

U.S. Department of Education
2016 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 Sherri Penix

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

Official School Name Euper Lane Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 6601 Euper Lane 3205 Jenny Lind Road

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

City Fort Smith State AR Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 72903-4049

County Sebastian

Telephone (479) 452-2601

Fax (479) 478-3118

Web site/URL http://www.fortsmithschools.org/euper/home.aspx

E-mail mbraddy@fortsmithschools.org

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, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Benny Gooden

E-mail bgooden@fortsmithschools.org

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

District Name Fort Smith Public Schools Tel. (479) 785-2501

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Dr. Deanie Mehl

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

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

Date _____

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

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

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

Part I – Eligibility Certification

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. 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 public school has met their state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) using the most recent accountability results available for the year prior to nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) for the year in which they are nominated (2015-2016) 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 2010 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: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, or 2015.
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

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2015-2016) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 19 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 4 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 2 High schools
 - 1 K-12 schools
- 26 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. Number of students as of October 1, 2015 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	34	33	67
1	35	26	61
2	42	33	75
3	39	31	70
4	29	28	57
5	40	26	66
6	35	31	66
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	254	208	462

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 5 % Asian
 - 10 % Black or African American
 - 20 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 60 % White
 - 4 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2014 – 2015 school year: 13%

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, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	29
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	23
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	52
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	387
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.134
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	13

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 13 %
56 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Spanish, Laotian, Vietnamese, Korean, Mandarin, Russian, Thai, German, Oriya, Muskogee Creek, Chinese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 55 %
Total number students who qualify: 257

8. Students receiving special education services: 27 %
127 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 conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- 27 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 0 Emotional Disturbance
- 0 Hearing Impairment
- 15 Mental Retardation
- 29 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 6 Other Health Impaired
- 12 Specific Learning Disability
- 37 Speech or Language Impairment
- 1 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 0 Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 15
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers	16
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	13
Paraprofessionals	16
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 14:1

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

Required Information	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	96%	95%	94%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2015.

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. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

Working Together Today To Be Compassionate And Honorable Leaders Of Tomorrow

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

PART III – SUMMARY

Euper Lane Elementary is a community of learners dedicated to the mission of "Working Together Today To Be Compassionate And Honorable Leaders Of Tomorrow."

Euper Lane is one of 19 neighborhood elementary schools in the city of Fort Smith, Arkansas. The City of Fort Smith with a population of 86,209 is the hub of a diverse economy, a rich history and a promising future. Home to Arkansas' oldest symphony orchestra and the state's oldest continuously-running volunteer little theatre, Fort Smith is also known for its western historical heritage with books and films like True Grit to some major western characters like Belle Starr, "Hanging" Judge Isaac C. Parker, U.S Deputy Marshal Bass Reeves and the founder of the U.S. Army Rangers, General William O. Darby. Fort Smith is home to a strong military presence with the Fort Chaffee Maneuver Training Center, the 188th Wing and the Arkansas Air National Guard.

The original building was the Echols School on the campus of Westark Community College which is now the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith. The new facility was built in 1986 at Euper Lane and 66th. We currently have 485 students enrolled for the 2015-16 school year. The school population consists of kindergarten through sixth grade students inclusive of 16 general education classrooms and 7 self-contained special education classrooms. The demographics of our school reflects the changing culture of our city and northwest Arkansas area with significant growth in the Latino community and an increase in poverty.

The vision of the Euper Lane School team is to inspire a culture of mutual respect by embracing our differences to support personal and academic goals. Our staff is committed to student academic achievement as well as to meeting the social and emotional needs of our students. We are very proud that our students have met the academic combined target each year as well as closed the achievement gap of our subpopulation groups for which we received an award as a National Distinguished Title I School for 2016. We also received an "A" rating on the state performance report card for the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years. We have been acknowledged as a "High Performing School" in the top 10% of schools in Arkansas.

Our Leadership Team participated in a summer professional development on Professional Learning Communities (PLC) based on the work of Dr. Rick DuFour. In August 2015 the Leadership Team trained our certified staff in the PLC Model. We also revised our vision and mission statement and established a renewed focus on student achievement, teaching and learning, best practices and the value of productive, professional conversations. In 2007 our staff and students embarked on a path to create a culture and atmosphere that was conducive to fostering mutual respect, empathy, responsibility, citizenship, and making good choices. This endeavor was supported by a school-wide initiative using the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People and The Leader in Me both by Dr. Stephen Covey. The staff and students learned the habits, wrote classroom mission statements, and discussed appropriate behavior in the learning environment. Students also were given the opportunity to be in leadership roles to practice the habits.

The staff at Euper Lane Elementary is committed to providing rigorous and quality instruction. In order to provide that, teachers need to participate in authentic and intentional professional development. When the writing curriculum needed to be addressed, the staff participated in a year long, intensive and embedded writing approach (Every Child A Writer) to improve how writing was taught. Math was our next challenge and so with the support of the math facilitator, teachers implemented strategies from Extending Children's Mathematics, Cognitive Guided Instruction and Number Talks which provided our teachers instructional strategies that promote critical thinking and writing about math. The special education teachers and support staff have participated in professional development on behavior management and targeted reading strategies to meet the needs of our students with disabilities population.

Our students that were in the Basic and Below Basic categories on standardized testing participated in an after school tutoring program which was taught by four of the certified staff. They were given additional practice in reading and math instruction. Our school counselor meets the social and emotional needs of our students through individual counseling, small group counseling and classroom guidance. Our students

participate physical education twice a week, music once a week, art once a week and media services/technology once a week.

We are committed to doing whatever it takes to help our students become successful and productive learners and citizens that will flourish in the 21st Century global society.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

At Euper Lane Elementary teachers use subject area curriculum maps based on the Common Core Standards to drive the instruction and assessment of our students. Our teachers use those curriculum maps when they plan their activities for instruction, remediation, intervention and assessment.

The literacy curriculum focuses on student growth in the areas of reading and writing. Students in grades 1-6 are given the Development Reading Assessment (DRA) and the Standardized Test for Assessment of Reading (STAR reading). Teachers use the data to plan for individualized or small group instruction based on skill strengths and weaknesses. Elementary reading focuses on improving phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension and fluency based on the Comprehensive Literacy Model. There is a K-6 interventionist that provides interventions for struggling learners who are not proficient on the Benchmark and PARCC Assessments. She also works with K-2 struggling readers and writers based on Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). Each student in grades K-2 is assessed by the classroom teacher to check for gaps in skills. The classroom teacher provides core instruction in the deficient areas and also provides individualized and/or small group intervention. Teachers in grades K-2 progress monitor students and in grades 3-6 students are assessed using STAR Reading at the end of each quarter to measure growth. The daily literacy block is 90 minutes. Students are taught the grade level standard during a whole group mini lesson and then taught in differentiated reading and writing groups based on skill level. Teachers use additional resources to support and enhance reading and writing using the Daily 5, Raz Kids, Spelling City, No Red Ink, Stride Academy and other pertinent supplemental resources. The literacy facilitator(s) work with and provide embedded professional development and modeling of teaching techniques to the classroom teachers.

The math curriculum focuses on a balance of acquisition of basic skills with problem solving and application of mathematical practices. The Common Core Standards and 8 Mathematical Practices are the foundational pieces for our curriculum. Each lesson is designed to align to the grade level learning expectations and goals set forth in the curriculum map. The math facilitator works with the classroom teachers on instructional strategies and models and/or co-teaching to provide immediate and explicit feedback to the teachers. Students are assessed at the beginning of the year with STAR Math to establish a baseline to plan for instruction. Teachers teach whole group mini lessons on the grade level standards and/or small group instruction based on specific skills. Do the Math, Harcourt Brace textbook materials, IXL Math technology, Marilyn Burns, Extending Children's Mathematics (ECM), Cognitive Guided Instruction (CGI) and Number Talks are some of the resources teachers have available to them for instruction and assessment. The daily math block is 60 minutes. Teachers and students also use hands on manipulatives and technology resources to enhance and support the learning experience.

The science curriculum is based on the Arkansas Department of Education Science Frameworks along with Next Generation Science Standards. Our school district has moved from the traditional science fair concept as a culminating event to the STEM approach (Science Technology Engineering Math). Teachers plan lessons throughout the year emphasizing integration of technology, math, literacy and engineering. Students in grades 3-6 have specific challenges designed for them to problem solve, organize materials, make a plan, produce a product and test the product in a school wide competition. Students work in teams of 3-4 alongside parent volunteers, district technology personnel, science facilitators and classroom teachers. Students are learning the necessary academic language and content through classroom instruction, assessments and experiments. At least 20% of the instructional time for science each week is spent on experiments or hands on experiences either done by the students or modeled by the teacher.

The social studies curriculum taught at Euper Lane Elementary is based on the Arkansas Department of Education Frameworks. Each lesson is brought to life by integrating reading and writing into the curriculum. Students are engaged in content by either relevant stories that connect time periods or people together, listening to guest speakers, virtual field trips to historic sites or time periods or reenactments of characters from a specific era. Social studies is usually integrated into the literacy block when appropriate because it is

way for the students to be exposed to nonfiction text. Teachers are also required to teach Arkansas history, citizenship and geography as a part of the social studies curriculum.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

In order to prepare our students and help each student strive for success, we use all modalities for children to express themselves. Every student does not learn the same way or through the same means. That is where the visual arts, fine arts, health and physical education, English as a Second Language, technology and Gifted and Talented education services come in to play at Euper Lane Elementary.

These vital curriculum areas support the core curriculum by integrating the Common Core Standards with their own State and National Area Standards. These educators collaborate with the core teachers to plan lessons within their own curriculum that will enhance the instruction and provide another opportunity for our students to be fully engaged in the learning experience.

Once a week our students receive 40 minutes of art, music and library. They receive 80 minutes of physical education each week along with daily recess. The art teacher provides instruction in the technical, critical and visual aspects of art. She exposes the students to various artists, styles, techniques and mediums. The students learn how art is used to express a mood or experience sometimes based on a cultural or historical influences. Students learn to analyze their work and manipulate the various mediums such as paint, clay, paper mache' or free style drawing. They learn to appreciate the value that art has in our society.

During music, students are taught basic music theory, musical notes and their value and context in a song or piece of instrumental music. Students are exposed to music that is specific to a particular time period or musician. Students are taught to identify classical, contemporary or trend music based on beat or rhythm/connotation. The music teacher provides instruments such as recorders, drums, rhythm sticks, etc. for the students to participate during the class when appropriate. Each year specific grade levels provide the entertainment for the General PTA Christmas Program, PTA Founder's Day Program, Veteran's Day Program, Spring General PTA Program and other solicited programs throughout the year. Students in grades 4-6 are taught how to use the piano keyboard during the second semester of the school year.

In physical education, the students focus on healthy habits, physically and mentally. The physical education teacher and the paraprofessional plan lessons that are interactive and engaging and keep the students moving. Students are given a basic fitness skills test using sit ups, push ups and jumping jacks to assess their physical skill level. Students in grades 4-6 work on completing the Mile Marathon in 10 minutes by the end of the year. They start off with a one minute run and each month add a minute. The teacher teaches them about spatial awareness, team building, healthy eating choices, coordination and appropriate exercise that will lead to an active lifestyle. Our kindergarten and first grade students work on jumping rope, second and third grade work on catching and throwing a ball, third grade plays tennis, fourth grade works on archery, fifth and sixth grade work on basketball and volleyball as well as track and field activities. The teacher incorporates math and literacy when appropriate in all of her activities. She also using various games and equipment to make the process as engaging as possible. Students also receive thirty minutes of daily recess.

During library students are taught the curriculum based on the Library and Media Standards. They are allowed to check out a book from the available circulation as well as have access to ebooks from our library and the city library (Tumblebooks and Overdrive). Students can use their student ID number and password to access the ebooks at home as well. They can also take Accelerated Reader (AR) book tests online at school and from home. The media specialist teaches the students about accessing research databases online, coding and other technological resources that helps them become a digital, literate citizen. She also provides these resources and websites to our parents and teachers. In the classroom as well as in the media center, students practice keyboarding using laptop mini computers and the Easy Tech curriculum.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Euper Lane teachers and support staff differentiate in all classrooms by using small group and individualized settings. Teachers also provide grade level instruction during a whole group mini lesson or direct teach. At

the beginning of the year each student is assessed depending on the grade level (Grades 1-6 are given the Developmental Reading Assessment and STAR Math; Kindergarten assesses with the QUELI -Qualls Early Learning Inventory). Teachers use this data along with the past year's standardized test results and any other classroom based formative assessments to determine groupings. In the K-6 classrooms all students have access to a set of laptop minis, interactive whiteboards, projectors that are connected to the teacher computer and document camera and to a varied array of educational websites and teacher tools. The special education students in the self-contained classrooms are assessed based on their current IEP goals and provided individualized and small group instruction relevant to meeting their goals.

Technology and software such as STAR Reading, STAR Math, IXL Math, STRIDE Academy, Spelling City, Education City, United Streaming, No Red Ink, Do the Math, ECM, CGI, RAZ KIDS, The Learning Institute (TLI), RTI (Response To Intervention), SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) for the English Language Learners, CIM (Comprehensive Intervention Model) for the self-contained special education students, Easy Tech (a computer based program to learn keyboarding), Accelerated Reader (AR) and multiple hands on manipulatives, teacher made and commercially produced materials are utilized to provide prescriptive and personalized interventions for students.

Students who did not score proficient on standardized testing (Arkansas Benchmark and PARCC) are provided small group interventions in the classroom and with the intervention for grades 3-6 and for those students not meeting the standards on DIBELS in grades K-2, they also receive small group intervention by the classroom teacher and/or the interventionist. Those students are progress monitored bi-weekly to continuously check for gaps in skills. Specific students who qualify for special education based on their deficient area receive services from the special education resource teacher, speech language pathologist, occupational therapist or physical therapist. The students with higher ability levels based on standardized test results, a creativity test and a critical thinking test receive additional class time one day a week in the Gifted and Talented Program (GATE). This is for qualifying students in grades 3-6. Students in K-2 participate in enrichment classes provided by the GATE teacher.

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

Euper Lane Elementary teachers and support staff use a variety of assessments across the curriculum and grade levels to assess student learning and to guide the instruction to improve student achievement. In September the kindergarten students are administered the QUELI to check for language and mathematical skills. In grades 1-6 students are administered the DRA in the fall semester of each year to get an instructional reading level. Students in grades 3-6 are administered the STAR Math and STAR Reading as another form of gathering specific reading and math levels. Students in grades 1 and 2 are given the DIBELS to check for gaps in phonemic awareness, letter names and sounds, blends, and nonsense words. This is also the state required assessment to identify possible candidates for further screening in dyslexia. Students are also assessed quarterly with interim assessments such as those from TLI or this year from ACT Aspire. ELL students are given ELPA (formerly ELDA) to assess their language acculturation.

Teachers meet in PLCs and during their common planning time with grade level peers, vertical peer group, math and/or literacy facilitators, interventionist, special education resource teacher and speech/language pathologist to analyze student data and develop explicit teaching strategies to target the need area. Teachers look at student scores and determine what areas need immediate attention so that there is a specific plan (AIP-Academic Improvement Plan) for those students. Some students participate in an Extended Day Learning Plan After School Program to give them further practice and support in the deficient areas in reading and math. The Leadership Team meets once a month to review the school improvement plan to monitor tasks and students. The district school achievement team meets with the administrator and interventionist and select teachers to monitor, discuss and review individual students. Teachers utilize the model of backward planning - plan with the end in mind-decide what the students need to know based on the Common Core Standards and then plan the instruction to get them there.

Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled for the fall and spring semester of each school calendar year. Mid-terms are sent out to parents bi-quarterly. Parents and teachers may meet on other scheduled times throughout the year or keep in contact with each other via email, texts, teacher Protospace, phone calls, or

notes. Weekly folders with student work is sent home for parent signature and feedback. Our school performance report card and school improvement plan is available on our school webpage for the parents and other stakeholders to view at any time.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Our school mission statement "Working Together Today To Be Compassionate And Honorable Leaders" tells our story of how we want to be perceived to our school community, stakeholders in our community and in our larger community outside of the walls of Euper Lane. Our district is a "Zero Tolerance " establishment that focuses on early prevention and intervention of bullying and harassment of any sort. We teach our students constructive ways to deal with conflicts and to come to resolutions of problems through positive talk and feedback. The teachers use the Second Step curriculum that provides lessons on how to resolve issues in the classroom or generalize to other settings. Teachers have various means for students to talk out their issues with words such as coming together at the Peace Table, signing a contract of appropriate behavior, or setting academic and behavior goals.

The guidance counselor and school-based mental health counselor meets with students about any social, emotional, behavioral or sometimes academic goals. They meet with students individually or in small groups. The small group may be topic specific or an immediate response to some particular crisis. The intervention may require a conference with parents or an outside agency such as Department of Human Services. The counselor meets during the fall semester on a weekly basis and then in the spring as much as the schedule will allow during testing. She meets with students needing immediate intervention or support. She works with other support systems such as Migrant Education, Homeless Services, Children's Clothes Closet, Children's Emergency Shelter, Perspectives and River Valley Behavior Center to make sure our students are provided the best care possible.

We have a full-time nurse. A large percentage of her time is spent checking the status of the students in the self-contained special education classrooms. There are also a few students in the general education population who are monitored by her as well because of severe allergies or diabetes. She works with local doctors and dentists to schedule dental programs/screenings, vision and hearing screenings and follow up on immunizations.

Each teacher was given the charge this year to make a connection with students outside of their regular classroom to make sure that all of our students know that they are loved and cared for. We have tried to make sure all feel welcomed when they walk in to our school building. We have sponsored two Cafecitos geared toward establishing a relationship with our Latino families. We also have had three Strong Fathers, Strong Families events which targeted getting our fathers engaged in their child(ren)'s education.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

At Euper Lane we are fortunate to have very active and vital community support from our parents and community partners. Parents are encouraged to become members of the Euper Lane PTA which connects them to various opportunities to support their children and our school. Parents attend the two scheduled conferences in the fall and spring of each year. We always have 100% participation in these conferences. If parents cannot attend, teachers make the effort to reach each parent by either making a phone call or a home visit.

Parents serve as homeroom mothers (or fathers), volunteers, visitors to special events or as active board members. The Euper Lane PTA plans events throughout the year such as Take Your Family To School Week (Drive Through Donut Day, Technology Night, Read and visit your child's class); Strong Fathers, Strong Families (Dads come to school to participate in reading, math and science activities with their child(ren)); Grandparents' Day; Dinner Out (this night out is at our various Partners In Education); Field Day; Valentine and Fall Parties; Read Across America (Celebration of Dr. Seuss); Halloween Tailgating (students and parents enjoy a night of food, costumes and fun); Variety Show (students and teachers perform for the audience and display their talents); General PTA meetings where the music teacher and select grade level perform for the audience and generating funds from fall and spring fundraisers.

We have several partners in education that involve our students, parents and teachers. For certain special events our partners are valuable assets when donations are needed for parties, speakers for classroom presentations, field trips for students (our 6th grade students usually job shadow around Groundhog Day as a part of career awareness) and for fundraising opportunities. One particular partner has continued a school banking and savings program that was started almost thirteen years ago. Students learn the value and importance of savings with First National Bank and they also do lessons with the fourth grade classrooms.

We also have partnerships with the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith. Our 4th and 6th grade students have a field trip where they visit the technology department, tour the campus and visit with the dean and students about the importance of an education now and in the future. Some of our students participate in after school activities such as drama and choir that are sponsored by the university as well.

Our students learn about the community and service through such organizations as the local fire and police department, The Morgan Nick Foundation, Arkansas Blood Bank Services, River Valley Smiles Dental Office, Sebastian County Humane Society, Project Compassion, Soles for Souls Shoe Drive and the Salvation Army Canned Food Drive.

The home-school connection is a vital component in helping our students become successful on their educational path.

3. Professional Development:

Authentic and embedded professional development has been the most meaningful and powerful professional development that has strengthened the staff at Euper Lane.

For the past couple of years we have worked through the Professional Learning Community model of teaching and learning. Our teachers meet monthly to discuss student work, student assessments and curriculum. We analyze data to see what teaching strategies have been most effective and that can be replicated horizontally and vertically. Each quarter grade levels determine the essential skills that need to be taught which are crucial building blocks for the next grade level. Teachers focus on those skills as well as breaking down the other Common Core Standards to make sure they are clear and understandable.

Teachers do a self assessment at the end of the year to determine what their professional development goal should be for the following school year. The Leadership Team looks at all relevant assessment and perceptual data to determine a school wide goal for the upcoming year. Teachers are required to have eighteen hours connected to their PGP so during the summer the district provides a comprehensive menu of trainings in literacy, math, science, technology, instructional strategies, lesson planning, etc. At the beginning of the year in the August pre training days, site-based building level professional development is provided and teachers participate in mini conferences that are topic specific.

Throughout the year teachers will participate in after school and building level professional development. Teachers are provided 48 hours of professional development throughout the school year from the district and building level. As a part of the evaluation and observation protocol, administrators work with teachers on select instructional strategies or classroom management skills to improve teaching which will positively affect student learning. Math, science and literacy facilitators work with teachers by having discussions on best practices for instruction in the designated content area, modeling a strategy during a teach and providing feedback to the teacher, planning and co-teaching a lesson with a teacher and providing immediate feedback about the teach or providing focused professional development on topics such as using technology in the lesson, how to ask critical thinking questions that move up to the higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy, writing across the curriculum areas, project based learning, reading across the curriculum areas, engagement activities (Kagan structures), use of appropriate manipulatives and tools for learning/instruction, and analyzing student work for growth and improvement (exemplary work and use of rubrics).

Four of the teachers on staff are National Board Certified with one additional teacher in the process; one of the administrators has participated in Phase 1 of the Master Principal Institute and Center for Excellence

Leadership Program at Arkansas Tech University; one teacher has participated in the Teacher Leadership Academy and various other teachers have been in leadership roles as teacher leaders, presenters at the district and school level, served on curriculum task forces and textbook committees.

We feel that we should be life long learners; always wanting and needing to improve our craft; always providing our students with the best because we expect the best from them.

4. School Leadership:

There is one building administrator/principal and a half-time assistant principal at Euper Lane. Each grade level wing has a teacher leader who is in charge when the administrators are not available. There is a Leadership Team which meets monthly to review and discuss the school improvement plan and monitor the tasks and indicators listed in the plan. The Leadership Team also discusses any teacher concerns about students who are in need of some type of intervention.

Teachers also have a daily common planning time where they meet with their grade level peers to discuss and plan instruction and assessments. Teachers and support staff meet monthly in PLCs which are driven by student work and assessments. Teachers visit with facilitators and administrators about their concerns about students who are struggling or those that need to be challenged academically. Each of the team members problem solve and brainstorm various ideas that they are willing to implement in the classroom and discuss at the next meeting for feedback.

Other committees which involve administrators, teachers, support staff, paraprofessionals and parents are the School Safety Committee, Crisis Team, Handbook Committee, Parent Advisory Committee, Leader In Me Team, Student Council and PTA.

The special education coordinator for our school works with the administrators and special education staff to address any IEP or instructional needs for our students with disabilities. District personnel such as the Literacy Coordinator, Math Coordinator, Science Coordinator and Special Programs Coordinator works with the administrators and select staff to analyze trend data quarterly and plan relevant professional development for the interventionist, facilitators and building administration.

Our administrators work closely with and meet for monthly meetings with district personnel from the instruction department, school accountability and achievement, business and finance, professional development, human resources, building and grounds and transportation services. Both elementary and secondary principals meet with their respective supervisors monthly to discuss relevant information. Elementary principals also meeting quarterly for a Benchmarking for Success meeting to look at district trend data or upcoming programming.

Our district is led by a student-driven superintendent who leads book studies that are based on current topics and leadership. He is governed by a strong and knowledgeable school board who are supportive of the Fort Smith Public School system. Our schools are supported by a strong sense of pride from our community leaders such as the Mayor, the Chamber of Commerce and over 200 Partners in Education.

The collaboration and shared leadership at the school level supported by the district and community has created a strong and positive focus on the importance of education in our community.

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The one practice that is very evident when you first enter the halls of Euper Lane Elementary is developing positive relationships. Children know when someone is genuine and truly care for their well-being. Children want to experience a sense of belonging and stability in what sometimes may be a chaotic environment for them. Out of a 24 hour day, a child may spend anywhere from 6-8 hours a day 5 days a week at school or in some type of school-related activity or environment. School may be the only stable environment they experience during that time period. School may be the only place where they are fed, shown love and kindness and given words of encouragement.

At the beginning of the year each teacher assesses the students with a teacher-created perceptual survey to find out each student's likes, dislikes, hobbies, favorite food or favorite book. The teacher begins to build on that information to establish a working relationship with the students assigned to their classrooms. Teachers use that information to make connections with their students. They plan curriculum and instruction around student interest to motivate appropriate student behavior and learner expectations. Teachers work to instill an intrinsic motivation within the students to want to succeed and do their very best. If the teacher has established a high expectation for learning and behavior and students know that you have their best interest at heart, the students tend to work harder to meet that expectation and then hopefully, want that expectation for themselves.

Students are held accountable for their learning and their behavior. Our teachers have a "No Excuses" philosophy and only accept a "Can Do" Attitude. Teachers meet with students during their planning times, during lunch hour, before and after school to remediate or provide additional academic or emotional support. In the classroom teachers use a clip up or clip down chart for behavior. Some teachers use a similar electronic form of this called Dojo. Students start each day on "Ready to Learn" and based on choices made through out the day, they may move down to Principal Office discipline visit/Parent Phone call or up and off the chart to the teacher and/or principal for a special prize. Students get to sign the Principal Book and get their names announced on the intercom for clipping off the chart. Students start the day over each day at "Ready to Learn".

Students are given awards for perfect attendance, bringing up grades, honor roll, all As, most improved in a particular subject area or good citizenship. Teachers provide classroom incentives for students based on completion of assignments, meeting set goals and overall improvement in academic or social behavior.

There is a story that is shared at the beginning of the year about expectations. A teacher was assigned all of the low achieving students but the students did not know that was their classification. The teacher told the students they were the smartest students in the entire building and it was their job this year to show everyone else in the school why and how they could become smart like them. The teacher had set the bar high and established high expectations for the students. The students did not disappoint. Instead, they excelled well beyond the expectations because they believed in themselves but mainly they had a teacher that believed in them.