout our school. Our students are at the heart of what we do, so our actions and commitments must always demonstrate the highest regard for their wellbeing, their safety, and their achievement. Chittum is fortunate to have a caring and dedicated community, within and outside of the school, to help us meet this expectation for every student in attendance.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

At Chittum Elementary, the one practice that has been the most instrumental in our success has been the implementation of a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) with fidelity in our school. This implementation has been a work in progress over the past five years. Our staff has been through many professional developments led by school administration focused on the difference between interventions and accommodations, lessons derived from current research on interventions, and a framework for the implementation of intervention. Our school has instituted regularly scheduled meetings to collaborate as a team of professionals, which includes administration, the grade level team, our school counselor, reading specialist, social worker, and special education teacher. Our singular purpose in these meetings is to discuss our students by name and need; we follow a consistent structure to use data to determine targeted interventions, identify who will provide the intervention, schedule the intervention service appropriately to protect core instruction, and set expectations for monitoring student progress. As part of this process, our school principal worked with the Principal's Advisory Council to develop the Chittum MTSS flip chart to clearly define the tiers with entrance and exit criteria. We also reviewed our resources and identified research-based interventions for reading, math, and behavior. In doing so, we learned that we needed access to interventions and professional development to implement interventions with fidelity to ensure the highest degree of effectiveness and impact. Our school worked collaboratively to identify and purchase interventions. Training was provided to both teachers and teacher assistants, as both play a significant role in providing these interventions, supporting our learners, and celebrating the achievement of our students. The other significant partner in this work is the parent or family, of course. At Chittum, we share the intervention process and service with our families and invite them to support and reinforce the work at home and share in the progress of their students by joining in the partnership of learning, growth, and achievement.