

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2016 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Ms. Erin Kornoely

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

Official School Name Marshall Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1756 64th Street SW

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

City Byron Center    State MI    Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 49315-8694

County Kent County

Telephone (616) 878-6300    Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Web site/URL http://www.bcpsk12.net/marshall/    E-mail kanama@bcpsk12.net

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\*Mr. Dan Takens    E-mail dantakens@bcpsk12.net  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Byron Center Public Schools    Tel. (616) 878-6100

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 Mrs. Lenore Roede  
(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

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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

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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):
- 4 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 6 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	70	55	125
1	38	42	80
2	52	54	106
3	48	68	116
4	41	42	83
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
<b>Total Students</b>	249	261	510

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 3 % Asian
  - 1 % Black or African American
  - 8 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 82 % White
  - 6 % 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: 8%

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	24
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	15
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	39
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	462
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.084
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	8

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 3 %  
17 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):  
Bosnian, Spanish, Urdu, Vietnamese.

Other languages spoken by families of students that have exited our ELL program: Swahili, Chinese, and Italian.

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 25 %  
Total number students who qualify: 129

8. Students receiving special education services: 9 %  
48 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
- 1 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 2 Emotional Disturbance
- 0 Hearing Impairment
- 13 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 4 Other Health Impaired
- 4 Specific Learning Disability
- 22 Speech or Language Impairment
- 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 2 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:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers	20
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	4
Paraprofessionals	5
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 26:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	94%	93%	97%	99%	99%
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.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.  
Yes    No X

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

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

Byron Center Public Schools, in partnership with the community, will educate and prepare each student to be responsible citizens capable of pursuing life goals now and in the future.

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

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Marshall Elementary is a public school located in Byron Center, Michigan, a suburban community of approximately 20,000 people in the Greater Grand Rapids area. It is one of three elementary schools in the Byron Center Public School District, which also has one intermediate school, one middle school, and one high school. The Byron Center community is continuously growing and has transitioned from a traditional, rural setting to a suburban setting due to the development within and around the community.

For the 2015-2016 school year, Marshall has an enrollment of approximately 510 students in kindergarten through grade four. The racial/ethnic composition of the student population is 82% white and 18% being of other racial/ethnic groups. Approximately 9% of Marshall students are part of the special education program, which includes students who are cognitively impaired and those with speech-related needs. Marshall Elementary houses a regional program for students with moderate cognitive impairments. Students from six neighboring districts access this program at Marshall Elementary. Approximately 3% of Marshall students are being served by the school's English Language Learner (ELL) program, which provides students with additional services to help them achieve grade level objectives. Additionally, 25% of Marshall's student population qualifies for free and reduced meals. Marshall strives to meet the unique needs of each and every student that comes through its doors.

Marshall first opened its doors in 1967 and served grades one through four, with one classroom per grade level. Then, in 1996, it went through significant renovations. Since then, the Byron Center community has supported continued development of the buildings and technology throughout the district, including updates to Marshall in 2002 and 2014, which now has three to four sections of each grade in kindergarten through grade four. The district is now in the beginning phases of a new bond proposal as the community continues to see positive growth and development each year.

While the physical size of the school and its student population has changed significantly, Marshall has maintained its warm, welcoming atmosphere and great traditions. Many of these traditions are made possible because of its MAPS (Marshall Active Parents and Staff) group, which provides free events to students and their families throughout the year: Mornings with Moms, Donuts with Dads, the Family Picnic, and more. Another tradition at Marshall is Reading Month. The staff, parents, and students come together to create an annual reading experience that students remember for a lifetime. There are many other great Marshall traditions: the Wax Museum, the mentor program, and running club to name a few.

Marshall also takes pride in the achievements that are made with each and every student. Its commitment to challenge all students to meet their fullest potential is unwavering. In addition to the daily successes that are made within the school, Marshall was honored as a Reward School in 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 by the State of Michigan, meaning it was ranked in the top 5% of schools in the state.

Marshall is dedicated in its commitment to support, encourage, and challenge all students to reach their fullest potential. There are many key strategies in place to support this commitment: an aligned curriculum for teaching and learning, numerous student and school supports, and various programs and initiatives.

The teaching and learning at Marshall is of the highest quality. Teachers at Marshall are all highly qualified and the teaching experience ranges from 3 to 24 years, with more than half of the teachers having earned their graduate degrees. Marshall teachers are highly motivated and continuously work to grow and improve in many ways, such as continuous professional development, professional learning communities, and much more. Marshall also implements high quality curriculum that is aligned both horizontally and vertically through grade levels and the district. The curriculum is supported with materials and professional development, and data is analyzed regularly to ensure the most rigorous and relevant curriculum is in place.

The student and school supports at Marshall promote daily success. The Marshall Student Council, comprised of third and fourth grade students, helps to make decisions, implement fundraisers, and create initiatives to improve the school. Marshall also has developed a school-wide behavior matrix, which focuses on helping students and staff to be respectful, responsible, and safe. Additionally, Marshall has many great

community programs that support students and their families: Watch D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students) program, Hand-to-Hand family supplemental nutrition program, and a student mentor program. Within the school, there are additional supports in place, such as counseling and safety lessons, to ensure students feel safe and happy.

Marshall has many other programs and initiatives in place to help all students achieve. There is a School Improvement process in place where the teachers and the principal work together to analyze data, set goals and interventions, and reflect on the data and progress. Marshall also has a Response to Intervention team that meets regularly to create student-specific interventions for our most at-risk students. There is an Academic Support Intervention Program in place that allows teachers to determine the greatest needs for all students and then create a learning environment each day to meet those needs. The Marshall staff also meets weekly for Professional Learning Communities to collaborate about teaching and learning.

In addition to these programs at Marshall, students can also participate in many extra-curricular programs to meet additional needs and talents: choir club, art club, and more. All of these great programs and initiatives support our commitment to ensuring all students meet their fullest potential.

## PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Core Curriculum:

Byron Center Public Schools (BCPS) provides a vertically aligned curriculum for pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. The district follows the Common Core State Standards for reading, writing and math instruction, which is required by the State of Michigan. Science and social studies are taught based on the Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCEs). The teachers at Marshall have worked very hard to ensure the alignment of the curriculum through instructional practices and formative and summative assessments. The instructional program is designed to meet the educational needs of every child. Marshall provides challenging, interdisciplinary instruction while setting high expectations for all students in pre-kindergarten through fourth grade. Marshall aims to meet the academic and developmental needs of each student through a differentiated approach to instruction. The focus is on ensuring outstanding achievement and progress for all students.

BCPS's language arts curriculum follows a balanced literacy approach that instructs students using the Reader's Workshop format in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Across all levels, students at Marshall receive 90-minutes of daily reading instruction. The Teacher's College Units of Study for Reading are the primary instructional resource that provides both remediation and enrichment for all students in kindergarten through fourth grade. Teachers use the comprehensive workshop model to engage all students with high-quality literature, non-fiction texts and other print materials. During Reader's Workshop time, all students are engaged with every aspect of the workshop model, which consists of the mini-lesson, independent reading, conferring, and sharing time. All classrooms at Marshall have leveled texts for students to choose to read because time on at level text is a major focus of the reading program. The school district and parent group purchased many new leveled texts for the classroom libraries. Students have reading level benchmarks for each of the trimesters. An integral part of the reading instruction is the conferring time teachers spend with individual students. This gives teachers the opportunity to make personal connections and provide differentiated instruction.

The writing curriculum encompasses the Teacher's College Units of Study for Writing for grades kindergarten through fourth. All students at Marshall receive an hour of daily writing instruction. Each grade level focuses on three main types of writing: narrative, informational, and opinion. The structure of Writer's Workshop is parallel to that of Reader's Workshop. Teachers engage students with a mini-lesson, an opportunity to write, individual conferring and time to share. Students practice their writing skills through narratives, informational, and persuasive pieces reflective of his/her developmental interests and stage of writing development. Through individual conferences with the teacher, small group work, and assessment-based instruction, students are guided toward advancement of his/her writing skills. Students publish and celebrate their many accomplishments at the end of each unit of study. The use of a common structure and language across all of the grade levels has made students become more successful in the area of writing. Teachers use On-Demand writing assessments to analyze students' progress with a particular unit, and then use this data during conferring time to create teaching points to help ensure success in the future.

All students at Marshall engage in 60 minutes of math instruction each day based on the Common Core State Standards. Each grade level uses the Math Expressions series as a tool to teach these mathematical concepts. The school focuses on math instruction through modeling, exploration and discussion. Math vocabulary, strategies, reasoning and problem-solving skills are the foundational skills that are an emphasis in all grade levels. Students are taught multiple strategies to solve problems and are given time to share responses with peers through math talk and whole group discussions. Basic math facts are mastered through fluency checks where students can set and work to achieve goals on the way to mastery of these skills. Teachers at Marshall use daily quick checks, quick quizzes, and exit slips as formative assessments to find out who has mastered a particular skill and who needs re-teaching. Based on this information, teachers form small groups to ensure that all students have successfully mastered these mathematical concepts.

The State of Michigan has GLCEs for science and social studies. These standards have units of study for each grade-level along with content-related vocabulary. Each grade level reads content-related non-fiction

texts and completes hands-on activities to help students master these standards. In addition, all teachers have lists of critically important content-related vocabulary that is a focus for each of the units. The integration of informational texts to support science and social studies instruction is a key focus to Marshall's school improvement plan. In order to support this endeavor, each grade-level ordered content specific texts to enrich students' knowledge and awareness. Teachers also use current event resources like Time for Kids and National Geographic Kids as an instructional tool.

## 2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The Marshall school day is from 8:25-3:40. Specials times have been scheduled into blocks so there are minimal interruptions and allow for large chunks of continuous instructional time each day. All students go to what we call "specials" each day, which include art, music and physical education.

Students at Marshall travel to art class each week. Kindergartners have 40 minutes of art instruction while grades one through four have 60 minutes of instruction each week. Lifelong learning in the arts is based on the foundation of creative thinking and problem solving. Students apply, design, create, and evaluate using a variety of visual art techniques. These techniques include painting, drawing, and sculpture. Teachers reference different artists and cultural artifacts from around the world to create global and cultural awareness and connections across the curriculum. This awareness helps to instill a better understanding of ideas and beliefs that may be different from their own. Students in grades one through four have the opportunity to join a before school art club. This club meets for four sessions and students are encouraged to expand on the skills learned in art and explore their own artistic interests.

The music program at Marshall is rich with appreciation and experiences to create a love for music and performing. The students at Marshall attend music class twice per week for 30 minutes. During this time, students learn about different places around the world and cultural diversity through multicultural songs and famous composers. Musical learning and understanding is gained through listening, creating, and performing. The integration of many facets of the Common Core curriculum are evident in the music program through Mother Goose Rhymes, the reading and writing of sheet music, content-related vocabulary, and the use of world maps. This year, students in grades one through four will be performing a concert for the Byron Center community based on healthy living through good nutritional choices.

Students also have a unique opportunity to be a part of Marshall's school choir group. This is offered to all of the 3rd and 4th grade students and meets in the morning before school begins twice per week. During this time, students gain a greater appreciation for music and also have opportunities to perform concerts around the Grand Rapids community. Some of these performances include a holiday concert and singing the National Anthem for the minor league baseball team, the West Michigan Whitecaps.

Each spring Marshall celebrates art and music with an "Arts in Our School" night. During this time students' art work is displayed all around the school and the choir performs a concert. The parents and community members are invited to this special night to celebrate our music and art programs.

The physical education (P.E.) program at Marshall is designed in accordance with the Michigan benchmarks and standards. All grade levels attend P.E. twice per week for 30 minutes, except kindergarten who has P.E. three times weekly. Our program helps students create personal fitness goals to help them work towards the achievement of the National or Presidential fitness awards. In addition, students are taught how to listen to directions, demonstrate effort, play fair, and the qualities of good sportsmanship. Students participate in a school-wide field day, which showcases many of the physical fitness goals they have strived to achieve throughout the school year. Developing attitudes to lead a healthy lifestyle are also important goals of our physical education program. Each year students participate in the Jump Rope for Heart fundraiser to help support the National Heart Association. The culmination of this fundraiser is when students compete in a jump-rope contest. Over the past several years, Marshall has offered a running club for students to participate in. This club is offered to students in grades one through four. Each week students participate in weekly practices to train for either a 1-mile or 5k run. The goals of this club are to create positive emotional, social, and physical development.

The use of technology at Marshall has grown drastically due to the changes in curriculum standards, standardized testing methods, and the passing of a school bond in 2011. The passing of the bond allowed all students in grades two through four to have individual daily access to a Chromebook in their classroom. In kindergarten and 1st grade, students have access to iPads and go to the computer lab weekly. Technology skills are taught in conjunction with subject area benchmarks across the curriculum, and classroom teachers create a structure and learning environment to educate students in the tools of their time. Students use these tools to acquire typing skills, conduct research, create presentations, write reports, and create books.

### 3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Marshall Elementary School works hard to achieve academic excellence each and every year through our instructional methods and interventions. The teachers at Marshall are continually striving to use the most current best practices to meet the needs of all students. We recently modified our instructional practices in reading and writing to follow the workshop model. During these times, students are taught a very focused mini-lesson and given time for independent practice where student choice over books and writing topics create ownership and authenticity. The workshop model also allows for teachers to differentiate instruction with individual conferences. This conferring time can be an extension of the mini-lesson or an opportunity to give direct instruction on a specific area of need. At the end of workshop time, students are given time to share their thinking with a partner or small group. Teachers hold students accountable and increase engagement by using turn and talk time, sticky-notes, and reading/writing notebooks. It is vital that all students spend time reading on-level text. In order to accomplish this goal, all teachers were given resources to purchase books and time to level these books in their classroom libraries. These resources have allowed students to have a huge variety of books to increase motivation, engagement, and learning.

A fundamental intervention at Marshall is what we call SuperSwitch time. This intervention allows for differentiated instruction across all reading levels and grade levels. Everyday, students in grades kindergarten through four engage in an extra 30 minutes of instruction, which specifically targets areas of need or time for enrichment, depending on each student's individual reading level. The process of SuperSwitch time begins with individual assessments of students' reading levels using running records and Scholastic Reading Inventory data. This data is then compiled and analyzed by grade-level teams, para-educators, the school principal, the Executive Director of Instructional Services, and our reading interventionist. Students are grouped based on reading levels and areas of need. Students who are below grade-level are put in a very small group for focused individualized instruction. Students above grade-level are given time for enrichment activities such as book clubs, non-fiction reading activities, and reading comprehension strategy extensions. While the main focus for SuperSwitch is reading instruction, it can be adjusted to meet any academic needs of Marshall students.

Nevertheless, Marshall recognizes that not all students learn at the same pace or with the same instruction and may need strategies and interventions. Marshall Elementary addresses this situation through the Response to Intervention (RTI) process. A team of teachers and staff members meet regularly to collaborate, share resources, and develop new instructional strategies to help ensure appropriate grade-level growth.

Weekly Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings provide grade-level teams with time for data analysis, discussion, and collaboration on instructional strategies for students. Working collaboratively to improve the academic skills of all students is the foundation of the PLC meetings at Marshall. Teachers value this time to collaborate and share teaching strategies and interventions. For example, teachers give formative math assessments at the beginning of each new math unit and then use this information to plan out upcoming math lessons so focus areas can be addressed.

Marshall Elementary continuously strives to meet the needs of all students whether they're surpassing grade-level expectations or falling below. The use of the workshop model, SuperSwitch, RTI, and PLC all help to solidify the advancement of all the students at Marshall.

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

In order to maintain a successful learning environment, summative and formative assessments are used to track the growth and mastery of Common Core Standards. Students in grades three and four take the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-Step) assessment each spring for English Language Arts and Mathematics. In grades two through four, students take the Discovery Education tests for reading and math three times per school year. Another assessment tool is the Scholastic Reading Inventory test for students in grades three and four. This assesses the students' current Lexile level. Students in kindergarten through grade two are assessed using A-Z Running Records. These assessments are given at the end of each marking period to track a student's growth and the results are shared with parents at conferences and throughout the school year.

The school improvement team meets to analyze the M-Step data to create school-wide goals on the low performing areas. These low performing areas become the goals for the school improvement plan and are focus areas in the upcoming school year. Accountability folders are collected from all teachers at the end of each trimester. The folder is a collection of checklists, conferring notes, assessment data, and student work samples. Data is also disaggregated to determine if there is an achievement gap between subgroups. For example, in 3rd Grade Math, 91% of Non-Economically Disadvantaged students demonstrated proficiency on the M-Step assessment and 79% of Economically Disadvantaged students were proficient, which is a 12% gap. In 4th Grade Math, 87% of white students demonstrated proficiency on the M-Step assessment and 55% of Hispanic students were proficient, which is at 32% gap. In 4th Grade Science, 21% of white students demonstrated proficiency on the M-Step assessment and 0% of Hispanic students demonstrated proficiency, which is a 21% gap. In order to close these achievement gaps, Marshall is providing additional para-educator support, providing free summer tutoring opportunities, and continually utilizing the SuperSwitch model to address these gaps in learning.

The assessment data results collected during each trimester are discussed and analyzed at our weekly PLC meetings. Plans for whole group instruction, interventions and small group work are collaboratively discussed with grade-level teams. A plan of action is created and then implemented in the classroom. For example, teachers find areas of struggle in the Discovery Education tests for math and reading and then use this information to develop small groups for individualized instruction. PLC meetings are also used to have data discussions about formative assessments. In our math curriculum there are 2-3 "quick quizzes" in each unit. Marshall teachers use the quick quizzes to create interventions for struggling students and opportunities for extensions.

The teachers at Marshall Elementary know how important it is to keep parents informed of their child's progress in school and on assessments. These results are shared through notes going home, report cards, and parent-teacher conferences. We use a variety of tools to help all parents understand the different assessments and how to interpret the results. For example, all parents receive a reading continuum at the end of each trimester. The continuum clearly shows the grade-level expectations for Running Records and the Scholastic Reading Inventory test. Book bags and Reading A-Z.com printed books are sent home with struggling students so they have on-level text to read. Marshall teachers have a deep commitment to using assessment data to guide instructional practices.

## **PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS**

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

Marshall Elementary values the importance of the school climate and culture and implements many supports in order to create and maintain a positive environment that will promote student growth.

Every Marshall student is important, and it is the goal of the staff to make each of them feel that way every day. When students first arrive at school, the principal greets them while they enter the lobby, and the teachers greet them at the classroom. The students' day officially starts with the morning announcements, led by the principal. These school-wide announcements get the day started on a positive note, including highlights such as special events, students who are "Caught Being Good," and the Best Bulldog Behavior awards. The principal also has a weekly highlight with the Wheel of Destiny, an opportunity for the chosen class to participate in a fun activity with the principal. At the end of each day, students receive a positive send off from their teachers and principal as they leave Marshall. All of these fun, positive interactions both engage and motivate the students to make each day the best it can be.

Another great aspect of the Marshall culture is that it provides many opportunities for students to participate in peer mentoring relationships, such as reading and math buddies. Also at Marshall, it is a goal to create as many inclusion opportunities as possible. Our students with cognitive impairments participate in a variety of buddy activities such as recess buddies.

A top priority at Marshall is to ensure that each child feels safe and can make growth academically, socially, and emotionally. Marshall has created and maintains a positive behavioral culture to promote growth in each student. The school has a Behavior Expectation Matrix to teach and promote positive school-wide behavior, with a focus on choices that are respectful, responsible, and safe. This school-wide matrix allows the Marshall culture to be consistent and clear for the entire school community. In order to maintain a positive behavioral culture, Marshall staff gives out Best Bulldog Behavior awards daily and catches students "Being Good" as a consistent way to reinforce great behavior.

Marshall also has two compacts to help promote a positive school climate. The Partnership Agreement and "NO" Bully Pledge are signed by teachers, parents, and students to ensure a shared responsibility for student performance and a commitment to a bully-free culture. Marshall teachers also create classroom social contracts with their students to support the school-wide behavioral matrix, encouraging students to take ownership within their classroom community. Additionally, students have opportunities to receive social and emotional support through counseling groups, counseling lessons, and safety programs such as Kidz Have Right and Cyber Safety.

The teachers work directly with students each day, so it is important to ensure that they feel valued and supported in their daily work as well. The principal does regular classroom walk-throughs ensuring she is present and available to support teachers. She also shows appreciation for staff, giving them the gift of time throughout the school year in a variety of ways. There are also teams in place at Marshall, allowing teachers to have an additional support system: professional learning communities, grade level teams, and a school improvement team.

Marshall Elementary is a great place to be, with a positive and supportive culture where lots of learning and great experiences take place.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

Much of Marshall's success can be attributed to the support from and connection with its families and community.

Marshall's parent group, Marshall Active Parents and Staff (MAPS), is very involved with student success, school improvement, and family participation. MAPS holds monthly meetings, raises funds for the school,

hosts many family events, and supports the staff throughout the year. Monthly meetings keep parents informed of events, curriculum, and other current information. MAPS provides childcare and dinner to encourage participation. Funds that are raised by MAPS are used to support the school and students in many ways: to purchase books and resources for classrooms, to send students on field trips, to support school events such as field day and reading month, and to host family events such as Marshall Movie Night, Donuts with Dad, Muffins with Mom, and more. Additionally, MAPS supports staff with meals during parent-teacher conferences and encouraging notes throughout the year.

Parent volunteers play a large role in Marshall's success as well. These volunteers come in to assist staff whenever possible. They also help with school events such as parties, field day, and the Reading Counts incentive program. Marshall has the Watch D.O.G.S (Dads of Great Students) program, which creates opportunities for students to connect with male role models on a daily basis.

Community organizations are another vital support at Marshall. Local non-profit organizations provide students with mentors, whom support our at-risk students on a regular basis. Another local non-profit organization provides at-risk students and their families with supplemental groceries each week to ensure adequate nutrition for student success. These organizations provide invaluable support to students and their families.

In addition to the support received by the Marshall community, the students also give back to their community. Student Council members lead activities that benefit the community, such as food drives and fundraisers. They also assist with special events and school functions.

Communication with the families at Marshall is vital for student success and school improvement. Marshall hosts various events to promote communication such as Open House Night, Kindergarten Round Up, and Arts in Our Schools. Parent-Teacher conferences are also a top priority at Marshall, with 100% of parents in attendance as the goal for both the fall and spring conferences. Marshall also sends out a variety of communications: bi-monthly newsletters, School Messenger reminders, and information on the classroom and school websites.

At Marshall, we believe, as the African proverb says, "It takes a village to raise a child." We are grateful for the families and community that support us with our important role in ensuring a well-round experience and success for each student.

### 3. Professional Development:

Professional development is a critical part of the success at Marshall Elementary, and it is implemented in a variety of ways. Each teacher and administrator participates annually in the district-provided professional development. Additionally, there are many opportunities for staff to participate in further professional development that is more specific to individuals' and teams' needs. These additional opportunities are typically provided by the Kent Intermediate School District or by presenters that are hired by the Byron Center Public School District. All of these professional development opportunities and experiences have clear objectives and aim to help all staff reach their fullest potential.

The approach to professional development maintains a focus on specific objectives: standards alignment, school improvement, and student achievement. First, administrators and staff analyze a variety of summative and formative data, as well as survey results from the staff and community, in order to determine the specific focus of professional development. Once this focus is determined, grade level needs are further analyzed to differentiate. Next, the type of professional development is chosen, scheduled, planned, and communicated. The ultimate goal is focused, relevant learning to support high levels of staff learning.

In recent years, Marshall staff has participated in many valuable professional development experiences, both as a whole and as individuals who bring their learning back to the staff.

One focus for professional learning has been on culture and collaboration. Staff has received various

training in regards to Professional Learning Communities (PLC) with many staff members attending Solution Tree's Professional Learning Community Institute. Additionally, all staff received further development regarding school culture and collaboration with presenter Dr. Anthony Muhammad.

Another focus of professional learning has been on academic standards. The district brought in professionals to help teachers align the most updated standards both vertically and horizontally, so as to maintain systemic learning and growth. Since that professional development, staff has continuously met across the district and within the Marshall community to maintain focus on academic alignment and a high expectation for teaching and learning.

Marshall has also focused on learning in the area of technology. The district is fortunate to have many great resources such as Chromebooks, iPads, Apple TV, and more. As the newest technology resources become available, it has been important to ensure teachers have updated development in this area. The district has provided teachers with opportunities to learn about technology advances and needs by bringing in technology consultants for both whole group and individual "shoulder-to-shoulder" learning.

While much of the professional development is provided to the staff as a whole, there are also many opportunities for staff to participate in specific, individualized development. For example, teachers have gone to the Teacher's College in New York City and the district hired a Teacher's College consultant to provide in-depth instruction. In-district, intermediate school district, out-of-state, and web-based professional learning are all options for the Marshall staff, which accommodates a variety of needs so as to help each staff member reach their fullest potential for teaching and learning at Marshall Elementary.

#### 4. School Leadership:

School leadership is an important part of the success at Marshall Elementary. The philosophy and structure of leadership at Marshall has helped to ensure student growth and success. One unique aspect of the leadership at Marshall is that it has been in transition over the last four years in regards to the school principal. While this type of transition can be challenging, the overall leadership philosophy and structure at Marshall has ensured high quality programs, positive relationships, and a focus on student success, all of which make Marshall the special and successful place it is. There are many strong, dedicated leaders and leadership teams that have played an important role in maintaining what is great about Marshall.

The School Improvement team is made up of teacher leaders that represent each grade level and curricular area. This team meets regularly to maintain high expectations for learning and student success, effective communication, and camaraderie. The team works with the principal to ensure ongoing success at Marshall. They work together to analyze data, stay up-to-date on current curriculum and best practices, and to help maintain high levels of accountability. This team collaborates to develop and implement the school improvement plan, they assist in professional development planning, and they determine supports that are needed to implement curriculum in the most effective and relevant ways. An important role of this leadership team is to maintain communication with the entire staff so as to have a systemic approach to teaching and learning. While the main focus is on school improvement goals, this leadership team responds to any needs the Marshall community may have to ensure success for all.

Another leadership team at Marshall is the Response to Intervention team, which is made up of teachers, specialists, and the principal. They meet regularly to assess specific needs of at-risk students. As a team, they analyze specific student data, discuss potential interventions, and determine individual needs in order to create plans to help at-risk students succeed. This leadership team ensures success for all students.

The principal, our main school leader at Marshall, has an important role in its success. Her role is to help shape and maintain the vision for students and staff, to help to support the positive and successful culture, to manage the staff and school processes to ensure success, and to work to improve instruction for all students. Overall, she helps to maintain a healthy balance of these many facets in order to ensure that each child succeeds.

The school leaders at Marshall are passionate and believe that communication, high expectations,

collaboration, and hard work are needed to help each child to become well-rounded and successful in life. The commitment and determination of the school leaders at Marshall are a vital part of its success.

## Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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The Academic Support Intervention Program at Marshall Elementary, also referred to as SuperSwitch, is an important key to each student's success. The SuperSwitch Program occurs for 30 minutes every day for each grade level. During the scheduled time, Marshall assembles a large team of staff to provide focused and rigorous instruction to meet each student's individual needs, based on current assessment data.

There are many steps for effective implementation of the SuperSwitch Program. It begins with analysis of current, curriculum-based data in order to determine the focus area for each grade level. This is done regularly, typically on a 6-8 week cycle. Once the focus area is chosen, data is further analyzed to determine the specific needs of each student. This analysis leads to the next steps of the program: creation of student groups based on their needs, determination of staff member placement so as to provide the most effective instruction, and decisions on the specific instructional interventions that will occur for each student. The student groups range in size from two up to twenty-nine students, depending on the needs, goals, and specific instructional interventions. The staff members involved in the intervention are the grade level teachers, the academic support instructor, and the para-educator support staff instructors. The interventions vary depending on the focus area, however, an example of one intervention that is used most often is the Fountas and Pinnell's Leveled Literacy Intervention System, which is research-based and has specific, intended results for reading growth at each grade level.

Once the planning for SuperSwitch occurs, the instructional interventions begin. It is the goal of the Marshall staff to maintain high expectations and accountability for these focused interventions; therefore resulting in an expectation to maintain SuperSwitch as uninterrupted and focused instructional time, with distractions and staffing changes kept to a minimum. Once the cycle for the intervention is complete, the teachers reassess the students to determine if expected growth is made. This data is used to begin a new cycle of SuperSwitch. The focus area may remain the same, or it may change depending on the data analysis and current academic needs.

Marshall's SuperSwitch Program is successful because it maintains a focus on data-driven and research-based instruction. This program follows the "Plan-Do-Study-Act" model, which is used to improve processes and make needed changes on a regular basis, making it a program with which staff feels effective and confident. This program has been part of the Marshall learning community for the past three years, and the results have shown student growth in all areas of curriculum, with the most significant growth in the area of reading. This program is also very successful because it can be used in all curricular areas and can be tailored to meet any and all needs of the students, which is our ultimate goal at Marshall Elementary.