

U.S. Department of Education
2014 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Dr. Darin William Siefert

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

Official School Name Festus Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1500 Mid-Meadow Lane

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Festus State MO Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 63028-1544

County Jefferson County State School Code Number* 050-006

Telephone 636-937-4063 Fax 636-937-7870

Web site/URL http://www.festus.k12.mo.us/ E-mail dsief@festus.k12.mo.us

Twitter Handle _____ Facebook Page _____ Google+ _____

YouTube/URL _____ Blog _____ Other Social Media Link _____

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

Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Link Luttrell E-mail: llutt@festus.k12.mo.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Festus R-VI Tel. 636-937-4920

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

Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Todd Oetting
(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 that it is accurate.

Date _____
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

Include this page in the school’s application as page 2.

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, 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 a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made its Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) or Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) 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, a public school must meet the state’s AMOs or AYP requirements in the 2013-2014 school year and be certified by the state representative. Any 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.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2008 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, or 2013.
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 (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 3 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
 - Suburban
 - Small city or town in a rural area
 - Rural
3. 8 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.
4. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	128	118	246
1	104	129	233
2	120	103	223
3	119	121	240
4	0	0	0
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 Students	471	471	942

5. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 3 % Black or African American
 - 1 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 94 % White
 - 1 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

6. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2012 - 2013 year: 9%

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, 2012 until the end of the school year	46
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the 2012-2013 school year	39
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	85
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1	962
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.088
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	9

7. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0%
6 Total number ELL
 Number of non-English languages represented: 2
 Specify non-English languages: Chinese, Spanish
8. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 45%
 Total number students who qualify: 432

If this method is not 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.

9. Students receiving special education services: 8 %
75 Total number of students served

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>2</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>11</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>5</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>33</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>5</u> Mental Retardation | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>16</u> Developmentally Delayed |

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of personnel in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers	46
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	20
Paraprofessionals	6
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

11. 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 20:1

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

Required Information	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	95%	94%	94%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools)**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2013

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	180
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	23%
Enrolled in a community college	53%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	4%
Found employment	12%
Joined the military or other public service	2%
Other	7%

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

Yes X No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 1999

PART III – SUMMARY

Festus Elementary School is the only primary elementary building in the Festus R-6 School District. The school is part of the small but growing community of Festus, Missouri. The student population is comprised of approximately 950 students spread throughout 46 classrooms in kindergarten through third grade. These classrooms are supported by another 24 certified teachers and an additional 20-30 classified employees. The building was originally built in 1955 and has undergone a series of renovations and additions over the years. Demographically, Festus Elementary School is largely Caucasian, but does service the needs of a growing number of ELL students. Today, Festus Elementary School has a free and reduced lunch student population of approximately 45% which is slightly higher than the historical norm. With these realities in mind, Festus Elementary has consistently improved its scores on the annual state assessments in both communication arts and math, and is currently one of the top performing schools in the State.

Festus Elementary School owes its tremendous success to its active and thriving Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). The R-6 School district has been utilizing the PLC model for more than a decade. These PLCs are the foundation to the success of the elementary school and allow us to achieve to our mission of “Doing Whatever It Takes to Build Strong Foundations to Promote a Lifetime of Learning”. PLCs meet weekly on a ‘late-start’ Wednesday. The teachers utilize this time to look at and discuss established learning standards, formally the Missouri Grade Level Expectations, and now the Common Core State Standards. Teachers meet to develop pacing guides, standards based report cards, formative and summative assessments, and actual lessons. The teachers also use this time to share best practices. Most importantly, teachers utilize this time to do all things previously mentioned with the individual student in mind. Student learning data is discussed and plans are made to alter instruction so as to better meet the needs of each student.

In recent years, Festus Elementary School has taken further steps to move from meeting the needs of most students to meeting the needs of all students. First, the implementation of the Class-within-a-Class program is allowing our special needs students to be fully involved in the school’s daily culture and academic program. Second, our implementation of the Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) program in 2011 has led to a dramatic shift in the culture of the building. It has always been a challenge to keep a building of this size tied together with one focus and one culture. PBS has helped transform the building into a unified and positive place where students learn. Third, this change of culture has allowed for Response to Intervention (RtI) to be implemented successfully. All of these programs represent cultural shifts towards making sure all students have the opportunity to learn and that they do learn.

Festus Elementary School has been the recipient of numerous awards over the years. We were designated a Missouri Gold Star and a National Blue Ribbon School in 1999. We have twice been awarded the Bronze Award for our implementation of PBS. This is the highest award a Missouri school can receive in our stage of implementation. We have also been awarded a Promising Practice Award in 2013 for our work of motivating students to want to do the best they can on the state test. Additionally, in 2012, we received accreditation through AdvancEd. Finally, in 2013, we were named by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as a Missouri Exemplary PLC School. These awards demonstrate the quality of programming occurring at Festus Elementary School.

When people visit Festus Elementary School one of the first things they remark on is the size. After spending a few minutes in the building they all make the statement that, while we are huge, it doesn’t feel big. We take that as a point of pride. We strive to make the building as child friendly and stress free as possible so that the job of learning can take place in a positive and peaceful environment. If a person spends any time at all in Festus Elementary School it is easy to see why it is a place where parents want their children to go and learn.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

A. Festus Elementary School takes part in the annual Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) spring test in the third grade. This test measures all students from 3rd-8th grade on their understanding of Missouri's Grade Level Expectations. While third grade is the only grade in the building tested by the MAP, the kindergarten through second grade teachers, and all other non-classroom teachers, see themselves as being an important part in the successes and failures of the students who take the third grade test.

Festus Elementary School has shown significant growth and success on the statewide MAP test over the last seven years. In 2008 we experienced a drop in math scores, but quickly refocused our energies as a building and very quickly remedied that loss. Over time, we have increased our Communication Arts scores almost 30 percent and our math scores almost 35 percent. Seven years ago Festus Elementary routinely scored just above the state average in both Communication Arts and Math. Today the state average falls far behind FES's scores. Our scores put us in the top 30 of elementary school buildings out of a little over 1100 elementary school buildings in Missouri. To put it another way, we score better than 98 percent of elementary schools in the state.

B. We are constantly analyzing the data to better meet the needs of individual students. It is because of this intense focus on the data that we are able to enjoy the high successes described in the previous statement. For the last several years we have seen steady growth in both math and communication arts. Since this is a kindergarten through third grade building, only one year of state data can be used to judge ourselves. In previous years, we used to approach the data produced from the state test as being out of date when we received it. We had a much more passive approach to looking at the data and saw it as a snapshot of the past. This data did not inform the instruction occurring with the new students coming through the building.

Around seven years ago, we began a more intentional focus on working with students at their ability level and need. We did this in response to data showing us we were not reaching all the students. We were letting over half of our students leave our building not performing at the expected performance level. This data showed gaps between the subgroups in the building, particularly our IEP students and our Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) students.

To deal with this performance issue, teachers started incorporating more differentiated instruction into their daily lessons in order to reach students who previously hadn't been reached. Teachers also began to refocus their energies in their Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). The PLCs became locations where the sharing of best practices became the norm and data on student achievement was being discussed. We began to see immediate results. Math and Communication Arts quickly moved past the 50% mark on the state test. As we continued to look at the data, we noticed that while a larger number of students were finding success at the elementary, there were still large numbers of subgroup students, especially our Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) students, who were struggling on a daily basis. At that time we began planning and implementing an RtI program. This program coupled with our use of differentiated and small group instruction in both Math and Communication Arts is crucial to the gains we have made. At this point, the 2013 test shows incredible gains by all subgroups, especially subgroups of significant numbers. The 2013 test did show gaps in a small number of students of the Hispanic or African American background. The data also showed a gap involving a more significant number of students with IEPs. In those cases we have been looking at what we do and seeking ways to improve how we respond to the needs of those students. Our largest two subgroups, white and FRL students, scored with little to no gap in performance. Further, our subgroups performed significantly better than the state average. We utilize information from our variety of assessments to determine our small group activities, our RtI interventions, our instructional plans, our CWC work, and our PLC discussions. With continued focus on the individual student we will come closer to achieving our mission of "doing whatever it takes to build strong foundations to promote a lifetime of learning."

2. Using Assessment Results:

Festus Elementary School uses multiple forms of assessment in order to collect and interpret data to improve instruction, improve student learning, and inform parents of student achievement. Data analysis by individual teachers and teams is used to track whole school learning and behavior trends as well as grade level and classroom trends. Response to Intervention (RtI), Positive Behavior Support (PBS), Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), and the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) are the four sources of data most discussed by the staff at Festus Elementary during Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).

The RtI team is a team of reading specialists, teachers, counselors, and administrators who meet every six weeks to discuss and analyze the results of the Renaissance Learning STAR Assessment in Early Literacy and Reading. The team discusses strategies and interventions the teacher should use over the next six week period with those students not meeting benchmark level proficiency. Progress monitoring occurs weekly, data is again collected, and the team meets again to check the progress of the student and determine instruction.

Positive Behavior Support is a proactive, three-tiered system of support to enhance the school's capacity to effectively educate all students. Clear expectations for behavior are taught and modeled at the beginning of the school year and repeated throughout the year. Positive reinforcement is used with all students by all staff. Consistency is found throughout the building. The PBS team meets monthly to analyze data collected from the Schoolwide Information System (SWIS) to track all major and minor behavior referrals. This provides information about the antecedents and consistency of behaviors by grade level and student. This allows for early intervention with students who are at risk of being removed from instructional time for negative behaviors.

Each classroom teacher effectively evaluates each student's reading ability with the research-based assessment, the Developmental Reading Assessment. Teachers determine each student's independent and instructional reading level using three components of reading: reading engagement, oral reading fluency, and comprehension. This allows the teacher to determine the student's instructional needs, create lesson plans to develop strategies to meet those needs, and work with small groups in order to differentiate instruction.

The results of the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) are also used to drive instruction. Third grade teachers are able to analyze student and school results, with particular attention being focused on subgroups. Adjustments are made to curriculum and assessments to better reach those students who need intervention.

Each piece of data is used to monitor and improve student achievement. This information is shared with the parents and guardians of students, forming a partnership which leads to student success. Communication is essential in maintaining the partnership and can take the form of parent-teacher conferences, phone calls, emails, and newsletters.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Festus Elementary School has routinely looked to examples of success in other schools to help make successful decisions and changes. We have also strived to be open and sharing of our stories of challenge and success. One important example of this sharing is our work with Positive Behavior Supports (PBS). When Festus Elementary School (FES) teachers began planning (2010-2011) for implementation of School-Wide PBS, we had a lot of questions. During the year of planning the team attended training sessions given by our local Regional Professional Development Center (RPDC). After attendance at these training sessions, the team would come back and share the information with building faculty to obtain their input on the different aspects of PBS.

When we implemented the program during the 2011-2012 school year, the team was confident PBS would be successful. Our successes that year exceeded our expectations; we were nominated for the Bronze Award. FES met 96% of the goals set by Missouri SW-PBS. Most districts do not obtain the Bronze Award until

their second year of implementation. The team was asked to present a poster at the annual Missouri SW-PBS conference. At the poster session, FES displayed our successes for 2011-12 school year along with written materials we developed for our faculty.

During the 2012-2013 school year, we continued to enforce the behavior expectations, rules, and positive aspects of PBS. The FES team looked at the data from the Office Discipline Referrals monthly and adjusted the lessons accordingly. A second evaluation was completed and FES scored 99%. Because of these results, the team was asked to present at the annual Missouri SW-PBS Conference. FES shared how PBS was implemented in our building with fidelity. Team members shared the planning process and implementation of PBS. FES teachers shared lessons, the building matrix of social skills, the positive building matrix, and all the materials used by the faculty the first year. The team shared the stumbling blocks, as well as the successes, we had along the way. We spent time answering questions from the audience as well.

Neighboring school districts around FES have begun the process of planning and implementing PBS. FES has shared anything we have made, including the Social Skills Matrix, lessons plans, and posters for the individual areas (bathroom, playground, and hallway). Festus Elementary School's implementation of PBS has increased our student achievement; therefore it is important for us to share with others.

4. Engaging Families and Community:

Festus Elementary School has a history of successfully reaching out to families and community members in order to build and strengthen individual partnerships. Working with programs that support long term goals as well as provide direct student services is important to the school and district.

Involving others in the education of the students and allowing them to contribute to the school is a high priority. The Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) holds annual fundraisers to raise money for purchasing items that enhance student learning and engagement. Parent volunteers help in the classroom and organize family events held at the school. Kindergarten registration and the kindergarten social are opportunities to greet new families and make them feel comfortable with their child's transition to school. This time is also used to educate parents in ways to contribute to their child's success before school begins. Parents are also invited in during the school year for conferences with the teachers. The elementary school has consistently had the highest attendance rate of any other building in the district with over 90%.

Several outside agencies partner with the school to provide resources to the students. Dental care is provided by Big Smiles Dental Care. This organization visits two to three times a month and offers free dental care including cleaning, x-rays, extractions, and fillings. Brendan's Backpack is a local organization that provides weekend snacks and meals for students who may not eat otherwise. Comtrea Counseling visits the school weekly and provides counseling to several students. The Twin City Optimist Club provides dictionaries for each third grade student. These agencies are meeting the needs of the students, whether physical or emotional, which will assist them in being successful at school.

Festus Elementary understands that communication is important to successful partnerships. The district and building websites provide information to the public regarding policies, schedules, menus, school closings, and teacher contact information. The School Reach Parent Notification System is also employed to get information out quickly when necessary. This system contacts parents and guardians via phone calls and texts whenever needed. District, building, and classroom level newsletters are sent home as another means to convey information.

The relationship between the community and the school is strong because of the dedication of the Festus Elementary School staff and their understanding of the importance of transparency and communication.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

The curriculum of Festus Elementary has been based on the Missouri state standards, formally the Grade Level Expectations, and is now transitioning to the Common Core State Standards. Reading, writing, and math serve as legs of our basic academic program. Other curricular areas serve as a support to these basics of education.

The foundation of FES is its reading curriculum. Our reading curriculum and instruction are based on the balanced literacy approach to teaching reading. Teachers utilize the Developmental Reading Assessment to guide instruction and group formation. Small groups, especially those involving struggling students, occur daily. Additionally, students who are struggling in reading can qualify for a Title 1 Reading Program. PLCs meet weekly to discuss ways to better meet the needs of students in reading, and this information then changes the instruction occurring in the classroom and in the guided reading groups.

Writing is the second major leg of the FES basic academic program. We do not follow any specific writing program, but instead utilize the state standards of writing along with components of the Six Traits of Writing concept. We recognize that writing is a basic and necessary component of good reading instruction. We start in kindergarten with the understanding that all students can and need to write. Students routinely utilize journals to free write and draw supporting pictures. We utilize pictures as a way to help students better visualize what they are going to write about. This writing instruction continues throughout their school career. By third grade, students have been exposed to more structured forms of writing and are able to produce high quality finished written pieces both on topics of their choosing and on assigned topics.

The final leg of the FES basic academic program is math. There is perhaps no program in the elementary that has changed as much as math. Our basic instruction was originally based on a purchased math series. This series helped teachers understand scope and sequence and the importance of building mastery of topics over time. Today we have moved beyond a series and into a highly sophisticated and individually responsive math program. As we analyzed our data over the last few years, changes occurred to the math instruction in the elementary. Teachers began to utilize many of the concepts they used during guided reading. Today, guided math instruction is the primary method by which concepts are taught to students. Teachers utilize frequent math assessments to form groups and to work with students in a small group setting. This allows our math instruction to be differentiated and thus increases the success level of all students in math. Our math program is further supplemented with a Title I Math teacher in the third grade who works with struggling math students to help build their basic math literacy.

Science and social studies are an important aspect of the educational experience of students at FES. Our curriculum is based on Missouri standards and is primarily taught through reading and math, with a specific focus on non-fiction reading and writing. Students are given the opportunity to explore these areas through reading and experiments.

The students of FES receive a well-rounded educational experience with their time in art and music. Art and music teachers work to increase appreciation of and experience with composers and artists and their creations. Art and music curriculum spiral through the entire elementary experience and beyond in the upper grade levels. These programs also work closely together, and routinely produce artistic pieces inspired by music or sing songs inspired by art.

Physical education and health are an important part of FES. Students are asked to work on basics of coordination and exercise. They are asked to look at ways they can be more active and healthy in their daily lives.

Finally, the students of FES are given the opportunity to utilize technology throughout their elementary experience. They receive direct instruction in technology weekly, and have access to and use technology in a variety of forms daily. The library is a place of support for this technology. The technology teacher and

librarian work closely together to teach students to utilize technology and safely find the information they need.

2. Reading/English:

To create critical thinkers and lifelong learners who will flourish in a global society, Festus Elementary School implements literacy education through a Balanced Literacy approach. Our instructional practices ensure students will become inquisitive readers, who think beyond texts and across disciplines focusing on a deeper depth of knowledge. Educators in grades kindergarten and first have completely aligned our Reading curriculum to the key components of the CCSS: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary, while educators in grades second and third are continuing the professional process of their grade level alignment. This alignment ensures each core skill spirals through both grade level and Guided Reading levels, allowing students multiple and varied opportunities for deeper comprehension and greater success. The K-3 curriculum also utilizes Standards Based Educational practices where formative and summative assessments are implemented. Teachers are able to use the assessment data to evaluate best practices and guide future instruction. Through Shared Reading, Guided Reading, Independent Reading and widely varied literacy centers and hands on activities, students engage in instruction encompassing all literature, information, and foundation skills.

For students performing at basic and below basic levels, early identification and targeted intervention are priorities at Festus Elementary School. Through Response to Intervention small group techniques, progress monitoring through Renaissance Place, regularly scheduled instructional planning meetings for each at-risk student, and a rigorous Title 1 Reading program, student strengths, areas of concern and literacy benchmarks are continuously monitored, assessed and refined to provide scaffolded support.

Reading instruction for students who perform at proficient or advanced levels is equally important within Festus Elementary School. Students are challenged through small group Guided Reading instruction, leveled Independent Reading, and Book Clubs based on proficiency and interest. Special reading incentives, such as Six Flags Read to Succeed, Pasta House Reads, and Pizza Hut's Book It Program are implemented throughout the school year to challenge readers of all ability levels.

The educators and staff at Festus Elementary School hold all students accountable to a high standard of achievement, expecting individual progress while embracing individual learning styles and needs. We believe rigorous reading instruction plays an integral part in preparing students to meet the information-saturated challenges of a 21st century society. We strive to facilitate educational opportunities where students become proficient or advanced readers, and have adopted a "whatever it takes" philosophy to ensure student success.

3. Mathematics:

The math curriculum is aligned to the Missouri Grade Level Expectations and has been transitioning to the Common Core State Standards. Through collaboration and vertical teams, a coherent, focused, well-articulated curriculum that successively builds a deeper and more refined understanding of mathematics has been developed. The curriculum has been developed around the eight guiding mathematical practice standards found in the Common Core. In addition to the development of procedural fluency, the curriculum ensures that problem solving, reasoning, connections, communication and conceptual understanding are all developed simultaneously. The connections generated build mathematical conceptual understandings based on interrelationships across earlier work. Frequent standards based assessments provide feedback on individual needs resulting in differentiated classroom instruction.

The main instructional method utilized is guided math. Guided math is a structure for teaching in which a teacher supports each child's development of mathematical proficiency at increasing levels of difficulty, within the context of a small group. During guided math groups, students are engaged in rigorous, standards-based, meaningful learning opportunities where the teacher focuses on a specific concept, strategy, or skill. Learning is facilitated through scaffolding conversations, hands on learning activities, and rigorous questioning.

Guided math provides a structure for teachers to differentiate instruction so they can successfully teach every student. Creating small, flexible groups allows students to work in their zone of proximal development. Students who are working at their instructional level are afforded the opportunity to learn exactly what they need to know in order to be successful. The short, guided lessons emphasize conceptual understandings, procedural fluency, and problem solving. The flexibility created with guided math provides teachers an opportunity to create activities that address students' individual learning styles and interests so they can stay engaged. The small group setting allows teachers opportunities to provide immediate feedback so students can adjust their work, and gives students an opportunity to talk with their peers, ask questions, and justify their mathematical thinking. The ability to enrich, remediate, re-teach and reinforce strategies and skills helps build student confidence in mathematics and ultimately creates a love of learning.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

The goal of the social studies curriculum at Festus Elementary School is to create well informed citizens who will someday actively participate in a democratic society. Skills and content are interwoven throughout the English language arts curriculum and align with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The CCSS calls for a shift in the balance of fiction and nonfiction as children advance through school, and Festus Elementary School is using social studies to support this shift. Social studies is taught systematically and effectively using strategies that develop reading and comprehension skills.

In order to create a foundation for later learning, students begin reading informational texts in all subject areas in the early grades. Social studies topics related to self, family, and community, along with historical figures and events are covered over the course of the year. Nonfiction books are used in whole group lessons, small group work, and station work areas. Students learn how to research and gather information and place that information into graphic organizers or lists. This organization of facts is then used to write a short summary or longer research project, depending on grade level and/or ability level.

Using multimedia tools in the classroom engages students and increases their enthusiasm for learning. Classroom teachers at Festus Elementary bring audiovisual elements into their social studies lessons. Students watch video clips, listen to stories online, and watch webcasts related to the different topics being studied on interactive whiteboards or SMART boards. These SMART boards are also used in small group instruction, helping to differentiate lessons and accommodate different learning styles. Each grade level has a set of netbooks that are stored and charged in a traveling cart. These netbooks are used by classrooms to first research information on a given topic and then type that information into a report.

By using multimedia tools along with other forms of technology and engaging students in nonfiction, the social studies curriculum at Festus Elementary is helping the school meet its mission statement, "Doing whatever it takes to build strong foundations to promote a lifetime of learning."

5. Instructional Methods:

Festus Elementary School provides quality instruction to meet the diverse needs of all students. While whole group mini-lessons are used, differentiation is the main approach to attending to the learning needs of each individual student. The goal of instruction is to maximize student growth and success.

The Balanced Literacy Program at Festus Elementary allows the teachers to meet the needs of all students, regardless of their level of proficiency and learning style, and helps the students become successful, independent readers. Guided Reading is one of the main components of the program. Instruction is easily managed in small groups, and the teacher meets the unique needs of each student. Individualized attention gives the students opportunities to apply strategies learned and confidently come to mastery. Groups are flexible, allowing the teacher to move students around as necessary to meet different needs that arise.

The Guided Math Program is similar to the Guided Reading Program in that the teacher puts students into small groups. These groups work on specific skills being taught in centers around the room. Differentiation is achieved as students are placed in different groups and instruction is changed to meet the needs of the

students. One of the centers is the teacher's table. This is where individualized and group instruction is given and students are allowed to move at the pace necessary for them to achieve success.

Response to Intervention (RtI) is used daily in all classrooms. Students are identified by the RtI team who then discusses strategies and interventions the teacher should use with those students. These individualized plans are followed for six weeks, with progress monitoring occurring weekly. After the six weeks, the team reconvenes and discusses the progress the student has made. Strategies and interventions are modified as goals are met and new needs are identified.

Technology is used to support all levels of instruction. Reading and math stations include utilizing SMART boards and netbooks. Assessments are given on iPads, netbooks, and desktops. Each class spends 25 minutes per week in a computer lab, working on programs and games that supplement and support the curriculum being used in the grade level. Assistive technology devices are available to students with disabilities to help leverage their strengths and compensate for disabilities.

6. Professional Development:

A constant focus on student learning drives the selection and implementation of Professional Development at Festus Elementary. Instruction is aligned with building initiatives and the Building Improvement Plan (BIP). These plans are aligned with, and driven by, the district's Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP). Teachers then have a clear understanding of student expectations, curriculum, and professional best practices in a K-3 format.

A commitment by the Festus School Board to provide educators with the necessary tools to ensure high student achievement has resulted in a weekly late start schedule for students on Wednesdays. All certified faculty members participate in grade specific, hour long Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings. Current student achievement data is analyzed, curriculum is aligned with state standards, differentiated instruction is developed, and best practices are shared. Each Professional Learning Community is led by qualified Team Leaders who facilitate these important tasks. Kindergarten through third grade faculty, including special and Title 1 teachers, meet regularly in vertical content area teams to scaffold curriculum. When not meeting with grade specific PLCs, special education and Title 1 educators meet as a PLC across grade levels. The Curriculum and Special Services Coordinator at Festus Elementary provides valuable curriculum support through research based strategies, chosen to meet the varied needs of students. This information is then disseminated through the PLC platform.

District Professional Development days are scheduled into every school calendar. A minimum of four full days are set aside for teacher in-service each year. Activities and guest speakers are chosen to correlate with current CSIP, BIP, and building initiatives. Recent topics have included: PLCs with Rick DuFour, Positive Behavior Support, and Self-Regulation for students. Utilizing their vast knowledge, faculty members present in-service training throughout the school year on a variety of topics which have included: Depth of Knowledge, Multiple Intelligences and Standards Based Education.

The Festus R-6 District partners with two Regional Professional Development Centers located at two nearby state universities. This partnership provides ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers in the latest research based areas. Teachers participate in a needs assessment to determine the areas to be addressed. Through this data driven process, teachers and administrators at Festus Elementary consciously adjust and improve curriculum to meet the differentiated needs of our students.

Our effective use of Professional Development has allowed teachers at Festus Elementary School to create a strong atmosphere for student learning while continuing to increase student achievement.

7. School Leadership

Festus Elementary School is led through a team approach of the building administration and the teachers. This collaborative relationship is built on the understanding that we want Festus Elementary to be a learner centered environment. This leadership structure is built upon the years of Professional Learning Community

(PLC) work in the district and the understanding that there is no single bigger influence over the success or failure of a student than the teacher.

Festus Elementary School is led by a principal and an assistant principal. They work closely with a building leadership team made up of PLC facilitators/grade level leaders and other teacher leaders from the building. This team meets regularly to establish goals, develop the building improvement plan, and to communicate with each other what is occurring in the building. This team is particularly important to the success of the elementary because it keeps the important lines of communication alive.

The leadership team is then able to go to their PLCs and lead them in the important work of meeting their students' needs. It is the PLCs who have aligned the curriculum to the state standards and now the Common Core State Standards. The PLCs have developed common assessments, pacing guides, instructional calendars, and now are developing standards based report cards. The PLCs are the single most important method for improving student learning in the building.

Additionally, we have a variety of committees, most notably the Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) and RtI committees. These committees have representatives on the building leadership team and work to develop, implement, and maintain the PBS and RtI programs.

The principal is a key member of each committee, PLC, and team. It is the support of administration that allows for all of these various structures to function properly. No single group operates in isolation and the principal sees to it that they are all aligned in vision and in effort. The school leadership is crucial to the success of the students and operates under the understanding that the quality of the school is completely dependent on the quality and dedication of its leadership.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Math

Test: Missouri Assessment Program Grade Level Assessments

All Students Tested/Grade: 3

Edition/Publication Year: 2009

Publisher: CTB/McGraw-Hill, LLC

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	87	83	71	65	50
% Advanced	40	32	26	16	13
Number of students tested	244	232	201	219	245
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	2	0	1	0	1
% of students tested with alternative assessment	1	0	1	0	1
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	86	79	62	55	35
% Advanced	31	22	20	11	11
Number of students tested	102	86	82	85	93
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	81	38	41	25	36
% Advanced	33	0	12	5	8
Number of students tested	21	21	17	20	25
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	0	0	0	0
% Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	1	0	1	1	0
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	75	100	0	0	50
% Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	4	1	2	1	2
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	70	100	50	25	72
% Advanced	20	0	20	0	29
Number of students tested	10	3	10	8	7
6. Asian Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	100	100	33	50
% Advanced	25	100	0	0	25
Number of students tested	4	1	1	3	4
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	0	0	100	0	100

% Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	1	1	2
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
% Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
9. White Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	88	82	73	68	49
% Advanced	42	32	27	17	12
Number of students tested	225	227	187	206	230
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	0	0	0	0
% Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	1	0	0	0	0
11. Other 1: English Language Learners+Students receiving Special Education+Free/Reduced Price Meals+Black+Hispanic					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	87	75	57	54	37
% Advanced	30	20	15	11	11
Number of students tested	111	96	88	94	104
12. Other 2: Other 2					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

NOTES: Missouri reports Asian and Pacific Islander as one subgroup. Missouri does not report Native Hawaiian as a subgroup. All Asian/Pacific Islander data is in the Asian subgroup section.

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading/ELA

Test: Missouri Assessment Program Grade Level Assessments

All Students Tested/Grade: 3

Edition/Publication Year: 2009

Publisher: CTB/McGraw-Hill, LLC

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	77	65	59	56	50
% Advanced	48	33	24	25	21
Number of students tested	244	233	201	219	226
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	2	0	1	0	1
% of students tested with alternative assessment	1	0	1	0	1
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	73	48	49	45	37
% Advanced	39	21	17	20	13
Number of students tested	102	87	82	85	83
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	67	19	29	20	32
% Advanced	29	5	12	0	12
Number of students tested	21	21	17	20	25
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	0	0	0	0
% Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	1	0	1	1	0
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	0	0	0	100
% Advanced	25	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	4	1	2	1	2
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	60	67	40	13	50
% Advanced	40	33	20	0	17
Number of students tested	10	3	10	8	6
6. Asian Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	100	0	67	50
% Advanced	75	100	0	67	25
Number of students tested	4	1	1	3	4
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	0	0	0	100	50
% Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	1	1	2

8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
% Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
9. White Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	77	65	62	57	49
% Advanced	48	33	25	25	20
Number of students tested	225	228	187	206	212
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
% Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	1	0	0	0	0
11. Other 1: English Language Learners+Students receiving Special Education+Free/Reduced Price Meals+Black+Hispanic					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	73	46	42	44	39
% Advanced	37	20	15	18	13
Number of students tested	111	97	88	94	95
12. Other 2: Other 2					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

NOTES: