

U.S. Department of Education
2015 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mrs. Carrie Brockway

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

Official School Name Pecatonica Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 721 Reed Street P.O. Box 419

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

City Pecatonica State IL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 61063-0419

County Winnebago State School Code Number* 041013210262002

Telephone 815-239-2550 Fax 815-239-1418

Web site/URL http://www.pecschools.com E-mail carriebrockway@pecschools.com

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*Mr. William Faller

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

E-mail: williamfaller@pecschools.com

Other)

District Name Pecatonica CUSD #321 Tel. 815-239-1639

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. Don Miller

(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 and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are 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 2014-2015 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 2009 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: 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, or 2014.
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	39	30	69
1	33	32	65
2	28	44	72
3	36	39	75
4	31	27	58
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	167	172	339

5. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 4 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 91 % White
 - 2 % 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 2013 - 2014 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, 2013 until the end of the school year	13
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2013 until the end of the school year	15
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	28
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1	329
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.085
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	9

7. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
1 Total number ELL
 Number of non-English languages represented: 1
 Specify non-English languages: Mandarin Chinese
8. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 29 %
 Total number students who qualify: 99

Information for Public Schools Only - Data Provided by the State

The state has reported that 37 % of the students enrolled in this school are from low income or disadvantaged families based on the following subgroup(s): Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals

9. Students receiving special education services: 14 %
46 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>3</u> Autism | <u>2</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>8</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>5</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>18</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</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>14</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	18
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	6
Paraprofessionals	18
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

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	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	96%	95%	95%
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 2014

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

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

15. Please summarize your school mission in 25 words or less: Pecatonica Elementary School creates students who are confident, competent, resilient, and positively contributing citizens, through comprehensive preparation and high expectations of academic rigor.

PART III – SUMMARY

Since its inception in 1938, our school has undergone numerous reconfigurations, additions, and renovations to blossom into the K-4 learning center it is today. Pecatonica Elementary School is located in Pecatonica, Illinois, a small rural town of just over 2,000 people, and for most of its history, the small village of Pecatonica was the only source of students for our school district. But in 1999, the community of Westlake Village was formed, with hundreds of homes that would effectively double the size of the Pecatonica School District as it further widened its boundaries. Today, the school district serves just under 1000 K-12 students in 3 school buildings. Our major challenge is that while we are not a racially diverse community, our economic diversity encompasses both subsidized housing options for low income families and luxury homes. In the last nine years, our economically disadvantaged population has tripled while our student achievement has improved significantly. We take great pride in maintaining our small school feel where each child gets just what he or she needs to succeed!

To best meet the needs of our diverse population of students, our district boasts one of the lengthiest school days and some of the smallest class sizes in Winnebago County to maximize instructional minutes for our students. Each day, the learning opportunities include authentic, hands-on activities to help grow our K-4 students into capable readers, writers, and mathematicians. Inclusive special education services keep students learning with their peers and connected to the core curriculum at their grade level. We have clearly defined minimum competencies for students at each grade level to demonstrate mastery of content and preparation for the upcoming grade level. To ensure student success, each grade level team functions as a Professional Learning Community (PLC), which meets daily for 15-20 minutes to discuss curriculum, assessment, student achievement data, student progress toward goals, and Response to Intervention (RTI). The principal, special education staff, and reading specialist meet with PLCs at least once per week. We believe that it is this focused commitment to excellence that has allowed our students to experience such consistent success.

While walking the halls of Pecatonica, you'll find a Kindergarten or 1st grade class reading or playing a math game with their third or fourth grade buddies or hear the music for an upcoming grade level's concert wafting through the halls. You'll see teachers meeting daily with small reading and math groups to best meet the needs of each of our students. Inviting classrooms, many with non-traditional seating like yoga balls and exercise bikes, meet the needs of students who need to motor as they work. Watch our students using iPads to take virtual field trips to outer space, scanning access codes their teachers have placed throughout the school with embedded information about the planets. Stop by our SuccessMaker Lab, where all students get computer-driven math and reading instruction at their just right level several times per week, providing challenge or remediation to meet a child's needs.

What really sets our school apart from others is that we provide a wide variety of after school activities for elementary students. Many extracurricular activities are available at no cost to families so that most students can participate in opportunities that include: Healthy Heroes (exercise and nutrition training), Pecatonica Aspiring Writers (young author program), Pec Pacers Running Club, Forensics for Kids (speech giving), and Random Acts of Kindness Club, where students have made scarves and blankets for the homeless, write positive notes for staff and peers, and actively help those in need. Our own dedicated teaching staff volunteers their time to provide these programming options for our students, impacting lives, and helping each student find his or her own niche. We also offer several programs for families that do come at an additional cost, but expand our options for students even further, including Mad Science Club, Young Rembrandts art program, and Stars of Tomorrow drama group. Due to the generosity of our very active PTO, scholarships are available to ensure that no student is denied the opportunity to participate due to an inability to pay for the program cost. It is our belief that involved students are committed to excellence in every aspect of their lives, making them productive members of our community. This is especially important in Pecatonica, as most of our families remain in the community for generations, where approximately ninety percent of each Pecatonica High School graduating class started Kindergarten together at Pecatonica Elementary. During the last three years of expanding our co-curricular offerings, our student achievement has reached the highest proportions in our history, and we have earned Illinois' Academic Excellence awards in 2011 and 2012 for having 90% of our students meet and exceed state standards on our

state assessment for three consecutive years. In addition, Pecatonica Elementary has been a School Search Bright Star Award recipient three different times for demonstrating high performance with low funding per pupil, an honor bestowed upon just 10% of Illinois schools. For a small rural school to demonstrate this type of academic excellence consistently over time is an accomplishment of which we are very proud.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Pecatonica Elementary School offers a research-based, balanced literacy approach to helping students master the CCSS-ELA. Students read daily from texts at their independent reading level. They spend a significant portion of their instructional time reading for pleasure in texts selected for the student through individual conferencing with his or her teacher. During conferences, teachers listen to the student read the text, provide corrective feedback, and then set new goals for the student to attain before the next conferencing opportunity. In addition, teachers meet with small groups for reading instruction, where the focus is on providing systematic strategy instruction to improve students' reading fluency and comprehension. Students are taught close reading strategies, their comprehension skills built through rich, small group discussions where the teacher and similar-achieving peers meet to discuss texts. Large group instruction focuses on systematic strategies needed by all students for success when reading grade level material. A wide variety of text is utilized at the small group reading table, including science and social studies resources, to help students best navigate these challenging informational texts. Nonfiction pieces provide sources for research tasks, writing across the curriculum, and demonstration of speaking and listening standards when preparing speeches. From first grade through fourth, our students all complete multiple research projects each year. Whether it is a first grader's animal report or a third grader's country research project, our students are becoming capable synthesizers of information and confident presenters.

Our school adopted a systematic, sequential, hands-on phonics, spelling, and handwriting curriculum eight years ago that continues to create students who excel in the language arts. This program is built on a tiered approach that provides a standards-aligned scope and sequence for the instruction given to all students in each grade level. The program also includes "double dose" small group intervention lessons that provide a remediation of each lesson and progress monitoring of student growth for any student who is not scoring within the average of their peers. The primary goal is closing the achievement gap on specific phonics skills before a student can develop significant, pervasive spelling weaknesses.

Science and social studies instruction is firmly embedded in our approach to presenting the CCSS-ELA. Students are provided opportunities to read, research, and write for real purposes, and our district has made a commitment to purchasing a wide variety of content area texts at all reading levels so that they can be used for core literacy instruction. Daily, students are challenged to read for information, whether it is a patterned text on communities for Kinders or a study of the Northwest region for 4th graders. Our PLC teams have worked with the principal and curriculum director to unpack the CCSS-ELA and develop authentic research experiences for students. We have recently begun to work through the Next Generation Science Standards, seeing how these will reshape our instruction in Pecatonica. Our teachers have committed to employing quality content area reading strategies to help students become better readers of non-fiction texts. Time at the guided reading table or in front of the SMARTBoard with a shared text is being invested to help students navigate informational texts, learning valuable facts from captions, and how to discover the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary in a text's glossary. It is not uncommon to see Kinders pouring over a non-fiction big book with highlighting tape for main ideas or 2nd graders gathered around the guided reading table with their science textbooks and sticky notes to mark new facts about magnets.

Our hands-on, CCSS-aligned mathematics curriculum is an area of pride and much professional research in Pecatonica. Students work to master basic facts through hands-on games, as well as computer software tools that offer structured practice and growth measurement. Each grade level has a specific fact mastery goal for students. Our SuccessMaker software program provides students ample opportunities for enrichment and remediation as their needs dictate. Classrooms visit the specialized computer lab several times per week, and progress monitoring data is gathered during each visit to monitor student progress toward benchmarks. Our adopted math curriculum was recently heralded through an unbiased research symposium as the most rigorous, CCSS-aligned, user-friendly program currently on the market. In year two of implementation, we have noticed significant student growth on both standardized and formative assessments of mastery.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

While Pecatonica has been recognized for academic excellence, it is our visual and performing arts curriculum that really sets us apart from other elementary schools and enhances our students' learning experience. Our art teacher has fully embraced an approach to art instruction known as Teaching for Artistic Behavior (TAB). This approach means that our K-4 art students experience a variety of artistic opportunities during their 45 minutes of art instruction each week. The art room, known as "The Dragonfly Studio," provides students with an interest-based centers approach, where students take minilessons provided by the teacher and employ the knowledge in self-selected projects. The teacher opens various "studios" once students have the art knowledge from minilessons to complete them, such as printmaking, weaving, origami, etc. Students select their best work each quarter to be WOW pieces, write an artist's statement, and submit the piece for the annual Art Fair. The teacher has well-defined and clear expectations for what makes a WOW piece, and her instruction strengthens students' perseverance, attention to detail, as well as their critical thinking, innovation, and many other 21st century skills.

Music instruction at Pecatonica Elementary is second to none, and our concerts rival off-Broadway productions. The nearly hour-long, themed productions our music teacher choreographs allow for each student who wants one to have at least one instrumental solo, dance, or speaking part in each program. Most recently, the 4th grade show was a Christmas musical that was geared to grades 4-8, and one would never have guessed that our students were only 4th graders during the performance! Each grade level performs their own concert at some point during the school year in a dress rehearsal for the entire elementary school and an evening performance for their families. The music teacher also takes each grade level show "on the road," performing for senior groups and other local community organizations. The amount of rehearsal and performance time it takes to accomplish each individual grade level concert further develops students' 21st century skills. The music curriculum exposes students to a wide variety of music and instruments from many cultures during their 90 minutes of K-4 music instruction each week. The curriculum also provides instruction for each student to learn, during his or her Kindergarten year, the Star Spangled Banner's lyrics and meaning, culminating in membership in the SSB Club, the ability to perform with all 1st-4th graders at the Homecoming football game at our high school each fall, at home basketball games, and as fourth graders, in front of thousands of fans at an arena before a professional hockey game.

Our physical education curriculum offers students a games-based approach to physical fitness, as well as the opportunity to develop his or her personal strength and growth through structured exercises. Students walk/run the mile each year, growing and improving throughout their academic career. Students participate in the Jump Rope for Heart fundraiser for the American Heart Association, and they not only progress in the healthy cardiovascular habit of jump roping, but they give back to this wonderful organization by jumping in honor or memory of a family member for pledges. In all grades, students develop their physicality, teamwork, and game strategy through play. In grades 3 and 4, physical fitness excellence has been recognized for many years through the renowned National and Presidential Fitness Programs, but we, like many other districts across the country, are transitioning to the new Presidential Youth Fitness Program. Our students receive 90 minutes of physical education each week, and to encourage daily activity, students have at least 20 minutes of recess each day. Nutrition and health instruction is currently embedded into our science curriculum, and we often facilitate it with presentations from local dentists, nursing staff, and outside counseling agencies.

Our school has two fully functioning computer labs, two classroom carts of Chromebooks, and nearly 50 iPads. But without a cohesive approach to technology instruction, students could not reach their full potential. Typing instruction allows first grade students to begin honing their keyboarding skills. Teachers have received training on Google Apps for Education and possess a district-provided Chromebook. Each student has his or her own Google account where we have developed expectations for each grade level. Even in first grade, our students are creating presentations with Slides to showcase their animal reports. Technology is also embedded in everyday writing and researching tasks to best prepare students for their futures, which is the ultimate goal of our curriculum.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Pecatonica Elementary School offers a differentiated learning environment with small class sizes to best meet the needs of each individual student. Alternative seating options, like stability balls and exercise bikes, allow for students' comfort while learning. Interactive lessons are presented on SMARTBoards so that short video clips can be used to show rather than tell students about a concept. Students with academic needs are supported as often as possible in regular education co-teaching environments. Collaborative learning opportunities abound as students learn together with teacher guidance.

The majority of reading and mathematics instruction at Pecatonica Elementary in grades K-2 occurs in small, guided groups to tailor instruction to students' needs. In grades 3-4, we use formative assessment data, including pretesting of math concepts, reading benchmark data, and phonics inventories/assessments to place students in "walk-to-learn" environments for math and ELA instruction. Last year's data from formative assessment, standardized achievement testing, and our state assessment showed positive impacts of our fourth grade's pilot of the walk-to-learn environment. Groups of students with similar conceptual needs allow us to differentiate instruction and provide explicit teaching of necessary concepts, giving both students who excel and struggle appropriate challenge and pace. These fluid groups changed for each unit of study for math based on pretesting of concepts and mid-module assessments, resulting in 100% of fourth graders meeting their end of year Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) targets for math. Similar gains were not noted last year for 4th graders in ELA, where we had not piloted the walk-to-learn format of instruction. This year, we have employed walk-to-learn for ELA and math in grade 4, and for math in grade 3. We are considering expanding this concept to other grades and subject areas.

Tiered instruction for our Response to Intervention initiative in K and 1 includes a "Power Hour" of interventions where students get explicit, systematic, teaching of concepts, with daily practice and progress monitoring of improvement, from a variety of support staff. We have offered Reading Recovery interventions for nearly twenty years to our most challenged first graders, and we employ a Title I teacher and paraprofessional to carry out Title I Reading and Math interventions of varying intensity to the bottom 20% of students at every grade level, meaning that approximately 30% of Pecatonica Elementary students receive some type of Title I support to improve their achievement. These interventions have been successful, evidenced by the high percentage of disadvantaged students meeting and exceeding standards.

PART V – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results Narrative Summary:

Over the last five years, our students have evidenced exceptional achievement on the Illinois Standards Achievement test (ISAT), a measure of math and reading for our 3rd and 4th graders and a science measure in 4th grade. During this five year period, Pecatonica has consistently outperformed the state average by at least 5 percentage points in each subject, and recently, as many as 24, since the introduction of the new cut scores. In 2011 and 2012, we were bestowed the Illinois Academic Excellence Award for having 90% or more of our students meet or exceed the state standard on the ISAT for a minimum of three consecutive years. We have also been recognized every year as one of the top four non-magnet elementary schools of the 119 schools in the Rock River Valley region, and in 2014, we were the highest achieving non-magnet on that list. These successes are a direct result of our teachers' commitment to excellence and student growth.

Our low income and IEP subgroup size each year is very small, too variable to use for trend analysis. During the last five years, the size of our special education and low income populations ranged from less than 10 to 22 students. However, data trends show many positive traits with these two populations over these five years, to include 8 separate times that the low income subgroup equaled or outperformed the overall achievement of the entire testing population and many times where students with IEPs exceeded the state standards in a tested subject, an accomplishment we believe is directly linked to quality instruction within inclusive special education environments. Despite the 2013 school year, when the state made significant changes to the cut scores for meeting and exceeding standards, we have demonstrated high achievement for both our overall and subgroup populations. For that reason, before making major curricular changes, the 2013 results are best analyzed by comparing the raw data scores from 2012 to 2013, where both 3rd and 4th graders demonstrated growth in math and reading on the actual number of correctly answered questions, effectively showing there wasn't a significant decline in achievement. We continue to analyze data and audit our curriculum to ensure student success, but in a small school like ours, it takes more than one year of data to know what decisions are necessary.

2. Assessment for Instruction and Learning and Sharing Assessment Results:

Our teachers have become masterful at using various assessments to guide instruction and to best share student achievement with families. Our reading benchmarks allow teachers to scaffold instruction, identifying specific areas of strength and weakness in a child's reading ability to target for instruction. Teachers share this information with parents to explain an individual's reading performance and how to help the child grow as a reader. Unit assessments for phonics and spelling demonstrate mastery or show a need for specific remediation, further driving ELA instruction. Math pretest, mid-module assessment, and post test data are used to form instructional groups, provide targeted instruction, and progress monitor our students and our curriculum. Our teachers' toolbox of assessments for all subjects includes skill checklists, teacher-created, common formative assessments, benchmark information from SuccessMaker, nationally and locally normed data from MAP testing, and state assessments, which are perhaps a better measure of our curriculum than student achievement. These data points are shared and discussed with colleagues, principal, and curriculum director in PLCs and are the basis for instructional decision-making. All data is shared with parents through report cards and conferences.

Teachers have been liberated by our non-traditional grading scale to be very candid with parents and our district leaders about student performance on standards-aligned, common formative assessments and overall achievement in the classroom. By removing the pressure of giving an elementary child a C, D or F, teachers can be very direct and share benchmarking data points and unit assessments that are "not at the grade level standard" or "significantly below the grade level standard." This allows for a productive dialogue with parents about actual student achievement without the stigma attached to a failing grade. We can effectively communicate our specific areas of concern from assessment data and identify unmastered standards in an objective way that clearly shows areas for needed growth and celebrates areas of notable success. MAP data is shared thrice yearly with families and the board of education, offering a snapshot of how the child's achievement in math, reading, language arts, and science compares to peers at the school, district, and

national levels. Our state assessment results are given to parents in an easy-to-read format and discussed at PLCs in terms of how they may or may not suggest a need for a curricular or pedagogical change. In Pecatonica, assessment drives our instruction and our curricular adjustments.

Part VI School Support

1. School Climate/Culture

Pecatonica Elementary is a child-centered environment where we strive to help students see each day as an opportunity to celebrate learning. It is our privilege as a staff to assist each child on his or her journey to becoming a lifelong learner. Staff provide a visible, engaged presence, a benefit of a small school where we greet students by name in morning lineup to welcome them to school. The adults of our school stay connected to each other through our PLCs and school wellness club, sharing healthy snacks in our lounge, and encouraging each other's exercise through after hour classes and weekly wellness challenges for prizes. We have regular celebrations of special life events as a work family. We earn "jeans days" for incentives like loading the buses quickly after school, and enjoy luncheons catered to show appreciation for staff a few times each year. When someone does an amazing job at something, we thank them by singing our special Thank-You Song, to which each adult and child knows all the words!

Student engagement and motivational experiences are the efforts of the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) team, comprised of staff from each grade level and specialty. This team works to address the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of students, meeting bimonthly to create experiences that enhance the learning environment of our school for students and adults. These include events like our Unity Day each fall, where all students are placed in K-4 multi-age groups of 6-8 students, traveling inside and outside the school, to complete an entire day of team-building challenges with an adult staff as their leader. Unity Day teams then reconvene at other points during the year to create a small family within our learning community. These adults stay connected to these groups, giving those students a special sense of belonging. Unity Day teams meet again to create decorated Earth Day paper bags for our local grocery store to use during Earth Week. On the first day back after Christmas break, we conduct an annual staff versus students Minute to Win It physical challenges assembly. This is one of many incentives for students who have earned "caught you being good" tickets for displaying targeted positive behaviors, like helping a friend without being asked.

Our principal is a family-oriented leader who understands we can best take care of our students when we know our own families are well cared for. As a staff, we coordinate coverage for one another so that we can attend an event at our own children's schools or care for an aging parent. Our principal is very hands-on with our students, knowing each child as an individual learner. She even celebrates the birthday of each child with a book and a private chat, as well as monthly birthday parties for students, complete with cake and balloons.

It is the mission of each adult to make Pecatonica Elementary the best possible learning community for our students and staff!

2. Engaging Families and Community

Building relationships and effective communication are integral to our school improvement and student successes. Families visit us regularly for events such as Meet the Teacher Night, Back-to-School BBQ, Jog-a-Thon, Halloween parade, classroom parties, concert nights, and grade level open houses. These special events make us like a large extended family, and students see us as a united team! To effectively communicate, we reach out in many ways. Our tech-savvy families appreciate our teachers' blogs that can send updates straight to their smartphones and quench their thirst for easily accessible information, providing snapshots of their children's days at school. School email blasts and teachers' use of Remind 101 effectively inform families of important events. Our biweekly school newsletters are available for easy access online, as well as in paper format. A weekly Communicator, a large envelope of papers and school communications, is sent home on Thursdays so parents know when to expect it and can keep abreast of school events. We have a large number of regular, loyal parent and grandparent volunteers who support our school and initiatives, assisting in the library, counting laps at Jog-a-Thon, or helping at home by cutting

lamination or donating water bottles for an art sculpture. These roles all help us with our goal of providing the consummate learning experience for each child, and children see their parents as our partners.

Our partnerships with local organizations have been exceedingly beneficial for us. College students who have come to us for clinical experience and student teaching from our local four year university have essentially been on semester long job interviews, and many have been hired as full time teaching staff. These represent some of the most solid hiring decisions we have made to increase student achievement. We have a partnership with the Northern Illinois Food Bank, who provides backpacks of non-perishable food for needy families to end food poverty on the weekends when students don't have access to hot lunch at school. This allows students to have their basic needs met, thus leading to increased student focusing and achievement. We believe that this is one of the reasons our economically disadvantaged students excel. Our local grocery store is a generous benefactor of snacks for students who cannot provide their own. The police chief provides school safety training and crisis drills with us. Our fire department delights in bringing the fire trucks during Fire Prevention Week and even sprayed water for the children to play in so we could safely hold our Back to School BBQ during a record heat wave. Our learning community works to make our school events successful for our students, which creates students who are engaged, successful learners.

3. Professional Development

It is the philosophy and practice of the Pecatonica School District that we must continue to develop and refine our talented staff in order to enhance student achievement and school improvement. To accomplish this goal, the multi-faceted professional development plan for Pecatonica offers learning opportunities for the principal and teachers from sources both within and outside the district.

Grade level PLC teams provide teachers and principal opportunities for growth, as colleagues converse, share, and learn from one another's ideas, successes, and challenges. Teachers collaborate on lesson ideas and data, conduct book studies, and grow as educators. Teams meet weekly with our district curriculum director and principal to maintain focus on our school mission, current curricular and assessment endeavors, and to analyze data to drive instruction. These meetings also help the principal and curriculum director support teachers by providing relevant district-provided professional development on School Improvement Planning (SIP) days based on teachers' expressed needs. For example, prior to drafting our common formative assessments, two SIP days were spent with experts in the field to build our teachers' capacity for the task. In addition to daily PLC meetings, the principal has also orchestrated release time each quarter for teams to have time to work on curriculum and common assessments, as well as to collaborate for lengthier periods of time with special education staff, the principal, and curriculum director. These meetings were created at the request of teachers who found similar summer release time particularly valuable.

Pecatonica affords teachers the opportunity to attend at least three days of professional learning opportunities outside the district each year, targeting teachers' personal goals for professional development. Conferences and workshops offer educators information about current best practices that are then brought back and shared with colleagues to enhance our school. Historically, such professional development experiences shaped our implementation of balanced literacy, standards-based grading, and math games to support basic fact mastery. In addition, our principal and many of our teachers continue to present at conferences and workshops across the state and country, sharing the best practices at Pecatonica Elementary that have lead our small, rural school to significant student successes.

Learning opportunities such as these are celebrated in the teacher evaluation process. Teachers are asked to reflect on how their development impacts their teaching, share attainment of their own professional goals, and discuss students' growth.

Our growth as educators profoundly impacts student achievement and school improvement.

4. School Leadership

The primary focus of educational leadership at Pecatonica Elementary School is preparing students to become capable, well-adjusted lifelong learners through quality educational experiences. This is a shared vision of the Pecatonica staff, and our successes have occurred as a direct result of the “Together Everyone Achieves More” (TEAM) approach. Our school supports the learning of the entire child, from academic growth to social emotional well-being. Each adult on staff plays a vital role to better the life of each child by doing one’s job, be it as principal, paraprofessional, teacher, or social worker, to the best of his or her ability. Our superintendent and board of education empower the principal and the staff to make site-based decisions for the betterment of our school and district, and district leaders ensure that our school has the necessary resources to be successful.

Committees help communicate and crystallize the school’s focus on student achievement and development, providing a venue where parents, staff, administration, and school board have a voice to craft the optimal learning environment for our children. Diverse perspectives from a variety of stakeholders and sources are sought to ensure that student learning is maximized. The principal communicates to staff through weekly memos of detailed information and necessary tasks requiring completion, ever respectful of adult’s precious time, saving meetings for collaborative efforts that require interpersonal interaction.

The principal has created collaborative opportunities to empower staff to take ownership of curriculum, assessment, and student achievement with her guidance and support. To accomplish this, for eight years, the master schedule has been crafted to allow for daily grade level collaboration time where all teachers share a voice and leadership of curriculum and instruction. She firmly believes that the teachers of Pecatonica are instructional experts, and when we all work together, we create a higher quality product, as evidenced by our teacher-created CCSS-aligned curriculum, common formative assessments, and innovative approach to instruction. The formation of PLCs for collaboration have had a profoundly positive impact on student achievement. Individuality of teachers is valued, celebrated, and utilized by the principal to better our school as a whole and shapes our approach to professional growth and school improvement by sharing our talents. As the instructional leader of the school, the principal has endeavored to create a learning community where teachers have been liberated to take risks, be it moving students from desks to non-traditional seating or the establishment and perpetuation of looping classrooms at multiple grade levels.

Children are the life breath of Pecatonica Elementary, where staff warmly greet the children each morning and where the principal works to know every child as an individual. Our leadership philosophy is shared and all-encompassing: Our children are worth our very best efforts.

PART VIII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: <u>Math</u>	Test: <u>Illinois Standards Achievement Test</u>
All Students Tested/Grade: <u>3</u>	Edition/Publication Year: <u>2013</u>
Publisher: <u>Pearson</u>	

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES*					
Meets Standard and above	76	96	95	97	94
Exceeds Standard	14	63	58	61	61
Number of students tested	66	78	62	70	67
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	0	1	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
Meets Standard and above	68	100	100	92	92
Exceeds Standard	0	56	58	42	50
Number of students tested	22	18	19	12	12
2. Students receiving Special Education					
Meets Standard and above		80	95	82	
Exceeds Standard		27	53	18	
Number of students tested	0	15	19	11	0
3. English Language Learner Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
5. African- American Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
Meets Standard and above	76	99	97	99	95
Exceeds Standard	15	65	58	63	63
Number of students tested	59	71	57	65	65
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					

NOTES: In 2009 and 2013, we did not have 10% of our total student population receiving special education to comprise a subgroup, therefore the number of students tested is listed as 0. The 2013 school year also represented the first year of the Illinois State Board of Education introducing new cut scores to better align the state assessment with the more rigorous Common Core State Standards. The higher cut scores resulted in a significantly decreased number of students across the state meeting or exceeding on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test, including our students in Pecatonica. Despite the decline from previous testing years, Pecatonica's 3rd grade math students' scores were 21 percentage points above the state average (76% for Pecatonica, 55% for the state average).

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: <u>Math</u>	Test: <u>Illinois Standards Achievement Test</u>
All Students Tested/Grade: <u>4</u>	Edition/Publication Year: <u>N/A</u>
Publisher: <u>Pearson</u>	

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES*					
Meets Standard and above	79	90	93	92	97
Exceeds Standard	12	33	30	44	47
Number of students tested	77	63	71	62	72
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	1	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
Meets Standard and above	69	83	93	92	100
Exceeds Standard	0	28	20	46	25
Number of students tested	16	18	15	13	12
2. Students receiving Special Education					
Meets Standard and above	46	83	79	83	
Exceeds Standard	0	17	7	8	
Number of students tested	13	18	14	12	0
3. English Language Learner Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
5. African- American Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
Meets Standard and above	81	93	94	92	97
Exceeds Standard	12	35	31	44	46
Number of students tested	68	58	68	59	67
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					

NOTES: In 2009, we did not have 10% of our total 4th grade student population receiving special education services to comprise a subgroup, therefore, the number of students tested is listed as 0. The 2013 school year also represented the first year of the Illinois State Board of Education introducing new cut scores to better align the state assessment with the more rigorous Common Core State Standards. The higher cut scores resulted in a significantly diminished number of students across the state meeting or exceeding on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test, including students in Pecatonica. Despite the decline from previous testing years, Pecatonica's 4th grade math students' scores were 19 percentage points higher than the state average (79% for Pecatonica, 60% for the state average).

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: <u>Reading/ELA</u>	Test: <u>Illinois Standards Achievement Test</u>
All Students Tested/Grade: <u>3</u>	Edition/Publication Year: <u>N/A</u>
Publisher: <u>Pearson</u>	

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES*					
Meets Standard and above	83	89	89	93	87
Exceeds Standard	33	44	36	24	30
Number of students tested	66	78	62	70	67
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	0	1	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
Meets Standard and above	86	94	84	92	83
Exceeds Standard	14	33	37	25	33
Number of students tested	22	18	19	12	12
2. Students receiving Special Education					
Meets Standard and above		53	79	73	
Exceeds Standard		13	26	0	
Number of students tested	0	15	19	11	0
3. English Language Learner Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
5. African- American Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
Meets Standard and above	81	90	89	92	89
Exceeds Standard	32	44	37	26	31
Number of students tested	59	71	57	65	65
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					

NOTES: In 2009 and 2013, we did not have 10% of our total student population receiving special education to comprise a subgroup, therefore the number of students tested is listed as 0 for those two years since the data was not provided from the state. The 2013 school year also represented the first year of the Illinois State Board of Education introducing new cut scores to better align the state assessment to the more rigorous Common Core State Standards. The higher cut scores resulted in a significantly decreased number of students across the state meeting or exceeding on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test, including our students in Pecatonica. Despite the decline from previous years, Pecatonica's 3rd grade students performed 24 percentage points higher than the state average of students meeting or exceeding on the 2013 Reading ISAT (83% for Pecatonica, 59% for the state average). In addition, only 19% of students across the state exceeded the state standards, while 33% of Pecatonica Elementary School students exceeded the state standards for reading.

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: <u>Reading/ELA</u>	Test: <u>Illinois Standards Achievement Test</u>
All Students Tested/Grade: <u>4</u>	Edition/Publication Year: <u>N/A</u>
Publisher: <u>Pearson</u>	

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES*					
Meets Standard and above	72	79	86	81	90
Exceeds Standard	17	32	44	38	38
Number of students tested	78	63	71	63	72
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	1	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
Meets Standard and above	69	67	93	69	83
Exceeds Standard	0	33	47	31	8
Number of students tested	16	18	15	13	12
2. Students receiving Special Education					
Meets Standard and above	39	61	79	42	
Exceeds Standard	0	28	14	8	
Number of students tested	13	18	14	12	0
3. English Language Learner Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
5. African- American Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
Meets Standard and above	74	83	85	83	90
Exceeds Standard	17	31	46	38	36
Number of students tested	69	58	68	60	67
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
Meets Standard and above					
Exceeds Standard					
Number of students tested					

NOTES: In 2009, we did not have 10% of our total 4th grade student population receiving special education services to comprise a subgroup, therefore, the number of students tested is listed as 0. The 2013 school year also represented the first year of the Illinois State Board of Education introducing new cut scores to better align the state assessment with the more rigorous Common Core State Standards. The higher cut scores resulted in a significantly decreased number of students across the state meeting or exceeding on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test, including students in Pecatonica. Despite the decline from previous testing years, Pecatonica's 4th grade ELA students' scores were still 12 percentage points higher than the state average (72% for Pecatonica, 60% for the state average).