

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. Anthony McConnell

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

Official School Name Kipling Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 700 Kipling Place

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

City Deerfield State IL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 60015-4410

County Lake County

Telephone (847) 948-5151 Fax (847) 948-8264

Web site/URL http://kipling.dps109.org/ E-mail amconnell@dps109.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. Michael Lubelfeld E-mail mlubelfeld@dps109.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Deerfield Public School District 109 Tel. (847) 945-1844

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 Mr. Nick Begley
(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):
- 4 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 6 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

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

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	35	32	67
1	28	37	65
2	34	51	85
3	48	42	90
4	47	45	92
5	37	33	70
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	229	240	469

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 5 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 5 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 84 % 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 2015 – 2016 school year: 1%

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	3
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	0
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	3
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	469
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.006
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1

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

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Spanish, Russian, Mandarin, Romanian, Hebrew, Malayalam

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 1 %
Total number students who qualify: 1

8. Students receiving special education services: 8 %
35 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.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <u>1</u> Autism | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>9</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>9</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>14</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Mental Retardation | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>7</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>2</u> Developmentally Delayed |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 3
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	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	21
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	15
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	6
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

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 22:1
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%	97%	97%	96%	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 X
If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

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

The mission of Kipling Elementary School is to "Inspire Learners to Be Leaders Every Day"

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

"There is no better place to create a caring community than in our schools--the heart of our future" - Patricia Gandara

Kipling Elementary School educates 469 kindergarten through 5th grade students who live in the northern Chicago suburbs of Deerfield and Highland Park. The 53 full- and part-time staff members work together with parents and administrators to meet the needs of all learners that come through the doors. The Deerfield community is home to families who have lived in the community for decades and generations. Current Kipling students have parents who are Kipling alumni.

Staff and parents work together cooperatively to assure that students receive the highest level of support, recognition, and enrichment both emotionally and academically. The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) continually plans events and programs that bring the Kipling community together, and raises support and funds for large projects, special programs and learning opportunities, and day-to-day classroom needs. During the summer of 2016, the PTO, school staff and District worked together to fund and develop a SmartLab™, which provides STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) activities and opportunities for all students. Kipling was the first elementary school in District 109 to explore the concept of bringing STEM to the schools and students. The PTO also provided money to outfit the entire school with 21st century classroom furniture, including tables and chairs that allow for greater collaboration and flexibility within each homeroom. These enhancements have allowed the Kipling staff to transform and enhance instruction to meet the needs of each student and build a culture of innovation and collaboration.

Kipling parents and staff proudly continue traditions that began decades ago, and reinforce the sense of togetherness. Kipling's PumpkinFest occurs each October. It is the PTO's major fundraiser of the year, but more importantly, it is a much-anticipated event where the entire community assembles to socialize and play games. Donations and raffle prizes provided by the parent and business community abound and further cement the fact that the Kipling community values philanthropy and generosity. Each spring the PTO hosts a free pancake breakfast for the school. This beloved tradition allows staff and students (past and present) to mingle and enjoy each other's company. Also each spring, the Kipling staff organizes Field Day for the students. While the spirit of competition and physical education is prevalent, students also learn about the country their homeroom represents in this Olympic-themed event. Classes compete as a unit, not individually, which reinforces Kipling's family atmosphere.

Teachers at Kipling arrive in District 109 and stay. The support, curricular freedom, respect for professional knowledge, and encouragement allows teachers to grow, innovate, experiment and collaborate. Kipling is a school where teachers build a career and connect with colleagues, families and administrators. The average class size at Kipling is 22, allowing teachers to get to know their students and their families. The freedom that teachers have at Kipling to engage students at their own level allows for inquiry, increased differentiation, rigor and student choice throughout the school day.

Kipling Elementary School is one of only two Leader in Me public schools in Lake County, Illinois. The school began the journey during the summer of 2015. The entire staff voluntarily assembled for three days of intense and gratifying professional development with the Covey Institute. This work has led to a transformation of the school environment. Students and staff use the "7 Habits" to frame interpersonal relationships, solve problems, collaborate with others and connect to curriculum. The Student Lighthouse Team helps to plan, raise money for charities, and direct activities that benefit the school and community. Kipling has collected cans for the local food pantry and books for lower income schools. For the past two years the school community has spent a day engaging in a philanthropy project. Older students assisted younger ones in making toys for an animal shelter and activity backpacks for hospitalized children.

Kipling has been a 1:1 technology school for three years. Students kindergarten through second grade have iPads; third through fifth grade students have Chromebooks. The availability of technology allows teachers to differentiate lessons and materials so students can work at their own level. Students have the freedom to create documents, presentations and even websites to demonstrate mastery of topics and concepts. During

the 2015-2016 school year, Kipling began to explore the implementation of a SMARTLab™. With the support of the District and the PTO Kipling led the way for all of the District 109 elementary schools to install labs for the 2016-17 school year. In the lab, students collaborate on projects that utilize computers, electric circuitry, coding and engineering materials. Students enhance their problem-solving skills and creativity in this 21st century environment. During "buddy time," older students work with younger students in the lab to introduce them to exciting learning opportunities and caring friendships.

The Kipling community is proud of the culture of caring and collaboration, one that honors the history of the school, celebrates the current success, and looks ahead to its great future.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

"In an effective classroom students should not only know what they are doing. They should also know why and how" - Harry Wong

During the 2015-2016 school year, Kipling Elementary School began the journey to becoming a The Leader in Me school. This whole-school transformation process empowers students with the leadership and life skills they need to possess in order to thrive in the 21st century. Teachers take pride in creating a culture of student empowerment based on the idea that every child can be a leader. Specifically, The Leader in Me focuses on students learning essential 21st century skills: teamwork, responsibility, self direction, problem solving, communication, creativity, and self confidence. Students participate in goal setting, data tracking, unique leadership roles, student-led conferences, service projects, and contribute to an overall leadership environment. The Leader in Me drives the academic and social-emotional environment, including instruction of the core curriculum.

Mathematics instruction at Kipling is based on a differentiated approach to learning. Students receive small-group instruction and are grouped based on specific student needs. These needs are determined through continuous assessment and reflection by teachers and groups remain fluid throughout the year and the standards being taught. Through this process students are given the exact instruction that they need to be successful. This means that students can move at their own pace through the curriculum and are pushed beyond the grade-level standards when appropriate. Differentiated and self-paced programming also is delivered through web-based programs. These small groups and web-based programs allow students and teachers to understand and reflect on individual progress. Kipling also places a high priority on problem-solving skills in mathematics. Teachers develop and deliver high-level problems to teach students the eight Standards for Mathematical Practice. These overarching mathematical problem solving standards place a premium on student learning outcomes such as persevering through a problem, understanding multiple ways to solve a problem, and expressing one's thinking to classmates.

Kipling's hands-on approach to science is apparent the moment that you walk into any classroom. The teacher- and student-modeled lessons adopted from TeachTCI science curriculum, as well as Discovery Education, have allowed students to grow their science knowledge tremendously. Teachers received training on TeachTCI to build their interdisciplinary ideas with new and engaging concepts into their weekly lesson planning. Lessons are aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and are embedded with literary and mathematical standards. In science, students think critically by creating essential questions, developing a plan for how to investigate a solution, and collaborating with their peers to solve their real-world wonders. The inquiry-based model provides the foundation for these lessons.

A balanced literacy program is the cornerstone of Kipling's English Language Arts curriculum. Reading and writing are embedded in all subject areas throughout the school day. Students are engaged in higher-level thinking as they explore complex literature and informational text. They are challenged to be critical thinkers through the use of higher-level questioning and advanced vocabulary. A program called The Rooted Mind helps students better understand the meaning and origin of words. Close Reading is a common practice at Kipling, giving students the opportunity to make meaningful connections through the use of annotation and discussion. Book clubs incorporated into the ELA curriculum provide more opportunities for differentiation, student choice, and discussion. Using the Literacy Design Collaborative Framework, students write in-depth essays in response to an authentic essential question as it relates to literature and nonfiction text. Students share their thoughts and ideas through narrative, argumentative, and informative writing.

Social studies concepts are interwoven throughout Kipling's rigorous ELA curriculum. Through interactive simulation modules, Social Studies Alive content materials, and rich historical texts, students gain a sense of our country's history, government, and landscape. Students become responsible citizens who understand multiple perspectives, civic responsibilities, and their own place in an ever-changing, interconnected world.

The Leader and Me environment adds a particularly meaningful dynamic to social studies lessons. In all areas of the core curriculum, teachers pose real-world challenges to students. The experiences may be a single activity, a collection of lessons, or an entire unit. Discovery in science, math, reading, and writing areas happens through trial and error; reflecting on successes and mistakes is where growth occurs. The process takes time in the short term, but Kipling students and teachers realize that the long journey to the destination is worth the effort.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

"Creativity is intelligence having fun" - Albert Einstein

Kipling students are eager to come to school each day because they have the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of subjects outside of the core curriculum. The staff are as passionate both about their subject areas and the growth of their students. The other curricular areas are visual arts, physical education, Spanish, library media and technology, general music and instrumental music (both band and orchestra).

Visual Arts: Kipling's Art program serves students in kindergarten through fifth grade for an hour each week. Students explore a variety of media including painting, sculpture, mixed media, and digital art. Kipling artists make strong connections between art and their other core subjects in many cross-curricular projects throughout their year. Student work is showcased on SeeSaw, an online portfolio, that allows students to post their work with an artist statement for their family and other teachers to view. Each grade level has an art show that coincides with the music show. During these "Fine Arts Nights," students can choose two pieces of their artwork to display. In addition to the school art show, and student art displays throughout the hallways and classrooms, there are many community-based shows that provide opportunities for young artists to publicly and proudly display their talents.

Physical Education: In a multi-activity, fitness-based physical education program, all Kipling students learn the importance of being active and living a healthy lifestyle. Students are active and engaged while working on a variety of different locomotor, object control and sport skills. Lessons and units are based on National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) and Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) PE standards. Younger students focus on movement and learn how to do basic fundamental PE skills. Older students work on applying those skills to real-life situations and games. Students take fitness testing twice a year through the Fitness Gram program. Throughout the year, students engage in fitness activities, stations and creating their own fitness challenges.

Spanish: The Spanish program at Kipling promotes global citizenship for students in kindergarten through fifth grade. In 60 minutes of instruction per week, students use games, songs, books, activities and projects to develop a love of language. Students use context clues, cognates, picture clues, and hand motions to understand a new language. In addition to developing skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking, students are introduced to other cultures, countries and traditions.

Library Media/Technology: The Library Media program promotes literacy and digital citizenship, and the library itself, renovated and expanded to include a SmartLab™ in 2016, is space that fosters exploration and creativity. Classrooms each visit the library for 30 minutes a week; teachers and the Library Media Specialist collaborate on curriculum and create project-based learning (PBL) experiences that promote learning. Students participate in a new Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) curriculum in the SmartLab. Students in third through fifth grade rotate through the curriculum with hands-on, real-world activities including: robotics with Dot and Dash and Sphero; Tinkerkad for 3D printing; Lego Wedo; Bridge Building; Comic Life and many other software applications. All students have access to the makerspace area that includes a Lego wall and various hands-on activities including virtual reality glasses, snap circuits, and drones. The LMC also promotes the Kip Times (school newspaper), Coding Club, and Wonder Robotics. Kipling's robotics team won first place in Illinois in an international robotics competition in 2016.

Music: The general music program at Kipling provides an active curriculum that fosters the musical growth of each student. The curriculum incorporates the Orff and Kodály methodologies and includes composition,

improvisation, movement activities, and units on recorder and guitar. Student choice and student-generated ideas are evident during classroom activities as well as at the grade-level music shows that each grade performs once a year. Additionally, the Kipling Choir is an extracurricular offering open to all fourth and fifth grade students. In its fourth year, the Kipling Choir has grown exponentially and performs during the school day as well as during evening concerts.

Band and Orchestra: Many fourth and fifth grade students choose to study a band or orchestra instrument. They learn in weekly small-group lessons and rehearsals, where they prepare for performances for the school, parents and community. Band and orchestra specialists teach musicianship and technique in an engaging and collaborative environment to help foster a love of music.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

"True teachers are those who use themselves as bridges over which they invite their students to cross; then, having facilitated their crossing, joyfully collapse, encouraging them to create their own." - Nikos Kazantzakis

The educators at Kipling Elementary School work together to understand and support the intricate ways each child learns. Classroom teachers differentiate instruction to address the needs, abilities, and interests of students. As a result of continual, high-quality professional development, teachers have many strategies that provide learning opportunities appropriate for each individual child. Classroom teachers provide whole-group and differentiated lessons through daily small-group rotations in English language arts and math. Students are highly motivated to meet the rigor of the Common Core Standards through the use of Project Based Learning (PBL) activities, which allow students to apply their learning in creative and meaningful ways. As an example, fifth grade teachers developed a PBL activity that provides students the ability to design, plan and budget for a new landscape in a courtyard area at Kipling. Additionally, teachers and students work together to analyze assessment data to set quarterly goals and create an action plan to meet the goals.

At the least-restrictive classroom level, informal assessment leads to individualized instruction for all students. The use of 1:1 technology devices includes iPads for students in grades K-2 and Chromebooks for third through fifth grade students. Classroom teachers use programs such as Read Theory, Khan Academy, Study Island and Ten Marks to monitor student comprehension of curricular content before, during and after instructional units. Lower-tech instruction also offers important opportunities for differentiation. Students are flexibly grouped based on both strengths and challenges to ensure growth in learning and application. These groupings, however, remain fluid and dependent on the Common Core State Standard skills being addressed.

Results of the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) validate the ongoing work of Kipling teachers and staff. These assessment results are also a driving force that identifies gaps in learning, allows teachers to set goals, and helps determine if individual students need tiered intervention support or enrichment beyond the classroom instruction. Grade level teams meet weekly with the principal, assistant principal, and other staff to analyze data from these as well as other formative assessments. Through constant discussion of strategies, teachers set rigorous expectations for all students. Students who significantly exceed grade level expectations have an opportunity to move into an accelerated curriculum. Gifted programs exist for all grades in pull-out instruction that encourages higher-level thinking and problem-solving skills.

When a student is identified as needing intervention, he or she receives tiered interventions (Response to Intervention or RtI) in addition to continuing classroom differentiation. Kipling has two instructional coaches and a trained RtI Specialist who consult with classroom teachers and work directly with identified students. Once a student is identified as needing support, the classroom teacher, RtI Specialist, school psychologist, and assistant principal meet to identify further support needed to close learning gaps. Once a specific plan has been made there is communication with parents and consistent progress monitoring toward goal areas. Interventions are adjusted if adequate progress is not being made. Students who do not make adequate growth may be referred to the problem-solving team to determine appropriate next steps for

improving a student's outcomes. Kipling has created its own flowchart and criteria for academic RtI qualification processes. A referral for additional screening and assessment by the speech-language pathologist can be made at any time during this process. English Language Learners qualify for specialized ELL instruction at Kipling, but also receive RtI and Special Education support when needed.

Goal-setting and parent involvement maximizes student engagement at their own level and in their own education. Kipling students receive detailed information on formative and summative assessments. These results help our students understand their own learning in order to set personal goals for themselves. This process facilitates engagement, ownership and pride when these goals are met. Teachers celebrate with students when goals have been achieved and plan together when a student needs to continue working towards a goal. In addition, families receive all reports on formative assessments three times per year to ensure that they understand their child's growth and challenges. Because teachers, parents and students all work together, Kipling enjoys the status of being a high-performing school.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

"Schooling focuses on teaching, while a Culture of Learning focuses on the whole child and student understanding." - Steven Weber

Kipling Elementary School receives numerous visitors from educational professionals from schools nationwide who want to see excellence in action. One thing visitors often say within a few minutes of entering the school is, "This is such a happy place." The Kipling community works hard, together, to foster and grow a welcoming environment for students, staff, families, community members, and visitors.

Kipling measures school culture and climate of staff and of students. All staff members participate annually in the HumanEx Ventures School Culture Survey. This survey consists of 88 statements across 15 dimensions that measure school culture. The 2016 survey showed that 100% of Kipling staff members are highly engaged and highly satisfied working at Kipling. This put Kipling in the top 1% of all schools that take the survey. HumanEx reports that the average school comes in at 60% in the area of highly engaged and highly satisfied staff. From the data, Kipling staff together identify areas to improve and create action plans. For example, this year one of the areas targeted to improve was receiving positive feedback from coworkers. Staff got together and brainstormed ways to make this happen on a regular and strategic basis, and then implemented the process. Staff meets regularly to monitor progress toward the strategic goals we set to improve school culture.

All students in grades three through five take an annual student engagement survey, where they are asked about their teachers, the administration, and choice and relevance of the curriculum, and a variety of other measures. Kipling students report a very high level of satisfaction and engagement at school. However, the building administration and staff still use the data to make plans for improvement. The principal debriefs the data with students by classroom and the school creates plans with teachers and students to address identified areas. One new and exciting initiative that came out of the most recent survey was the creation of Inspiration Day. Students indicated they wanted to know more about what they could be in the future. The school hosted a day for fourth and fifth graders, inviting parents and community members to discuss their jobs and education with the students.

Listening to students and staff and then acting on their thoughts and ideas is the key to keeping the culture and climate high -- and ensuring Kipling remains a happy place.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much" ...Helen Keller

Kipling Elementary School considers the engagement of parents and community members an essential ingredient in its success. Four components play key roles: The Leader in Me initiative; parent and community assistance in academic learning; clear communication; and a dedicated Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO).

Leader in Me has transformed Kipling, opening pathways between home, school and the community. Staff, Student and Parent Lighthouse Teams lead opportunities for engagement. The student Lighthouse Team organized and facilitated a "Souper Bowl" food drive that garnered hundreds of cans of food for the local food pantry. The Parent Lighthouse Team provides support and learning opportunities for parents and community members. As a Leader in Me school, Kipling has hosted two Leadership Days; colleagues from other schools and community members visit to witness the incredible learning and culture of leadership. Kipling teachers organized an EdCamp for 70 educators from Illinois and Wisconsin; student leaders ran a session on being a Leader in Me school.

Special Someone Day is a beloved opportunity for grandparents or another "special someone" to spend

time learning with students. Parents and community members volunteer in classrooms, the lunchroom and library. On Inspiration Day, parents and community members teach fifth grade students about their respective careers.

Kipling uses social media and traditional forms of communication to engage parents and the community. The principal's weekly newsletter includes the Kipling Storify, a collection of all the Twitter posts with the hashtag #kip109. Teachers post frequently on Twitter and use the hashtag #kip109 to share exciting things happening in their classrooms. Parents can access current snapshots of the school through Storify, even if they don't use Twitter. Classrooms use Seesaw to communicate with families and share student work. Within this digital portfolio, students post videos, pictures, and written posts about their learning. Parents comment and "like" posts, and teachers communicate to students and parents about anything from homework to reminders about upcoming events.

Kipling has an incredibly active and generous PTO. The organization not only supported the Leader in Me transformation through their participation, but also funded the staff training and materials. The PTO funded Kipling's state-of-the-art STEM lab and flexible furniture for all classrooms. The PTO funds and runs the Kindness Connection, which brings hands-on activities for students to give back to the community and experience the joy of philanthropy. The PTO's annual Pumpkinfest event, which includes games, activities and a silent auction, brings members of the entire Deerfield community to Kipling for fall fun.

Kipling is a valued part of the Deerfield community because the school values and welcomes all members of the community it serves.

3. Professional Development:

"A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops." -Henry Brooks Adams

It's clear that Kipling Elementary School teachers and staff are lifelong learners, setting and working towards professional growth goals individually and collaboratively. District 109 supports and encourages the professional growth and knowledge through job-embedded professional development, which happens at both the school and district level, and by encouraging staff to broaden their learning through online and classroom experiences.

District-wide Instructional Rounds are a way to gather more information about how innovation is embedded in classrooms in order to support student engagement and growth. Each school hosts one morning of instructional rounds that are attended by staff members from the other five buildings. Internally, Kipling has lead Learning Labs, where the host teacher invites staff members to observe his or her classroom. The observation is guided by a very specific focus question about their practice, look fors are also identified so the feedback they receive is focused and purposeful. Following an observation, the host teacher and observing colleagues come together to discuss what they saw, ask questions, provide feedback, and make plans to incorporate what they learned.

Another way that teachers collaborate and connect is through Twitter using a district hashtag (#engage109) and Kipling's hashtag (#kip109). Through Twitter, teachers at Kipling have connected with other students solving Global Math Tasks, experts like the National Park Service to learn about wildlife, and have shared student work and ideas to support the growth of others as well as get feedback on their own practice.

Kipling staff members have been actively engaged in their own professional growth through Deerfield University a unique online learning portal developed by the Department of Teaching and Learning in district 109. Deerfield University offers teachers an opportunity to select areas of growth online and reflect on their learning on topics of interest in education. On this platform, teachers complete modules to receive badges - one of our staff members was the first person in the district to complete all modules. Teachers are also able to create their own modules on topics like Virtual Reality, using SeeSaw in the classroom and Discovery Education.

Kipling teachers regularly attend EdCamps, and in October 2016, six teachers planned, organized and

hosted an EdCamp at Kipling, which attracted educators from Illinois, Wisconsin and Indiana. Staff at Kipling regularly enroll in graduate courses, mentor new teachers, attend workshops and collaborative learning conferences and are called upon to present at District-level workshops as well as regional workshops and conferences. Kipling Elementary School staff are truly modeling the way when it comes to learning and leadership.

4. School Leadership:

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader." - John Quincy Adams

The leadership philosophy at Kipling Elementary School is simple - everyone can be a leader. Kipling seeks to redefine leadership for all students, staff, and families to prove that there is greatness in everyone and we all can be a positive influence on others.

On Leadership Day, a cornerstone event for a Leader in Me School, the community is invited into Kipling to see all the great things happening in classrooms and throughout the school. The day is organized completely by students and staff, with the principal and assistant principal playing a supporting role. Students present and perform, lead tours, and answer questions from visitors. In addition, the vast majority of the school's ideas for fundraising and philanthropy come from the students. Just in the past few months Kipling students organized a holiday toy drive for a school in need on Chicago's southside, organized and ran a canned food drive, and participated in a school-wide project to make toys and adoption folders for a local animal shelter. These ideas and the incredible effort to bring them to life came from the passions and leadership of Kipling students.

The principal and assistant principal promote the "all are leaders" culture by ensuring systems and processes to garner input and foster shared decision making. Teachers, along with the principal and assistant principal, make up a Lighthouse Team, which is the building leadership team that collaboratively makes decisions for the school. Parents also are an integral part of the decision-making process. When the school was exploring the idea of adopting The Leader in Me as a school transformation vehicle, parents were part of the process. They came on site visits to other schools and were involved in planning meetings, discussions, and the final decision. Parents also were instrumental in making the decision -- and providing the funding -- to bring a new SmartLab™ to Kipling, where students participate in science and engineering activities.

The building administration views its role as the builders of this culture of leadership. The principal and assistant principal have built a commitment within the community to do what is best for students. This philosophy drives all of the shared decision making at Kipling, which has reaped great benefits in the growth of the school culture, expectations of excellence, and in student achievement.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

"The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires." - William A. Ward

Kipling Elementary School's success is undeniable. High standards and expectations help Kipling to continue to develop global citizens who continually outperform their peers, and take on leadership roles in the school and the community.

Kipling is successful because of a learning-focused culture that permeates the school. Whether it is third graders working to create and design devices that could help people with disabilities or the book and holiday gift drives, teachers encourage students to take risks in an environment that increases their academic, social and emotional success.

Kipling designs learning that incorporates critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. Classrooms have flexible work spaces with tables that can be moved, raised, or joined for group and independent learning. Innovation is rampant in the SmartLab™, maker spaces, and in every classroom through project-based learning opportunities. Teachers use their training, talent and technology to meet each student at his or her own level. Teachers use formative assessments to make instructional decisions; students use them to set their own learning goals. Students collaborate with their teachers to monitor and assess their own progress towards achieving these goals by graphing data and reflecting upon target areas of growth. Individualized pathways make use of technology like Khan Academy, Study Island, and Ten Marks. Those tools help engage students, and offer their own opportunities for success. Kipling students won two of three first place trophies in Khan Academy's inaugural Learnstorm competition in the Chicago area.

Students take control of their learning choices. On Inspiration Day, students can attend the sessions of their choice to hear parents and other community members share details about their careers. During EdCamp, older students become the experts and teach younger students. Kipling recognizes the many talents and diverse interests of our students by offering a plethora of student-led clubs and committees so students can explore their talents and passions and gain a sense of belonging and commitment to their school. The strategy is simple: allow students to choose what they learn, and be actively involved in their learning, and their engagement and success will be high.

Students can express themselves creative and take risks when they feel safe in an environment that supports their social-emotional needs. That is the foundation of a Leader in Me School. At Kipling, staff explicitly teach the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. Those lessons clearly have resonated with Kipling students, who consistently achieve at the highest levels within the school and throughout the community.