

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

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

School Mailing Address 7487 Coal River Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Comfort State WV Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 25049-0369

County Boone

Telephone (304) 837-8310 Fax (304) 837-8342

Web site/URL https://sites.google.com/view/sherman-elementary E-mail llowe@k12.wv.us

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

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Mr. Matthew Riggs E-mail mrriggs@k12.wv.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Boone Tel. (304) 369-3131

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. Susan Kimbler
(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)
3 Middle/Junior high schools
3 High schools
0 K-12 schools
- 13 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	45
K	31
1	46
2	32
3	24
4	35
5	37
6	0
7	0
8	0
9	0
10	0
11	0
12 or higher	0
Total Students	250

*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
 - 0 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 0 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 98 % White
 - 1.5 % 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: 10%

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	13
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	24
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021	250
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.10
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	10

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

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 62 %

Total number students who qualify: 155

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP: 22 %
Total number of students served 55

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>2</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>12</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>3</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>6</u> Developmental Delay	<u>6</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>49</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>4</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>2</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Students receiving special education services with a 504: 0 %
Total number of students served: 1

10. Number of years the principal has been in the position at this school: 9

11. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	15
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	7
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	8

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 17:1

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	91%	96%	95%	92%	92%
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.

Sherman Elementary will provide a culture of collaboration which will focus on learning for all. ALL students can learn if they are given the adequate time with quality instruction and know they are cared about.

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

<https://www.boonecountyboe.org/employment-88d40432>

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

About 30 miles southeast of Charleston, West Virginia, in the small rural town of Comfort, you will find Sherman Elementary School. Located in the heart of southern coal fields, the Comfort area contains but a few small businesses and a warm, friendly school that has become the centerpiece of community pride.

In 1995, two small schools were consolidated to form Sherman Elementary. Those two schools were once two consolidated schools themselves, making Sherman Elementary a school of four consolidated schools of four communities in Boone County. Those communities now function as one. We have a common goal to meet the emotional, physical, and educational needs of the children in our community. The majority of staff members in our building live locally. They are not only employees, but also stakeholders in the community. We are educating and caring for our own children, family members, and neighbors.

Our community is no stranger to hard times. Mining coal is what puts food on many of our families' tables. This has proven to have its ups and downs. As coal mining booms and busts unexpectedly, so does the socioeconomic status of our families. The majority of our students come from low-income homes. Many of our students' families were devastatingly affected by the 2010 Upper Big Branch mine disaster in which 31 men lost their lives. Our small town is also at the center of an ever-increasing opioid epidemic. This has left many homes broken or totally destroyed. We often discover that as a result of this, our students are not getting their basic needs met at home. While we have endured many hardships and continue to face daily obstacles brought on by drug abuse and poverty, we still succeed. Our staff members work hard to help our students overcome the unfair cards they have been dealt. We address physical, emotional, and educational needs. Due to the high percentage of students living in poverty, the Community Eligibility Program allows us to offer free lunch and breakfast to all students. Even through the adversity they face, low SES students continue to achieve above county and state standards on the West Virginia General Summative Assessment. We are proud of the effort put in by our staff members and students that enables us to obtain and maintain this high standard of excellence.

As with all schools, COVID 19 has left us with a significant learning loss. We work diligently to overcome this and fill in the learning gaps, while still teaching our students on grade-level content. We use research-based methods and best learning practices to deliver a quality education to each and every student. We successfully implement programs such as Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID). As stated in our school mission statement, "Sherman Elementary will provide a culture of collaboration which will focus on learning for all." The core beliefs we live by are: the culture of a school is shaped by the attitudes of the adults, strong instructional leadership, and highly effective personnel; learning is the shared responsibility of the home, students, school, and community; addressing students' social, emotional, and physical needs are just as important as meeting their intellectual needs; learning across the school is enhanced when teachers collaborate by sharing knowledge, ideas, and techniques/strategies; and all students can learn if they are given the adequate time with quality instruction and know they are cared about.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

At Sherman Elementary, the staff focuses on educating the whole child. We pride ourselves on our ability to balance meeting each student's emotional, physical, and educational needs. We believe all students can succeed and hold our students to high standards. We practice a growth mindset. As stated in our county motto, "Accelerate forward...for the students." While Sherman Elementary is fortunate to have a caring staff that is 100% committed to this philosophy, this is not an easy task that we can accomplish alone. We work with local churches, families, and various community service programs to meet the needs of our children.

To make certain students' needs are being met, we use research-based methods and best practices. Our school implements Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) to reinforce academic behaviors and higher-level thinking from a young age. Our students are active participants in their education. They develop habits that will lead to success in life. Children learn about organization, study skills, communication, and self-advocacy using AVID binders. Students as young as 4 years old track their attendance to build a sense of accountability and self-awareness. Schoolwide, students assess data from i-Ready to monitor their growth and identify their individual needs. They use the data to set both reading and math goals for themselves. Students build organizational skills by using a daily agenda to record assignments, homework, and any important information such as upcoming tests. We create a healthy learning environment in which students are motivated by taking ownership of their education.

Our curriculum map is derived from West Virginia College and Career Readiness Standards. The goal is to prepare all students for success in a range of high-quality postsecondary options upon graduating high school. The foundations for that begin right here at Sherman Elementary. Data is the driving force behind our instruction. Monthly focus calendars are developed in order to target specific reading and math skills. These calendars are created using data obtained from West Virginia General Summative Assessment (WVGSA), i-Ready, and Common Formative Assessments (CFA) to address each student's deficiencies and to build upon their strengths. We identify individual needs and meet students on their level to foster growth. We use data to adapt and tailor instruction.

Our school uses i-Ready to individualize reading and math instruction for each student. Students take a beginning of the year diagnostic benchmark. The data from that is used to create unique, adaptive learning paths for each student based on their individual needs. The learning path is utilized to close any achievement gaps and get all students to grade level. It has been instrumental in addressing the issue of learning loss due to COVID. Students take a middle of the year benchmark and an end of year benchmark to monitor their progress.

The staff at Sherman Elementary makes learning fun and exciting for students. We provide a safe, engaging learning environment. We have two outdoor classrooms that students love to utilize on sunny days. We incorporate hands on learning activities to keep students engaged. Centers, partner learning, small and large groups, peer tutoring, use of technology, and STEM activities are staples in every classroom.

The scope and sequence of our reading program at Sherman Elementary is based on West Virginia College and Career Readiness Standards. We focus on the five domains of early learning foundations: reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language. We incorporate a colorful variety of resources to address these domains. Preschool facilitates discovery learning through play. Kindergarten through 5th grade use the county-adopted Wonders series from McGraw-Hill to build reading skills and foster a love of reading in our students. Heggerty and Secret Stories are used school wide to teach and reinforce phonemic awareness. Magazine subscriptions, such as Storyworks and Scholastic News, are incorporated to provide students with current events and real-world stories they can relate to, while building knowledge across the curriculum. Articles from Read Works are used to build comprehension and fluency. Each student spends

approximately 45 minutes a week working in their individualized, adaptive learning pathway using i-Ready to meet their personalized needs.

One important component of our reading program is our focus time. We use data to identify reading needs and set a block of time out of each day to address these needs. This helps us to fill in learning gaps post COVID. We utilize best practices to teach critical reading skills, such as phonemic awareness, phonics, high frequency words, vocabulary, and comprehension. We engage students with a variety of high-quality reading material and genres using informational text, short stories, novels, magazines, graphic novels, getepic.com, and our school library. We also provided each student with a “Beyond the Classroom” packet to engage in reading activities at home with their families.

Sherman Elementary is particularly proud of our writing program. We have implemented a four-square style writing program from grades preschool through 5th grade. The program uses the same basic graphic organizer to facilitate writing throughout all grade levels. Students love this because it is familiar to them schoolwide. The writing program spirals, starting the foundation with our preschool students and building on those same concepts each year. We have experienced great success using this unified system across all grade levels. Students begin by using the graphic organizer with pictures in kindergarten. They then progress to words and sentences. By the time they get to 5th grade, they are using the same graphic organizer to compose essays and conduct research projects.

The reading professional learning community (PLC) meets monthly, and grade-level PLCs meet weekly to discuss student progress and learning. We use summative and formative assessments. The i-Ready benchmarks are used to progress monitor and guide instruction. The i-Ready platform also provides opportunities for growth and enrichment. Interims are used to prepare students for the layout and components tested on the WVGSA. We use Common Formative Assessments to determine if goals are being met and to determine if we need to reteach. At the end of each school year, grades 3-5 will complete the WVGSA to determine if grade-level standards are being met.

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

Sherman Elementary’s curriculum map for math is based on West Virginia College and Career Readiness Standards. The curriculum focuses on the domains of operations and algebraic thinking, number and operations, geometry, and numbers and operations in base ten. The adopted series used for teaching is Go Math by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Teachers supplement the series with ST Math, Think Central, i-Ready, 99 Math, Minute Math and teacher made units to provide students with a comprehensive education.

Sherman Elementary teachers deliver instruction using high-quality, research-based strategies. Number Talks are used as short, daily, and flexible exercises aimed at building number sense and mathematical terminology for students. It helps students visualize problem solving and perform calculations quickly. Direct instruction and modeling are utilized at all grade levels to introduce new concepts or procedures. Direct instruction is often used by our teachers in conjunction with any number of other instructional approaches to prepare students for academic success. Our teachers view small groups, differentiation, scaffolding, and peer tutoring as instrumental in ensuring individual student’s knowledge and understanding of necessary skills. Mathematical concepts are applied and used in real-life situations in order to make them meaningful to students. Teachers incorporate hands-on manipulatives to make learning fun and keep students interested. Manipulatives are also used with our students to help solidify a concrete understanding of concepts being taught. We teach using a variety of algorithms to find a way that “works” for each and every child. Students are encouraged to master multiplication facts and fluency quizzes using interactive bulletin boards.

Fourth and 5th grade students are given the opportunity to excel through Math Field Day. Students practice and then compete with other schools. We are proud to say both our 4th and 5th grade teams won 1st place in the Boone County competition.

Our math teachers are masters at integrating technology daily to help students excel and keep them engaged. Students play interactive math games to practice skills. Students also work online in their individualized i-

Ready pathway. This provides students with prescriptive instruction and practice based on their needs. i-Ready is a key component to closing the achievement gap and bringing all students to grade level. Students love to engage in friendly, competitive games of Kahoot. Smart boards are integrated into math lessons at all grade levels.

Our math teachers collaborate monthly in PLC meetings to allow discussion and form curriculum alignment. This has proven to be beneficial in identifying weak areas and addressing specific concerns. They also meet with grade level PLCs weekly to discuss four key questions: What do we expect students to learn, how will we know when students are learning, how will we respond when students are not learning, and how will we respond when students already mastered the skill? We use summative and formative assessments to answer many of these questions. Benchmarks from i-Ready are used to progress monitor and guide instruction. i-Ready also provides opportunities for growth and enrichment. Interims are used to monitor student progress. CFAs are used by all teachers in the building to determine if specific goals are being met. At the end of each school year, grades 3-5 will complete the WVGSA to determine if grade-level standards were met.

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

Our science curriculum comes from the West Virginia College and Career Readiness Standards. In the classroom, we focus on the domains of physical science, life science, earth & space, and engineering technology and application. The adopted science series we use is Into Science by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. We supplement this with STEM activities, Scholastic News, Science Spin Magazine, teacher made units, leveled readers, and integration through math and reading.

In our science series, we begin each lesson with a hands-on activity to introduce science concepts. We then study the concept a little deeper through text, videos, or observations. After our study session, we repeat the hands-on activity from the start of the lesson, and apply what we learned to make the activity a success or better in some way. We offer students many opportunities to use the scientific method. Third through 5th graders complete a science fair experiment every other year. The fair is an enjoyable learning experience that includes parents/guardians in the learning process. If students win at the school-level science fair, they have the opportunity to take their project to the county and then state-level competition.

One advantage to living in such a rural area is that students have a natural curiosity and they are provided with many things to explore in our community. Creeks, mountains, and wildlife abound in our area. Students often come to school with questions regarding something they found or saw at home. This has led to some of our best science lessons, and a field trip can occur right out our backdoor. Our 2nd grade classroom takes care of our courtyard each spring as a way to enhance their earth science skills. Many classrooms grow plants, and we have even hatched chicks!

Science standards are assessed on the 5th grade level by the WVGSA. This is the only grade level that takes the test. Other forms of assessment include CFAs, formal and informal observations, projects, labs, and daily work.

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

Sherman Elementary's social studies curriculum is from the West Virginia College and Career Readiness Standards. Our adopted textbook, Social Studies, is published by Harcourt. The domains we focus on are civics, economics, geography, history, and West Virginia history. We supplement the series with historical documents, Readworks, Storyworks, Scholastic News, teacher-made units, and integration through reading.

One of our favorite teacher-made units is our school wide West Virginia unit. Everyone from preschool to 5th grade participates in a week-long study celebrating our Appalachian culture. We study all things West Virginia. We bring in guest speakers and have special presentations/demonstrations. We truly touch on every domain of study with this unit, and the students love it! We learn about our natural resources and local government. Students get to explore the arts. We have a community day. Families are welcome to visit our school and get a taste of what our students have been studying.

Our student body also has a student council. We go through the voting process, voting for a president and vice president in every classroom. One of their duties is to act as a liaison for their class. An additional responsibility for two of the members is to serve as student representatives on the Local School Improvement Council (LSIC) Committee. If a student or classroom has any ideas, problems, concerns, or suggestions, it is to be placed in the student council Suggestion Box. The president or vice president can then bring that to the attention of the principal or other responsible adult. Our students also participate in a yearly Veterans Day Program. This is a student led program in which veterans are invited to attend a special presentation from our students. Our students also participate in a Social Studies Fair every other year. Projects include topics such as economics, world history, anthropology, geography, political science, psychology, sociology, and state or local studies. This is a great learning experience for students. It also gets parents involved.

The social studies curriculum is assessed through both formal and informal methods. We use CFAs, projects, and daily work.

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

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

Our preschool program focuses on skills in five main areas of development. Social and emotional development skills provide a lifelong ability to build healthy relationships and to regulate behavior and emotions. English and language arts skills include receptive and expressive language, alphabet knowledge, phonemic awareness, and early writing. Cognitive skills include mathematics and science. These skills are problem solving, reasoning, making predictions, and understanding the world around them. Health and physical development skills include gross motor, fine motor, hygiene, and safety practices. Skills in the arts include dramatic play, music and movement, and creating visual art. Students are assessed on these skills using the Early Learning Reporting System (ELRS) three times a year. This is utilized to ensure that classroom instruction is data driven.

The skills taught in preschool set the stage for future learning and prepares each student for success. To help with the transition from preschool to Kindergarten the results of the Spring ELRS assessments are shared with kindergarten teachers. Kindergarten teachers use this information to determine each student's skills at the end of preschool. Kindergarten teachers also use the ELRS assessment. There is a "step-up" day in the spring that allows preschool students to visit the kindergarten classroom and meet kindergarten staff before the end of their year.

To support school readiness and to assure the use of developmentally appropriate methods for children in primary grades, the Ready, Set, Go! West Virginia Comprehensive Framework for School Readiness is utilized. This comprehensive framework focuses on how local communities, schools, and programs can offer support and resources for families and children prior to and during their transition into school. Early learning classrooms also provide opportunities for children to build on solid foundations and to have a positive disposition toward learning.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

2a. Arts (visual and/or performing)

Sherman Elementary offers many opportunities for students outside of the curriculum. Our students have the opportunity to participate in Scholastic Team for Arts and Greater Enrichment (STAGE,) which puts on a yearly play. One of our general education teachers has formed a school choir. They perform on special occasions, such as our Veterans Day Program. As part of our West Virginia unit, we have a student talent show that allows students to showcase their unique talents. All students participate in a holiday concert each

December. Our students are also responsible for our Veterans Day Program. Each class does a performance, for example: poetry readings, songs, artwork, and interpretive dance. We also try to immerse our students in culture by attending such performances as The Nutcracker. Our students create videos and programs to be viewed school wide for activities like “See Something, Say Something.” These are all in addition to teacher created art projects that occur regularly in our classrooms, for example: stained glass painting, quilting, plays, singing, and illustrating.

2b. Physical education/health/nutrition

Students at Sherman Elementary are fortunate to have a daily physical education class. We have a PE teacher and a cardio teacher, which accommodates for all students to participate in daily physical activity. We also have a walking trail on our playground, which was funded from grant money. Students can earn “Walking Bucks” and charms by completing laps on the trail. Students can exchange their walking bucks for prizes. One of the most anticipated days of our school year is Field Day. Students compete in various events on mixed grade level teams.

Our fourth and 5th graders participate in Fitnessgram. A pre-test and post-test is administered to measure components of physical ability, such as core strength, flexibility, aerobic capacity, upper body strength. Students participate in Fuel Up to Play 60, a wellness program to motivate students to be active, eat healthy, and stay fit. Students can create online accounts and participate in activities online and track their progress to earn points and prizes.

Our school also participates in the West Virginia University Extension’s Family Nutrition Program. This is a program aimed at low-income families to help educate them on the importance of eating healthy and exercising. Fifth grade students participate in an 8-week program that teaches them nutrition education and provides students with the opportunity to try healthy food that they may not have access to otherwise. Mountaineer Food Bank is also a nutritional partner. A farmer's market and a kid's market - both hosted onsite - are provided to educate and encourage the art of horticulture as well as healthy eating.

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

2d. Technology/library/media

Sherman Elementary students are fortunate to have a 1:1 technology ratio. Each student has their own tablet or iPad. This has proven to be invaluable. It opens the door to allow the students and teachers so many unique and new opportunities to engage in learning. Every classroom is also equipped with a View Sonic Board. The View Sonic Boards are interactive and allow whole group practice as well as many other educational options. Our students are more attentive when they can engage with interactive content. It gives teachers in our school the power to import videos or documents and create interactive lessons. Using the View Sonic Boards, we can save and share lessons. We have three computer labs as well. The computer labs are necessary when all students have to take the WVGSA at the end of the school year. They are also used for classroom research projects, such as Social Studies and Science Fair projects. We use the computer labs to complete Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) activities. Extended school year students use the computer labs for daily work. We also utilize our computer labs for parent training.

Sherman also has its own library. Parent volunteers run the library. They check out books, organize the library, and create classroom library schedules to ensure every student gets a chance to check out a book. Students benefit by having access to a multitude of genres and reading levels.

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

The staff at Sherman Elementary is invested in the mental health and well-being of our students. Our school counselor has monthly, 30-minute lessons with each class. The lessons focus on helping students develop healthy emotional behaviors and relationships. We work toward developing self-awareness, social

awareness, maintaining friendships, and making good decisions. The counselor has provided calm down boxes for every classroom to help students manage stress. Many lessons focus on drug awareness and prevention. Our counselor provides lesson and activities for Red Ribbon Week and implements evidence-based programs, such as “Too Good for Drugs” and “2nd Step.” She helps keep our school safe by teaching our students the importance of “See Something, Say Something.”

Our counselor also helps students prepare for their future. She organizes and hosts a Career Fair and College Exploration Week to teach our students that it is never too early to start thinking about their future. We work with the community to bring in a multitude of people from different occupations. Students are motivated to explore postgraduate options.

The counselor at Sherman is very involved in day-to-day activities with students. She often spends her lunch time eating with the students. She sponsors Student Council and a student book club. She builds strong, trusting relationships with students and staff members. She is always available for one on one counseling sessions to meet individual student needs. She has knowledge of and utilizes a variety of outside resources when situations warrant them.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Data is collected and aggregated from many sources to identify and monitor students who need additional support. We use both formative and summative assessments. CFAs are administered in class to identify struggling students and to allow teachers to adapt instruction. Diagnostic tests, such as i-Ready, are used to pinpoint trouble areas and monitor progress.

In order to address the achievement gap, teachers perform Tier II interventions in the classroom for nine weeks. Teachers use focus calendars to address specific problems. In-class interventions can include small group, rewording directions, oral testing, or extended time. If progress is not made, students are referred to Tier III Intervention, which is intensive intervention that occurs outside the general education classroom. Students work in small groups with an interventionist. Our interventionist is a Title I teacher. If progress is not made in intensive intervention, the student will be evaluated for special education services. All staff members collaborate to help each student reach their full potential.

Extended Day is a six-week program that is offered in the fall and spring. Teachers identify struggling students and refer them to the extended day program. The program occurs after school in a small group setting. Students receive additional support and instruction to help them be successful in the classroom. Students are provided a meal and transportation home from extended day. Struggling students can also participate in Energy Express. This is an award-winning program offered for six weeks during the summer. It provides students with additional reading support to help students retain reading skills during the summer months.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Sherman Elementary does have a gifted program for students who qualify. Unfortunately, we do not currently have any students who have met the standards. However, we do have other programs in place to help excel high-achieving students. Teachers use differentiated instruction to ensure students reach their maximum potential through a rigorous and challenging curriculum. We keep all students academically engaged. We also use programs that are tailored to each student’s needs. i-Ready uses diagnostic testing data to create a prescriptive lesson plan, called a pathway, for each student. The program is adaptive to the student’s needs. This allows for acceleration of students working above grade level. Students can also excel, or work above grade level, using ST Math. We utilize peer tutors to help both the low-achieving and high-achieving students. Above grade level students also have the privilege to engage in academic competitions, such as Spelling Bee, Science Fair, Social Studies Fair, and Math Field Day. Students can also use the school library to find higher level reading material. In addition, students set individualized reading and math goals to challenge themselves.

3c. Students with disabilities:

Sherman Elementary strives to provide our students with an all-encompassing education, including academic, social emotional supports, communication skills, behavior supports, social development, and daily living skills. Our highly qualified special education certified staff is focused on delivering specialized instruction of grade-level content for all students, regardless of their identified exceptionality. Instruction is provided within various school settings, per student Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs). Preschool special needs students receive instruction within a general education environment with teachers certified in both general education and special education, as well as Early Childhood Classroom Assistant Teachers. To meet the needs of all special education students in grades K-5, services are provided within the general education environment with paraprofessional support, as inclusion within the general education environment, small-group intervention services within the special education environment, and indirect special education services. Special education staff members collaborate with general education staff members to provide remediation, differentiated instruction, and enrichment opportunities for all students.

Our special education department currently services 22% of our total student population, integrating them within the entire school environment. Students who receive reading and math services within their IEP use the county-adopted reading and math series and school-purchased supplemental resources. Additional resources, such as SRA Phonics, SRA Math, and System 44, all research-based intervention programs, remediate any below-level skills. Students with IEPs are taught daily grade-level standards to help achieve their IEP goals. We also have students who receive functional skills instruction, along with related services, such as Speech Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Behavior Intervention, Hearing Impaired Intervention, and Vision Impairment Intervention. Our primary focus is to move our students forward while fully meeting their needs.

3d. English Language Learners:

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Our staff strives to create a safe and caring environment at Sherman Elementary. We aim to meet all students' emotional and physical, as well as academic needs. Due to the socioeconomic status of our community, students' health and wellness is our biggest challenge. West Virginia Health Right provides our students with a mobile dental bus. It is an in-school dental program to provide disadvantaged students with dental care. Local churches provide us with "Love Bags" of food to send home each Friday with students who might otherwise not eat all weekend. WVU Extension's Family Nutrition Program works with our students to provide them with fresh fruits and vegetables to have as a snack during the school day. We also have a counselor on staff to address students' emotional needs.

At Sherman Elementary, we kick off each school year with a back-to-school pool party for students and their families to get them excited for the new school year. We work diligently all year to engage and motivate our students. From our lively morning announcements with a daily joke, to after-school dances, we continually focus on providing a safe and engaging environment. We offer educational field trips. A television screen is displayed near the main office where students are honored for their achievements. We award one student per homeroom the honor of being named student of the month each month. The award is based on specific character traits that change monthly. The student's photo is displayed with a certificate. They receive a medal and a reward at the end of the year. A "MVP" is also chosen each week in PE. Kindergarten teachers choose a class leader, and our 4th grade teacher awards a "Champion Table" weekly. This promotes student growth as they strive to display specific, favorable character traits. We also offer attendance incentives. Students get to participate in activities like glow parties if they do not miss any school days. We have witnessed a decrease in absenteeism as a result of this.

In our classrooms, we engage in fun learning activities, such as Dr. Seuss Day, Read Across America, Go Noodle, and Kahoot, to motivate our students. Our student council has a suggestion box, so every student can have a voice. We also participate in Red Ribbon Week and "See Something, Say Something" to instill a safe learning environment for all students while supporting their social and emotional growth.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

At Sherman Elementary, we prioritize communication with parents and the community. After all, we could not do all we do without them. Each grade level sends home a weekly newsletter with any important information for that week. We communicate with parents through Schoology and email. Parents sign a student agenda nightly that tells what the student did in class that day. We have grade-level Facebook groups ran by homeroom parents to keep parents updated on current school events. Title I sends home a monthly Family Connections Newsletter with tips to help parents help their children. We invite parents in for special programs, such as West Virginia Day and our outdoor Christmas Concert. We also invite them in for academics. We created learning packets, Beyond the Classroom, for reading and math. We invited parents to come in, and we taught them how to use the packets to help their children with reading and math skills. We have parent/teacher conferences and open house to discuss academics. We recognize accomplishments with parents by inviting them to celebrations, such as graduation for 5th grade and kindergarten and award days for all grade levels. We work with parents to create a fun learning environment for students, such as water days. We rely on parents to do things like pop popcorn for recess and organize our library. We want students to look forward to coming to school while also getting a quality education. Parents play a crucial role in helping us obtain that goal.

At Sherman Elementary, we know a child's basic needs must be met before they can learn. Most of our students come from low income households or are being raised by grandparents. We engage with several businesses and churches to ensure, to the best of our ability, that each family has their needs met. Warm Heart Charity provides our students with shoes. Both Ball Toyota and Boone Family Support System made generous donations to help with food, clothing, shelter, and hygiene needs of our students. We collaborate with local churches to provide food baskets, back-to-school back packs, and Angel Tree gifts for students in

need. Odd Fellows and “Shop with a Cop” help us make certain each student has enjoyable holidays. We work with and provide transportation to a local church-ran after-school program where students can have a snack and get help with homework. The Gabriel Project works directly with our pre-school teachers to help meet the needs of our young students.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Because we realize the impact our school culture has on student learning, Sherman Elementary creates an environment in which all staff members feel valued and supported. At Sherman, we are a family. Our Morale Club works tirelessly throughout the school year to have a positive impact and boost morale because we all know you cannot pour from an empty cup. They plan numerous activities to lift spirits throughout the year and make all staff members feel important. We have a Secret Pal group that surprises staff members on special days, holidays, and birthdays with small gifts that express gratitude. We create a family atmosphere by planning and enjoying Faculty Senate luncheons together. We display a “Staff Belonging Tree” where all staff members can showcase their individual personalities and interest. We vote schoolwide on a Teacher of the Year and Service Personnel of the Year; we honor those recipients with special recognition and a plaque.

Our principal creates an environment where each staff member feels they are respected and have a voice through shared decision-making and shared leadership roles. She provides a staff Christmas dinner and Staff Appreciation Lunch for the faculty, which creates a sense of gratitude and belonging. Recognizing the need for self-care, she wrote grants and received donations to provide staff members with an exercise room. It allows us a phenomenal opportunity to relieve stress and stay healthy.

We also create a professional culture through our own learning. We take advantage of every opportunity to improve practices by making use of professional development and even Saturday work days to ensure we stay up to date on current research and findings in the educational field. We participate in book studies throughout the year. We attend various educational trainings, from Passive Restraint Training to the County Math Cadre. We had a team travel to Florida this year and bring back a wealth of knowledge from an AVID training. We leave no stone unturned in our constant pursuit of knowledge to become better educators.

4. School Leadership:

The structure of our school is based on collaboration. That is the biggest factor in keeping our building performing at an optimal level. In addition to regularly scheduled faculty senate meetings, we also meet both vertically and horizontally to collaborate school wide. We all hold accountability and a commitment to shared goals. Our Leadership Team meets biweekly to ensure continuity throughout the school. Grade-level teachers have a daily common planning time to plan units or discuss student needs. Grade-level teachers, Title I teachers, and special education teachers meet weekly for PLC meetings to discuss student learning goals and progress. We also incorporate various committees to keep our school running smoothly. We have a library committee to work with our parent volunteers to make sure reading needs are being met. We have a committee to organize and delegate jobs to make West Virginia Day a success. We have a reward committee that builds character education in our students through monitoring and planning for activities, such as attendance rewards, student of the month recognition, and academic achievements.

We are proud to say all permanent staff members at Sherman Elementary are highly qualified. We operate on intrinsic motivation; we all have high expectations for ourselves as well as our students. We have a shared sense of accountability. We are fortunate to have teachers in our building with specific areas of expertise. We utilize these strengths within our staff to elevate teaching practices across grade levels. For example, if one teacher is having trouble getting the concept of dividing fractions through to their students, that teacher will observe a fellow staff member who excels at teaching fractions. If we have a teacher who is excellent at teaching students to write essays, we will hold a professional development after school or on a Saturday in which that teacher can share her method with other teachers. If a staff member has technological knowledge that others do not possess, that teacher will train the rest of the staff. Leadership roles are allowed and encouraged throughout our building to promote growth and learning.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

At Sherman Elementary, we collaborate with local churches and business partners to help meet the needs of our students, families, and staff. The majority of our students come from low-income homes. They lack basic needs, such as food and clothing. Many come from broken homes and are not being raised by their biological parents. We are seeing grandparents raising their grandchildren more and more often. Sixteen percent of our student population is currently being raised by grand or great grandparents. To help support these grandparents and give them the tools they need, we actively participate in Grandfamilies Training. We teach grandparents how to help their child with school work and address any specific needs the family may have.

The opioid crisis has hit our area hard and affects the majority of our student population. We partnered with the local sheriff office to develop a program called “Handle with Care” to navigate these issues. Often times, our students will be exposed to a drug-related crisis or some type of criminal activity at home. If local cops are aware of a school-age child present at a crime scene, they will notify our school that that student needs to be “handled with care” that day and possibly the following days. We have also, on numerous occasions, had law enforcement call our school and tell us not to send a certain child or family home on the bus because mom or dad was just arrested or overdosed. We work closely with law enforcement to ensure the safety of our students both inside and outside of school.

We also have students who are homeless. Our Families in Transition Program is in place to help provide those families with food and clothing. In addition to homelessness, many of our students are living in cramped, multi-family homes. We offer free breakfast and lunch for all students. We also send bags of food home each weekend with children we know do not get food at home. With help from the community and business partners, we work diligently to ensure our students are fed and clothed.

We celebrate different cultures with our students through our curriculum. We teach diversity through literature and character education. We also celebrate Appalachian culture during West Virginia Week. Families are invited to participate in learning West Virginia history and given unique opportunities to experience Appalachian culture. Students get to participate in hands on activities, such as making apple butter. They learn tepee building from Native Americans. They get to see, and sometimes hold, animals native to the Appalachian region. While having fun, students gain a wealth of knowledge about the culture, history, geography, and resources of West Virginia.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR EXCELLENCE

The single-most influential factor in the success of Sherman Elementary is collaboration. According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, every student's basic needs must be met before successful learning can occur. Due to factors such as drug abuse and low socioeconomic status, a large percentage of our students' basic needs are not being met at home. Meeting those needs falls on the shoulders of the education system. Without the help and collaboration of all our business partners, local churches, groups, and organizations, we could not possibly accomplish this. By collaborating with the community, we are able to feed, clothe, and find housing for our students.

We collaborate with parents/guardians to always provide the best learning environment for our students. We work together to meet both basic and educational needs. We offer trainings and workshops to parents, like Beyond the Classroom Packets, to help foster educational growth inside the home. We rely on parents to help with projects, such as Career Day and Read Across America. Parents keep our library organized and running. It truly takes a village, and we feel we work together with families to help raise caring, successful individuals.

We collaborate with our school resource officer and local law enforcement to keep our students safe. Open communication allows us to address concerns quickly and effectively. We are able to provide safety and security for our students and staff. Our Local School Improvement Council (LSIC) is a collaboration between students, staff, and community members who work together to keep our campus safe and beautiful.

Finally, we collaborate within our building to provide students with a high-quality education. Our principal, general education teachers, special education teachers, related service itinerants, Title I teachers, school counselor, instructional aides, and service personnel collaborate daily to educate the whole child. Regular education teachers and special education teachers collaborate in inclusion classrooms to meet student needs and create a successful learning environment. PLC meetings are held weekly to collaborate and discuss student learning. We set aside time for vertical planning to discuss the learning continuum between grade levels. We desegregate data and set learning goals in PLC meetings. By doing this, we have been able to identify and come up with solutions to address learning gaps after COVID. This collaboration and communication between grade levels and subject areas promotes success for each and every student. It has proven successful, as, on average, all Sherman Elementary students score above district and state proficiency levels.