

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. Debra K Follman

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

Official School Name Sweetwater Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1304 2nd Avenue NE

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

City Devils Lake State ND Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 58301-1821

County Ramsey County State School Code Number* 8280

Telephone 701-662-7630 Fax 701-662-7637

Web site/URL http://www.sw.dlschools.org E-mail deb.follman@dlschools.org

Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Sweetwater-Elementary-School/111757868888426>

Twitter Handle _____ 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*Mr. Scott Privratsky E-mail: Scott.Privratsky@dlschools.org

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Devils Lake Public Schools Tel. 701-662-7640

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. Steven Halldorson

(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):
- 3 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 5 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. 16 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	24	22	46
1	26	32	58
2	27	22	49
3	28	20	48
4	16	28	44
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	121	124	245

5. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 34 % American Indian or Alaska Native
1 % Asian
1 % Black or African American
2 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
52 % White
10 % Two or more races
100 % Total

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

6. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2012 - 2013 year: 17%

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	28
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the 2012-2013 school year	14
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	42
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1	245
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.171
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	17

7. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 3 %
6 Total number ELL
Number of non-English languages represented: 1
Specify non-English languages: Native American - Dakota Language
8. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 53 %
Total number students who qualify: 130

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: 16 %
43 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>6</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>11</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>10</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>2</u> Mental Retardation | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>9</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	1
Classroom teachers	12
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	2
Paraprofessionals	9
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

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 21:1

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	97%	98%	97%	97%	99%
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	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

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

Yes No X

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

PART III – SUMMARY

The vision of Sweetwater Elementary School is to create a safe, positive, challenging, and caring learning environment for all students so that they become lifelong learners. The mission of Sweetwater Elementary School is to provide a learning environment where all students can acquire skills, knowledge, and behaviors necessary to be productive, responsible citizens in our ever-changing world. Sweetwater will prepare students to apply their academic knowledge, communicate effectively, respect and work cooperatively with others, as well as think critically and be problem solvers.

Sweetwater has put forth tremendous efforts to improvement outcomes for students. The vision and culture of striving for excellence permeates throughout the day-to-day operations of the school. Specific goals related to student achievement in reading and math for students are set each year. Families and students are engaged to a high degree in meeting these goals. The school continuously focuses on improving achievement for students through the use of many components including a standards based curriculum reflecting the common core, formative and summative assessments, continuous data review, professional learning communities, pacing guides for curriculum, intervention programs, Response to Intervention, Respect For All program, attendance programs, mentoring programs for teachers, and professional development opportunities based on the needs of the school and staff.

Sweetwater Elementary School, located in Devils Lake, North Dakota, has a kindergarten through fourth grade enrollment of 245 students. The population includes 34% of Native American students, many living on the Spirit Lake Reservation, which is approximately 13 miles away. The number of students eligible for free/reduced meals is 53%, which increases over the winter months. Since 2010, we have operated as a School-wide Title I School.

Located in the north central part of the state, the community has an economy that is primarily agriculture-related and light industry. With an enrollment of 1,700 students, the school district encompasses 472 square miles with three elementary schools, one middle school and a high school. The attendance area of Sweetwater Elementary serves students from low income to middle income housing, income-based apartment complexes, rental homes and private homes. There are also rural students from the outlying areas, including the Spirit Lake Indian Reservation. The lake (Devils Lake) has posed a challenge for the community and surrounding area due to the flooding of the closed basin lake for approximately 10 years. Many acres of farm land have flooded and homes have been inundated with water, forcing the moving of homes or abandonment. The lake flooding has created additional stresses on the economy and livelihood of the residents.

Nine years ago, Sweetwater began a transformation. Learning about and incorporating scientific researched-based reading and math strategies became a focus for all staff. Making adequate yearly progress was the initial goal, but as teachers increased their knowledge about best practices, meeting the needs of students for increased achievement became the standard and culture for teaching and learning.

Teachers and support staff have participated in numerous professional development activities that included workshops, book studies, and reading and math academies. Formative and summative assessments, now a regular part of the educational process, became the impetus for instruction and practice sessions. Student assessment data is reviewed regularly by individual teachers and at weekly/monthly grade-level professional learning communities to assist with instructional decisions. The Reading and Math Coaches provide professional development activities and guidance on a regular basis with the state standards and assessment data as the guide for focus topics.

In addition to an uninterrupted 90-minute reading block and 60-minute math block, teachers differentiate instruction within all academic areas, which provides an opportunity for all students to become highly engaged in their learning process, maximize their capacity as learners, and be motivated about their learning of a specific topic.

Parent and community involvement has been an ongoing endeavor at Sweetwater. The staff meets regularly to discuss additional methods for creating partnerships through communication, parenting, student learning, volunteering, school decision-making, and community collaboration. A focus has been directed towards building and fostering relationships with students and families, along with the community.

Sweetwater School has been recognized formally in the past with the International Reading Association Exemplary Reading Program Award in 2008 and the National Title I Distinguished School Award in 2009. Dr. Debra Follman, Principal for the past 16 years, was chosen as the North Dakota National Distinguished Principal in 2010, and the Title I Teachers were chosen as North Dakota Title I Teachers of the Year in 2012. Sweetwater also received a Program in Excellence Award by the International Technology Education Association for their efforts in Educational Technology.

Sweetwater School has made Adequate Yearly Progress for the past nine consecutive years. The success rate of the school, along with the extensive research and work in scientifically-based best practices, has gained attention across the state. Modeling and mentoring for other school districts' educators are a regular occurrence. Sweetwater School operates under the premise that educating students to high levels of achievement is best accomplished through a team effort, which is exemplified by our staff, students, families and the principal on a daily basis.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

A. The results of the North Dakota State Assessment reflect our diligent efforts to increase the level of achievement of all students and close the achievement gaps between white students, Native American students, and economically disadvantaged students. In reading, Sweetwater School has continuously improved the proficiency level beginning in 2005-2006 with a score of 75% scoring proficient to 92% scoring proficient in 2012-13. In math, the scores in 2005-2006 indicated that 69% of our students scored proficient with continuous improvement to 99% of our students scoring proficient in 2012-2013. The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction has not released the test scores of this current school year as of yet.

We have strived to meet the goals established by No Child Left Behind in having 100% of our students score proficient by 2013-2014. The expected standard for our school utilizes an approach of “no children will be left behind at Sweetwater School” as we continue our efforts in reaching the goal of 100%.

The Northwest Evaluation Association Assessments (NWEA) is used in the areas of reading and math as formative and summative assessments in the fall, winter, and spring. The goals established for the ND State Assessment are also expected with the NWEA, which is 100% achieving proficiency by the end of the year. For reading, the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) is used for screening, progress monitoring, and outcome based achievement. The benchmarks set forth by this norm-referenced assessment are used for grouping and differentiated instruction. The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) is also used for the purposes stated above. After researching norms of other schools across the state and nation, proficiency levels for each grade level at specific points throughout the year were established. School-level summative assessments for math have been developed with the expectation of 100% proficiency. Competency-based education is the foundation of our school and we consider it as "non-negotiable."

B. The performance trends found in the data table indicate significant gains with approximately 20% more of our students scoring proficient in reading and math two years after we began (in 2006-2007) a transformation and reform of teaching and learning. Since that year, we have continued to make improvements to the level of 92% in reading and 99% in math last year. We have also narrowed the gap between all of the subgroups throughout the past seven years. In the most recent North Dakota State Assessment scores, the economically disadvantaged subgroup indicated 93% of the students proficient in reading and 97% of the students proficient in the area of math. The Native American subgroup had 93% of the students scoring proficient in the area of reading and 100% of the students scoring proficient in the area of math.

Factors that have contributed to the significant gains over the five year period include the continual study and knowledge building of the new North Dakota State Standards, which reflect the Common Core. We have also strengthened the uninterrupted 90-minute reading block with components of target skill development, shared reading, guided reading, and the use of Daily Five/Café structure. Title I Teachers and paraprofessionals work with small groups, and a number of intervention programs (Leveled Literacy Intervention, Reading Mastery, Read Naturally, Fountas & Pinnell Guided Reading, Scott Foresman Early Reading Intervention, and Advance Code) are used with fidelity to meet the specific needs of students. A researched-based tutoring model is used to provide supplemental reading instruction. The five reading components are a focus, with oral language development incorporated throughout daily language arts instruction. The materials that we use to support reading instruction are scientifically-based. Assessments are used to determine benchmark proficiency and to guide instruction.

Sweetwater Elementary has also incorporated an uninterrupted 60-minute math block. During this block of instructional time, state standards and benchmarks drive instruction with the use of hands-on activities, problem-solving strategies, and expression of mathematical thinking as the emphasis. Continuous formative assessments are used on a regular basis for assurance of learning. Classroom teachers also acquire learning target proficiency information through a concept and skill math probe each month. The data is reviewed in weekly and monthly professional learning community meetings with changes in instruction, multiple

strategies, and differentiated instruction as discussion points. Through these meetings, consistency is maintained within the instructional settings of classroom, Title I, and special education.

Teachers differentiate instruction within all academic areas, which provides an opportunity for all students to become highly active in their learning process, maximize their capacity as learners, and be motivated about their learning of a specific topic. The teachers utilize assessment results, teacher observation, and other ongoing assessment strategies to design instruction that meets the needs of each learner with regard to academic level, content, product, and process. The use of differentiated instruction within daily teaching ensures that the needs of each student are met.

Parent and community involvement has been an ongoing endeavor at Sweetwater Elementary School. The staff meets regularly to discuss additional methods for creating partnerships through communication, parenting, student learning, volunteering, school decision-making, and community collaboration. A Parent Involvement Committee has been established to provide support and assure that a high level of involvement is maintained. Strong communication occurs through classroom/school newsletters, phone calls and websites. Attendance at parent nights, community volunteers, and daily family support of at-home learning are just a few of the components that reflect the high level of involvement, which has positively impacted in student achievement.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Sweetwater Elementary School uses a variety of formative, summative, and norm-referenced assessments to guide instruction and inform the school community of student academic achievement. A very structured assessment plan has been developed for the school year. The NWEA and DIBELS are used in the fall for the area of reading and math to identify baseline data. Other assessments such as the Developmental Reading Assessment, Leveled Literacy Intervention Assessment, Gates-MacGinitie, Texas Primary Reading Inventory, Brigance, Key Math, Woodcock-Johnson Diagnostic, Comprehensive Math Concept Probe, and the Basic Math Facts Assessment are also utilized for screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring, and outcome information. Data from diverse sources guide each step of planning and implementing initiatives for high academic performance. The Data Team initially develops a data wall for grouping of students. The weekly professional learning communities, which include all staff members, including Title I Teachers and Special Education Teachers, determine how the groups will be arranged and the programming needs. Strategies for differentiating instruction and providing interventions are focused on the needs of the individual learners. The staff also determines which students will participate in the extended-day learning programs (before school, after school, and summer school) to further develop a program for each child to meet their individual needs. Common assessments have been developed in the areas of reading, writing, and math to learn of students' academic achievement at the conclusion of each quarter. This data also provides information regarding specific needs of the students and/or instructional changes.

Throughout the school year, professional learning communities meet weekly to review data and review instructional practices. The math and reading coaches, Title I teachers, principal, and special education teachers collaborate with classroom teachers to analyze the data. Individual student data, small group data, classroom data, and grade level data is reviewed regularly to determine the extent of progress and the instructional changes that may need to occur. Groupings are revised when needed and individual interventions are reviewed to ensure progress is being made to an expected level.

The Response to Intervention Team meets weekly to review individual and small group data. A range of interventions within the three tiers are determined to meet the specific needs of students that encompass academic, social-emotional, physical, behavioral, and basic needs of the students. Sweetwater works closely with community agencies, families, and other organizations to provide all of the structures/support needed for students to be successful and flourishing.

Students are informed regularly (daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly) of their academic achievement progress, accomplishments, and needs. Each child knows their instructional and independent reading level, math skill achievement, and needs. Because a competency-based education philosophy is the goal, all stakeholders

understand the expectation for the end of the year. Families are informed regularly of progress through written and verbal communication (face-to-face, telephone). An important component is celebrating the improvements and achievements of students, regardless of how big or small the growth. Data from the state assessments is shared with families, the school board and the community through the school newsletters, school board reports and the community newspaper.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Sweetwater School has gained attention across the state due to the success, extensive research, and work in scientifically-based best practices for reading and math. Modeling and mentoring for other school districts' educators are a regular occurrence. We have had numerous school staffs from other districts (large and small) across the state visit our school and observe in classrooms. The visiting staffs meet with our reading coach, math coach, and principal to learn of the steps taken to increase achievement for all of our students. The Title I Math and Reading teachers, Reading Coach and Math coach have provided presentations at the North Dakota Title I Conference each year on strategies for reading and math. The Coaches have worked as mentors to other Reading and Math Coaches across the state to assist them in building a strong foundation for reading, writing, math, and assessments. The Reading Coach has presented to Lake Region Special Education and the Elementary Principal's Association on topics of scientifically-based reading instructional strategies and how to use assessment to guide instruction. She has taught graduate courses in reading, most recently the Daily Five and Café Reading Model. The Special Education Teacher has presented to the Lake Region Special Education District on how to support students in the area of reading and math within the regular classroom. The Math Coach serves on the executive board of the ND Council of Teachers of Mathematics and presents each year at the state conference on math strategies, mathematical thinking, and math research. The principal has presented at various conferences (ND Elementary Principal's Association, Title I Reading Conference, School Improvement Conference, and the National Title I Conference) on topics including supporting instructional coaches in the school, mentoring teachers, the components of an effective school program, High Reliability Schools, improving instruction and achievement in high poverty schools, and the importance of an effective pre-kindergarten program. The principal recently served as the president of the ND Association of Elementary Principals. Her platform focused on the benefits of pre-kindergarten for economically disadvantaged children. She spoke to a number of organizations regarding the research and importance of pre-kindergarten. Various teachers have also presented at district and state committee meetings and have served as mentors to other teachers in schools across the state. Because we are such a cohesive team of educators with strong beliefs that all children can learn, we believe that sharing our successful strategies is important to our profession.

4. Engaging Families and Community:

Parent and community involvement has been an ongoing endeavor at Sweetwater Elementary School. Sweetwater School has a Parent Involvement Committee to assist in keeping a strong focus on parent and community involvement. Each year, a staff meeting is held at the beginning of the year to develop a Plan for Parent Involvement. The Take-Home Backpack Reading Program has become culture for families to read or listen to their children read for 20 minutes each night. A DVD, produced by the Reading Coach and Title I Reading Teacher, was developed as a means to demonstrate how to conduct the nightly expectation for 20 minutes of reading in the Backpack Reading Program. Comprehension strategies, predicting, and questioning were modeled during these sessions. A Family Mentoring program was established that matches new families to Sweetwater Elementary School with a veteran family. Family Nights are held quarterly to provide training to parents on various topics that will help them support their children. A parent night was held at the casino on the Spirit Lake Reservation. The school counselor presented parenting and nurturing tips while the reading coach shared the importance of reading to your children at home. Family Math Nights are held each year as a means for sharing information about how to help with math at home. A literacy pamphlet, given to all facets of our community, including area clinics, hospitals, community centers, and daycares, was developed by the Reading Committee to share information about the importance of reading with children at an early age. The Morning Reading Round-Up Program is available to students through the use of teacher and community volunteers. The volunteers read to the children each day with a book(s) they bring or one from the library. The PTO hosts a book exchange during Reading Month each year.

Community Celebrity Readers during Reading Month are invited into classrooms during Reading Month. Community Service is an expectation of all students and staff at Sweetwater Elementary School. The principal, Reading Coach, and Math Coach are frequent presenters at community organizations such as Rotary and Kiwanis. Classrooms take part in at least two community service projects each year. Activities range from nursing home projects/visits to fund-raising for a community member with cancer and food-drives for the local food pantry. The community organizations and businesses have been very supportive of Sweetwater with monetary donations, technology items, and supplies. We believe that modeling and teaching students to “give back” to the community, emphasizing a social responsibility, is important.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

Sweetwater Elementary utilizes the North Dakota State Standards and Benchmarks, reflecting Common Core, to drive instruction in all curricular areas. A continual reference is made to the reading and math state standards for professional development, instructional development, and data-based assessment review. Teachers differentiate instruction within all academic areas, which provides an opportunity for all students to become highly active in their learning process, maximize their capacity as learners, and be motivated about their learning of a specific topic. The teachers utilize formative and summative assessment results, teacher observation, and rubrics/scales to design instruction that meets the needs of each learner with regard to academic level, content, product, and process. An uninterrupted 90-minute reading block is utilized with components of target skill development, shared reading, and guided reading. Title I Teachers and paraprofessionals use a researched-based tutoring model to provide supplemental reading instruction. The five reading components, with an oral language development focus, are incorporated throughout daily language arts instruction.

Sweetwater also incorporates an uninterrupted 60-minute math block. State standards and benchmarks drive instruction with the use of hands-on activities, problem-solving strategies, and expression of mathematical thinking as the emphasis. Summative assessments are used on a regular basis for assurance of learning. Classroom teachers acquire learning target proficiency information through formative assessments such as a concept and skill math probe, exit tickets, pencil/paper activities, and performance tasks. The data is reviewed in monthly grade level meetings with changes in instruction, multiple strategies, and differentiated instruction as discussion points. Consistency is maintained within the instructional settings of classroom, Title I, and special education through the meetings. The Title I Teacher and Math/Reading Coaches work collaboratively with the classroom teachers so that students become proficient in all language arts and math standards. Title I teachers support students and teachers through the pre-teaching and re-teaching of skills taught in the classroom for deeper mathematical understanding, which leads to higher success in the classroom. A communication log is utilized to maintain regular communication and instructional consistency.

The school counselor provides weekly guidance lessons in all classrooms based on the social/emotional development and needs of students. Lessons reflect the ASCA standards and a multitude of resources are used for classroom, small group, and individual guidance/counseling. Students have the opportunity to participate in frequent community service projects led by the school counselor. A Career Fair for elementary students brings community volunteers, professionals, and the school community together for helping students learn about many different types of careers.

Students participate in physical education classes, based on ND Standards daily. Physical activity is also emphasized in the classroom with the “Move to Learn Program” and the morning extended school day program, “Walking Works.” A Healthy Beginnings Committee organizes and promotes healthy lifestyle activities throughout the year. The school hosts a spring marathon for students and families each year and Family Nights promote a variety of healthy lifestyle activities such as Zumba, Yoga, healthy eating, and emotional well-being. Community fitness instructors, martial arts instructors, mental health professionals and licensed dietitians have provided mini workshops to students and their families. Monies from a Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Grant provide nutritional snacks each day for students.

An Artist in Residence is secured each year to enhance the arts program. A variety of artists have taught dance, visual arts, music, drama, and cultural awareness through these residencies. Art Club in the after school program and summer school also provide additional opportunities for art education. Music education, reflecting state standards, is provided daily to all students. Music is also incorporated into daily instruction in all classrooms. The after school Drama Club includes musical productions each year.

Technology has become an essential instructional tool used daily by teachers and students to enhance learning and instruction. All classrooms are equipped with a SMART Board and a number of computers and iPads. The science and social studies curriculums, based on state standards, are taught with materials and instructional strategies that are hands-on and engaging for students. The Sully's Hill National Game Preserve is utilized to enhance the science curriculum. Fourth graders attend lab science sessions each week at the Middle School for additional rigorous instruction. Teachers use the social studies curriculum to provide a foundation for students to become active, responsible citizens in a diverse, interdependent, democratic society. Native American studies and culture is an essential component of our curriculum with respect to families from the nearby reservation who attend school at Sweetwater. Native American Dance, beading, and drumming are included in the educational program. Supplemental materials, including technology websites, are also used on a regular basis to support science and social studies instruction and learning.

2. Reading/English:

The Sweetwater Elementary School reading program is based on scientifically-based reading research. The 90-minute block for reading instruction was implemented approximately eight years ago as a result of the district language arts curriculum committee's extensive research. The 90-minute reading block incorporates various components. During shared reading, an emphasis is placed on reading and interacting with a wide variety of texts and genres. Comprehension strategies with essential questions and "big ideas" are a major focus. Vocabulary, fluency, phonics, and phonemic awareness are also embedded in shared reading instruction. As students progress across grade levels, they are asked to interact with texts in more sophisticated ways. The purpose of the target skill, based on the state standards, is to ensure that all students are taught skills applicable to their grade level, to ensure scope and sequence in our reading program, and to provide consistency throughout our K-4 school. Guided reading and literacy groups teach children to learn how to use independent reading successfully. Students work in groups according to their DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment) levels and progress through levels according to the progress indicated in the frequent assessments conducted. Students are instructed at their specific instructional reading level, which targets students' needs, including those below and above grade level. In the past two years, the Daily Five and Cafe Reading structure (Boushey and Moser, 2006) has been incorporated to enhance reading instruction and learning. Meaningful literacy centers are utilized to provide additional practice and proficiency in reading fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and phonics. Literacy centers must reflect a targeted skill that has been previously taught. The literacy centers are a continuous review of the reading curriculum. All classrooms and the Title I room are filled with a multitude of leveled books for students to be able to practice reading at their independent reading level. This has increased our student's fluency rates and their comprehension skills. It has also provided teachers the opportunity to differentiate instruction and meet the needs of all students by reviewing skills that have not been mastered. Students also gain confidence in reading and they acquire the lifelong skill of a love of reading. The take-home Backpack Reading Program provides families with the materials necessary to assist their child in the reading process.

A variety of reading assessments (DRA, DIBELS, NWEA, NDSA, AIMS, TPRI, Woodcock-Johnson Diagnostic Reading) are consistently utilized for screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring, and outcome purposes. Interventions are provided by Title I Teachers and paras with programs directed at the specific reading needs. Response to Intervention plans also assist with improving the reading skills of students performing below and above grade level.

3. Mathematics:

Sweetwater Elementary developed a 60-minute math block that has been in place for the past six years. The 60-minute math block utilizes Scott Foresman-Addison Wesley Math, along with Investigations. These two math programs have been approved as scientifically-based programs. The National Science Foundation has included the Investigation Program on their list of approved programs due to the inquiry approach it uses. Within the 60-minute math block, teachers provide instruction on math skills, which reflect the North Dakota State Standards. Whole group instruction is used to provide an overview of the target skill. The purpose of the target math skill is to ensure that all students are taught skills applicable to their grade level,

to ensure scope and sequence within the math program, and to provide consistency throughout the school. An investigation activity follows for practice at the instructional level. Teachers differentiate their instruction on an individual or small group basis to meet the needs of all learners. Investigation activities include the use of manipulatives, paper and pencil tasks, and real-life application of the particular math skill and previously taught skills. Formative and summative assessments are utilized on a continuous basis to assure learning and determine further instructional needs. A math facts program and calendar activities also serve as major components in the math curriculum.

Assessments have been used to target the specific needs of students and small groups. The Title I teachers reinforce and supplement the skills the classroom teachers are teaching during these blocks. The extra practice allows the students the time and support they need to master the skills. The Title I Math Teacher also teaches a 60 + 30 minute math block to students who are performing at the lowest level. This small group arrangement has had a direct impact on their achievement. This teacher also teaches those same students in an after school 45-minute block to further enhance their learning and performance. Each year, students are identified for the Title I Math Block with the goal of needing this small group for one year. The special education teacher also provides a similar teaching model. Technology is incorporated into math instruction through the use of student computers, iPads, and interactive SMART Boards. We have witnessed much success in math instruction for the past six years due to programming, instructional models, small group instruction, additional instructional time for struggling students, and the use of assessments for determining instructional needs.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Science instruction is provided during a specific science block and is also integrated through curricular areas such as reading and mathematics. Through investigative hands-on science activities, research, and technology, students are provided opportunities to develop understandings and skills necessary to function productively as problem-solvers in a scientific and technological world. Students investigate and practice inquiry/process skills frequently. Assessments are utilized to identify students' prior knowledge of science content and standards so instruction can be designed to challenge students and build upon the development of science process skills. They also provide information regarding the students' progress and level of proficiency. Assessment strategies include exit tickets, oral and written reports, performance tasks, portfolios, and investigative projects. Scales/rubrics are used to describe the levels of performance relative to the learning goals set.

The school utilizes the Sully's Hill National Game Preserve, located on the Spirit Lake Reservation, regularly to enhance science instruction. The Game Preserve provides educators from the Game and Fish Department to assist the classroom teachers in providing lessons that meet the ND State Standards in Science, Math, and Reading. Classrooms at the Preserve are used during the school day to provide lessons, instruction, and hands-on learning in a "natural environment". In addition to regular classroom instruction, fourth grade students receive specialized instruction with a teacher at the middle school who has an advanced degree in science education. This instruction provides additional resources, a higher knowledge base for science standard acquisition, and advanced rigor. Science is also an area of focus in the 21st Century after school and summer program. GEMS Kits are used to provide a hands-on inquiry approach to specialized curriculum for life, earth, and physical science. STEM materials, specifically STEMfinity, have also been purchased to use for the summer school programming. Project Lead the Way programming is being planned for the 2014-15 school year. PLTW is a national STEM program that incorporates a hands-on, project-based science, technology, engineering and math curricula for elementary, middle, and high schools. Technology and science are necessary partners for instruction; therefore, Sweetwater School incorporates a high degree of technology within science instruction. Because of the integration of technology, Sweetwater School was awarded a Program in Excellence Award by the International Technology Education Association. The staff and principal at Sweetwater continually search for resources and opportunities to assist with developing students' problem-solving skills, critical thinking, creative and innovative reasoning and a love of learning for success in the ever-changing world of tomorrow.

5. Instructional Methods:

Research of the most effective instructional methods for high academic achievement has been a focus for the past nine years. Differentiated instruction within all curricular areas for all learners is provided by classroom teachers, special education, Title I and paraprofessionals daily. Differentiation provides multiple approaches to content, process, and product; makes instruction student-centered; is a blend of whole class, group, and individual instruction; and is ever changing. The goals are to allow the learners to maximize their capacity as learners, become highly active in their learning process, be motivated about their learning, and provide interest to the learning topic. Through the use of PLCs on a weekly basis and monthly grade level meetings, data assessment is reviewed to determine programming needs and to design instruction that meets the needs of each learner. Differentiated instruction is also provided in the 21st Century Before and After School Programming. Tutors and teachers work with students in small and large groups to provide targeted instruction and guided practice for increased academic proficiency in the specific areas of need. Information regarding improvements and further needs are a constant communication between daily classroom teachers, Title I Teachers, the reading and math coaches, tutors and the Before and After School Program Teachers.

Technology is used to support instruction through interactive SMART Boards, iPads, and computers. These tools are used in every classroom, including special education resource room, Title I, music, speech/language and counseling. Differentiating through technology has increased the ability to provide a multitude of strategies and instructional techniques. It has also served as a great motivational tool for students. Websites are listed on the school homepage so that families have access to many opportunities for skill development. The staff provides training for families during Technology Night each year so that they can better understand the purpose of technology and how it can help their child succeed academically and globally.

Teachers communicate learning goals each day for all curricular areas, which sets students up for success. The learning goals are visible to the students and communicated at the beginning of each lesson. Effective questioning strategies are utilized which include quality questions that lead students to higher levels of thinking, wait time with the provision of cues, clues, and other prompts to students who do not immediately respond, and asking for extensions to the responses or clarification.

Providing feedback and reinforcing effort are common elements in classrooms. Teachers provide verbal, written and physical (i.e., thumbs up) reinforcement throughout the day. Academic and behavioral charting is used for all students. The record of progress with behavioral charting has been especially valuable for increasing motivation for select students working on specific behavior goals.

Student engagement/active learning strategies are regularly implemented in all classrooms to avoid the option of students being “passive” participants in the learning process. The classrooms are emotionally and intellectually “safe” so that students are comfortable in the active learning process. There are frequent interaction, negotiation and explorations among the learners and teachers. Cooperative learning, small group work, turn and teach strategies, and think-pair-share are some of the strategies for active learning.

High expectations for behavior and academic efforts/progress are an essential element school-wide and for individual classrooms. These expectations are communicated by all adults and through Respect Assemblies where students provide “mini” lessons on behavior and academic goals. Rules and procedures are developed early each school year so that all understand what is expected. Positive reinforcement is used frequently through verbal and written communication. The “Caught You” Program recognizes students who demonstrate respect, choose appropriate behaviors, make concentrated efforts, and/or academic progress.

6. Professional Development:

The professional development team identifies professional development needs each year through a district and specific school approach. An important goal of professional development is to ensure that teachers are successful in providing the highest level of instruction to all students in teaching the ND State Standards, reflecting the Common Core Standards. Specific needs are also identified through surveys, staff meetings,

coaching observations, and assessment data. The AdvancEd Accreditation Process also drives professional development needs. Teachers and support staff participate in numerous professional development activities that include workshops, book studies, and reading and math academies. New strategies learned through professional development are implemented and teachers collaborate on a regular basis to determine effectiveness. Teachers utilize an Effective Instruction Rubric Self-Assessment to identify strengths and further needs for professional goal setting and planning of additional professional development. Peer observations, peer-mentoring, and PLCs also provide information regarding further needs for professional development. The most current, up-to-date research-based practices are a continuous focus for professional development. In the past three years, we have researched and implemented instructional models such as Café, Daily Five, and the Steve Dunn Writing Program to enhance our language arts curriculum.

Poverty has been a continual study with research from Robert Barr, William Parrett, and Ruby Payne. Marzano has been and will continue to be a major emphasis of study as our district recently adopted the Principal and Teacher Evaluation Process by Robert Marzano. This will not only assist in building teacher and principal effectiveness, but will inevitably have an effect on student achievement as building and sustaining instructional capacity have the most impact. Professional development for technology in the classroom has been instrumental for staff in staying current with the ever-changing practices. Love and Logic, Nurtured Heart, and Conscious Discipline approaches have also been the topic of professional development provided for the staff at Sweetwater. The Reading and Math Coaches provide targeted “on-the-spot” professional development to teachers, paraprofessionals, tutors, and volunteers based on specific needs. Another component of professional development is the development and support of teacher leaders. Teachers assume essential roles in improving instruction and driving improvements. Distributing the leadership responsibilities to teacher leaders creates and supports the necessary collaboration needed to effectively teach all students.

7. School Leadership

The leadership philosophy at Sweetwater School is based on the premises of shared leadership, data-driven decisions, a “community” of learners, high expectations for all, and building relationships. Student achievement is best accomplished through the distribution of leadership among staff members to create a successful learning community. The principal advocates for a culture of shared leadership where there is meaningful involvement of others to put forth collective energy for continuous growth of teaching and learning. Creating a culture of continuous learning for adults tied to student learning and school-wide goals are a focus for the leadership. Commitment to learning is modeled by the principal through participation in professional development with teachers. Promoting an environment of trust and mutual respect so that staff can take risks and feel supported in their efforts in accomplishing the school's mission is the goal. Building capacity for leadership is necessary for success; therefore the principal encourages and empowers a wide range of educators to be leaders in different aspects. District-wide and state-wide committees are encouraged by the principal. The confidence gained and skills learned from these committees serve as a level of professional development that positively impacts the school environment, teaching, and learning. The reading and math coaches take responsibility for professional development and assessment needs and analysis. The special education teachers lead professional development on different aspects of learning regarding students with special needs. They also assist with differentiation in the classrooms and the resource rooms. The Title I Teachers are specialists in their respective fields, which provide leadership to strategies and materials that support the regular classroom teacher. The librarian is the "expert" with media and technology, therefore is the support person to all staff members as they seek materials to provide exemplary instruction. The counselor leads a variety of activities and projects to promote the well-being of students and families. Classroom teachers become “leaders” of specific strategies or programs and provide professional development, modeling, and resources for other staff members.

The principal sets high expectations and standards for the academic, social, emotional, and physical development of all students. With a shared leadership model, all staff members embrace the goal for high expectations and demonstrate it personally. The principal and school leaders use data to inform decisions and measure progress of student, adult, and school performance. The results of assessments and progress are made transparent to the entire school community for the purpose of continuous growth. The principal and

school leaders have actively committed themselves to engaging parents, families, and the community to build relationships that support students and improved performance. Staff members have embraced this concept, which has created partnerships to ensure multiple learning opportunities for students, in and out of school. The leadership philosophy and structure at Sweetwater has been a constant evolution of researched-based practices to build a school committed to excellence and high achievement of all students.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Math

All Students Tested/Grade: 4

Publisher: CTB McGraw Hill

Test: North Dakota State Assessment

Edition/Publication Year: 2013

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Oct	Oct	Oct	Oct	Oct
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	99	100	98	98	98
% Advanced	56	59	54	54	56
Number of students tested	73	82	87	79	76
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	2	1	1	2	3
% of students tested with alternative assessment	3	1	1	2	4
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	99	94	98	97	90
% Advanced	28	40	33	45	19
Number of students tested	37	43	40	41	38
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	92	93	100	100
% Advanced	86	83	80	83	86
Number of students tested	7	6	5	6	7
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
% Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
% Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	0	100	0	0	0
% Advanced	0	100	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	1	0	0	0
6. Asian Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
% Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
7. American Indian or					

Alaska Native Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	100	84	98	84
% Advanced	20	32	20	23	16
Number of students tested	15	22	15	15	21
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
% Advanced	0				
Number of students tested	0				0
9. White Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	89	98	98	98	98
% Advanced	80	68	80	77	84
Number of students tested	56	59	72	64	55
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
% Advanced	0				
Number of students tested	0				0
11. Other 1: Other 1					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
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: The North Dakota State Assessment Results provide information reflecting AYP that combines the scores of the 3rd and 4th grades at our school. Because we are a K-4 school, no other grades are tested. This data is from all students in grades 3-4.

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading/ELA
All Students Tested/Grade: 4
Publisher: McGraw Hill

Test: North Dakota State Assessment
Edition/Publication Year: 2013

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Oct	Oct	Oct	Oct	Oct
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	92	91	89	88	90
% Advanced	40	25	26	49	36
Number of students tested	71	82	87	79	76
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	2	1	1	2	3
% of students tested with alternative assessment	1	1	1	2	4
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	93	92	86	93	88
% Advanced	34	28	36	30	14
Number of students tested	37	43	40	41	38
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	92	87	70	100
% Advanced	71	67	60	50	86
Number of students tested	7	6	5	6	7
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
% Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
% Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	0	100	0	0	0
% Advanced	0	100	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	1	0	0	0
6. Asian Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
% Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	89	94	69	70	85
% Advanced	34	28	18	10	11

Number of students tested	29	22	15	15	21
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	93	90	93	90	91
% Advanced	76	73	82	90	93
Number of students tested	42	59	72	64	55
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	0	0	0	0	0
11. Other 1: Other 1					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
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: The North Dakota State Assessment Results provide information reflecting AYP that combines the scores of the 3rd and 4th grades at our school. Because we are a K-4 school, no other grades are tested. This data is from all students in grades 3-4.