

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. Brian Canfield

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

Official School Name Schroeder Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3541 Jack Drive

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

City Troy State MI Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 48084-1322

County _____

Telephone (248) 823-3600 Fax _____

Web site/URL http://schroeder.troy.k12.mi.us/ E-mail bcanfield@troy.k12.mi.us

Twitter Handle

https://twitter.com/SchroederDragons Facebook Page _____ Google+ _____

YouTube/URL _____ Blog _____ Other Social Media Link _____

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Richard Machesky E-mail rmachesky@troy.k12.mi.us

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

District Name Troy School District Tel. (248) 823-4000

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Dr. Nancy Philippart

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

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

Date _____

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

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

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

Part I – Eligibility Certification

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

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The public school has met their state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) using the most recent accountability results available for the year prior to nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state's accountability requirements (i.e., avoided sanctions) in participation, performance in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics, and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate) for the year in which they are nominated (2015-2016) and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2010 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, or 2015.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 12 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 4 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 4 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 20 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	8	6	14
K	35	37	72
1	40	37	77
2	41	40	81
3	59	52	111
4	44	41	85
5	43	53	96
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	270	266	536

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 47 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 1 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 50 % White
 - 0 % 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: 23%

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	64
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	59
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	123
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	536
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.229
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	23

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 29%
153 Total number ELL

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

24 languages: Arabic, Kannada, Telugu, Korean, French, Malayalam, Tamil, Chinese, Hindi, Marathi, Urdu, Romanian, Thai, Punjabi, Gujarati, Albanian, Vietnamese, Chaldean, German, Spanish, Russian, Bosnian, Japanese, Portuguese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 2%
Total number students who qualify: 13
8. Students receiving special education services: 8%
41 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
- 3 Emotional Disturbance
- 1 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 3 Other Health Impaired
- 11 Specific Learning Disability
- 23 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: 8
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	20
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	10
Paraprofessionals	2
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 26:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	95%	96%	96%	97%	97%
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. 1998

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

The purpose of Schroeder Elementary School is to ensure learning for all members of the school community.

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

Schroeder is not a magnet, charter or choice school.

PART III – SUMMARY

Schroeder Elementary School is one of 20 schools within the Troy School District. The city of Troy is located in Oakland County, Michigan. The school was founded in 1970 and named after Elmer Schroeder, who was a local businessman and a fire chief in the Troy Fire Department.

The school has experienced academic success and achievement. Schroeder has performed well on the past state standardized test, the MEAP (Michigan Educational Assessment Program) Test. During the time of the MEAP Test, the school received many notable accomplishments. Schroeder was recognized as a Blue Ribbon School during the 1998-1999 school year. That previous Blue Ribbon recognition helped develop the culture and standards of the school. The status was shared and celebrated with the community. The Schroeder parents and staff appreciate this type of recognition and hold the expectations that Schroeder will be a high performing school. Our 1998-1999 Blue Ribbon Award ties into some of the more recent achievements recognized by the Michigan Department of Education. For the staff, it also helped maintain and further develop a school culture around instruction and achievement. This has led to numerous changes in curriculum over the past years. The most important changes have taken place in reading, writing and math. Those programs are summarized later in this document. Perhaps our most powerful instructional development has been the implementation of Visible Thinking, where teachers value and foster thinking in the classroom and develop student led classrooms. Visible Thinking will also be further described in this application.

Over multiple and consecutive years, the MDE (Michigan Department of Education) has awarded Schroeder as a Reward School. Under the Reward School status, the school has been announced as a “High Performing School” and “Beating the Odds.” As a “Beating the Odds” school, Schroeder has outperformed schools with a similar demographic. Schroeder has also received numerous years of being ranked in the 99th percentile in the state of Michigan. Schroeder students have continued to achieve with the new M-STEP (Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress) Test. Achievement data and results have ranked Schroeder as a top performing school in Michigan and recently ranked Schroeder in the top ten schools in the state in English Language Arts.

Schroeder is a diverse school and located in a diverse community. Currently, there are a total of 24 languages spoken in the school. Students come to Schroeder with different cultural backgrounds and come from different countries from around the world. Our parent community is a well-educated group and supports their children and the school. Parents have important jobs and long careers in their field of work. Many Schroeder parents are financial stable and contribute to a strong socioeconomic status community. Our PTO generates financial support as well as many volunteers to support programs within the school.

There are many programs that contribute to the school’s success. These programs support academic, emotional and social development. Programs such as Buddy Classes, Dragon Dens, Round Table (Student Government), morning “Spotlight” TV announcements, character assemblies, fifth grade camp, Green School Program, The Disability Workshop, Service Squad, and Safety Patrol are some of the programs that contribute to the students becoming active members of our school culture and community.

Other programs such as our PTO (Parent-Teacher Organization), the “Schroeder World Tour” diversity celebration, Jogathon, classroom volunteers, Curriculum Night, Parent-Teacher Conferences, March is Reading Month Night, Field Day, classroom parties, Kindergarten Round-Up, music concerts and performances, and The Art Show create parent involvement. These types of programs build the community within our school with our families and connect the staff and parents.

The Schroeder staff is committed to serving students and works to demonstrate professional growth. The staff operates as a PLC (Professional Learning Community) by collaborating around student data, instructional practices, interventions, and assessment. The staff spends time in collaboration meetings, staff meetings, grade level team PLC meetings, district curriculum meetings, school provided professional development, and district provided professional development. Teachers use classroom structures to support all students across different levels of learning and support struggling learners within their classrooms.

Teachers also work to support advanced learners in reaching their potential and achieve above grade level learning. Cultures of Thinking/Visible Thinking has been an ongoing professional development for the staff which has allowed teachers to generate deep thinking and problem solving within the classroom. Classrooms have become student driven learning environments. Technology has been implemented in classroom instruction. The Troy School District has provided the framework to implement technology with Smart Boards, 1:1 iPads in grades 3-5, classroom sets of iPads in grade K-2, and a computer lab. Teachers have implemented technology to increase engagement and improve student learning within their classrooms. Teacher technology chairs help support professional development for our staff. The school's NCA school improvement process continuously set goals, strategies and assessments to monitor student growth. NCA Chairs, goal chairs and goal committees work to shown continuous improve in student learning. The staff has many members who serve in leadership positions and provide a shared leadership approach. Teachers serve as head teachers, NCA Chairs, goal chairs, technology chairs, Culture of Thinking Chairs, grade level team representatives, activity coordinators, Guided Reading Academy leadership, CAT (Content Area Team) leaders, character education chairs, and many other positions. The staff culture is very positive and conducive for collaboration and professional learning.

The success of Schroeder Elementary School is credited to numerous programs that support student academic growth, social development, and emotional development. These are all supported by the Schroeder staff, the Troy School District, the students and the parent community.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Our core curriculum is driven by the Michigan Common Core State Standards. In our school, we have been working to establish ambitious outcomes for each core curricular area. To address the learning standards we have implemented a variety of strategies to improve and meet the needs of all students. Cultures of Thinking routines are incorporated across all subject areas to provide a structure for deep thinking. Technology is a critical component in this mission, interwoven in all core subject areas. Each student in grades 3-5 have their own district issued iPad and students in grades K-2 have ten iPads in their classrooms as well. This technology piece has allowed teachers to support and individualize instruction. Also, to support our English Language Learners, key concepts and vocabulary from all subjects are used by our special area teachers to support the learning that takes place in the classroom.

In math we use Math Expressions by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt as a guide for our instruction. Our math program is very language based, providing students with many real world problems to tackle on a daily basis. This typically comes in the format of word problems. Students are encouraged to use “math talk” to share their thinking and various methods of problem solving. Students often become the teachers in these lessons and benefit from the collaboration of sharing multiple strategies. In addition, some of the word problems purposely show incorrect work, allowing them to work through common misconceptions that might occur for specific learning objectives. One instructional approach is encouraging students to justify their thinking. This can be done through words, diagrams, pictures, or examples. Teachers also supplement the Math Expressions program with additional resources for certain math objectives, such as fact fluency, that require more repetition for student mastery. Teachers have also individualized instruction through the use of student iPads using apps such as FrontRow and Prodigy. These apps have diagnostic testing that places students in a program that matches their ability level. Many of the teachers have begun using the math workshop approach to form small flexible group intervention. These groups are based on formative assessment.

For the past several years, our school has identified a math goal as part of our North Central Association process. Our current math goal is focusing on problem solving and data usage at each grade level. Students are being challenged to complete performance tasks, which are real world problems that require them to apply a variety of mathematical skills covered in their current unit of study. This work aligns with what students will be expected to complete as a “21st Century Learner.”

Our English Language Arts curriculum follows the program, Michigan Association of Intermediate Schools Administrators (MAISA), created by our county. This program is aligned with the National Common Core Standards for English Language Arts. The units of study are organized around genres and foundational skills. Reader’s and writer’s workshop is the format in which these genres and skills are taught. Teachers often begin with a mentor text to model and teach a specific learning objective. Students are then challenged to try this new skill in their own reading and writing. During this time, teachers are conferencing with students one on one or in small groups based on the needs of the class. This allows teachers the opportunity to give valuable feedback to students and also provides the teacher with information needed to guide future instruction.

Reading recovery is another component of our English Language Arts program offered at our school as an intervention for our struggling readers. Similar to Math, our school typically chooses a reading goal for our NCA process. Most recently, we have identified nonfiction reading as an area of concern and we are working with all readers to support their progress. All students are formally tested twice a year, and our struggling readers are tested more frequently. Our below grade level readers and writers receive more intense interventions such as additional small group and one on one instruction based on skills and strategies.

Our Science curriculum uses the FOSS program. This is an active learning science program where students are able to explore through meaningful experimentation. Students build intuitive knowledge through

exploration, observation, and open-ended activities. Students are encouraged to ask questions, look for evidence, record observation, and make predictions. Our science instruction seeks to harness the natural curiosity our students bring to the classroom and as teachers we mold this curiosity into deep understanding of critical scientific concepts and thinking. Students are exposed to the scientific process in each grade level. Our social studies curriculum centers on the idea that children learn best when concepts are brought to life. Teachers create activities that incorporate role playing, games, simulations, creative projects, group problem-solving, and reading to learn about the world around them. Audio text is available for students who are reading below grade level as well as our ESL population. The Culture of Thinking routines are used across all grade levels as a means of formative and summative assessment for student learning.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Our special area classes expose our students to essential life skills through vocal music, instrumental music, physical education, media, Spanish, and art. The physical education program is centered on five physical assessments: cardio vascular endurance, speed and agility, flexibility, core strength, and upper body strength. Students are tested throughout the year on these physical skills. Research shows that having a physically active life style is essential to brain development. Our physical education teacher promotes and models this life style through Field Day, Troy Fitness and Health Celebration Run, monthly health and fitness calendars, Girls on the Run, and On Your Mark.

Vocal Music focuses on the four creative processes of creating, performing, responding, and connecting. In grades 1st and 3rd, students have a yearly performance showcasing their musical talents! In addition to regularly scheduled music class, students can participate in an extra-curricular choir and/or Ukulele Club.

Our visual arts program develops problem solving and critical thinking skills needed for the 21st Century. Students are taught to use the creative process to communicate and express themselves. Appreciation and exploration of various cultures and historical periods are also covered. Students learn to respond visually, verbally, analytically, and creatively through a wide variety of materials. Students' growth is monitored through teacher observation and self-evaluation. The overall goal is to respect and value diversity.

The media program teaches students digital literacy and digital citizenship. Students learn to locate and evaluate appropriate print and non-print information as a 21st Century skill. There are two book fairs a year to promote literacy in the classroom and at home. Students learn about coding and receive database training as well.

In addition to the fine arts programs, the Troy School District provides students with an introductory FLEX (foreign language experience) model program. Research has shown that children who receive world language instruction benefit in many ways from early exposure to a second language. Students learn through various types of media and hands-on activities.

Our 5th graders have the special opportunity to be a part of the band or orchestra program. All 5th graders receive instruction throughout the year on how to play an instrument and conduct performances. Many of our students continue to play their instruments through middle and high school.

Throughout the year, students in grades K-5 receive instruction in vocal music or instrumental music, art, Spanish, physical education, and media for forty-five minute sessions, forty-four days throughout the year. All students receive media and Spanish instruction for forty-five minutes, twenty-two days during the school year. We feel these curricular areas allow students an opportunity to shine in other, non-academic, areas. Students have shared with classroom teachers how much they enjoy and look forward to participating in these classes. Through these specials, students have become more confident and comfortable within the school setting.

As educators, we feel these special areas support our academic goals by promoting language and reasoning, increased coordination, emotional development, imagination and intellectual curiosity, discipline, risk taking, and teamwork. More specifically, students who struggle with fine motor skills benefit from skills learned and practiced in physical education and the arts, which helps them with writing in the classroom.

When students have opportunities to practice teamwork skills outside of the classroom, they can bring those skills back and apply them to rigorous academic tasks that require collaboration. When students are encouraged to use their imagination and natural curiosity through music and art, they are more apt to think deeper as writers and scientists.

One of the greatest strengths of our school is that our specials teachers connect their instruction with the core content of what's being taught in the classroom. One example of this is our art teacher has students create clay owls to support their unit of study on Structures of Life. Also, our music teacher chooses music projects that are based on our classroom read alouds. This collaborative piece between classroom and special area teachers supports our school's goal of ensuring learning for all members of the school community.

3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

The Eight Culture Forces outlined by Ron Ritchhart provide the framework for which our staff structures their classroom environments. Under this umbrella we use a variety of instructional methods and interventions to meet the diverse needs of our unique population. Within the classroom, teachers use a workshop approach for most subject areas. This allows for teachers to be flexible with their student groupings, so students performing above grade level are challenged, students performing on grade level are supported, and students performing below grade level are provided with intensive small group instruction.

In math, teachers use higher level thinking word problems to challenge students who have mastered the concepts from the unit. Students that need more support are given more visual and hands-on materials to help them solve problems. These students are often given more modeling from the teacher and may require extra time to complete their tasks. All students, no matter their abilities, are challenged to explain their thinking through mathematical writing and performance tasks.

In English language arts, teachers use book clubs, guided reading, and individual conferences to meet the vast abilities in their classrooms. Book clubs are used as a platform to engage students in literary discussions, using essential skills taught in the literacy curriculum. In all subject areas, the Cultures of Thinking routines are used to promote student thinking. These routines help students share through verbal discussions, and also provide a framework for written communication as well. The beauty of incorporating these routines into the curriculum is that they provide a way for students of every ability level to have a voice and build confidence. As teachers, we have noticed where students, who were previously hesitant to share their thinking, have now begun to thrive and stand out as role models.

iPads are used to differentiate instruction in the classroom and are used to communicate learning tasks with parents. The Seesaw Learning Journal is used throughout the school and parents are linked to their child's account, allowing students to document what they are learning at school.

In our school, we have some main sources of intervention to support students below grade level and English Language Learners. The first level of intervention happens within the classroom with the classroom teacher. For students that need extra academic support, they may receive services from our reading specialist for Reading Recovery or literacy groups. They may also qualify to be pulled out of the classroom for special education services or help from our teacher consultant. Hours and times vary based on their Individualized Education Plan. These interventions support the learning objectives in the general education classroom, however, the methods to master these objectives vary based on student needs. The curriculum is often modified; however, our end goal is for students to return to the general education classroom after intensive instruction.

Our school has a high English Language Learner population. Students receive support from EL teachers either as a pull-out or push-in service. This program also supports the general education classroom by frontloading important vocabulary for upcoming units, reviewing key concepts, and providing basic English instruction.

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

Teachers utilize a variety of formative and summative assessments throughout the year to guide their instruction by making accommodations to meet the needs of all students. Each spring, new NCA goals are established for the following year. Teachers analyze a variety of data, including our state's standardized test, which is currently the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP). Our school has consistently performed in the 99 percentile of the state. In order to maintain this high level of success we use the Item Analysis Report and Class Roster data to identify student weaknesses. Recently, we have noticed that our students have struggled with the science component of this assessment. To improve this, a school-wide goal has been created in science. Teachers across all grade levels have implemented strategies such as Claim-Evidence-Reasoning to support students' abilities to encourage the critical thinking required to increase student performance. Following this work, teachers create their own personal goals, often in alignment with the school's goals. This encourages collaboration and communication, two key factors in improving student growth.

Teachers begin the year by administering the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System to identify each student's reading strengths. This system allows teachers to identify areas of need such as fluency, accuracy, and comprehension. Based on this data, teachers are able to form guided reading and strategy groups in their classrooms for explicit instruction. When students need more intervention, our students have opportunities to qualify for our English Language Learner program, special education resources, Reading Recovery or literacy groups with the reading specialist. Throughout the year, teachers conference with students to formatively assess students and continuously adjust instruction.

The Math Expressions program has summative tests after each unit of study as well as formative assessments such as quick quizzes and fluency checks built-in throughout each unit. These assessments are used to help teachers determine mastered skills and skills that need more practice. When students need additional support, the program has RTI resources built-in. The Troy School District utilizes a data collection program called Mastery Manager to disaggregate data which allows teachers to identify specific learning outcomes. Our math program includes opportunities for students to connect to their writing abilities by explaining their thinking on higher level word problems and real world performance tasks.

The World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) is administered in the fall and spring to identify students that need ELD services. If the results of this assessment indicate that ELD services would be beneficial, students are given intensive small group instruction. Another assessment used for struggling students is the Academic Improvement Measurement System (AIMSweb), a universal screening, progress monitoring, and data management system that supports Response to Intervention (RTI) and tiered instruction.

We value the importance of communicating students' academic growth and achievement with our parent community and all stakeholders. Schroeder teachers have identified this as an area to improve on and have made a shift toward our students communicating their own academic achievement with parents through student-led conferences, data binders, and student produced newsletters. We are fortunate to have a wealth of technology available for a variety of purposes. One way teachers and students make their progress visible is through apps such as Seesaw, Padlet, Socrative, and Kahoot. Teachers complete formal report cards four times a year, along with progress reports as needed to convey individual student growth. Parent Teacher Conferences are also held in the fall and spring to personally meet with families to explain student work and set academic and/or social/emotional goals. Throughout the year, teachers meet with families to share and explain the academic growth of students with families on a consistent basis. This constant communication is a strength of our school that closely ties the staff at Schroeder with our families and the community.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Our school works tirelessly to create a culture in which all students and teachers feel accepted and valued in order to promote the highest academic success and overall enjoyment of school. The mission statement of our school is, “The purpose of Schroeder Elementary School is to ensure learning for all members of the school community.” This mission is not just to ensure academic growth, but to help mold the social and emotional side of our students as well.

This past year we implemented a new school wide program to develop community across grade levels called Dragon Dens. Students are placed into a multiage group and assigned to a teacher whom they meet with on a monthly basis. These groups provide an opportunity for students to create positive relationships with other students and staff outside their classroom. At the monthly meetings the lesson focus is always based on needs that we see in our school ranging from academic, such as March is Reading Month, or social/emotional topics such as perseverance and responsibility. As a result, students look forward to these monthly meetings, have developed friendships in different grade levels, and have gained another teacher as a role model outside their classroom.

Another strength that adds greatly to our school’s culture is our Round Table. These students provide a voice for their peers by bringing their ideas to monthly meetings. Students see firsthand how important and powerful their ideas and suggestions can be. Round table makes all the decisions for our community outreach programs. They truly get to experience Democracy first hand and see the positive impact it can have.

A yearly event that families look forward to is our Schroeder World Tour celebration. During the celebration, students from every culture have an opportunity to share traditions with the entire school through cultural dance, singing, sports, instrumental presentations, and much more! They also tour the countries with a personal passport and learn from parent led interactive presentations. Pride from the parents and students is evident as they share personal stories about their culture and history. This event unifies our school every year!

While we have many others, March is Reading Month is another significant time in which our community comes together around a common purpose. The entire month is focused on promoting reading through themed activities connecting the school with families and the community. This event motivates our students with reading challenges throughout the month that are completed at home and at school.

All of these events play an essential role in creating an environment in which students want to be a part of. Before any academic learning can take place we strive to have our students feel welcome, accepted, and valued as individuals. We hope our students see how the staff members at Schroeder are more than just working colleagues, but friends as well. The staff at Schroeder is a close group that spends quality time together outside of school, which carries over into creating a positive working environment for everyone.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

A strong sense of community between our school and our families is a key element that we believe plays a major role in the success of our school. The entire staff at Schroeder Elementary believes this to be true, which is why we strive to bridge a partnership between the school and the home. One way we engage families is through our broad base of communication methods to involve families and keep them informed on a daily basis. By-weekly newsletters are sent out to parents titled, The Schroeder Reporter, outlining upcoming events, school accomplishments, district news, tips for parents, curriculum updates, and much more. In addition, numerous emails from the office are also sent out to keep parents informed as well as an extensive website that is updated daily.

At the start of the school year we begin to develop our relationships with families through our Curriculum

Night in which all grades welcome parents into their classrooms. This is an opportunity for teachers to share with families an overview of the year by outlining curriculum expectations, learning routines, and school events. However, more importantly, it is an opportunity for teachers to introduce themselves on a personal level. Communication is then continued throughout the year in many ways such as, classroom websites, emails, data binders, iPad applications, and newsletters. Most recently Schroeder teachers have begun sharing student learning through Twitter, #SchroederDragons, as well as using it as a tool to acquire new instructional strategies.

The family activities we offer throughout the year to engage families are another key component in which families have an opportunity to volunteer and partner in their child's learning experiences. Some of these activities include New Family Orientation, Cheers and Tears, Jogathon, Schroeder World Tour, March is Reading Month, Junior Achievement, and mystery guest readers. In addition to these school wide events, various grade levels host special events connected to their science and social studies curriculum in which members of the city, school board, and school district administrators are able to come and participate. These events include a heart dissection, American Revolution Debate, Barter Day, Wax Museum, restaurant economics, and City of Troy Celebration. Many of these events are supported by our PTO. All of these events show our students that their parents value their education and encourage them to work hard.

In order to reach beyond the doors of Schroeder Elementary, we have a teacher run student council, called Round Table. Round Table is composed of student leaders from grades 3-5 in which their responsibility is to foster not only school spirit, but plan and carry out community service projects for the entire school. Our students donate food, school supplies, and books, as well as collect money for Unicef, to support local and nationwide service projects.

As a result of our strong family and community ties, our students thrive because of the positive and supportive environment that is created through these events. Our students can see, on a daily basis, how their teachers work collaboratively with their families to ensure their success in school and for their future. Through these events and communication methods, our rigorous school academic goals are met because we have a shared vision in which all stakeholders are able to support the needs of each and every student.

3. Professional Development:

The strength behind our school's professional development approach is that our work is directly tied to the needs of all staff members and connected to our work to enhance student growth. At our building level, our teachers play a main role in facilitating professional development sessions. This is due to our building administrator who clearly sets that stage with the message that he wants all of our work to be meaningful and impactful. Our administrator works closely with the teachers on individual goals and school wide goals. He is a resource that teachers can count on and utilize to support their instruction and personal growth. His personal goals are always tied to our school wide goals which helps connect collaboration and professional development opportunities. After setting school wide goals and analyzing student data we work together to create strategies that will be implemented school wide throughout the year.

In the fall of 2011 our school began to study the Cultures of Thinking philosophy by Ron Ritchhart. Over the next three years we embraced this new approach in our teaching and have seen a tremendous impact on our students' thinking as well as a cultural shift in all of our classrooms. Over this time period we have done many professional development collaborations to support our work on Cultures of Thinking.

For example, we have set up lab classrooms in which teachers have opportunities to be released from their classroom to go observe other teachers. Immediately following the observations, all teachers involved would have an opportunity to debrief with the focus being on student learning. Teachers reported that this reflective approach was a key element in helping them improve their practice, which in turn helps students.

Another professional development approach we have implemented are book clubs in which we study a professional text that is supportive of our students' needs and often connected to our school wide goals. We would launch our book club meetings in the summer before the start of the school year and continue them throughout the year. The books that have been chosen to study always reflect the challenges that

teachers were seeing with our students' achievement. One of the books we chose was *The Book Whisperer*, by Donalyn Miller, which focused on fostering a love of reading within students. As a staff we had noticed that in a world driven by standardized testing, we needed to work on balancing our instruction to ensure a love of learning within our students. This book helped us do just that! Student surveys given each fall have revealed that reading enjoyment was on the rise!

To support our reading goals, we also implemented a Guided Reading Academy, led by our schools Reading Recovery specialist. This helped us address the challenges that struggling readers face. Our reading specialist focused on teaching the staff how to use the Fountas and Pinnell reading assessment data more effectively to better target student needs. After that we focused on the how, by learning new strategies to implement in our guided reading sessions. As a result, students reading levels were tracked and we noticed school wide improvement, specifically in our lowest percentile readers. One point of pride you will commonly hear from teachers at Schroeder is we truly feel our professional development impacts the work we do with our students on a daily basis!

4. School Leadership:

Our school's leadership philosophy is centered around each staff member having opportunities to be involved in and lead school initiatives. Our principal ensures that there is a shared leadership culture by encouraging all staff members to participate equally. District wide our curriculum leaders are working to establish a shared leadership philosophy that is guiding our work at the school level. Teachers across all buildings and grade levels are serving on curriculum focused committees to identify ambitious learning outcomes and key performance assessments for all students. We have a variety of Schroeder teachers serving on all of these committees giving everyone an opportunity to have a voice and role in the decision making process. Our principal also strives to make us a part of the decision making process at Schroeder. Before making school wide decisions our principal always surveys the staff to get their feedback and opinions. Some examples of this include technology protocols, recess rules, safety issues and staff meetings/collaboration. This has a huge impact on our school's success because all staff members have a voice in the decisions that are being made.

North Central Association (NCA) is an example of a process our school uses to foster quality instruction that all staff members must participate in. Within this process teachers are allowed to choose which goal area they want to participate in based on their personal strengths. These teacher-led committees work to create academic strategies to improve areas of concern we have identified based on teacher observations and student data. Each goal team collects student data throughout the year that we use as formative and summative assessment to drive our instruction in order to meet our goals.

Our school has also created other committees in which teacher leaders have volunteered to run collaboration. Examples of other leadership roles where teachers facilitate learning opportunities and student activities are Cultures of Thinking, book clubs, Dragon Dens, guided reading, Round Table, technology chairs, service and safety squad, March is Reading Month, and head teachers.

In closing, we also have teachers that serve on county committees at Oakland School's board offices which give our teachers a voice in the decisions being made to impact students and teachers at the county level. Formative Assessment and Reading and Writing curriculum are a couple examples of these committees.

Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The one practice that we believe has the most influence on our school's success is collaboration. This practice ties all stakeholders, including teachers, students, administrators, and families together. Collaboration is at the heart of our PLC (Professional Learning Community) and it is what we do as educators each and every day. Collaboration happens formally and informally throughout our school year. Our formal collaboration sessions that are set up within our building include whole staff, grade level, mixed grade levels and goal committees. Our formal collaboration meetings are focused on topics that will support student achievement for all grades. Our topics are based on student needs that we have determined through data collection and observation.

During these collaborations, teachers identify specific strategies that develop a common language across grade levels. Establishing a common language is a key component in improving student growth. When our students have a firm foundation that can be built on each year, teachers know just what to expect from incoming students and where to take them. Having this vertical alignment in all of our collaboration is an essential element to drive student success and instruction.

Each year, every teacher is required to set a SMART (Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Results Focused, Time-Bound) goal that is developed as a grade level. These SMART goals are created based on areas of weakness that teachers identify from examining data. The purpose is for teachers to focus their attention on an area of need to improve student achievement. These goals are often targeted to support the lowest 30% according to student and classroom data. Throughout the year teachers meet to examine student data and formulate new strategies to better meet the individual needs of students. Student data consists of formative assessments that teachers and students evaluate. As a result of this collaboration, students benefit from the shared ideas of a collective group of teachers. Teachers benefit from learning from their colleagues.

While formal collaboration is a planned process that uses student data to improve our practices, informal collaboration also plays a huge role in teachers' day to day instructional adjustments. Some examples include, conversations during prep time and lunch, impromptu before or after school meetings, phone calls, text messages, and emails to share lesson modifications or ideas. These informal collaboration sessions are typically the result of teachers sharing successes they have had during a current unit of study as well as challenges they have faced.

Professional literature from colleges and businesses routinely indicate that a top skill they look for is a person's ability to collaborate with a group. At Schroeder we strive to create many collaborative opportunities within the learning day to help foster this life skill within all our students. Collaboration carries over to our students on a day to day basis and is a part of all their core academic and special area classes. This has impacted the success of our students by creating an environment in which students understand their critical role in the learning process and that their voice is valued, accepted and needed.