

U.S. Department of Education
2017 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Ms. Andrea Kramer Schwartz

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

Official School Name John P. Woods Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3201 Massard Road

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

City Fort Smith State AR Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 72903-5512

County Sebastian County

Telephone (479) 452-5808

Fax (479) 452-0021

Web site/URL

<http://www.fortsmithschools.org/works/Home.aspx>

E-mail aschwart@fortsmithschools.org

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. Doug Brubaker E-mail dbrubaker@fortsmithschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

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

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

Date _____

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

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

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

Part I – Eligibility Certification

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

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2017 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. 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 2011 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: 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016.
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 has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.
12. 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 (2016-2017) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 19 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 4 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 2 High schools
 - 1 K-12 schools
- 26 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
 - Suburban
 - Small city or town in a rural area
 - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2016 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	7	13	20
K	34	41	75
1	41	32	73
2	33	42	75
3	41	34	75
4	47	37	84
5	39	45	84
6	44	40	84
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	286	284	570

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 7 % Asian
 - 5 % Black or African American
 - 13 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 67 % White
 - 7 % 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 2015 – 2016 school year: 17%

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, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	49
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	44
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	93
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	540
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.172
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	17

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 11 %
59 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Spanish, Laotian, Vietnamese, Korean, Mandarin, Russian, Muskogee Creek, Chinese, Filipino, Punjabi, Arabic, Albanian, Finnish, Urdu, Hindi, Nyanja, Tagalog

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 41 %
Total number students who qualify: 223
8. Students receiving special education services: 6 %
34 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- 0 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 0 Emotional Disturbance
- 0 Hearing Impairment
- 0 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 3 Other Health Impaired
- 5 Specific Learning Disability
- 25 Speech or Language Impairment
- 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 1 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 0 Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 2
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 including those teaching high school specialty subjects	23
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	3
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	1
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

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 25:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	95%	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 2016.

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

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.
Yes No
If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

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

A safe place where we work, think, and learn together for success in tomorrow's world. Motto: Guiding students in Opportunities for Adventure, Leadership, and Success!

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

Woods Elementary is a proud, positive and persistent learning community dedicated to the mission of being “A safe place where we work, think, and learn together for success in tomorrow's world.” Woods is “Guiding students in Opportunities for Adventure, Leadership, and Success!”

Woods is one of 19 neighborhood elementary schools in Fort Smith, Arkansas. The city, with a population of 86,209, is the center of a diverse economy and has an iconic history and an encouraging future for all of our citizens. Fort Smith boasts a rich western and military historical heritage, which includes citizens such as Bell Starr, U.S. Deputy Marshall Bass Reeves, General William O. Darby, founder of the US Army Rangers, and “Hanging Judge” Isaac C. Parker, who was portrayed in the novel/film “True Grit.” The Fort Smith Chaffee Maneuver Training Center, the 188th Wing and Arkansas Air National Guard, which are currently located in Fort Smith, extend the city’s military traditions to the present. Fort Smith is also home to Arkansas’ earliest symphony orchestra and the state’s oldest continuously running theatre group, the Fort Smith Little Theatre, whose productions are entirely volunteer based.

Woods, built in 1975, is located in the historic Massard Community of the city at 3201 Massard Road. 570 students are enrolled for the 2016-17 school year. The school population consists of pre-kindergarten through sixth grade students, inclusive of 22 general education classrooms and one preschool classroom. The demographics of the school reflect the varying cultures of Fort Smith and the Northwest Arkansas area, with significant emphasis on the Latino and Middle Eastern populations.

The vision of Woods is to inspire a philosophy of shared respect by embracing differences and to support academic and personal goals for all students. The staff is dedicated to student academic achievement and meeting the emotional and social needs of students. Students have met and exceeded the academic target each year and have received recognitions from Arkansas School Recognition and Reward Program, ranking in the top 5% of performance for achievement and growth.

In August of 2015, Woods’ PLC team participated in a summer professional development activity on Professional Learning Communities (PLC) based on the work of Drs. Richard and Rebecca DuFour. This team trained certified staff in the PLC Model during the beginning-of-the-year professional development sessions. Each week, time was carved out for grade-level bands to collaborate with one another, and in 2016 vertical team meetings were implemented. The focus was on collected student achievement data to plan interventions and enrichments for students. Additionally, common assessments were developed each week, and the resulting data was used to drive instruction. The school’s vision and mission statements were revisited, and a laser focus was established on student achievement, including the most effective teaching practices. The team concentrated on the value of collaborative conversations, and in 2015 staff and students embarked on a path to consciously plan higher order questions to ask during lessons, requiring students to provide justifications for their thoughts and answers. As teachers began to work toward common goals, the team decided to implement a two-year plan. The Achievement and Accountability Department helped develop and implement job-embedded professional development to support teachers and enhance student learning.

The staff is dedicated to ensuring and providing superior and demanding instruction. Teachers have participated in authentic and deliberate professional development. When the curriculum areas in writing, reading, math, and science needed to be evaluated, the staff engaged in a year-long, intensive and job-embedded professional development which centered on unpacking the standards in literacy, math and science while focusing on essential standards, questions, and common assessments. With the support of the math and literacy facilitators, teachers implemented strategies from Extending Children's Mathematics, Cognitive Guided Instruction and Number Talks, which provided them with instructional strategies that promote writing and critical thinking in math. To scaffold literacy instruction, teachers were given support for implementing guided reading and writing with special focus on developing independent and self-regulated readers and writers. The school’s special education teacher and support staff participated in professional development on targeted reading and math strategies to meet the needs of students with disabilities and to address learning gaps.

Students who were identified as “at risk” in specific categories on standardized testing participated in an after-school tutoring program facilitated by four certified staff members. Each student was given tailored lessons with additional support in reading and math instruction.

Woods counselor addressed the social and emotional needs of the school’s students through individual counseling, small group counseling and classroom guidance. Students participated in physical education twice a week, music classes once a week, art once a week, and media/technology classes once a week.

The staff is committed to developing proud, positive, and persistent learners who will become successful and productive citizens as they navigate through their lives today and into the future.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

At Woods, teachers utilize curriculum maps in each core subject area (based on the Common Core/Arkansas Standards), to drive the instruction and assessment of students. Teachers use the curriculum maps as a guide to plan activities for assessment and instruction and employ the data collected to plan for remediation, intervention, and enrichment.

The literacy curriculum concentrates on spiraled student growth in the areas of reading and writing. Development Reading Assessment (DRA) and the Standardized Test for Assessment of Reading (STAR Reading) are administered to students in grades K-6. This data is used to organize individualized or small group instruction centered on the strengths and weaknesses of students. The district's elementary reading protocol emphasizes improving phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension and fluency. K-6 interventionists deliver interventions for struggling learners who are not proficient on the ITBS and ACT Aspire Assessments and who are identified as showing markers for dyslexia. Each teacher supports K-2 struggling readers and writers based on the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). Every student in grades K-2 is assessed by the classroom teacher to identify skill gaps. Core instruction and identified individualized and/or small group intervention in deficient areas are provided by the classroom teacher. Progress monitoring of the K-2 students is also handled by the teacher. Grades 3-6 students are assessed using STAR Reading at the end of each quarter to measure growth. The daily literacy block is 90 minutes. During a whole group mini lesson, students are taught the grade level content standard and then grouped into differentiated reading and writing groups based on skill level needs. Teachers utilize additional resources to support and enhance reading and writing with mentor sentences, read works, Spelling City, Stride Academy, IXL Literacy and math and supplemental resources. The literacy facilitator supports teachers and provides embedded professional development and modeling of high yield teaching strategies.

Math curriculum centers on an attainment of basic skills followed by focusing on problem solving and the application of mathematical practices. Common Core/Arkansas Standards and 8 Mathematical Practices are the preliminary focus for the curriculum. Each lesson is planned to align to the grade level learning expectations and goals provided in the curriculum map. The math facilitator guides classroom teachers in using high yield instructional strategies while modeling and/or co-teaching to provide explicit and immediate feedback to teachers. Each year, students are assessed with STAR Math to establish a baseline for planning focused instruction. Whole group mini lessons are taught on the grade level standards and/or small group instruction is based on specific skills needs. Do the Math, textbook materials, IXL Math, Extending Children's Mathematics (ECM), Cognitive Guided Instruction (CGI) and Number Talks are just a few resources available for instruction and assessment. The daily math block is 70 minutes. Hands-on manipulatives and technology resources are used to enhance and support students' growth and learning experiences.

The science curriculum is based on Next Generation Science Standards. The district has progressed from the traditional science fair concept to the STEM (Science Technology Engineering Math) competition. Teachers design lessons throughout the year emphasizing the integration of technology, math, literacy and engineering. Tailored challenges designed for students in grades 3-6 encourage them to make a plan, organize materials, assess ideas, problem solve, produce a product and test the product in a school wide competition with progression to a district STEM competition. Students collaborate in teams of 3-4 in conjunction with students from a nearby junior high, district technology personnel, science facilitators and classroom teachers. Students are engaged using essential academic language and content through classroom instruction, assessments and trials. At least 20% of the instructional time for science each week is spent on experiments performed by the students and/or modeled by the teacher.

The social studies curriculum utilized at Woods is based on the Arkansas Department of Education Frameworks. Engaging lessons are designed by integrating reading and writing into the curriculum. Students are immersed in historical content not only by noteworthy stories that connect time periods and historical figures, but also by listening to guest speakers, taking virtual field trips to historic sites and watching

character reenactments from a specific era. Appropriate, social studies material is frequently integrated into the literacy block to expose students to nonfiction text. Arkansas history, citizenship and geography are also a part of the social studies content. Students are acquiring these foundational skills in several ways. Each year Woods holds student council elections. Students prepare election signs, write speeches, and present the speeches before the election. The student body votes for the officers electronically using computer kiosks. After the officers are elected students in each classroom run for representative. Again, students create marketing materials, create and give speeches with classroom voting. Throughout the year the student council participates civically by holding drives for Wounded Warrior Project, Hamilton House, and the Humane Society. During Constitution Day students and community members share literature about how the country was founded. The school worked closely with the developing Marshal's Museum staff. Woods' students actually won the "selfie" contest held by the museum. Fifth grade students participate in a Flag Etiquette program provided by the William O. Darby Chapter of Military Officers Association of America. Then students from this assembly are chosen to raise and lower the flag on the campus each day.

Preschool is licensed as an Arkansas Better Chance Early Childhood Education preschool for 3 and 4 year old students. The program provides a written curriculum plan arranged in thematic units, projects or topics of study including goals/objectives related to cultural diversity, social/emotional development, creative/aesthetic learning, cognitive/intellectual, physical development and language. This curriculum is taught by a licensed preschool teacher and paraprofessional. The core curriculum areas are Emergent Literacy, Mathematical Thinking, Science/Technology, Social Studies, and Creativity/Aesthetics. The alignment of academic standards ensures preschoolers gain foundation skills necessary to preparation for standards in K-3. Standards vertically align with language arts and math standards to support transition from early childhood into K-3 education. The Qualls Early Learning Inventory is used to determine the impact of early education on school readiness and success in primary grades. General Knowledge, Oral Communication, Written Language, Math Concepts, Work Habits, and Attentive Behaviors are assessed with this inventory and 96% of students enrolled in preschool met the standard.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Preparing students to become contributing members of a global society and helping each student strive for individual success is the top priority at Woods. The school incorporates all modalities to ensure that students can be successful in everything they do. Every student learns in different ways and does so through different means. It is critical to engage the students in library media skills, visual arts, fine arts, health and physical education, English as a Second Language, technology and Gifted and Talented education services.

Specialty area classes support the core curriculum by integrating the Arkansas State Standards/Common Core Standards with their own state and national area standards. Specialty area educators collaborate with core teachers to plan lessons that will enhance instruction and provide opportunities that allow students to be fully engaged in art, music, technology, and physical education.

Every week students receive 40 minutes of art, 40 minutes of music and 40 minutes of library. They receive 80 minutes of physical education each week in addition to 30 minutes of daily recess. The art teacher provides instruction focusing on technical and visual characteristics of art and creates lessons that allow the students to experience a plethora of artists who use different styles, techniques and mediums. Students are exposed to art, the way it is used to convey a mood or experience and the fact that some art is based on cultural or historical influences. They then analyze their work and replicate or create pieces using different mediums.

Each week during music class, students learn basic music theory as well as value and context in a song or a piece of instrumental music. Exposure to music specific to a particular time period or musician is common practice during the class. Students can identify classical, contemporary or current music based on beat or rhythm. Instruments such as recorders, drums, rhythm sticks, piano keyboards and guitars are provided to allow the students to participate during class when appropriate. Students in grades 4-6 receive direct piano keyboard instruction. Each year the music teacher directs specific grade levels to provide the entertainment for the Christmas Program, the PTA Founder's Day Program, the Veteran's Day Program, the Spring Program and other solicited community programs. Every student who participates has a specific role; the

talents of all students are highlighted.

Physical education classes focus on mental and physical health habits. Lessons are planned by the physical education teacher and a paraprofessional. The lessons are designed to be interactive and engaging while ensuring the students are physically active. The teachers administer a basic fitness skills test, which includes sit ups, push-ups and jumping jacks, to assess physical skill level. Students in grades 4-6 train to complete a 10 Minute Mile Marathon by the end of the year. The students learn about team building, spatial awareness, healthy eating choices, coordination and appropriate exercise. Each grade level learns developmentally appropriate calisthenics. Kindergarten and first grade students learn to jump rope, while second and third grade learn to catch and throw a ball. Third grade students play tennis, fourth grade is exposed to archery, and fifth and sixth grade learn about basketball and volleyball as well as track and field activities in preparation for the district track meet. The teachers incorporate math and literacy when appropriate in all activities. Additionally, various games and equipment are utilized to make physical activity as engaging as possible.

Library and media standards drive the instruction in the media center. Students check out books from the available circulation and have access to ebooks through the media center. Students can access the ebooks at home by using their school login and password. Accelerated Reader (AR) book tests are available online at school as well as at home. Students become proficient at accessing research databases online, coding and using other technological resources. These skills are essential for each student to become a responsible digital, literate citizen. Parents and teachers are provided with resources and login credentials through special training sessions facilitated by the media specialist. Keyboarding skills are practiced not only in the media center but also in every classroom each week using the Learning.com curriculum.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Differentiated instruction is employed by teachers and support staff by using data to design small groups and to facilitate individualized interventions. Grade level curriculum is taught during whole group mini lessons or through direct teaching. Current data collected, previous year's standardized test results and other classroom-based formative assessments determine groupings. Students are assessed according to grade level standard (Grades 1-6 are given the Developmental Reading Assessment and STAR Math; Kindergarten assesses with the QUELI -Qualls Early Learning Inventory). All students have access to chromebooks or laptops. In each classroom a LCD Projector connected to a computer and document camera allow for delivery of content. Woods is a targeted Title I school and this year we purchased Kindle Fire devices for each of the Title I students. After attending an instructional session, parents signed a form to allow the students to utilize the device and technology programs at school and at home.

Technology software and curriculum resources such as IXL Math and Literacy, STRIDE Academy, Spelling City, ECM, CGI, RTI (Response To Intervention), SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) for the English Language Learners, CIM (Comprehensive Intervention Model) for the special education students, Learning.com (keyboarding program), STAR Reading, STAR Math, Accelerated Reader (AR), hands-on manipulatives and other materials are utilized to provide prescriptive, tailored interventions for students.

Students not proficient on standardized testing are placed in small intervention groups within the classroom. Intervention is provided for grades 3-6 and for students not meeting the standards on DIBELS in grades K-2. Small group intervention is supplied by the classroom teacher and/or the interventionist. Students are progress monitored bi-weekly to ascertain skill gaps. Students identified as needing special education receive services from the special education resource teacher, speech language pathologist, occupational therapist or physical therapist. A creativity and a critical thinking test is administered to students in grades 3-6 who exhibit outside-the-box thinking. Students who qualify receive additional class time once a week in the Gifted and Talented Program. Enrichment classes are provided for K-2 students by the GATE teacher.

To increase student achievement and growth, teachers and support staff administer formative and summative assessments covering all curriculum areas to all grade levels. The window for the Kindergarten QUELI assessment opens in September of each school year. Grade levels 1 through 6 are assessed using DRA during the fall semester and students are grouped according to instructional reading levels. STAR Reading

and Math provide teachers with data to use for proper placement in differentiated groupings. State required DIBELS assessment is administered to locate gaps in early reading behaviors such as phonemic awareness, letter names and sounds, blends, digraphs, and nonsense words. This test screens students for dyslexia markers. ELL students are required to be given the ELPA 21 assessment in the spring semester to assess language acculturation. Students in grades 3-6 participate in three interim assessments that mirror the ACT Aspire exam while first and second graders utilize a common assessment created by the districts accountability staff.

Teachers, facilitators, and interventionists collaborate during the designated PLC meetings. Teachers are grouped horizontally by grade and vertically by a span of three grade levels. Horizontal teams meet three times a month, while vertical teams meet once a month. Each week teams focus on a specific goal. Teams analyze student test scores to determine immediate academic need areas and create an AIP (Academic Improvement Plan). Students needing additional support in literacy and math skills outside the school day participate in EDLP (Extended Day Learning Program). Woods' leadership team is comprised of representatives from each grade level, support staff and specialty areas who meet with the principal to review academic goals, review students being monitored, and discuss ways to intervene. The staff has unpacked the Common Core Standards to ensure assessments and lesson plans meet expectations.

During the fall and spring semesters, mid-term reports are sent home. Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled in the middle of each quarter. Parents and teachers meet throughout the year as needed. Teachers use email, text, remind 101, Class Dojo, phone calls and notes to maintain an open line of communication. Each Tuesday, folders with student work are sent home for parents to review and sign.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Woods Elementary is a proud, positive and persistent learning community dedicated to the mission of “A safe place where we work, think, and learn together for success in tomorrow's world. Woods is “Guiding students in Opportunities for Adventure, Leadership, and Success!” Fort Smith Public School’s is a “zero tolerance” district that focuses on early prevention and intervention of any bullying actions. Woods teaches its students constructive ways to handle conflicts and create resolutions for problems through positive talk. The Second Step curriculum and Conscious Discipline programs are used to provide our students with ways to resolve problems in any setting. Behavior contracts and academic plans are developed by teachers, students and parents to ensure the students are successful today and every day.

Behavioral, social, emotional, or academic goals are supported by the school counselor and the school-based mental health counselor. Students can meet with counselors in small groups or as an individual depending on need level. The counselor interacts with groups of students to form friendships, work on social skills, or to deal with a particular crisis. The counselors meet with parents to offer parenting skills or to discuss the needs of their student. The schedule for meeting with the groups or an individual is usually once a week but could be more frequent depending on need levels. The counselor seeks out support systems within the community to provide assistance to Woods families to ensure they receive the best care. These support systems include Childrens’ Service League, Children’s Emergency Shelter, School Based Mental Health personnel, River Valley Behavior Management, Perspectives, Migrant Education, Homeless Services, and the Backpack Program.

An itinerant nurse serves Woods’ students twice a week. The majority of her time is spent helping students who may become ill at school or injured during recess or a physical activity. Additionally, we have some students who require monitoring due to severe allergies, special medical conditions, and attention deficit disorders. The nurse also follows up on immunizations, schedules dental programs and screenings and sets up growth and development programs as outlined by the student handbook and curriculum.

Woods utilizes a variety of methods to ensure teachers are valued and supported in a nurturing environment. Climate/Culture surveys are administered at the end of the year to help guide decisions and changes to be implemented the following school year. The school team votes on themes that support the mission and goals that we as a staff set each year. Google surveys and face to face meetings are utilized to ensure teachers' voices are heard and used for making decisions. A Teacher PLC Focus group works closely with staff to ensure support is given to each teacher as we grow as a professional learning community. The school’s leadership team contains a representative from each grade level and specialty area. This team uses the feedback from the entire school to guide curriculum decisions for the school as a whole. Whole Staff Planning meetings are utilized to address budget spending for Title I funds as well as Gains funds earned from achievement and growth on state testing. Monthly, the school community selects two staff members of the month which coincides with our Patriot of the Month student honorees from each classroom. These staff members receive special privileges that include designated parking space for the month, a t-shirt, and a gift card provided by one of our partners in education. A staff member is highlighted in our weekly newsletter for innovative teaching used with classes and students.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Family and community participation is a critical component of the school environment. Parents and community stakeholders take great pride in Woods, and it shows through consistent support given to students. The community is encouraged to join PTA. Parents participate in fall and spring parent teacher conferences and always reaches its goal of 100 percent participation. An effort is made to connect with every parent, by making phone calls or visiting them at home.

Parents serve as homeroom parents, classroom volunteers, mystery readers, assist with special events, and are active PTA board members. Activities are planned, organized and implemented by the PTA, including

fundraisers during the fall and spring semesters. Families have opportunities to participate in Tailgate Night, Trunk or Treat, Spring Carnival, 6th Grade Party/Appreciation Night, Field Day, class parties and Read Across America Week. PTA provides money for 5th graders to visit the State Capitol. General meetings are held and coincide with a program the music teacher facilitates.

Woods' school community worked with the Strong Fathers, Strong Families program. This series of events includes invitations to fathers or important family members to participate in reading, math and science activities with their students.

Woods is fortunate to have several Partners In Education members that collaborate with parents, students and teachers to provide support in many ways. Partners participate in the student mentor program, provide monetary donations or supplies for parties or classroom events, speak at career fairs, and aid with field trips. Fifth graders benefit from a banking partner that provides lessons and savings accounts which teaches the benefit of saving money by allowing deposits to be made each week. Students return the favor with musical presentations and by helping with special events.

Woods has been a member of the National Elementary Honor Society Association for years. Students meet a set of criteria to participate in this organization that provides community service to Fort Smith. Students have collected toys for the annual Toy Toss at a local university, participated in coin drives for the Humane Society and collected cans for the Salvation Army's "Souper-Bowl" drive.

Woods teachers and staff believe it is important for students to learn about the community and find ways to be contributing community members through service projects such as helping Delta Beta Sigma to collect money to support the Hamilton House, Sebastian County Humane Society, Wounded Warrior Project, Habitat for Humanity and the Salvation Army.

3. Professional Development:

The most meaningful and powerful professional development that has strengthened the staff has been authentic and embedded professional development. Beginning the 2015-16 school year, Woods' leadership team attended the PLC (Professional Learning Community) conference, and developed a schedule to incorporate horizontal team meetings. Grade level teams met weekly, and vertical teams met monthly to analyze student work and assessments and used data to plan lessons that conform to the standards and curriculum goals. Teachers use data analysis to determine effective teaching strategies that can be shared vertically and horizontally to support students. The district's achievement and accountability offices developed a yearlong professional development plan for Woods which focuses on higher order questions that ensure students justify answers with supporting evidence and determining essential skills to be taught for each quarter. The school focused on unpacking the standards to make certain the content is understandable to students.

Each teacher reflects on his/her professional growth by taking a self-assessment to determine professional development goals each year. Those objectives determine the professional growth plan goals for the following year. That data is used to choose school wide and personal goals. Teachers are surveyed to determine professional development needs for the upcoming year, and the leadership team uses that data to plan professional development. To meet state requirements for the PGP, teachers must participate in 18 hours directly connected to his/her goals. The district provides ample professional development training that includes comprehensive literacy, math, science, technology, instructional strategies, data analysis, site-based, building level professional development, mini conferences that are topic specific and after-school offerings that can total 48 hours per year. FSPS requires teachers to earn 60 professional development hours each year to maintain a current license.

Administrators scaffold and support teachers so that they can select instructional strategies and classroom management skills that improve teaching and use state and district evaluation and observation protocols to facilitate feedback to teachers. Literacy, math and science facilitators guide teachers by modeling and discussing best practices for teaching, give the teachers immediate feedback and plan professional development.

Woods has two National Board Certified teachers, and the counselor is in the process of obtaining certification; one administrator has participated in the ACEL Leader 2 Leader program. Many teachers have taken on leadership roles by participating in a technology task forces, textbook adoptions and grade level curriculum alignments through course subject task forces and facilitated/presented professional development in the district.

4. School Leadership:

Woods has one building principal, half-time assistant principal and Teacher in Charge who handles issues in the absence of administrators. The leadership team consists of a representative from each grade level and meets quarterly/as needed to review and discuss the improvement plan to monitor focused indicators in the plan. Grade-level PLC groups contain one leadership team member.

Each grade level has daily common planning time, allowing teachers to discuss assessment and instruction. Once a week, teachers meet in horizontal PLC teams, and once a month, vertical PLC teams meet to discuss gaps between grade levels. Teachers and instructional facilitators collaborate to find ways to encourage student growth/achievement.

Other committees utilized are Crisis Team, School Safety, Partners in Education, Handbook Committee, Health/Wellness, Student Council, National Elementary Honor Society and PTA.

District Coordinators such as the special education coordinator collaborates with administrators and special education staff to recommend IEP or instructional needs for identified students. Special Programs, Literacy, Math and Science coordinators support teachers' growth by providing professional development and working with staff to analyze trend data that drives instruction.

Administrators convene monthly with personnel in each district department. Administrators meet monthly with their direct supervisor to discuss information to determine plans and goals for elementary campuses. Quarterly, elementary principals participate in Benchmarking for Success to dissect district trend data, examine new programming and create data plans.

Last year the district was led by a well renowned, student-driven superintendent who exposed us to recent educational practices through book studies. He was a major influence with legislators in the state and nation regarding laws that govern schools. He retired in 2016. For the first half of the 2016-2017 school year we were led by an interim superintendent who supported the district in new growth as we continued the mission of the district. In January 2017 a new superintendent was hired and is bringing innovative changes. He is currently building relationships with the entire community while observing and addressing important priorities to ensure that we continue to be one of the best establishments in the country.

Pride in the school system from community leaders in Fort Smith is due to support from the city's mayor, the Chamber of Commerce and the 200 businesses that participate in PIE. Collaboration and shared leadership at the school level supported by the district and the community has created a focus on the significance of education in our community.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Woods Elementary is a school deeply rooted in developing a positive place for students to grow into contributing members of an ever changing global society. It is a community where students, teachers, staff, and parents experience a family atmosphere in which every member is valued, treated with kindness, and challenged academically.

Building positive relationships is one of the top priorities at Woods. Each year teachers administer an interest survey to students. This affords the teacher an insight into students' likes, dislikes, hobbies, favorites and learning preferences and lays the groundwork to establish a strong relationship between the students and the teacher. Most importantly, this background knowledge aids the teacher in planning lessons that are relevant to students and center on the skills needed to progress up the academic continuum in each of the core subject areas. A solid relationship between teacher and student is one of the most important aspects of creating learners who are intrinsically motivated, reach high expectations, and exhibit favorable behaviors.

Woods students are held accountable for not only academic but also behavioral success. Teachers accept nothing but the best effort from students. This is evident when teachers take extra time before or after school and during lunch to help students with improving skills or by providing emotional and behavioral support. Woods implements the Kagan clip up and clip down chart to monitor behaviors in the school community. The students begin each day "ready to learn." During the day students can move up or down the chart based upon positive or negative choices. Students who exhibit exceptional behavior can clip off the chart to clip onto the counselor or principal. When students clip off the chart, they earn special treats like pencils, gift certificates and eating lunch with the counselor or principal. Some teachers use Class Dojo as a point system because it is a great parent/teacher communication tool.

Each quarter students may earn awards for perfect attendance, A-B Honor Roll, Principal's Honor Roll, and Good Citizenship. Each month teachers select a "Patriot of the Month." These students are announced at the "Wake Up Woods" assembly. Students are chosen by their teacher for exhibiting the 3 P's - Proud, Positive, and Persistent. Teachers provide incentives for students based on criteria developed by the class family.

The Woods' school community is led by this thought, "Every Child is Gifted, They Just Unwrap Their Packages at Different Times."—unknown.