

**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) [ ] Title I [ ] Charter [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Mrs. Lorinda Krey

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

Official School Name Fairway Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 480 Old Fairway Drive

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

City Wildwood State MO Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 63040-1569

County St. Louis County

Telephone (636) 733-4175 Fax (636) 733-8855

Web site/URL http://www.rsdmo.org/fairway/Pages/default.aspx E-mail kreylorinda@rsdmo.org

Twitter Handle https://twitter.com/Fairway  
Elem Facebook Page \_\_\_\_\_ Google+ \_\_\_\_\_

Blog http://www.rsdmo.org/fairway/offices/principal/default.aspx Other Social Media Link \_\_\_\_\_  
YouTube/URL \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Superintendent\*Dr. Eric Knost E-mail knosteric@rsdmo.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Rockwood School District Tel. (636) 733-1140

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School Board President/Chairperson Mr. Matt Doell  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

## Part I – Eligibility Certification

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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):
- 19 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 6 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 5 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 30 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	37	35	72
1	32	47	79
2	36	35	71
3	32	36	68
4	50	38	88
5	45	45	90
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>	232	236	468

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 5 % Asian
  - 6 % Black or African American
  - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 83 % White
  - 4 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

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

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

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	21
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2014 until the end of the 2014-2015 school year	5
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	26
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2014	475
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.055
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	5

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 2 %  
8 Total number ELL

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 15 %  
Total number students who qualify: 71

8. Students receiving special education services: 16 %  
77 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.

- 1 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 2 Emotional Disturbance
- 1 Hearing Impairment
- 1 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 13 Other Health Impaired
- 9 Specific Learning Disability
- 49 Speech or Language Impairment
- 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 1 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	2
Classroom teachers	23
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	12
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.	5

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 20:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	97%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**  
Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2015.

<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

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.

We do whatever it takes to ensure all students realize their potential.

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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Fairway Elementary was built in 2004, and remains Rockwood School District's youngest building. It is a true neighborhood school, as it was built on a former golf course, with a subdivision erected in its shadow. Our first student body picture was taken in the construction area directly across the street, which soon became the backyards of some current and former students! Before construction was complete, the staff was hired and a group of students, parents, and staff began the process of building our school community. This group embraced the golf course theme. We became the Fairway Eagles, with our colors being green and gold, and we reside on Old Fairway Drive. Since Fairway's inception, our first principal was promoted to Rockwood's Central Office as Assistant Superintendent Of Learning and Support Services. She continues to spread Fairway's culture on a district-wide level. Our second principal was promoted to Central Office as Director Of Elementary Education. Fairway is proud that its beginning leaders now impact the entire district!

Fairway's entire staff holds a high standard of efficacy in meeting our students' academic, emotional, physical, social, and cultural needs. Fairway's teachers believe that all students will succeed, regardless of their backgrounds and the obstacles they face. Fairway teachers are committed to doing whatever it takes to ensure that all students' needs are met to be successful.

Most of Fairway's student body are resident students. However, Fairway is also home to Voluntary Inter-district Choice Corporation students from St. Louis City. We are honored to serve so many families! Annually Fairway celebrates these neighborhood roots by hosting a Walk/Bike To School Day. Students who live in the surrounding neighborhoods meet at designated posts, where volunteers walk them to school. Even our VICC students that reside in the city participate by unloading buses at a nearby stop, where they are met by staff who walk them to school. Every child feels a sense of belonging at Fairway, regardless of where he/she resides.

Over our short existence, Fairway has earned several significant awards. We have received nine nationally-recognized Promising Practice Awards through the Character Plus organization. Two that we are the most proud of are: The "Got Your Back Pack" (GYBP) program and our "Soup-er Bowl" canned food drive. Both practices are ongoing and impact our entire district. Fairway created, houses, and maintains the Rockwood School District's food pantry. GYBP provides low-income and homeless Rockwood families with non-perishable food items each weekend from the food pantry. The Soup-er Bowl is one way that Fairway students stock the pantry during February. Students place canned goods in our foyer, according to which football team they want to win the big game! The team which collects the most cans is Fairway's Soup-er Bowl winner. Students have the task of counting cans daily, reporting standings during live student-broadcast announcements, and stocking pantry shelves at the completion of the competition. This successful practice provides kids with a sense of accomplishment, a love for helping others, and knowing they are giving to those who are less fortunate.

Fairway's unique programs nurture the success of our students. Many students participate in the Go! St. Louis Read, Right, Run Marathon where students read 26 books, "right" the community with 26 good deeds, and run 26.2 miles over four months. Fairway also initiated a Gift Giving Program where identified families in need, within our own school community, are "adopted." Assistance with their physiological needs is provided to these families each month. The Gift Giving Program is funded by having a "McTeacher Night" at our local McDonald's, where Fairway staff members serve our community, and a portion of the profit earned by McDonald's is shared with Fairway.

Fairway builds a sense of community and fosters student relationships through many character education initiatives such as "Buddy Classes," where intermediate grade level classes are paired with primary classes. Buddy classes meet regularly and participate in activities that support the academic curriculum. The meetings help cultivate academic, emotional, and social growth among our students. We also participate in Relay For Life to raise money for the American Cancer Society. Our students raise money, and walk in honor of their loved ones affected by cancer at our yearly Mini-Relay Marathon during PE classes.

Fairway also supports a free reading and math tutoring program before school, to help at-risk students achieve academic success. This tutoring program is taught by certified Fairway teachers and meets four days per week.

Fairway prides itself in building leadership qualities within its students. Fifth graders show leadership by becoming Ambassadors. Ambassadors perform tasks such as facilitating a daily live student broadcast of morning announcements, tours to new families joining our school community, volunteering to help staff members, and assisting younger students with various social, emotional, and academic needs.

Fairway truly lives by our district's mission and vision: "By continuously improving every aspect of our performance, the Rockwood School District empowers students to command their future. We do whatever it takes to ensure all students realize their potential."

## PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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### 1. Core Curriculum:

As a public school, Fairway’s core curriculum is collaboratively determined with other Rockwood School District teachers, and aligns with Missouri’s Learning Standards. From the curricular standards, Fairway staff differentiates instruction based on the needs of individual and groups of students. Differentiation is based on formative, summative, and standardized assessments, routinely administered throughout the school year. All assessment data is used to help us flexibly group students according to their unique learning needs. Those students who require extra support in both remediation and acceleration are recognized through the Response to Intervention (RTI) process during grade-level Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Through PLC time, teachers are able to analyze student assessment data, brainstorm, and share strategies to help students meet their full potential. Students also write personal academic goals, based on what they recognize as their own strengths and areas for improvement, in both math and English/Language Arts (ELA).

Fairway Elementary places high importance on English/Language Arts. We utilize a balanced-literacy approach, with equal importance on reading, writing, and oral communication from preK-fifth grade. Teachers make it a top priority to meet with students daily within guided reading groups. In guided reading groups, students receive instruction that is tailored to their specific learning needs. Fairway staff constructed a room called “The Eagle’s Nest” where hundreds of teacher reading materials and resources are housed in order to provide the best differentiated instruction. The Eagle’s Nest offers a plethora of reading levels A-Z fiction and nonfiction books. Fairway encourages readers to set challenging goals and participate in quarterly reading celebrations when goals are met! All students are formatively assessed throughout the school year to monitor progress so teachers can adjust practices accordingly.

Math is also a critical core subject for Fairway students. We focus on the development of basic mathematical skills, but also cultivate students to become real-world problem-solvers. Similar to language arts, we consistently monitor student learning with formative and summative assessments to meet students’ specific mathematical needs. All Fairway classrooms utilize small group instruction, according to a student’s skill set. We make it a priority to work with students in small groups on a daily basis. In primary grades, Fairway utilizes fifth grade student Ambassadors and the FasttMath computer program to help struggling students learn their basic facts. In intermediate grade levels, students actually switch classes so that teachers have an entire group of students with similar needs. Those classes built with struggling students have lower numbers, allowing teachers more individual and direct instruction time. However, students who exceed the math standards are accelerated through the curriculum. Fairway students participate in holistic, real-world problems, allowing them to dig deeper into the curriculum. Advanced learners are challenged with enriching experiences and curriculum beyond grade level expectations. Throughout Fairway, math students are also allowed to grade skip when they show mastery of current grade level skills. High achieving students have the opportunity to attend middle school math classes, before school. Like ELA, all Fairway math students take formative assessments frequently throughout the year to monitor progress and adjust instruction.

Fairway’s science curriculum integrates the areas of Earth, Life, and Physical Sciences, emphasizing a hands on approach. With the increase of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) careers in our world, Fairway’s curriculum develops STEM skills to help prepare our students to function and thrive in the future. Through the use of engineering practices, students connect the concepts they are learning in class to new, real-world situations, while becoming better problem-solvers. Fairway third and fifth graders also participate in extended lessons through our district’s Mobile Instructional Classroom (MIC) bus, where they further utilize STEM skills, while working with our district’s STEM Coordinator.

Fairway’s social studies curriculum is divided into five strands: history, government, geography, economics, and cultural awareness. These strands are spiraled in kindergarten through fifth grade. Each strand is embedded in conceptual units, which leads to differentiation for all students. Students can use higher level thinking skills in each unit. The units are project based, which allows students to learn to use primary and

secondary sources. An example of a 5th grade conceptual unit would include students analyzing historical events in American History, integrating where those events took place on a map, how the government impacted the events, the economic needs, and cultural perspectives of that time period in American History.

## 2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Fairway offers a variety of non-core subjects, which are collaboratively determined by Rockwood School District's Core Curriculum Objectives that align with Missouri State Standards. Art, vocal music, physical education (PE), and health are taken by all students, grades kindergarten to fifth. In third grade orchestra is added to the curriculum. Fourth and fifth grade students then have the option to take either orchestra or technology. Each non-core subject integrates the curriculum of core subjects, and develops progressively as students grow and learn.

Fairway students receive 60 minutes of art instruction once per week. Kindergarten and first grade art introduces the elements of line, shape, color, and value. Fairway students explore self-expression through portraiture, landscape, printmaking, and sculpture. Second and third grade students learn elements of art at a higher complexity. Art incorporates science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) through creating original building design and paper weaving. It integrates social studies by encouraging self-expression through themes of community and group identity. Fourth and fifth grade students incorporate technology and examine art at an accelerated level of complexity through graphic art. Students apply their knowledge of elements and principles of art by drawing, painting, weaving, and sculpting. Lastly, all Fairway art students express themselves in the themes of patriotism and other cultural points of view.

All Fairway students receive 30 minutes of vocal music instruction twice every week. Fairway's K-5 vocal music curriculum focuses on continuous refinement of basic music skills. The vocal music program provides the opportunity for students to develop technical performance skills, knowledge, understanding of music, and making music a part of their daily lives. Fairway students develop critical thinking skills and learn to appreciate music on an independent level. The critical thinking utilized through vocal music enhances development in other academic areas. Our vocal music program assists students in developing knowledge of our musical heritage by incorporating social studies standards. Students learn to make knowledgeable judgments about the music that they hear. Training received in Fairway's vocal music program enables students to experience leadership and confidence as part of the community, through live performances.

All Fairway students receive 30 minutes of PE and health instruction, five days per week. Our physical education (PE)/health curriculum is based on nine core conceptual objectives, developed by Rockwood's PE/health educators, curriculum facilitators, and community members. The core conceptual objectives are directly aligned with the National Physical Education Standards (NPE), set by the National Association for Sports and Physical Education (NASPE) organization. Fairway's nutrition program is part of the spiraled health curriculum for first, third, and fifth grades. It is supported throughout Fairway, both at lunch, and in the classrooms during snack time. Technology is included in our curriculum with the use of FitnessGram software, a program used by our P.E. teachers. This software package integrates math by allowing students to record and report their fitness goals and scores, along with prescriptive feedback for each student and parent.

Fairway's orchestra curriculum is also spiral designed, serving third through fifth grades. All third graders participate in orchestra class for 30 minutes, twice per week. However, those who develop a passion for orchestra may choose it as an elective in fourth and fifth grades, where they will continue classes for 30 minutes/twice per week. Fourth and fifth graders are grouped in like classes with their instrument of choice: violin, viola, cello, or bass, in order to refine their skills. Basic orchestra skills include math, reading, writing, problem-solving, collaboration, analytical skills, and effective communication. Many Fairway students who are involved in orchestra advance to private lessons, then continue to play for our middle school and high school programs.

Technology class is a popular option for Fairway fourth and fifth graders that is offered 30 minutes, twice weekly. The goal of technology education is to ensure technological literacy for students. Fairway students

use technology to develop solutions to real-world problems. Technology education is vital to Fairway's STEM program. Its interdisciplinary nature helps students comprehend and apply these concepts in their academic studies. Fairway students learn keyboarding skills, internet safety, how to identify credible websites for research, and utilize academic games to support learning. Students utilize Google Drive to share their work with peers and teachers, while completing projects related to our core-curriculum. Fairway's technology education prepares Fairway students for real world situations.

### 3. Instructional Methods and Interventions:

Fairway students receive core curriculum instruction from their classroom teachers. Teachers use differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students. Formative, summative and standardized assessments are used in the classroom to determine students who would benefit from acceleration or intervention. We use a tiered Response to Intervention (RTI) instructional method to assess each child based on their reading, writing, and math skills.

Teachers address the needs of all learners through guided reading and math groups. Each child is given direct instruction every day at his/her instructional level. Teachers use many different mediums for instruction. Technology is integrated in K-1 with the use of tablets featuring reading, grammar and math apps. Each classroom has eight or more computers to use for programs such as Raz-Kids, Spelling City, ConnectED, FasttMath, Study Island, etc. All of the programs can be differentiated to match each student's level. Additionally, Fairway has approximately 20 Nooks (eReaders) per grade level. Those Nooks are loaded with leveled readers from A-Z (Fountas and Pinnell), so all students can access appropriate text at their own level. Our current language arts program has an online component, where teachers can assign books to individual students at their levels. Students can access these books at school and home.

Students requiring extra support for specific standards and skills are divided into flexible, small groups for re-teaching. Generally, teacher assistants (TAs) monitor an independent classroom activity, so that the classroom teacher can deliver additional instruction when needed. Each school year formative, summative, and standardized assessments are given, which determine progress and placement. Students scoring below average in reading are identified for a Reading Intervention (RI) program. RI students meet daily with a Reading Specialist to work on skills and strategies for reading success. RI students receive double the minutes of reading instruction, because they meet with their RI teacher and classroom teacher. RI is a pull-out program for 30 minutes each day.

Fairway identifies gifted students through standardized testing process. Once identified, our talented and gifted (TAG) students attend gifted education classes at Rockwood's Center for Creative Learning (CCL) one full-day per week. Fairway teachers work collaboratively with CCL teachers to provide challenging and rigorous learning opportunities for our gifted population. The CCL's curriculum is inquiry-based and aligns with the district's curriculum, but is written two grade levels higher, in order to meet the needs of students who require academic acceleration. Our gifted students are encouraged to share their expanded knowledge with their Fairway classmates, as it applies to our daily curriculum.

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

Fairway utilizes a variety of formative, summative, and standardized assessment data points to analyze and improve student and school performance. Because Fairway has identified an achievement gap between our general population and subgroup students (specifically IEP and Free and Reduced Lunch) assessments are used, with other indicators, to drive instruction by analyzing data. Data from these assessments are used during Professional Learning Community (PLC) time, to discuss student progress and determine interventions necessary for each student.

Fairway uses the Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) for reading and the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) assessment to identify independent and instructional reading and math levels of students in kindergarten-fifth grade. The BAS is administered one-on-one, between teacher and student. Teachers discuss student's reading goals, and use information from the BAS to form guided reading groups, based on specific needs at each child's instructional level. The STAR is a computer-based assessment given to all

students in grades first through fifth, a minimum of four times per year. It measures specific skills and overall reading and math ability, then compares data with students across the nation. Growth is fore-casted and charted. Data from both assessments, as well as classroom information, is used in our PLCs to analyze success and implement interventions.

Fairway students take a district common summative math assessment at the beginning and end of every school year. Data from these assessments can be used to monitor growth, place students in appropriate math classes and/or flexible groups and use for quarterly report card information. Throughout the year, teachers use numerous formative assessments to guide their instruction while monitoring student achievement. Beyond STAR, Fairway students take common assessments for each math chapter, giving teachers additional data to compare. This data is critical for helping teachers monitor their flexible math groups and refine instruction for essential standards.

Students also meet with teachers individually to set goals based on data. Parents, teachers, and students collaborate by monitoring subject specific contracts, which are based on student goals. All are involved in the communication process about a child's data and progress. Teachers consistently communicate with parents via Infinite Campus, email, phone, texts, or meetings to discuss their child's progress and/or specific needs to help their child achieve their academic goals. Fairway strives for 100% "face-to-face" participation during two formal parent/teacher conferences (fall/spring.) However, it is communicated that parents may request a conference or team meeting at any time of the year to further discuss students' academic goals and progress. By doing whatever it takes to inform parents of their child's strengths and areas for growth, Fairway ensures high levels of student achievement and a strong commitment to closing the achievement gap.

## **PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS**

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

Fairway Elementary engages and motivates all students by providing and maintaining an inviting, warm, and positive school climate. Substitute teachers, visitors, and community leaders often comment on the “family feeling” as they enter the front doors of Fairway. Fairway’s stakeholders know that a positive school climate is critical to academic success. With that belief, the staff’s first priority is that of cultivating a safe and happy atmosphere for all students. Before students even enter kindergarten, a special Fairway Eagle t-shirt is hand-delivered. The staff also receives a matching t-shirt to wear throughout the school year; encouraging a sense of unity and belonging. Teachers make personal phone calls to all parents during the first week of every school year, and continue these conversations throughout the school year. Through a strong character education initiative, Fairway teachers regularly hold class meetings to discuss norms, celebrate successes, and solve problems peacefully. Primary classes are paired with intermediate classes to build “buddy” relationships, and support one another through shared academic activities. A successful mentoring program matches a staff member with a student who is in need of extra support. The staff mentor checks in with his/her student to give encouragement and build a trusting relationship. Through weekly Professional Learning Communities (PLC’s), staff members meet to brainstorm ways to meet the diverse needs of every learner.

Additionally, student leadership permeates the entire school culture. All students identify their leadership strengths and are then encouraged to use those strengths in various leadership positions. Student leaders act as morning greeters, peer tutors, teacher assistants, hallway monitors, and facilitators of school-wide assemblies. One example is that every morning the student body “tunes in” as Fairway student leaders present a live video news broadcast to share school announcements. The Student News Team is responsible for the entire broadcast and they lead the whole school in reciting the Fairway Eagle “SOAR” pledge to: solve problems peacefully (S), be open (O) to new learning, always (A) do their personal best, and show respect (R) to themselves and one another. This pledge reinforces the core belief of Fairway to provide a positive environment that supports the academic, social, and emotional growth of all its students.

In the same spirit, Fairway teachers feel valued and supported during monthly staff meetings where they have the opportunity to honor each other, once a year through district recognition programs like “Teacher of the Year” and Rockwood School District’s “ROSE” award for outstanding service in education, and in everyday conversations with school administration. However, Fairway teachers feel the most valued by knowing they work in a building where love, acceptance, and respect abound.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

Rockwood School District services hundreds of homeless students at any given point of the year. Realizing that students cannot possibly focus on learning when they are worried about much larger issues, like hunger, Fairway Elementary developed the “Got Your Back Pack” (GYBP) program. Fairway established the GYBP program in August 2011 to alleviate student worry over hunger; thus allowing students to focus on learning. Every weekend our homeless students receive a backpack filled with nutritious food items that are easy to open, simple to prepare, and can accommodate a variety of living circumstances. Over the years, this program has grown to serve students across the entire school district. Fairway administration dedicated a section of the building to house the collected food for the entire district, creating a food pantry. The GYBP program involves students, their families, staff members, and many community groups and businesses. Fairway’s staff prides themselves on teaching students the value of giving back and helping others. Students and their families collect food and personal care items through various drives, including school-wide events such as: Trunk or Treat, Cup Stacking Competitions, Soup-er Bowl, Hundredth Day of School Challenge, Bake Sales, Square One Art, Trivia Night, neighborhood collections, and so much more. Fairway has also reached out to local businesses to support the program. Some of GYBP’s biggest and most consistent supporters are our local grocery stores, food banks, community colleges, churches, restaurants, and farmer’s markets. Fairway’s student activities groups (Go St. Louis, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Girls on the Run, etc.) have organized their own service learning projects to help with the food

pantry efforts. After collecting hundreds of food items, these student groups stock the in-house food pantry, and some groups raise money to purchase food for the pantry, go shopping themselves, stock shelves, and pack backpacks. Through this process, students are able to see first-hand the value of helping others and the impact it has on their peers. Fairway's has an amazing parent group that leads and coordinates volunteers from all around the district in order to pack over 100 backpacks every week for students. Our volunteers dedicate many hours each week to shop for food, organize the pantry, pack backpacks, and sort backpacks for delivery based on the needs of the homeless student population. Fairway truly understands the importance of taking care of each other, specifically feeding our homeless population, and how that increases students' overall academic, social, and emotional success.

### 3. Professional Development:

Fairway's professional development approach is always focused on students. We strive to align to the district's strategic professional development plan, while also being responsive to our building's specific needs. Through the use of professional development "needs inventories" and post-evaluations, a professional development plan is designed for each school year.

Driven to close our achievement gap by improving upon instructional practices (especially in regard to our students with special needs,) we utilize many resources such as guest speakers from the district or professional world to educate our staff. For example, a Clinical Nurse Specialist/Behavior Interventionist educated our staff about Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD). The strategies she provided were easily applicable to students with other mood disorders. Our purpose for inviting her was to learn more about the disorder, how it affects some of our special needs students, and to improve upon our strategies for working closely with these students, ultimately ensuring optimal student success.

Professional development is also implemented through various book studies in order to keep staff current on district, community, and social changes. One powerful book study titled: A Repair Kit for Grading, by Ken O'Connor, was chosen in anticipation of the district's switch to a K-5 Standards-Based Grading and Reporting (SBGR) model. Our staff thrives on being knowledgeable of current educational trends in order to improve instruction. This book study enabled the Fairway staff to embrace the district's change, understand the power of knowledge we would gain about our students with the change, and then meet student needs through a more comprehensive assessment and reporting model. Our staff is proud that with the targeted professional development received, they now understand our students' academic progress better than ever, and can use this new grading/reporting to better drive their instruction.

Another area in which meaningful and effective professional development has impacted our teachers is that of improving on our English/Language Arts instruction. As our district moved towards a Balanced Literacy approach, Fairway was already implementing many of the new instructional strategies. Additional ELA professional development led our teachers to initiate more individual student conferences in reading and writing, and provided the ability to better meet each individual student's needs.

Other professional development opportunities include: summer and school year district-provided workshops based on teacher need and current district curriculum implementations, opportunities (release time) to allow teachers time to observe and collaborate with other teachers in the district, and the ability to share best practices and knowledge acquired from these professional development opportunities with our own staff. Fairway is special because we share and learn from each other, always putting our students first. We are lifelong learners.

### 4. School Leadership:

School leadership has been second to none at Fairway Elementary School. From its inception, Fairway's leaders have been true visionaries that have facilitated leadership in others, especially the students. The leadership philosophy will always be that we do whatever it takes to ensure all students realize their potential. Fairway's school leaders hold true to the following core values: promote and model ethical values and good character as the foundation of performance, build a safe and caring school community, provide a meaningful and challenging academic program that connects all students to learning and honors

their differences, and engage all stakeholders in shared responsibility for learning, character and climate.

Because of this philosophy and the success of Fairway, it is no surprise that the first two principals now work within the district's central office. The first principal of Fairway now serves as the Assistant Superintendent of Learning and Support Services. The second principal was recently promoted to the district's Director of Elementary Education position. Both of these influential leaders are now able to spread Fairway's positive culture and academic success on a more global level, thus impacting the overall success of the entire school district.

Fairway's school leaders from the past, as well as current administration, strive to be fully entrenched in every aspect of the school. Through a true character education approach, Fairway's school leaders ensure an equitable, systematic approach that allows for "voice and choice" from all stakeholders, especially its students. This is accomplished through the use of a building leadership committee that meets regularly. The committee is comprised of staff members representative of every area of the school community. Ideas, suggestions, and plans for ongoing school improvement (focused entirely on students' needs) are continuously discussed and shared with the rest of the school staff via the representatives. Additionally, academic/curriculum issues are addressed through a vertical team approach where each grade level is represented. Fairway is also proud of its practice to include parents in decision-making as much as possible. This is accomplished through regular Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) Executive Board meetings. Teacher liaisons attend and collaborate with parents. Furthermore, committees that address other topics, such as the Caring Schools (character) committee, and Professional Development committee meet regularly, also utilizing the same organizational structures. Either the building principal or the assistant principal is present at all committee meetings. Meeting minutes are taken and shared through the use of Google Drive to ensure everyone has access to the information and the ability to follow through on action items to enhance and improve student learning.

Finally, Fairway's school leaders are reflective practitioners who regularly seek feedback from all stakeholders in order for continuous improvement to occur. Through community-wide surveys, direct conversations, transparency, visible presence, and organized structures; the school administration facilitates leadership within all stakeholders to promote educational success.

## Part VI – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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Fairway Elementary is committed to maintaining highly effective Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Our grade level PLCs are comprised of teachers within a grade level, administrators, the guidance counselor, reading interventionists, and specialists. Weekly, these professionals work collaboratively to share best practices, review data, and discuss strategies to help all of our students learn better. Four corollary questions guide the actions of our PLCs: What do students need to know and be able to do in the classroom? How do educators know if they have learned it? What will we do if students haven't learned it? What will we do when they already know it? In keeping these four questions at the forefront of our efforts, Fairway's educators are able to work more effectively to meet the needs of all students. We believe that if our school is powered by these highly effective PLCs, our students will have the greatest opportunity for success through learning at a rigorous level.

Through much research and professional development over the years, we have come to realize that we work better as a team than individually. Fairway teachers understand that it's a paradigm shift from teaching to learning, and that instead of "my" students, it's "our" students. Teachers realize that it's about first unpacking the learning standards and identifying the essential course outcomes. Once essential course outcomes are identified and agreed upon, PLCs can then focus on supporting students' specific learning needs.

When our PLCs meet at the beginning of a school year, they utilize a student learning model in which they first study the standards and are able to answer the question, "What does our curriculum expect our students to know and be able to do?" Once that question has been answered, teachers move to studying overview data to determine who their students are. Teachers then begin to discuss where each of their students are with respect to the standards. As powerful discussions ensue, teachers consider their collective response to their students' needs. Teachers ask themselves and each other, "What instructional strategies and supports will meet individual students' needs?" At this point, true collaboration begins, as all team members begin to identify which of their strategies were effective and which were not. PLCs consider reteaching, relearning, and re-assessing students in order to ensure that all students are learning and achieving. PLCs also consider strategies for students who already know the learning standards and they share best practices for a more rigorous learning track.

It is the powerful practice of effective PLCs that has had the most profound impact on our students' academic success. At Fairway, we believe that it is this collective efficacy, the selfless ability to talk about "our" students, and knowing that each of us will maintain the focus on learning versus teaching; and how together we can help ALL students thrive in our world.