

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) or its equivalent each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's AYP requirement or its equivalent in the 2012-2013 school year. Meeting AYP or its equivalent must be certified by the state. Any AYP status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2007 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for that period.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 or 2012.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
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. 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.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 1 High schools
 0 K-12 schools
 3 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 5897

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Small city or town in a rural area
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 6
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2012 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

| Grade | # of Males | # of Females | Grade Total |
|----------------------------------|------------|--------------|-------------|
| PreK | 41 | 31 | 72 |
| K | 59 | 47 | 106 |
| 1 | 26 | 38 | 64 |
| 2 | 35 | 38 | 73 |
| 3 | 42 | 43 | 85 |
| 4 | 40 | 27 | 67 |
| 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 12 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total in Applying School: | | | 467 |

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
1 % Asian
2 % Black or African American
1 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
96 % White
0 % Two or more races
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting 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.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2011-2012 school year: 5%
This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

| Step | Description | Value |
|------|---|-------|
| (1) | Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year. | 19 |
| (2) | Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year. | 3 |
| (3) | Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]. | 22 |
| (4) | Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2011 | 430 |
| (5) | Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4). | 0.05 |
| (6) | Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100. | 5 |

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 4%
Total number of ELL students in the school: 16
Number of non-English languages represented: 3
Specify non-English languages:

Amharic, Spanish and Chinese.

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 34%

Total number of students who qualify: 157

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 14%

Total number of students served: 65

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <u>0</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>0</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Mental Retardation | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed |

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

| | <u>Full-Time</u> | <u>Part-Time</u> |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Administrator(s) | <u>1</u> | <u>0</u> |
| Classroom teachers | <u>20</u> | <u>0</u> |
| Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.) | <u>10</u> | <u>2</u> |
| Paraprofessionals | <u>29</u> | <u>0</u> |
| Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.) | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> |
| Total number | <u>64</u> | <u>7</u> |

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

21:1

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

| | 2011-2012 | 2010-2011 | 2009-2010 | 2008-2009 | 2007-2008 |
|-----------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Daily student attendance | 97% | 96% | 96% | 97% | 97% |
| High school graduation rate | % | % | % | % | % |

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2012.

Graduating class size: _____

Enrolled in a 4-year college or university _____ %

Enrolled in a community college _____ %

Enrolled in vocational training _____ %

Found employment _____ %

Military service _____ %

Other _____ %

Total _____ **0%**

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

No

Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

PART III - SUMMARY

Okoboji Elementary School is situated in the northwest corner of our state in Milford, Iowa. We are nestled in the heart of the Iowa Great Lakes which is a beautiful, popular vacation area that is enjoyed year round. Our current enrollment consists of about 475 PK-4th grade students and 65 staff members. Seven teachers on staff hold their Master's degree and the average number of years of experience is 14. Dedicated support staff contributes a wide range of experience and expertise for our students. We have continued to grow in size with building additions being completed in 2003 and most recently, a 10 classroom addition in 2011. Okoboji Elementary provides an excellent education to the students from multiple communities where the demographics are continually changing, and our student population consist of 38% low SES as determined by our free and reduced lunch count.

Success and achievement at Okoboji Elementary is founded in our mission: We will prepare each learner with the knowledge and skills necessary for a productive life in a changing world. This mission is interpreted to include students as well as teachers and staff as lifelong learners. Our mission has led us to the tradition of rigorous academics while meeting the needs of all learners resulting in success in the classroom and in their future. Community members serve as mentors for students who need a caring and supportive adult relationship that nurtures and celebrate their strengths. Business partnerships are another avenue for community involvement in our schools. Local business members collaborate with students and staff on symbiotic projects that are mutually beneficial.

Okoboji Elementary's strengths and accomplishments are built upon a collaboration of hard-working, motivated students along with supportive, caring parents who work in conjunction with a dedicated staff. Together, we are willing to do "whatever it takes" for all students to succeed. Known for high academic achievement, we have attracted students from area schools. The continued growth and improvement results in our students traditionally scoring well above the state average in Reading and Math. In addition to strong academic performance, our students have also been honored as the 2007 School District of Character and 2008 County of Character. CHARACTER COUNTS! plays a critical role throughout our building, district, and community. All students are recognized for demonstrating positive acts of character both inside as well as outside of our school.

Meeting the needs of all students at Okoboji Elementary is second to none. We are able to meet the multiple needs of students through research based best practices that our staff implements as well as evaluate regularly for effectiveness. Behavioral and social needs are met through guidance counseling and at-risk behavior intervention services for our students. In addition to serving students throughout the day, we also offer programming prior to the start of the school day as well as throughout the summer months. Teaching school-wide expectations to all students provides a consistent message throughout the building. Differentiated instruction is critical for all students academic success. Our school-wide Response to Intervention approach enhances instruction for the struggling students who need additional strategies for success. We offer the Talented and Gifted program for students who need acceleration beginning at the kindergarten level. All students are held accountable and to high standards. Parental support is critical in this process and we are fortunate to have an average of 98% attendance at parent-teacher conferences as well as a high attendance rate at our curriculum nights each year.

Technology has become an ubiquitous tool throughout our district with a 1:1 initiative. Each student in our building has technological access beginning at the preschool level where they are exposed to iPods. Elementary students also use netbooks on a daily basis to assist in meeting their academic goals. We believe that technology is a tool used to help us reach our highest potential with every student. Demonstrating creativity and being able to express oneself as a learner is encouraged in every classroom throughout our building. Students are expected to explore and try new ways of learning. We feel it is also important that they know and understand that making mistakes is a part of the learning process. The

learning environment and culture in our building teaches students to be accepting and open to the ideas of others.

Okoboji Elementary School is extremely honored and humbled to have been nominated for the National Blue Ribbon Award. The students and staff continually work together as a team in an effort to put forth their greatest efforts for combining and capitalizing on areas of expertise. We complement and support each other to ensure the most positive outcomes possible for all. We are proud of the outstanding growth and sustainability in our achievement over the past years and take pride in knowing that we will continue to strive to maintain this legacy. Thank you for considering Okoboji Elementary for this award.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

A. Okoboji Elementary has demonstrated a trend of sustaining and improving student achievement measured by the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills and Iowa Assessments over the last five years in both reading and mathematics for grades 3 and 4. During the last five years in 3rd grade, math scores have progressed from 88% proficient in 2007-2008 to most recently 93% 2011-2012. Reading scores have been maintained at 90% proficient in 2007-2008 to 2011-2012 with a high percentage of 93% in 2010-2011. During the last five years in 4th grade, the math scores have progressed from 94% proficient in 2007-2008 to most recently 96% 2011-2012. Reading scores have progressed from 91% proficient in 2007-2008 to 92% in 2011-2012.

The performance levels for standardized assessments in our school are based around the state agreement for No Child Left Behind. Within that agreement, the three levels of performance are advanced/high, proficient/intermediate, and below proficient/low. We have an expectation that all students achieve proficiency and we are able to move more students into the advanced level.

B. In analyzing our data tables, we have been fortunate to have an increase in our enrollment over the past 5 years in our building. The number of students who qualify for free and/or reduced lunch has also increased over the past 5 years. With our changing demographics, we have been able to sustain high levels of achievement, above 90% proficient, and in some cases improve our achievement scores. With over 90% proficiency in grades 3 and 4 in both math and reading and with class sizes of 72 and 61 respectively, there are very few students who did not achieve proficiency. Maintaining this level of achievement with a changing demographic is something we are very proud of. The school-wide RTI model was introduced for the purpose of reaching those students who are not proficient and moving them to the next level of proficiency as well as taking the students who are proficient and advancing them to the advanced level of performance.

In our most recent year, we had 2 subgroups with an achievement gap of 10 or more percentage points in the area of reading comprehension. To close this achievement gap, we have done a couple of different things instructionally as a result. We have reduced the number of students in each group for our small group reading instruction which allows our teachers to focus on the learning needs of the students more precisely. We have also made sure that these groups are all taught by the most highly qualified teacher. We have implemented a school-wide RTI model in our building where all students receive intervention 4 days a week for about 120 minutes per week.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Assessment data is utilized in many different ways and for different reasons at Okoboji Elementary. There are two main reasons we analyze our data. The first is to identify the academic needs of our students. The second reason is to make improvements in our instruction. The assessment data we have available to our staff is the Iowa Assessments that are administered to grades 2-4 annually. In the area of literacy, we administer the Phonological Awareness Test (PAT), Basic Reading Inventory (BRI), Diagnostic Spelling Assessment (DSA), and Marie Clay in the fall, winter and spring. In math, we administer quarterly probes at each grade level and utilize Kathy Richardson concept assessments for the purpose of diagnostically looking at students in the area of math.

On an annual basis in the spring, each grade level analyzes their assessment data and writes goals for the next school year that align with our building goals, which are also aligned with district goals and ultimately with our district mission statement. These goals are written with the focus on the students and subgroups who have not achieved proficiency in the areas of reading comprehension, math, and science.

Teachers working at each grade level not only identify the students who were not proficient, but also the areas where students were not proficient. Identifying the students allows for the teachers to start planning and organizing interventions for Response To Intervention and by identifying the areas where students were not proficient allows the teachers to reflect on their instruction and make the necessary adjustments so they can be sure they cover those standards and benchmarks thoroughly and achieve grade level proficiency the following year. These goals are reviewed on a regular basis with the principal and grade level teams throughout the year.

To start the school year, the principal meets with every grade level every two weeks for the first quarter of the school year and then once a month for the remainder of the school year. The purpose of these meetings is to review assessment data and classroom probes to help identify the learning needs of the students and the teaching needs of the staff. With our literacy assessments occurring in the fall, winter and spring, the principal also meets with each grade level team and all reading staff members that work with that grade level. Literacy assessment data is analyzed to determine if there are any students who need to change their leveled group, but more importantly, the data is used to provide information to determine the instructional focus for each group of students. The teachers at each level discuss necessary instructional adjustments as well as communicate student expectations.

We want to inform the parents, students, and community of our students' achievement in order to maintain continued support for our school and for the work they do outside of the school day, and to maintain our continued growth and success each year. Parents and students are informed on a quarterly basis regarding their child's growth and achievement on formative assessments in the areas of literacy and math. Our Literacy Leadership Team created a parent data form that is also sent home three times each year. The data form provides parents with their child's data as well as what is expected at the different reporting times during the year. This is one way our parents are made aware of our expectations in the area of literacy. Classroom teachers share the results from the Iowa Assessments with students and are discussed on an individual basis. Goals are established individually and as a grade level. Parents are given some suggestions and are encouraged to go over the results of the Iowa Assessments with their children. Summative assessment results such as the Iowa Assessments are distributed annually in a couple different ways. The principal presents student achievement data to the School Board, School Improvement Advisory Council, and district administration annually. Student achievement results are also communicated in the district newsletter that is distributed bi-annually to each resident in our district. The results are also available electronically on our district website.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

The staff and students are proud to be able to share our success with others. Since there is only one elementary school in our district, presenting to our School Board throughout the school year is a great way for us to highlight our successes locally.

In the past, we have presented academic achievement results to the School Board. Staff members have presented our small group guided reading approach to teaching literacy. Staff presented our weekly diet of concepts and skills as well as how we arrange and organize our groups using our reading assessment data. We have also presented our approach to school-wide Response To Intervention and the successes the students have experienced.

The staff welcomes teachers and administrators from other schools to observe strategies that have proven successful with elementary students. Okoboji staff has conducted professional development activities for teachers, both within and outside of the district. Other districts have observed our literacy program, 1:1 technology approach to teaching and learning and our early childhood program.

After winning the CHARACTER COUNTS! district of the year award, and winning the following year the 1st County of Character award, we had school districts visit and observe what we were doing with our

CHARACTER COUNTS! program. Staff members and administrators visited and learned from our students and staff.

Staff members have presented the Picture Word Induction Model (PWIM) strategy at the Statewide Reading Team and state level literacy conference. The PWIM strategy starts with a poster from which students identify words they know and build on them using non-fiction reading materials and research. This knowledge is a basis for writing sentences and paragraphs. Teachers from Okoboji Elementary taught this strategy to other elementary teachers from around the state.

While much of the success that our students have had at Okoboji Elementary can be contributed to the hard work of our teachers, students, parents, and staff, we also recognize that the high performance of our school is a reflection of the hard work of the district office and school board too. In the event that Okoboji Elementary is recognized as achieving National Blue Ribbon School status, our team will share this honor with the entire school community.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

There are many ways we work with our families and community for student success and school improvement. We start each school year by holding individual parent conferences. Grade level curriculum, expectations, communication methods and student needs are discussed at these conferences. Throughout the year we have two additional conferences where staff update parents about their child and their successes.

Each grade level at Okoboji Elementary has a community partner to assist them in the educational process. An example of how these partners work is having employees from one of our local banks, come to the classroom to teach the first grade students about coins and their values. These partners also come to the school and volunteer their time to have students read to them to give students extra reading time with an adult.

Math and literacy nights are held each year for both parents and community members. The night starts with a meal and an introduction by the building principal and then parents are off to their child's classroom with their child. In their classroom, classroom teachers and staff demonstrate their instruction and expectations as they would on a normal school day. Parents get to experience school the way their child does and then is engaged in activities to learn the same things their child does. At the end of the night, parents leave with a better understanding of expectations in the classroom and an activity they can use at home to reinforce their learning at school.

We are very fortunate to have a parent organization at school that supports our staff and students by volunteering in the classroom and working with our students. Our parent organization also provides grant funding to our teachers for special projects and materials to enhance learning. Monthly meetings are held for all parents to learn more about their child's school, the teachers and how they can be a part of their child's education.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

Students attending Okoboji Elementary receive an education to prepare them for the future that lies ahead, as mentioned in our mission statement. Okoboji implements the Iowa CORE standards in literacy and math. District standards are implemented for science and social studies. Learning targets in the arts, physical education, and technology were developed by the district in the absence of state standards in those content areas.

Math- The building is in the beginning years of implementing a new math series. We are in our 3rd year using the Investigations series. We chose this inquiry approach to teaching math over the more traditional approach. This series aligns well with the Iowa CORE curriculum and Characteristics of Effective Instruction. Teachers are receiving training in Cognitive Guided Instruction to complement our new series. Students are encouraged to solve problems in more than one way and then share their thinking through writing and sharing aloud with the rest of the class. Our focus is on number sense and problem solving.

Literacy- Reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing are included in daily study toward language development. The five big ideas of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, fluency and comprehension) instruction at Okoboji Elementary begin with a strong phonics program that builds from Kindergarten to 2nd Grade. Students are then given the opportunity to succeed at their own reading level through the use of leveled readers, ability groups, novels, literature circles, and writing.

Science- Instruction is based on state standards through the use of science inquiry and investigation. The use of multi-media resources allow students to be actively engaged in the learning process. Teachers go beyond the textbook to connect learning to the real world through the use of the internet, non-fiction books, and presentations from experts in the community.

Social Studies- Traditional elementary social studies foci make up our curriculum in this content area, with special attention to the use of inquiry, primary sources, and authentic student product and performance to demonstrate proficiency with specific grade level outcomes.

Physical Education- The SPARK curriculum is used throughout the school district to support and meet our district and national standards. There is an emphasis on life-long exercise and healthy habits.

Art- The art education curriculum stresses the history and big ideas of visual art, like line, angle, and color. The art teachers search for ways to integrate other content into their projects.

Music- The K-5 vocal and 4-5 instrumental curriculum offers experiences that support the whole range of standards traditionally found in national music standards.

Technology- We have been very progressive with technology through the availability of computers in a 1:1 environment in PreK and grades 2-4. In addition to our 1:1 environment, we have two stationary labs and two mobile labs. Teachers have received training in different ways to use technology in their instruction. Students in grades 2-4 receive keyboarding instruction.

In addition to our core curriculum, students at Okoboji are given support and instruction by the school guidance counselor, classes for gifted students, interventions through special education and RTI, remedial reading, or ELL teachers.

2. Reading/English:

Our teachers and reading staff provide 90-100 minutes of reading instruction each day. Half of the instruction time is spent in whole group reading and the other half of our instruction is delivered in a small group setting. We chose this approach to reading instruction because our leveled small groups meet the individual needs of our students whether they perform above or below grade level. This research-based approach was determined after a thorough study of other programs and approaches in Iowa. Site visits were scheduled and our teachers observed these methods in other districts. We felt that prior to implementing small group instruction, our literacy scores had reached their highest potential and we knew that in order to achieve at an advanced proficiency level as a school, we had to focus on the individual student and meet them where they are developmentally in the reading process.

Our leveled small group instruction weekly diet includes word study, fluency, comprehension, writing, and a literature circle approach in upper grades. Leveled books and novels are utilized from our leveled library with the leveling based on Fountas and Pinnell. Many of our teachers supplement reading with leveled classroom collections from Reading A-Z.com and TumbleReaders.

The curriculum areas we deliver to our students are aligned with the Iowa CORE curriculum and include Letter People in PreK to theme-based novels with specific skill integration, the 7 Keys to Comprehension, Word Journeys and Guided reading. We are very thorough in our literacy diets, and each week includes phonics and phonological awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Some of our instructional methods include explicit instruction, read alouds, modeling, Picture Word Induction Model (PWIM), direct instruction, reader's theater, graphic organizers, collaboration, technology, independent reading on individual level and writing through the use of journals, book reports, and content area research.

Students who perform above and below grade level are provided with 45 minutes of instruction each day at their reading level in addition to Title 1 support, classroom differentiation, Talented and Gifted support, and Response To Intervention. Our data driven approach to RTI supports the needs of students who are both above and below grade level with continuous progress monitoring and goal setting.

3. Mathematics:

Our math philosophy: When children learn only to follow procedures without understanding the underlying mathematics, what they are doing is empty of mathematics. We have a set of belief statements that we have posted in each classroom that include:

Students at Okoboji Elementary CAN:

- Create a picture in their head and persevere to solve the problem.
- Explain their mathematical thinking through the use of think alouds as well as journaling and not just imitating procedures/processes. (Avoid the illusions of learning.)
- Recognize that solving problems many different ways is encouraged with the use of a variety of tools including, pictures, objects and role playing.
- Think through the problem and determine whether the solution is reasonable.
- Make mistakes without fear of failure, but know that making mistakes is part of the learning process.

Three years ago we studied and researched a new approach to math instruction and learning. We researched the traditional method vs. a more inquiry based approach. There were three things we looked at to determine the direction that teaching and learning was headed. We looked at the Iowa CORE curriculum, Characteristics of Effective Instruction (CEI), and the new Smarter Balanced assessments to assist us in our decision to create thinkers instead of “doers.” As a result of that research, our staff is currently being trained in Cognitively Guided Instruction.

Student performance levels are determined through standardized tests, teacher observations and checklists, along with grade level formative assessment probes which are all used to provide appropriate RTI interventions for students who perform above and below grade level expectations or benchmarks.

Students acquire foundational math skills through the inquiry approach facilitated by the teacher through good questioning. Students have the opportunity to share out multiple strategies with the whole group and with a partner. Students share their thinking through verbalization, demonstration using manipulatives, role playing, and other tools along with written responses in journals, etc. Classroom discussion, teacher feedback, scaffolding, and questioning stretch and challenge the thinking of our students.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

For the purpose of connecting many curricular areas and for gaining instructional impact and efficacy, our staff engages in a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary, inquiry- based strategy called the Picture Word Inductive Model (P.W.I.M.). P.W.I.M is focused on the areas of Science and Social Studies. However, this model allows teachers to intricately weave together science and social studies concepts with important language arts Core targets, including a wide range of reading comprehension and writing skills all within the underpinnings of student research.

Using a poster as a central focal point, students collaboratively isolate and compile information from sources that support conceptual frameworks such as the roles of living things, culture regions of Native Americans, and the three states of matter. In this process they engage with a wide variety of resources including quality nonfiction, credible video clips, and carefully selected Internet sites including databases and referents.

Teachers then facilitate instruction within these sources. Skills are focused not only on social studies and science concepts but also on reading complex texts, listening to quality recordings while focusing on collecting information, and viewing videos. After collecting information students synthesize their research findings as they author well written texts of their own.

Within the study, teachers also craft and facilitate lessons for comprehension and writing skills such as identification and use of main idea and details, use of text features including maps, diagrams, graphs and illustrations, and the use of language to best convey a message. These are all skills outlined by the Common Core as best practices for preparing students for their futures in college and beyond.

This powerful model enables instruction for a wide variety of abilities and provides a natural means for differentiation. At the very basic level, P.W.I.M. serves as a picture dictionary that helps students to engage in word-study highlighting phonemic and structural analysis skills while cultivating vocabulary acquisition. At the very top of the instructional hierarchy, P.W.I.M. provides a basis for students to probe beneath a photograph to deeply investigate complex concepts. P.W.I.M. allows students freedom of choice as they select topics within the concepts and investigate strands that appeal to individual interests . This fuels excitement for learning, high levels of engagement and a collective synergy. Best of all, our students emerge as confident and competent contributors in a learning community.

5. Instructional Methods:

Characteristics of Effective Instruction (CEI), as presented by the Iowa CORE is how we provide instruction. Teaching for Understanding, Assessment for Learning, Teaching for Learner Differences, Rigor & Relevance, and Student Centered Classrooms make up the Iowa CORE CEI. How we provide and differentiate instruction starts with our data. Our data drives how we provide our instruction, the type of instruction we provide and to whom.

At Okoboji Elementary, we provide Response To Intervention (RTI) to every student kindergarten through 4th grade. Staff is able to provide RTI to every student for an average of 120 minutes per week in all content areas including social needs. Grade level teams meet monthly to determine student need based upon formative assessment data and school-wide screening results. Progress monitoring is utilized for each RTI group to determine the growth and success for each student.

In addition to RTI, students in grades kindergarten through 3rd grade can receive supplemental Title 1 services in the areas of reading and math. ELL services are provided to students who qualify based on their ELDA test results. Staff have all received professional development with the strategy of questioning. Effective questioning will guide those students who need additional scaffolding to understand new learning as well as stretch those students who need additional challenge with concepts they already know.

Technology at Okoboji Elementary has become ubiquitous and is just a part of what we do and how we provide instruction. Starting in preschool, students have access and utilize the iTouch on a daily basis to reinforce their learning of new concepts. We are able to provide a 1:1 environment for all students in 2nd through 4th grade. Students do not take these computers home, but utilize them many times throughout the day for their daily learning. Teachers are able to provide their instruction to meet the multiple learning styles of their students through the use of mimeo boards and LCD projectors.

Some special needs students use the iPad for communication as well as the learning process throughout their day. Students will carry their iPad device throughout the building so they can communicate with staff and other students. Applications on the iPad allow these students to participate with their grade level peers in the regular classroom. Technology allows our teachers to equalize the teaching and learning process for all students.

6. Professional Development:

Our approach to professional development is aligned to the Iowa CORE standards and benchmarks and the Iowa CORE Characteristics of Effective Instruction. The Iowa Professional Development Model (IPDM) is the basis for our professional development. Our professional development goals and focus is determined by our data. Each spring, our staff analyzes our data from throughout the year and then develops grade level goals aligned to our building goals and ultimately aligned to our district goals. Our professional development days are full day and occur about once a month. Professional development initiatives are determined, planned, and delivered by individual building. An example of this planning came when we determined, as a building after analyzing our data and reviewed grade level goals, that we were going to focus on reading comprehension. The Literacy Leadership Team visited area districts with high comprehension scores and we made a decision to go with the 7 Keys to Comprehension as our focus. The members of the LLT team researched, planned, developed, and delivered the information and materials to the rest of the staff for our comprehension strategies.

The IPDM cycle includes: Collecting and Analyzing Student Data, Goal Setting and Student Learning, Selecting Content, Designing Process for Professional Development, Training/Learning Opportunities, Collaboration, The Study of Implementation, Ongoing (Formative) Data Collection, and Program Evaluation (Summative).

Teacher leadership and capacity is built by having each staff member be on one of the four leadership

teams in the building. The four teams include the Literacy Leadership Team, Math Leadership Team, Technology and 21st Century Leadership Team, and Building Leadership Team. Planning and preparing for our teacher professional development days is one of the many things our leadership teams accomplish as they meet throughout the school year.

Peer coaching and observation as well as team and individual logs are utilized to determine effective implementation of new strategies learned during professional development. The building principal uses a walk through form for part of his evaluations which includes the professional development strategies listed to hold teachers accountable for the new strategies learned.

7. School Leadership:

The building principal is not only the instructional leader, but also the person who manages the day to day function of the building and adjusting schedules as necessary. Capacity is built amongst each of our teachers by having everyone participate on a leadership team in our building. Our building has four leadership teams which include: Literacy Leadership Team (LLT), Math Leadership Team (MLT), Technology and 21st Century Skills Leadership Team (TLT), and Building Leadership Team (BLT). Each of these teams meet throughout the school year with the building principal playing the role of a colleague and having a shared facilitation of the agenda and discussion.

The role of the content area leadership teams (LLT, MLT, and TLT) is to analyze data and report the results to their grade level teams and all school staff. The teams develop, plan, and present our professional development to the rest of our staff. The members of our leadership teams are also responsible for reading and researching best practices to assist in challenging the status quo in our efforts to stay ahead of the learning curve in education.

The Building Leadership Team serves in a management role with the principal as facilitator. The members of this team make decisions based upon activities and the needs of the building staff and students. In the past, this team has developed school-wide expectations for our students. They have created a 4 day rotation schedule for our specials so all staff could have a common planning time each day to meet and discuss student concerns, plan lessons and review data and implementation logs.

Every day, our principal, teachers, support staff, associates, secretarial staff, and students work cooperatively and accept leadership roles within our school. The principal serves as the instructional leader, guiding teachers in self-reflections, assessing data, and utilizing best practices for student achievement. The principal is instrumental in involving the community as part of the school team and maximizing the capabilities of the support staff. Okoboji Elementary is supported by the district superintendent and School Board.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3

Test: Iowa Assessments

Edition/Publication Year: 2012 Publisher: Iowa Testing Programs/Riverside

| | 2011-2012 | 2010-2011 | 2009-2010 | 2008-2009 | 2007-2008 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Testing Month | Feb | Feb | Feb | Feb | Feb |
| SCHOOL SCORES | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | 93 | 93 | 94 | 95 | 88 |
| Advanced/High | 43 | 33 | 35 | 24 | 31 |
| Number of students tested | 72 | 57 | 68 | 55 | 48 |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Number of students alternatively assessed | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 0 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 2 |
| SUBGROUP SCORES | | | | | |
| 1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | 92 | 94 | 92 | 86 | 86 |
| Advanced/High | 27 | 31 | 21 | 38 | 21 |
| Number of students tested | 26 | 16 | 28 | 14 | 14 |
| 2. African American Students | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | | | | | |
| Advanced/High | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 3. Hispanic or Latino Students | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | | | | | |
| Advanced/High | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 4. Special Education Students | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | 90 | 75 | | 100 | |
| Advanced/High | 30 | 17 | | 30 | |
| Number of students tested | 10 | 12 | | 10 | |
| 5. English Language Learner Students | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | | | | | |
| Advanced/High | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 6. | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | | | | | |
| Advanced/High | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| NOTES: | | | | | |

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3

Test: Iowa Assessments

Edition/Publication Year: 2012 Publisher: Iowa Testing Programs/Riverside

| | 2011-2012 | 2010-2011 | 2009-2010 | 2008-2009 | 2007-2008 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Testing Month | Feb | Feb | Feb | Feb | Feb |
| SCHOOL SCORES | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | 90 | 93 | 91 | 84 | 90 |
| Advanced/High | 25 | 21 | 28 | 20 | 25 |
| Number of students tested | 72 | 57 | 68 | 55 | 48 |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Number of students alternatively assessed | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 0 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 2 |
| SUBGROUP SCORES | | | | | |
| 1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | 81 | 94 | 89 | 79 | 93 |
| Advanced/High | 12 | 12 | 14 | 7 | 29 |
| Number of students tested | 26 | 16 | 28 | 14 | 14 |
| 2. African American Students | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | | | | | |
| Advanced/High | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 3. Hispanic or Latino Students | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | | | | | |
| Advanced/High | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 4. Special Education Students | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | 50 | 67 | | 30 | |
| Advanced/High | 0 | 8 | | 0 | |
| Number of students tested | 10 | 12 | | 16 | |
| 5. English Language Learner Students | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | | | | | |
| Advanced/High | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 6. | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | | | | | |
| Advanced/High | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| NOTES: | | | | | |

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4

Test: Iowa Assessments

Edition/Publication Year: 2012 Publisher: Iowa Testing Programs/Riverside

| | 2011-2012 | 2010-2011 | 2009-2010 | 2008-2009 | 2007-2008 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Testing Month | Feb | Feb | Feb | Feb | Feb |
| SCHOOL SCORES | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | 96 | 89 | 92 | 90 | 94 |
| Advanced/High | 30 | 38 | 19 | 27 | 39 |
| Number of students tested | 61 | 72 | 59 | 49 | 56 |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Number of students alternatively assessed | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 0 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 0 |
| SUBGROUP SCORES | | | | | |
| 1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | 96 | 83 | 80 | 87 | 100 |
| Advanced/High | 10 | 21 | 0 | 20 | 39 |
| Number of students tested | 21 | 29 | 15 | 15 | 18 |
| 2. African American Students | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | | | | | |
| Advanced/High | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 3. Hispanic or Latino Students | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | | | | | |
| Advanced/High | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 4. Special Education Students | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | 90 | 73 | 85 | | |
| Advanced/High | 20 | 13 | 8 | | |
| Number of students tested | 10 | 15 | 13 | | |
| 5. English Language Learner Students | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | | | | | |
| Advanced/High | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 6. | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | | | | | |
| Advanced/High | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| NOTES: | | | | | |

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4

Test: Iowa Assessments

Edition/Publication Year: 2012 Publisher: Iowa Testing Programs/Riverside

| | 2011-2012 | 2010-2011 | 2009-2010 | 2008-2009 | 2007-2008 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Testing Month | Feb | Feb | Feb | Feb | Feb |
| SCHOOL SCORES | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | 92 | 92 | 88 | 88 | 91 |
| Advanced/High | 25 | 42 | 17 | 35 | 36 |
| Number of students tested | 61 | 72 | 59 | 49 | 56 |
| Percent of total students tested | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Number of students alternatively assessed | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Percent of students alternatively assessed | 0 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 0 |
| SUBGROUP SCORES | | | | | |
| 1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | 86 | 83 | 87 | 87 | 89 |
| Advanced/High | 14 | 17 | 7 | 20 | 33 |
| Number of students tested | 21 | 29 | 15 | 15 | 18 |
| 2. African American Students | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | | | | | |
| Advanced/High | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 3. Hispanic or Latino Students | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | | | | | |
| Advanced/High | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 4. Special Education Students | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | 80 | 73 | 70 | | |
| Advanced/High | 0 | 13 | 0 | | |
| Number of students tested | 10 | 15 | 13 | | |
| 5. English Language Learner Students | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | | | | | |
| Advanced/High | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| 6. | | | | | |
| Proficient/Intermediate and Above | | | | | |
| Advanced/High | | | | | |
| Number of students tested | | | | | |
| NOTES: | | | | | |