

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

Official School Name West Union Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 400 North Pine Street PO Box 73
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City West Union State IA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 52175-1108

County Fayette

Telephone (563) 422-5514 Fax (563) 422-3854

Web site/URL http://www.nfvschools.com E-mail telliott@nfv.k12.ia.us

Twitter Handle _____ Facebook Page _____ Google+ _____

YouTube/URL _____ Blog _____ Other Social Media Link _____

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

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Duane Willhite E-mail dwillhite@nfv.k12.ia.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name North Fayette Tel. (563) 422-3851

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.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Roy Guenther
(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.

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

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):
- 2 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 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. 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	13	14	27
K	42	32	74
1	35	23	58
2	33	26	59
3	29	30	59
4	27	29	56
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 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	179	154	333

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 92 % 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.)

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	22
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	25
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	47
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	356
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.132
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	13

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1 %
4 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Spanish, Palauan

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 52 %
Total number students who qualify: 155

8. Students receiving special education services: 13 %
45 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.

- 0 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 0 Emotional Disturbance
- 0 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 0 Other Health Impaired
- 0 Specific Learning Disability
- 8 Speech or Language Impairment
- 0 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: 1
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	15
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	14
Paraprofessionals	11
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 20:1

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	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%
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.

The mission of the North Fayette Schools is to work cooperatively to create a safe learning environment which fosters in all students a sense of self discipline, positive self esteem, accountability, responsibility and respect. The result will encourage life long skills, so that students may become contributors in a global society.

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

West Union Elementary is located in the rural town of West Union, Iowa. The population of West Union is just under 2,500. West Union is the county seat of Fayette County. West Union Elementary serves students in Preschool to 4th Grade. Fayette, Iowa is home to Upper Iowa University and has a population of just under 1,500. Fayette does not have a middle school or high school located in the city limits. It does have an elementary building that serves North Fayette Community School District's 5th and 6th grade students. Together West Union Elementary and Fayette Elementary serves all of North Fayette Community School District's elementary students. West Union Elementary and Fayette Elementary (North Fayette Elementary) serves a total of 5 rural communities including West Union and Fayette. They also serve Hawkeye (population 435), Eldorado (population under 300), and Alpha (population under 200).

In 2014 North Fayette Community Schools and Valley Community Schools came together and agreed to start whole grade sharing. The State of Iowa was offering incentive money for smaller districts to whole grade share in order to help support each other's academic courses as well as extracurricular activities and programs. Under this whole grade sharing agreement all the high school students would come to West Union and attend North Fayette Valley High School and all the 7th and 8th grade students would go to Elgin, Ia (Valley Campus) to attend North Fayette Valley Middle School. West Union, Fayette, and Elgin (Valley Elementary) would all keep their elementary schools. Hawkeye Elementary (Hawkeye, IA) was closed in 2013 as a result of declining enrollment and the whole grade sharing agreement. North Fayette Valley Schools now have one superintendent for both districts, one curriculum director for both districts, and three principals. One High School Principal, One Principal to oversee the Valley Campus, and one Principal to oversee North Fayette Elementary Schools (West Union and Fayette).

West Union Elementary has an on-going commitment to academic excellence. It is a source of pride that they have never been placed on the SINA (School in Need of Assistance) List during the years of No Child Left Behind. Our dedication paid off during the current school year when we were nominated and selected for Iowa's Department of Education's Breaking Barriers Award. This Award was only given to four schools in the whole state. West Union Elementary was honored with this award due to 93% of our free and reduced lunch students were proficient on the Iowa Assessments (Iowa Standardized Test). This compares to a 68% statewide percent proficiency for that demographic. The pursuit of academic excellence has been a staple of West Union Elementary school culture for many years; no matter the circumstances our students will do their best and achieve their goals.

At West Union Elementary the number of students who qualify for free and reduced lunches has steadily increased for the past 5 years. During the 2015-16 school year there were 375 students and 52% of our student population qualifies for free or reduced lunches. This has entitled West Union Elementary to access Schoolwide Title I funds for the past 4 years. This Title I funding supports two teachers who are full time interventionist for reading and math. It also helps to support reading and math interventions that are carried out in the classroom and provides resources and technology for students who struggle with reading and math. West Union Elementary is the only school currently receiving Title I funding in the North Fayette School District.

One major focus of West Union was to offer early literacy and math interventions to student who struggled with reading and math. To do this West Union Elementary implemented a Multi-Tiered School Supports (MTSS) framework. The main focus of this MTSS framework was to find time throughout the day when classroom teachers and interventionists could offer students Tier 2 (supplemental) interventions and extensions or Tier 3 (intensive) interventions. The time was termed "WIN" time or "What I Need" time. This time was to focus on essential Iowa Core standards and skills in reading and math.

Another major focus at West Union Elementary has been our school culture. Students are able to come to school each day and feel safe, knowing that everyone cares about them as a person and a student. To accomplish this we have implemented our Olweus Anti-Bullying program and have used Love and Logic techniques. Both of these have help West Union Elementary student develop a sense of TigerHawk Pride,

which encompasses; empathy, awareness, respect, responsibility, caring, cooperation, and the ability to work through difficult situations as a team or an individual.

Our latest and greatest success is just in its infancy this school year. Iowa's Legislation and Department of Education fully understand that school leadership plays a very crucial role in how teachers establish a growth mindset and continually improve professionally. This year North Fayette Valley Schools were awarded the Teacher Leadership and Compensation Grant (TLC) from the Iowa Department of Education. This was after a 9 month process of developing and submitting our teacher leadership proposal to the Department of Education. This grant helps fund teacher leadership throughout both of our districts. Our goal is to have 25% of our staff in some kind of leadership position. We were able to fund 4 instructional coaches and 15 model and mentor teachers with this grant. Through this grant's support teachers are able to set professional goals for themselves and have the resources and supports in place to help them achieve these goals.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

West Union Elementary has made it our mission to follow the Iowa Core when making curriculum decisions. The Iowa Core is derived from the National Common Core and established in Literacy, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. The Iowa Core is broken down into grade level clusters and standards for each of these subject areas. These standards are organized to build on each other for each grade level and the goal of these standards is to have our students college and career ready when they leave high school.

These summative and formative assessments, along with universal screeners, help our teachers provide students with the appropriate instruction. We can offer students practice and reinforcement on skills and strategies related to each essential standard, we can offer student extension activities for students who have mastered certain standards, and we can structure school supports for students who are struggling to master a standard. These multi-tier school supports are offered as Tier 2 (Supplemental) interventions and Tier 3 (intensive) interventions. All of these extensions, reinforcements, and interventions are done throughout the school day and specifically during our “What I Need” (WIN) Time. This is a specific time when teachers and interventionists address skill deficits and give each student exactly what they need to master an essential standard or work towards becoming advanced in that standard.

In 2014, Iowa Legislature passed a bill which requires student to be proficient readers by the end of 3rd grade. The Early Literacy Implementation (ELI) Legislation requires all Iowa elementary schools to develop proficient readers by 3rd grade. In order to ensure that our students are proficient readers by 3rd grade we spend 90 to 120 minutes focused on Literacy each day. During literacy time, students and teachers focus on reading fluency and reading comprehension. They also focus on writing across the different curriculum areas. Student write and read about all kinds of different fiction and nonfiction topics. Teachers use student’s lexile number to help determine how to plan an appropriate literacy lesson for each student or group of students. Students who are not proficient readers are immediately provided tier 2 and if needed tier 3 interventions during WIN Time.

Mathematics lesson usually last for 45 to 60 minutes per day at West Union Elementary. The resources we use for our math instruction is Everyday Math which is developed by McGraw-Hill. This mathematical resources helps teachers and students focus on how math is used in the real world and how to solve real word problems using math. It also allows students to think about math in deep and meaningful way by using classroom discussion, exploration, and manipulative, instead of just thinking of math as processes, procedures, and formulas. Right now, West Union Elementary has model teachers piloting Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) for Math. This is not a specific math program or mathematical resource it is a way to teach math for deep conceptual understanding. It focuses on the Iowa Common Core’s 8 Mathematical Practices. It sets lessons up as mathematical tasks that can be accessed by all learners in the classroom. The students can use their problem solving skills to unlock or solve the mathematical task in many different ways. The most important aspect of these CGI Lessons is when the class comes together after the mathematical task has been completed. They share with each other what they learned, how they navigated the problem and arrived at their solution. When students can understand how they solve a math problem and relate that understanding to someone else's thinking, the connections are made and deep mathematical understanding is achieved.

Just this year, the Iowa Department of Education has adopted the Next Generation Science Standards as part of the Iowa Core. We have started to pilot some Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) programs at West Union Elementary. Project Lead the Way (PLTW) is one of the science curricula that is directly related to the Next Generation Science Standards. West Union Elementary’s science scores have always been high. One reason for these high scores is the commitment to teach science almost every single day. Our teachers also do a great job of introducing grade level science concepts to the students during science time and then expanding on them in other curriculum areas. Science and Social Studies concepts are also discussed and accessed during literacy and math time.

The focus for our social studies classes is to learn about the past to help shape and understand the future. Students will learn about topics like citizenship, finance, history, and geography during our social studies classes, but then they will have guest speakers, field trips, and video conferences to help bring these social studies' concepts and themes to real life. We continue to have food and fitness, bankers, surveyors, veterans, and others come into our classrooms and teach or reinforce these concepts to the students. Our students will visit places like a historical landmark or structure, a fish hatchery, Good Samaritan homes, banks, factories, dairy complexes/farms, hospitals, and other local commerce, parks, and service providers. Just like in science, these social studies concepts are discussed and accessed during literacy and math lessons.

TigerHawk Preschool is the district's fully integrated ECSE/Preschool program serving both three and four year old students. It follows the Creative Curriculum and its GOLD assessment system. This curriculum aligns with the Iowa Early Learning Standards and covers the entire development of the child in the domains of Social-Emotional, Language, Physical, Cognitive, Literacy, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Social Studies and the Arts. Daily assessment data is gathered via observation and documentation then uploaded to the GOLD assessment system. This information is then shared three times a year with parents with the kindergarten team for the transition to kindergarten. The GOLD continuum gives a range that is appropriate for the child's age level and can be used to determine school readiness for the primary grades.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Student learning at West Union Elementary is enriched by fine arts, physical education and technology instruction. Through the arts, students learn higher order thinking skills: critical thinking, analyzing, and decision-making. The arts help to motivate, engage, and assist students in developing positive social/emotional skills. Fine Arts instruction at West Union Elementary is based on the National Core Arts Standards.

All students at West Union Elementary, Junior Kindergarten through 4th grade, receive music instruction twice per 6 day cycle. Class periods are 35 minutes in length. Students learn by doing: singing, playing instruments, listening and analyzing, moving, and creating. Emphasis is placed on learning by the Orff approach. The classroom contains a set of twelve Orff instruments which students use to make music on a daily basis. Music literacy is infused into each grade level. 4th graders play recorders as a precursor to band instruction in 5th grade. Other experiences include African drumming, folk dancing, and Dalcroze movement. Each grade level presents one music program per year. These performances showcase student learning and create connections with the community. Local musicians are often invited to collaborate with students and to allow them to perform with a variety of musical instruments. West Union Elementary students also participate in a Veterans Day program each year. Connecting with local veterans, developing leadership skills, and growing a sense of patriotism are the goals of this program. Music is a part our monthly Olweus assemblies. Singing our school song with joyful enthusiasm is one thing that unites the students of West Union Elementary.

All students receive instruction in Visual Arts once per six day cycle for 35 minutes. Art instruction is based on the National Visual Arts standards which has four anchor standards: create, presenting, responding, & connecting. The students develop their artistic skills during the process of creating their art pieces. They then focus on presenting, responding, and connecting when they share the art product they have created. Literacy and math are integrated into many of the art lessons. Students spend time focusing on art history and exploring many different kinds of artistic mediums; such as ceramics, drawing, painting, weaving, and others. Student artwork is displayed through our four school campus and throughout our North Fayette Communities. Art products can be seen in our school hallways, display cases, and in the art gallery at our district's Performing Arts Center.

All students at West Union Elementary, JK through 4th grade, receive Physical Education twice per each 6 day cycle. Class periods are 35 minutes in length. We follow the Physical Essentials Curriculum, more commonly known as the "Kansas Curriculum." As a result of participating through our program the students

will respect others, as well as the equipment and the learning environment. They develop, demonstrate, and understand fundamental movement skills and health related fitness components. Using a combination of cognitive and physical skills students will use and enjoy physical activity outside of the classroom. They will develop a healthy lifestyle and problem solving skills to overcome life obstacles. Students go through fitness tests at the beginning and end of each year, showing a student's growth and maturity throughout the school year. We culminate our year with an elementary school-wide track meet, in which all students participate in at least three events.

Technology plays a big part in West Union Elementary's success. Students and teachers in all grades have 1:3 access within the day to iPads, ChromeBooks, and Macbooks to engage students and provide diverse learning opportunities. Students collaborate online, create projects, and connect with others all while interacting in content of the Iowa Core Curriculum. With the support of our regional Area Education Agency, (AEA), the district provides access to multiple online learning and skill development websites; students use online databases, websites, and blogs; learn how to use word processing, spreadsheets, and presentation programs; and use research tools effectively. A major focus of the past 3 years has been online digital citizenship. The students receive instruction and have very engaging conversations about digital citizenship during classroom meeting times, media classes, and guidance classes.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

West Union Elementary uses a system of whole group, small group, and individualized instruction to support students' needs. Teachers use a Multi-Tier System of Support (MTSS) Model to ensure each student is receiving what they need to be successful. In addition to differentiated Common Core instruction provided in the classroom, teachers analyze data to provide personalized instruction. This is accomplished through What I Need (WIN) time, which is used for practicing, reinforcing, and supplementing instruction. WIN time provides teachers the opportunity to provide extensions for students who are exceeding grade level benchmarks. They also provide Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions for students performing below grade level. The students in Tier 2 have small group interventions provided by the teacher. Tier 3 interventions are provided by classroom teachers during WIN time and these students also benefit from additional instruction provided by Interventionists in either a 1:1 or small group setting. Through the use of progress monitoring, adjustments are made throughout the intervention process for all Tier 2 and Tier 3 students.

Teachers at West Union Elementary use research based instructional methods daily in their classrooms. In order to provide a balanced literacy program, teachers at West Union Elementary utilize Guided Reading in conjunction with Daily 5. This approach to literacy instruction ensures high levels of student learning because it allows for small group and individual instruction in reading. Recently, teachers have begun implementing Project Lead the Way (PLTW) in science and Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) in math. Both of these instructional methods encourage student-centered learning.

As the district transitions to Standards Based Reporting, teachers have begun to study aligning classroom instruction with standards and use both formative and summative assessment data. This implementation also provided an opportunity for a more in-depth study of the Iowa Core Standards. Grade Level teams are identifying which Iowa Core Standards are essential to a student's success in that current grade level and in future grade levels. Teachers are then assessing these essential standards using common summative assessments and timely formative assessments. This data informs their core and supplemental instruction, guiding them to learning what each student needs to be successful. As teachers develop common formative and summative assessments, they have consulted the work of Robert Marzano and Rick Wormeli.

West Union Elementary's Problem Solving (PSP) committee is a vital part of our student success. This team is comprised of classroom teachers, special education teachers, administration, guidance counselor and the regional Area Education Agency staff. This team works closely with classroom teachers to support and meet the needs of struggling learners. We share intervention strategies and data that guides the team through decisions on the student's future needs.

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

West Union Elementary currently uses the following universal screeners to assess every student. Through this testing we are able to identify the needs of all students and address areas of individual student needs. Grade Level Teams meet weekly to discuss the results of these assessments and how they compare and correlate to each other. Teams then focus on and discuss the four big questions; what do we want our students to know, how do we know they know it, what will we do with the students who do know it, and what will we do with the students who do not know it. Teams will structure and tailor their WIN (What I Need) time to meet the needs of each student.

The Universal FAST (Formative Assessment System for Teachers) Assessment is administered 3 times a year K-4 to determine if students are proficient, at risk, or substantially deficient in the area of reading. These results are shared with parents to inform them of their student's progress throughout the academic year. Substantially deficient students receive Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions in a 1:1 or small group which are implemented and progress monitored weekly. Teachers are provided data team days to review student data and determine best interventions to put into place for the students.

MAP (Measurement of Academic Progress) testing is conducted in grades 2-4 in Reading, Math, and Language Arts in the Fall, Winter and Spring. This criterion referenced test is one more indicator that we use in designing an academic program to meet the needs of each learner. It provides percentile, RIT scores and it will calculate lexile equivalency scores. It will reference skill sets to remediate or accelerate learning. The results for this assessment results are used by grade level teams to determine and develop differentiated instruction as well as intervention needs.

Number Sense Screener is given three times per year to students in Kindergarten and 1st grade, used for information of student's basic mathematical knowledge.

The Iowa Assessment are administered second-fourth grade once a year. We use the data from this assessment in determining student needs, percentile ranks, and comparing student population.

Aimswest Assessments are used in the special education program as a progress monitoring tool in reading, math, and writing. Scores are recorded on IEP graphs and monitored at least every 2 weeks. Changes are made using the four point decision making rule. This data is used to guide the special education instruction for students.

Ongoing progress monitoring for individual students are used in multiple grade levels as a tool to guide reading instruction and interventions. Running records provide miscue analysis for diagnostic purposes. The data is used to determine the areas of student growth such as phonemic awareness, decoding, and fluency. At the kindergarten level, running records are being used to determine benchmark reading levels.

Formative and summative assessment developed by the PLC teacher groups.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

West Union Elementary engages students through the use of an anti-bullying program called Olweus. This program provides lessons and scenarios for teachers to use with students. At the beginning of the year each class, along with their teacher, work together to develop their norms or rules for how their class meeting will progress each week. Every class meets weekly for about 30 minutes for a class lesson. These anti-bullying lessons provide time for class discussions and teamwork. Our Counselors have offered a Love & Logic class to our teachers to help us with simple and practical techniques to help us have more fun and less stress while motivating students to be responsible in both their social and academic growth.

Every day students have the chance to earn TigerHawk Pride tickets from staff member and at times from one another. They can earn these tickets by following our “Elements of Success.” These elements include caring, cooperation, respect and responsibility. Once a ticket is earned the student’s name goes into a grade level bucket for the chance to be drawn out during our game show. This occurs at our monthly TigerHawk Pride Assemblies where we celebrate student accomplishments such as meeting assessment goals, showing the elements of success, and allowing students to present knowledge about how to stand up to bullies.

This year North Fayette Valley implemented our (TLC) Teacher Leadership Committee, where mentors, model teachers, and instructional coaches are available for support throughout the year. They have been wonderful leaders and facilitators of the ongoing learning necessary in the workplace. The group has also been valuable in implementing new ideas, and have been an integral part in the co-teaching in several of our classrooms.

The Tigerhawk Connections Learning Center (TCLC) was started this year by the Helping Services of Northeast Iowa. This after school program, based within the school setting, has supported our classroom efforts in many ways, and has provided another a positive learning environment for our students. Additionally, the North Fayette Mentoring Program pairs adult mentors with students requesting some one-on-one attention, and those in need of positive role models.

North Fayette Elementary is in the process of establishing a (PTO) Parent Teacher Organization, which will be another support system for both students and teachers. We will also be initiating intake conferences at the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year to get better acquainted with our students and parents.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

West Union Elementary staff strives to have a positive relationship with both parents and community members. Some of the ways we work together to ensure these positive relations are by having parent/student/teacher conferences twice a year. This is a time for us to visit about academics, behavior, and student programming. We are also implementing parent led intake conferences before school starts in the Fall of 2016. This conference will focus on the parents sharing with the teacher their child’s strengths, interests, how they interact with others, and health concerns.

Other ways that we include our community into our school are through field trips to local businesses, the Junior Achievement program, Tigerhawk Connection Learning Center (afterschool program), SIAC (School Improvement Advisory Committee) Upper Iowa University student volunteers, and assisted living and nursing home visits. Community speakers often grace us with their willingness to talk about the communities the students live in. We have recently started to establish a North Fayette Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). Another way we engage our families is each spring we invite all of our families in for a literacy night. This is a very well attended event where all students are able to show off a literacy project they have been working on. Parents and other family members are able to visit all classrooms and take in all of the amazing projects.

Many teachers choose to send weekly or monthly notes home as a way to keep in constant contact. These notes consist of spelling words, upcoming test dates, field trips, etc. Our second through fourth grade students use a daily planner to write their assignments in each day. Parents check their child's planner each night to see what they did that day, what homework is due, and dates of upcoming tests. This is a wonderful way for parents to communicate any changes in schedule or concerns they may have. Other teachers also have a web presence where students can access weekly assignments, websites that can be used at home, and any upcoming important information.

We have a Northeast Iowa Food Bank BackPack Program. All families are able to sign up for this program. Each Friday, a food bag goes home with each child that is signed up. The food bag consists of items that are easy for students to prepare in the microwave or readily able to eat. Our elementary is involved in a food and fitness initiative through Americorps. Our students receive lessons that teach them about fitness, exercise and nutritious foods. Each lesson ends with a new food to try! The coordinator also brings a variety of food options to the lunchroom for student taste tests. They are always excited to try the new foods that are introduced! Our county naturalist comes into all classrooms and presents lessons on topics that coordinate with our curriculum. These programs range from recycling, hatching baby chicks, learning about our environment, etc.

3. Professional Development:

The West Union Elementary has dedicated every Wednesday afternoon for Professional Learning Communities (PLC). School is dismissed every Wednesday at 2:00. Teachers take this time to analyze multiple sources of student data, classroom performance, and take this extra time to discuss strategies to meet the needs of all learners. PLC time with our colleagues has been engaging for all of our staff. The benefits are that teachers meet in collaborative teams and are able to lead the discussions with topics they need the most help with in their classrooms.

Collaborative PLC teams include teachers from the general education setting, special education, interventionists, and instructional coaches. Having the support and experts in all fields discussing student learning, has helped improve our instruction. Teachers and specialized support staff have the time to design instructional materials, interventions, and have quality discussions about how students progress. This time is very valued as it is the core to our success. Therefore, our tests scores have shown continued growth.

In addition to our Wednesday PLC's, there are numerous days throughout the calendar year in which professional development is provided. These PDs are planned by our administration and district lead team, which is made up of classroom teachers. The topics discussed are issues that affect our classroom on a day to day basis. Topics include Standard Based Grading, A.L.I.C.E., effective interventions (Tier 2 and Tier 3), and grade level teams have the ability to personalize their professional development opportunities if needed. These personalized PDs are supported by our curriculum director, instructional coaches, and our regional Area Education Agency (AEA). The extra support added through these professional development opportunities helps guide our classroom instruction and our weekly PLC conversation and discussions.

One of our latest professional development opportunities was a motivational speaker, Dr. Alan Zimmerman. He is a world renowned speaker who specializes in promoting positive attitudes. His presentation was uplifting and helped encourage a more positive outlook on our classrooms and work environments.

Our administration is fully aware of how beneficial and valuable our PLC time is. They know that scheduling meetings or other events is off limits for Wednesday afternoons. Collaboration and open communication between staff and administration is crucial for keeping our PLC time protected and uninterrupted. The professional trust between our administration and teachers is a true example of how an effective school is run.

The strong professional development opportunities provided for our staff is the driving force behind the success of our student scores.

4. School Leadership:

Our elementary building is organized into teacher leadership roles in order to best represent each aspect of our building.

The Building Lead Team is comprised of representatives from each grade-level plus specialists and paraprofessionals. This team meets twice a month and is responsible for decision making for the building while keeping the student's best interest in the forefront. For example, this team makes recommendations for our parent-teacher conferences framework. They work hard to protect our instructional time and voice any concerns that need to be addressed in a timely manner. Our Building Lead Team also gives the administrators great feedback so they can make informed decisions about the direction of our districts.

Another leadership role is the Administrative Assistant . This individual helps with scheduling, is a representative for district lead team, and a liaison between parents, staff and administration. This position assures that the classroom teacher's perspective is represented in administrative decisions. This person also steps into the administrator's role when needed.

Our building principal is an instructional leader, he oversees building staff and students, and all leadership committees in our elementary. He researches current and effective curriculum and instructional practices and updates us about state legislation decisions in order to meet the needs of all students in our building. He has also established a system of leadership within our building. All staff along with parents and community members belong to at least one leadership committee or team. They have regular meetings to help make informed decisions about everything that happens in our schools. These committees focus on instructional, professional and management needs.

New to West Union Elementary this year, are our fabulous instructional coaches. These teacher-coaches are full-time support for our classroom teachers as we continually work to improve our skills and understanding of best teaching practices. They come into our classrooms to model new strategies as well as co-teach to help improve instruction. They organize and facilitate data days, instructional learning labs, and personalized PDs by utilizing 8 week coaching cycles. Instructional Coaches are involved in the mentoring program for new teachers and new to the district teachers. These valuable data days allows grade-level teachers to analyze testing results and plan for instruction. The instructional coaches are also very resourceful when we are looking for resources and websites that connect to our teaching to our student's learning.

The leadership of our elementary guidance counselor is very important to our success. Not only does she engage students in reflective conversations, she also creates a strong rapport with them. She also spends time in all classrooms teaching students coping skills, friendship/communication skills, leadership/character skills, and how to be a successful student and person. She supports staff with behavior interventions and is an excellent liaison for parent connections and support for families.

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

West Union Elementary's success is due to socioemotional awareness of all staff and the implementation of two key programs. We use the research based Olweus anti-bullying program. This program focuses on teaching students the roles in a Bullying circle. We teach our students to show empathy towards people who are being bullied. We want them to move to the role of being compassionate and supportive of someone being bullied. The goal is to have students become a supporter of the person being bullied instead of being a person displaying bullying behaviors. The weekly classroom lessons focus on our school's anti-bullying rules and teaching these rules to our students. By emphasizing a positive environment in our school, we are teaching our students to be supportive and encouraging to their peers. Our community supports our school anti-bullying program. Local businesses helped to purchase t-shirts for all of the students in our elementary school. All students and staff are encouraged to wear their t-shirts on Wednesdays and once a month for our Olweus celebration.

To tie in with our Olweus program, our school utilizes Love and Logic Techniques to help student work through problems, obstacles, and barriers. These techniques also support empathy for students and help them to take on their problems. It offers students logical consequences for their actions and provides them their own satisfaction when they work through a problem successfully.

At our monthly Olweus assembly, the entire elementary meets at our Performing Arts Center at the high school. Our elementary principal celebrates academic achievements, community support, student leadership. Teachers and staff hands out TigerHawk Pride tickets to any student displaying positive behavior and our school's four Elements of Success, caring, cooperation, respect and responsibility. At our assemblies, a student's name is drawn from each grade level to reward their homeroom class with a special privilege. Awards and recognition are also given by physical education, music, art, library, and lunchroom staff members. To show their school spirit students are encouraged to do presentations to the whole school about anti-bullying and Love and Logic behavior. These presentations show all the students, young and old, that TigerHawk Pride is at the core of North Fayette Elementary success.

We survey our students each spring to show the effectiveness of our Love & Logic techniques and our Olweus Anti-bullying program. Our school takes great pride in having students that are caring, cooperative, respectful and responsible. With our community members, staff and students all working together, we are able to have a successful academic learning environment.