

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. Brian Hoelscher

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

Official School Name Central Intermediate School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1301 Eagle Avenue

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

City Washington State IL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 61571-1111

County Tazewell County

Telephone (309) 444-3943 Fax (309) 444-3414

Web site/URL http://www.central51.net/ E-mail bhoelscher@central51.net

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Dale Heidbreder E-mail dheidbreder@central51.net
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Central School District 51 Tel. (309) 444-3943

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mrs. Saundi Pugh
(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):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 2 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	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	86	63	149
5	77	64	141
6	63	57	120
7	68	77	145
8	74	77	151
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	368	338	706

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 2 % Black or African American
 - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 90 % White
 - 3 % 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: 7%

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	34
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	19
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	53
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	712
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.074
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

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

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Spanish, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Haitian, Gujarati, Russian

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 14 %
Total number students who qualify: 95

8. Students receiving special education services: 7 %
56 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.

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

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 10
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	29
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	12
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	15
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 24:1
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.

Encourage Excellence Everyday, With Compassion, Commitment and Community

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

Central Intermediate School, a 4th-8th grade building in Central School District 51, is located in Washington, Illinois, a growing city with a small-town feel. Washington is a close-knit community with a great amount of parental support. Central District 51 has a wide range of students from a variety of socioeconomic groups and an increasing number of diverse ethnic backgrounds.

In the 1830's Central School District 51 began as a rural, one-room, log schoolhouse housing less than forty students. From its humble, rural beginnings, Central has developed into a bustling elementary district housing nearly 1400 students in two buildings, with plans for future building due to increasing enrollment. Central Intermediate School has a long history of high standards and performance. Central's staff and students earned the Award for Academic Excellence from the state of Illinois from 2008-2011. In 2010 Central Intermediate School was recognized as a National Model Professional Learning Community at Work by Solution Tree, and Central SD 51 earned the Bright Star Award for high achievement despite low per pupil spending. Central is currently a LEAD School and is working toward a Lighthouse School designation from Franklin-Covey.

As a Professional Learning Community, Central Intermediate School concentrates on student learning for ALL students as its main and most important goal. Our district mission, Encourage Excellence Everyday with Compassion, Commitment and Community, guides all of our actions.

Central Intermediate adheres to four questions in regards to student learning. The first is: What do we want all students to know? Central has organized itself into Fundamental Learning Area (FLA) teams. These teams are led by a teacher-leader who serves on the Leadership Team. These curriculum committees create and update the curriculum, activities, assessments and recommend professional development necessary to meet the needs of staff. These committees have worked to create a guaranteed, viable curriculum that is well articulated both horizontally and vertically.

The second question asked is: How do we know if they know it? Central has committed to a no-zero policy. All students are required to complete all assignments to standard. This policy is a deliberate attempt to make sure all students fully understand the material through reteaching and reconnecting with the material, regardless of their support at home. Teachers administer effective formative assessments, identifying problems early to provide feedback and reteaching in real time to support struggling learners prior to the summative assessments. Technology has given teachers powerful tools to quickly assess student learning and gain data that assist in effective intervention. Teachers work in learning areas to create and continually improve common formative assessments for each subject at each grade level to determine student growth and achievement. This, coupled with our school-wide benchmarking measures for reading and math, provides an excellent picture of student growth throughout the year.

Next comes a crucial question for any school: What do we do if they don't know it? Within the classroom, teachers support struggling students, assign peer tutors, and meet with them during study hall time. The utilization of a block schedule has allowed for teachers to spend more time with students in class to provide reteaching and support. All Central students have a daily RtI class in their schedules. During that time, students are provided with reteaching, retake assessments, get help with organization, and work with peer tutors. Students who do not score to standard on the summative assessments will reconnect with the material with the teacher and will be required to retake the test. Teachers provide extra help in study hall as well as after school homework assistance, a work session for students at each grade level, staffed by a grade level teacher. Students with issues in their lives that put up roadblocks to learning are addressed by our school counselor who meets and strategizes with students to develop plans for success.

The fourth question, which is equally crucial to individual learning: What do we do when they already know it? Central Intermediate teachers utilize pre and post tests to determine the level of knowledge that students have in their subject. If, on the pretest the students demonstrate an understanding of certain material, the teacher utilizes that data to affect her/his instruction going forward. In fifth grade, students are initially evaluated for accelerated classes. Central Intermediate has an accelerated section for each subject at each

grade level. Staff utilizes a number of different assessments and teacher recommendations to place students. This has been successful as students from many groups are represented, even students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).

Central's goal is to help all students realize their full potential. This is demonstrated by encouraging all students to perform to their highest level. With a strong emphasis on a rigorous curriculum, a focus on the whole child, and with the support of parents and community, Central students succeed.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Teachers use the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) as the foundation. We do not use textbooks to drive instruction but rather as a supplement. Through curriculum mapping Central has vertically aligned the curriculum into scope and sequence of content, CCSS, and desired outcomes. Teachers create student friendly overviews and target objects in order to provide clear expectations and outcomes for each student. Teachers choose resources in order to promote educational growth as well as personal and moral development.

Reading/ELA students receive separate blocks of instruction specializing in writing/grammar and reading/literature. Reading curriculum is developed by teachers and utilizes best practices such as backwards design lesson planning, close reading, guided centers, literature circles, Socratic discussions, reading workshop and conferencing, interdisciplinary units, and research-based vocabulary development methods from Marzano and Gallagher. Reading classes utilize a variety of resources such as authentic exemplar texts, Ready Common Core, and Accelerated Reader. Both English and reading classes utilize Scholastic magazines, CCSS based resources which focus on various literature and writing genres through real-world application, current events, and relevant issues. Thematic units teach fundamental CCSS and critical thinking skills, integrate literature-based writing tasks with rigorous texts, and allow the opportunity to explore moral issues, character building, and real-life coping skills for physical and mental health. English and reading teachers allow a great deal of choice through a variety of projects and writing assignments with a focus on applying textual evidence, researching and promoting creative writing. English combines grammar instruction, student directed learning, and a writing workshop approach as well as a writing buddy system where students grades 4-8 work with other grade levels to build friendly support while editing and providing feedback.

Central's special education program includes a Life Skills program, pull-out core classes, and inclusion in general education with support based on individual student needs according to Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Students' IEP goals dictate curriculum; these are aligned with CCSS and the general education curriculum is used to guide learning. The Life Skills program at Central teaches all core academic areas and bases curriculum on Essential Elements of the Common Core, as well as vocational, self-help, functional, and social skills.

Mathematics curriculum is aligned with the CCSS based Glencoe book series; however, flexibility is embraced and multiple resources are used to meet the needs of each student and give a full understanding of mathematics, promoting real-life application. Engagement strategies include but are not limited to interactive notebooks, Scholastic Math, engaged reading and math application, videos, hands-on manipulatives, computer math programs (IXL, Moby Max), math stations, collaborative learning, task cards, projects, real world connections, in-depth class discussion, games, student-led lessons, peer-tutoring, and student created tests.

The social studies curriculum at Central is aligned with the Illinois Social Science Standards. These center around inquiry skills and disciplinary concepts - history, geography, economics, and civics to produce civically engaged, and informed citizens. The social studies team accomplishes this goal through a variety of activities such as: war games, mock trials, school-wide mock elections, student-created videos, stations, close-reading, simulations, class discussions, inquiry-based learning projects, and real-world projects. Students at Central exemplify the civics standards in several ways like: leading a Christmas present drive for those in need, a school-wide food drive for Washington Helps Its People (WHIP), operation hydration - helping bring fresh water to third-world countries, and a world's culture day.

Central's science curriculum is aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) created around a Three-Dimensional Learning approach consisting of science and engineering practices, core ideas (the curriculum itself), and crosscutting concepts which include ideas such as patterns and cause and effect that envelop math and ELA CCSS. Fourth and fifth grade science curriculum covers all science branches while

the sixth-eighth grade curriculum is divided into each branch throughout three years. This approach has allowed the department to provide a more rigorous NGSS curriculum by delving into the middle school standards. The curriculum is based on a hands-on, inquiry based, problem solving approach with rigorous classroom and laboratory work.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Developing all aspects of the student is extremely important to Central. The school offers general music to fourth grade. Students 5th-8th grade have the opportunity to participate in band, chorus, solo and ensemble, jazz band, marching band, as well as receive individualized lessons in these areas.

Physical education is an integrated part of the daily education for grades 4th-8th. In PE students are pre and post tested on the skills, games, and fitness procedures and rules. Additionally, health and nutrition are incorporated into the PE curriculum. A health class is required for 7th and 8th graders in which they learn about the human anatomy, personal hygiene, drug prevention, and encourage healthy life choices.

Spanish is offered to 7th-8th grade students during their FLEX period each week. The students are immersed in verbal practice of basic vocabulary and verb conjugation.

Technology classes are required for 4th and 5th graders and encompass various skills such as: coding, typing, Google classroom, internet safety, and cyberbullying. Central strives to put technology into each student's hands and is on track to become one-to-one. Teachers 4th-8th grade fluidly weave technology into lessons daily.

Every student receives RtI for nearly two hundred minutes per week. This class is an extension of the core subjects. Through the tiered RtI approach, students receive additional support in reading and math strategies including interventions. This varies from reteaching concepts, re-doing assignments, and enriching and extending reading and math content.

Central also has advanced classes for 6th-8th grade. Students are identified based on SAGES test scores, STAR scores in both math and reading, previous academic scores, and teacher recommendation. These classes are intended for students who have the ability to move at a faster pace in a more in-depth and engaged curriculum.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Central ensures fundamental grade level concepts by reteaching, offering homework assistance after school with certified teachers, and a no zero policy requiring students to complete all assignments. If a student earns a C or lower on an assignment, the student has the opportunity to redo. RtI services are provided for all students for tiered support as well as enriched activities to extend learning. Students are formatively assessed on a regular basis; when the content has been mastered, students are then summatively assessed. Advanced classes are offered to ensure students have the opportunity to move at a faster, more enriched pace. Central also has an elevated grading scale holding students to a higher standard.

Central utilizes a variety of instructional techniques and assessments. All students are benchmarked three times a year using the reading and math nationally-normed test, Standardized Test for the Assessment of Reading (STAR). Based on these results, students are placed into Tier I, II, or III of RtI. Students move fluidly between the tiered levels based on progress monitoring throughout the school year.

All students are included in Tier I strategies. Differentiation for students in Tier I include but are not limited to cross-curricular units in grade levels, science symposiums, guided centers, goal setting, real-life application, and student-created lessons and presentations. Literature circles provide students choices in rigorous texts, and differentiated projects allow students opportunities to collaborate and create. Technology is integrated into all aspects of the learning process. Some of the technological tools used are: MobyMax, IXL, Khan Academy, Create-a-Graph, Google Classroom, Canva, Wonderopolis, Flocabulary, and Kahoot. Within Tier I, all materials and assessments can be modified to meet student needs. Advanced students in

4th and 5th grades are given enriched educational opportunities and materials; students in 6th-8th are identified and placed into accelerated courses in all subject areas.

In addition, students in Tier II and Tier III are progress monitored every 3 to 4 weeks using the reading and math nationally-normed test, Standardized Test for the Assessment of Reading (STAR), along with Ready Common Core. Additionally, students in Tier III are instructed and assessed using Ready Common Core, Fountas and Pinnell, Wade Wilson, Lexia, and Visualizing and Verbalizing to target individual student deficits.

Students in special education benefit from differentiation within the general education classroom through inclusion, as well as in pullout instructional and Life Skills classes. Instruction is based on students' IEPs, and materials are created and modified depending on student need. Discrete Trial Training, Applied Behavior Analysis strategies, TEACH strategies, and visual supports such as social stories, communication boards, and schedules are used in the Life Skills classroom. After receiving instruction in the classroom, Life Skills students have the opportunity to go on community-based instructional outings to enhance learning experiences outside of school.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

As a school, Central celebrates student leadership and success. Great Job Slips are given to students daily for leadership. These slips are put into drawings for prizes each semester and are drawn at all-school assemblies. Students who meet the criteria for behavior and academics each nine weeks earn the right to attend ROCK (Rewarding Outstanding Central Kids) nights, put on by the PTO in which there are games, snacks, karaoke, etc. Awards Night celebrates the academic success of our students throughout their career at Central. The emotional needs of our students are met with the services of a school counselor. She provides one-on-one counseling, peer group sessions emphasizing social interactions, and communicates with parents regarding student issues and offers coping strategies.

To motivate students to be lifelong readers, sticker charts to track AR reading progress, prize patrol reward system for AR reading logs, and Accelerated Reader awards are presented throughout the school year. Student council creates spirit days, donut days (proceeds go to a student chosen charity), and organize and lead school-wide assemblies to boost student morale and school culture. Teachers and administration are visible at events, sporting activities, and fine arts programs after school hours. Teachers feel valued and supported through the various teams CIS has in place. The leadership team consists of Fundamental Learning Area (FLA) leaders from each subject area who are liaisons between administration and staff. The FLA teams meet once a month to discuss/ align curriculum, arrange professional development opportunities, and make decisions on policies and procedures. All teachers are offered the opportunity to serve on a variety of committees which allows ideas and voices to be heard. Administration is present in the classrooms and shows support and respect by giving a “positive post-it,” an encouraging comment in regards to instruction, classroom environment, and/or student-teacher interaction.

Central also celebrates its staff by having a holiday party, various potlucks and luncheons throughout the year, and all school baby showers. Staff plays various athletic events against grade levels throughout p.e. units and assemblies. The PTO and Board of Education support the staff by providing meals on conference days, Teacher Appreciation Week, holidays, and standardized testing celebrations.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Central engages families and community in several ways. The arts are celebrated through Arts Day, an all day celebration of students participating in multiple art projects. Implemented by PTO and volunteers, it places an emphasis on art in the lives of students. Central celebrates increasing diversity in the backgrounds of our students’ families. CIS teachers and PTO collaboratively plan Culture Night in which students and their families provide presentations about their background, give demonstrations of languages, and provide samples of various foods to give attendees a glimpse into diverse cultures. A student-led initiative to inform parents and community members about the past, present, and future aspects of Central is State of the Schools. The evening began with students greeting, directing, and serving a meal to the attendees while the community enjoyed a choral performance. Students also presented about the Leader in Me program and current cross- curricular units, demonstrated differentiation and how technology is utilized throughout the school, and the evening concluded with a performance by the jazz band. Career Day is offered to 6th-8th grade students. Parents and community members volunteer their time engaging and interacting with the students about career choices. Students participate in Career Cruising, where they identify possible careers based on interest and attend informative sessions led by parents.

Students understand the importance of taking ownership of learning through their participation in student-led conferences. Students are responsible for creating goals, sharing both strengths and areas for improvement, and celebrating victories within both the school and community. In order to keep the community connected with CIS, teachers are encouraged to utilize social media. CIS has a Facebook page, Instagram account, and Twitter in which announcements, daily activities, lessons, and celebrations are posted. Teachers are encouraged to use the hashtag #celebrateCIS to create a common space to celebrate the fantastic happenings at CIS. Beyond email and Skyward, all classroom teachers have a classroom

website to communicate.

Through the DARE program, a police officer engages fifth grade students; he has also offered mentoring services to students who benefit from a role model figure. Students are also taken into the community on a DARE field trip following the completion of the program. The PE class at Central has the opportunity to go to the local bowling alley and golf course to learn new skills and become involved in the community.

3. Professional Development:

Professional development is encouraged at Central. Many teachers have pursued their master's or have taken additional courses, which is strongly supported by administration and the school board. Teachers are offered opportunities to attend professional development within in the district as well as outside the district. Throughout the year the technology coordinator researches and provides a variety of technology tools for teachers to implement within the classroom and also provides Tech Tuesday workshops. Administration continually notifies staff of upcoming opportunities to attend seminars, conferences, and training sessions. Teachers also seek their own opportunities approved by administration. Additionally, administrators, from the various school districts in Washington, provide an opportunity for the teachers from the different districts to come together. On this day the school districts vertically and horizontally look at the curriculum, discuss and learn common strategies, gain tools to enhance and engage learning, and to collaborate with colleagues.

Faculty meetings are staff led with a yearly focus on student-centered learning such as: formative assessment and feedback, differentiation, PLC's, and Depth of Knowledge. With a growing enrollment, CIS faces challenges- increasing class size and a rise in low income population. Teachers have been involved in The Leader in Me trainings developing a school-wide leadership program which leads to consistency within the school district. Teachers take this knowledge and use it to develop 21st century leaders to help CIS students become more effective, more goal-oriented, and more successful within the school and the community now and in the future.

4. School Leadership:

We believe in shared leadership. Each grade level operates as a leadership team focusing on student learning. They meet weekly to problem-solve, collaborate on interdisciplinary units, and discuss specific interventions and differentiation. Each team member serves an important role in the function of the team such as: organizer, communicator, technology advisor, and resource collector. Additionally, subject areas meet monthly to align curriculum, share instructional methods and resources, and discuss professional development opportunities. Teachers also meet with core subject areas (FLAs). These meetings serve as a time for subject areas to develop yearly goals, vertically align the curriculum, and collaborate ideas to improve student learning. During these meetings, teachers voice questions, concerns, and celebrations in regards to student learning which are then relayed to the leadership team. Administration meets once a month with the leadership team to discuss ways of improving student learning and voicing teacher concerns. The administration relays information from the board, discusses district goals, and guides what we discuss as an FLA. Lastly, a variety of committees at CIS create leadership opportunities for all staff as they wish to be involved. Administration encourages feedback through committees in areas such as: school handbook, scheduling, school improvement, and school culture.

We believe students will discover their value and leadership potential to become contributing members of our community. The Leader in Me program creates a culture of empowerment based on the idea that every child has the potential to be a leader. Students are explicitly taught the 7 Habits in enrichment sessions and real life application activities and discussions help to develop further understanding. Student leaders then serve various leadership roles throughout the school such as: aid teachers, peer tutor, monitor cleanliness of building, welcome visitors, lead assemblies, and manage community service projects.

When a teacher is hired at Central, they attend a new teacher orientation day. The day is designed to introduce teachers to the procedures and policies, as well as build rapport between other staff and administration. Throughout the first school year these new teachers attend quarterly meetings with

administration to check progress with the school policies, student learning, and curriculum. It is also an opportunity to open communication and offer help or resources if needed. Additionally, Central has a mentoring program for these teachers in which a veteran teacher within their FLA observes, provides feedback, guides, and supports for their first two years at CIS.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The single practice that has most positively affected academic success at Central Intermediate School has been the “No Zero Policy” in which teachers are tasked with working with all students to complete all work and have no zeros in their grade book each quarter.

In 2008, the low income population was, largely, the same list as the students at risk of failing. They were often in jeopardy of being retained. These students had frequent conversations with the principal to set up a plan in the third and fourth nine weeks so they could graduate to the high school. The numbers were miserable. Only 27% of grades earned were A's, 21% B's, 25% C's 13.5% D's and 13.5% of grades were F's. Teachers were covering the material, but these students were not coming in for help, completing assignments, or studying for assessments. Teachers were offering their help, but the failing students were not taking advantage.

With more students struggling, the staff saw this approach as no longer tenable. The staff worked together to develop the no zero policy at Central Intermediate School to assist all students, but, primarily, the lost students who disengaged from the process altogether. A block schedule was implemented to provide more time for practice and formative assessment; teachers were deliberate in seeking out students with zeros to help them to complete assignments and to prepare for assessments. These students experienced success and the number of zeros and low grades decreased almost immediately.

In two years, the data show the results of collaboration, intervention and the focus on student learning due to the new policy: 47.2% of grades earned by our low income population were A's in 2011, 25.7% were B's, 19.8% were C's, 5.7% were D's and there were just 1.7% of low income students receiving F's. The trend has continued since then. The 2015-2016 grade distribution analysis showed the low income population with 54% A's, 30% B's, 12% C's, 3% D's, and just 1% of grades earned were F's.

Since the implementation, there have been no students at risk of failing, the grade distributions of low income students are coming in line with those of their peers, and on the 2016 PARCC assessment, 45% of low income students met or exceeded standards. This growth is significant and is showing up in every metric utilized at Central Intermediate School.