

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Dr. Meg Brooks

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

Official School Name Chesterfield Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 17700 Wild Horse Creek Road

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

City Chesterfield State MO Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 63005-3799

County Missouri (MO)

Telephone (636) 891-6500 Fax (636) 891-8847

Web site/URL http://www.rsdmo.org/chesterfield E-mail brooksmeg@rsdmo.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. Eric Knost E-mail knosteric@rsdmo.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Rockwood School District R-VI Tel. (636) 733-2000

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

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

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**

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

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. 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

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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)
  - 6 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 5 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 30 TOTAL

### SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

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

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	26	22	48
1	31	32	63
2	31	36	67
3	23	39	62
4	40	34	74
5	31	34	65
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	182	197	379

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 7 % Asian
  - 12 % Black or African American
  - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 75 % White
  - 2 % 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: 9%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	24
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	10
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	34
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	396
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.086
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	9

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

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):  
Spanish, Somalian, Tagalog, Portuguese, Japanese, Chinese, and Hindi.

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 14 %  
Total number students who qualify: 54

8. Students receiving special education services: 12 %  
47 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>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness              | <u>3</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness        | <u>7</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>30</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment    | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>3</u> Mental Retardation    | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>1</u> Developmentally Delayed               |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 6
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	18
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	20
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	5
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	6

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 21:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	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.

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

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.  
Yes X No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award. 1996

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

We do whatever it takes to ensure every leader matters.

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

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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Chesterfield Elementary is one of 19 elementary schools in the Rockwood School District in the suburban St. Louis area. The school borders the City of Chesterfield, a thriving business community, and also the farmlands that are being developed into housing communities. The school experiences an annual turnover of 10 to 15% of new students in grades 1 through 5. The parent community exhibits a vested interest in the success of their children. Chesterfield Elementary has a rich tradition of focusing on student core ethical and performance values. We are dedicated to the belief that every child can learn and it is our charge to help all children grow academically, emotionally, physically, culturally, and socially. We believe it is essential to teach all students to be people of strong character with high academic achievement so they become productive citizens and leaders in our democratic society. Along with a rigorous academic curriculum, we have integrated social-emotional learning into our instruction, in conjunction with the Leader in Me philosophy. You can feel the climate of students as leaders from the moment you enter our school. From the wall displays to the language carefully chosen to encourage and enrich the lives of students, our students are given opportunities to develop their strengths and grow their talents. This approach has become the foundation of our academic work.

Our school was first recognized as a National School of Character in 2008 and once again in 2013. Our journey of integrating character education in the curriculum began in 1995 with the introduction and emphasis of core character traits that helped guide our school culture. The staff was trained under the Caring Schools Community model, implementing opportunities such as buddy classes, class meetings, school-wide and home-side activities, which resulted in our students taking more ownership of their learning, using their voice and choice to make curricular decisions.

We used this approach as a springboard to build student leadership skills, incorporating the “7 Habits of Happy Kids” into our school culture. Using Stephen Covey’s 7 Habits of Highly Successful People as a template, we have empowered our students to set high goals, spearhead community service projects, and take an active role in the leadership of our school. This initiative has yielded a high rate of academic achievement and low discipline referrals. Our philosophy of “We do whatever it takes to ensure all students meet their full potential” and our motto, “Every Leader Matters”, guides us in our efforts to improve performance of all students. Student competence is improved through differentiated curriculum and instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners. Students not meeting proficiency on state assessments are targeted for intensive interventions with frequent monitoring. Many of our classrooms offer alternative and flexible seating, meeting the needs of those students who learn better through different modalities. In weekly PLC meetings, Professional Learning Communities, grade levels plan for instruction, discuss student progress, and provide interventions and supports.

We realize that the education of the whole child cannot be infused effectively without the support and involvement of the community. One of our strengths as a school community is the positive relationships that are embraced among parents, teachers, staff and administrators. Teachers attend school events and family evening activities, such as STEM, Trivia, Muffins with Moms, and movie nights. Parent volunteers and OASIS Intergenerational Tutors work daily at school with students and teachers. Email, weekly newsletters, principal’s blog, school Facebook page, face-to-face conferences and our website keep our whole community informed. Our Parent Teacher Organization is extremely supportive of our school community and the Executive Board takes an active role in decision making. Our student leadership team spearheads community outreach, such as recycling, assisting the Humane Society, Hope for Haiti, and Smile Initiative. Students lead an all-school assembly to honor our Veterans and for the past two years, they donated over 200 pounds of their Halloween candy to our troops overseas.

We believe that students who feel part of a community respond well to meaningful learning and reach high expectations when they are given the opportunities to do so. This is essential in teaching problem solving, creativity, and social skills that will carry them through to adulthood. Additionally, we recognize that our school administrators are educational leaders who promote the success of all students and staff by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and an instructional program conducive to student learning and professional growth.

As a previous recipient of the National Blue Ribbon School award, we are aware of this distinct honor. We have used this recognition to open our school to others by hosting “Leadership Days”. Our community is a high achieving community that respects this honor and strives to live up to its high standard. We celebrate the successes of all students and staff by acting with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum:**

All curricular content standards are written by our teachers in the District, who teach the material and create formative assessments that help guide their instruction; most of the Chesterfield teachers have served on various curriculum writing committees. The curriculum is a living document that constantly is modified to meet the current research-based trends and the needs of our students. Content areas are integrated, offering our students a well rounded perspective of their learning.

Beginning in kindergarten, our children acquire foundational skills that are developmentally appropriate such as hands-on activities at centers and small group differentiated instruction, including a dramatic play center because young children learn best through social interaction. We collect academic data on each child to tailor our instruction. The first grade curriculum extends objectives to sight words and phonics, applying strategies to incorporate comprehension skills as well as basic mathematical objectives. Primary Grade Reading Intervention is an extra support program for struggling readers, where a specialist works very closely with the classroom teacher to ensure student progress. For written expression, students first learn to write a complete sentence, that eventually culminates in three writing pieces: a narrative, opinion and informational. These are scored based on a teacher created rubric that includes mechanics as well as the development of content. At this level, they are exposed to civic oriented content that includes the basics of government, economics, geography and cultural awareness.

As our students progress through second and third grades, they are challenged with authentic, problem-based, real world scenarios. They are expected to make sense of text that is more complex, examining new information closely, expanding their knowledge base, and building new ideas. These expectations include making logical inferences, determining the central idea, analyzing and summarizing, and finally being able to explain author's craft and structure. Exposure to civic responsibility consists of real life scenarios where students take on the roles of government leaders (president, senators, judges, etc.) and write a class constitution with local government leaders being invited to work alongside of our students. Science instruction is presented in a hands-on approach, incorporating STEM components. Strategies, such as think-pair-share, cooperative groups, scaffolding assignments, and higher level questioning, ensure all students are engaged in their learning. In this cooperative learning environment, students who struggle with task completion are given opportunities to self regulate to help them identify how they learn best, using sensory items such as sand, fidgets, and alternative seating.

The fourth grade team utilizes small group instruction, cooperative learning, and flexible groupings as the model for curriculum delivery in both Language Arts and Math instruction. Students expand foundational skills in Language Arts by participating in writer's workshop lessons focused on student interests. These lessons include skills-based mini-lessons, modeling, guided/independent practice, and frequent teacher feedback in one to one conferencing. Students participate in reading groups focusing on various reading genres, critical-thinking skills, questioning, discussion, and written response activities.

The fifth grade curriculum centers on students' abilities to apply their knowledge to real-world scenarios, with opportunities for self assessment and reflection. Students utilize technology resources, such as Google Classroom, to review lessons, seek extra practice opportunities in math, and consult materials to augment their learning. We use balanced literacy with differentiated instruction and flexible grouping for language arts and math instruction, providing access for all learners through video lessons, audio books, interactive games, reading blogs, and editing/revising tools. The approach of "place-based" where students do their learning within their own personal environment is used in teaching Science. Students experience learning in the school yard, the student designed prairie, and the newly created monarch butterfly garden. Reinforcement of skills is also provided in activities such as "Science in a Tree" where students are supervised to climb a tree using professional climbing equipment releasing student created "seeds" to determine the dispersal range. This type of kinesthetic teaching allows our students to truly understand the content and be able to explain their learning.

Across all grade levels, the curriculum serves as a guide to our teaching, guaranteeing that our students become proficient in the Missouri Learning Standards, meeting the state expectations.

## **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

In addition to the core curriculum, our students are also offered opportunities that impact the whole child.

All students participate in physical education thirty minutes a day, five days a week. The physical education teachers are Nationally Board Certified with advanced degrees in education, awarded with the MOAHPERD EXEMPLARY GOLD, Missouri Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance in 2008, 2010, and 2012 and Shape American Stars Award for Quality Physical Education in 2006 and 2007. Chesterfield's physical education program follows a School Board approved physical education and health curriculum including a scope and sequence with formative and summative assessments. The curriculum is aligned with State and National Standards. Students are active for at least fifty percent of class at a moderate to vigorous level of fitness. The physical, cognitive, and social/emotional progress of the students are communicated to the parents regularly.

Students attend visual arts class once per week for 60 minutes. Instruction at the primary level focuses on fine motor skill acquisition, experimenting with a variety of media, and forming meaningful connections between art and themes like self, nature, environment, diversity, visual culture, and abstraction. Instruction at the intermediate level focuses on teaching artistic behaviors in a choice-based format. Students develop their own ideas, demonstrate critical thinking skills, persist through challenges, maintain studio spaces, use tools and materials responsibly and independently, and reflect on their practice to grow through their risks, failures, and successes.

Every child in the third grade experiences a beginning string class, learning to play the violin by rote. The Rockwood fourth and fifth grade orchestra programs are an extension of third grade violin class and are open to every student. Students may continue on the violin or may choose to begin instruction on another string instrument. Recognizing patterns, verbalizing patterns, tapping and playing patterns all contribute to reading notes and rhythms on the staff. Playing a string instrument uses both left and right side of the brain functions and this helps our students learn to multi task as they utilize both left and right hand techniques to play the instrument. Creating, performing, responding and connecting are target areas that we integrate at every grade level in string classes. Students also learn the importance of collaboration and the skills and techniques it takes to accomplish playing with others in ensemble settings. Our goal is to instill skills and techniques and tools; igniting a love and aptitude for music so that students will continue to utilize these skills for a lifetime.

The technology curriculum is taught based on 3 strands: basic computer usage, digital citizenship, and computational thinking. Twice weekly, Grades K-2, 4, and 5 students are exposed to mainstream technological devices and use internet sources to advance knowledge that will allow adaptation to an ever-changing STEM-based future. Currently, we place an emphasis on creativity and problem solving in block coding that builds logic to learn true coding.

Chesterfield Elementary students receive vocal music instruction two times per week. The curriculum incorporates the National Core Arts Standards while continuing to align to the Missouri GLEs, Grade Level Expectations. With a focus on the four artistic processes of creating, performing, responding, and connecting, content is structured in spiraling units with common assessments implemented across the district. An emphasis is placed on expanding opportunities for musical creativity as well as developing musical literacy.

Chesterfield recognizes the inherent linguistic and cultural diversity of our students. We provide English Language Learners equal access to the curriculum. We use language standards in the areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing that align with the curriculum, which assists students in acquiring the English language. We cultivate a climate where students from all cultures can assimilate into the American culture while enriching and sharing students own cultural experiences with classmates and teachers.

### **3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:**

Our work of educating the whole child is guided by our mission statement and school improvement plan. Our school improvement effort is to ensure that every student shows growth. Individual student competence is achieved through a differentiated curriculum and leveled instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners. Students not meeting proficiency are targeted for intensive interventions with frequent monitoring. Our Response to Intervention teams regularly discuss student progress and suggest research-based strategies and interventions needed to address student concerns. Together they make an individual plan to meet the needs of students struggling academically, socially, and/or emotionally.

Achievement has soared as teachers continue to allow the use of student voice and choice in curricular decision making. For example, in third grade, the students created their own test questions based on the information learned in social studies. In fourth grade, students designed and depicted a First Missourian Museum. Fifth grade students facilitated a lesson in which character was integrated as students reenacted a Revolutionary War Era ballroom dance. These learning experiences are examples of how the use of students' current knowledge, questions and curiosity about their world, developing technology skills, and the need for hands-on experiences create powerful and engaging instructional opportunities.

In order to enhance learning, teachers in grades K-5 require learners to solve problems. We use this problem-based learning instructional strategy so that students begin learning by addressing simulations of an authentic, structured problem. The content and skills to be learned are organized around problems, understanding the reciprocal relationship that exists between knowledge and the problem. Knowledge building is stimulated by the problem and then applied back to the situation. Instruction is student centered and self-directed so that students individually and collaboratively assume responsibility for generating learning issues and self-assessing, increasing the probability of students to be self-directed, independent, lifelong learners.

Differentiation and acceleration are provided for every student based on their level as measured by teacher assessments. Teachers are flexible in their approach to teaching, adjusting and modifying the curriculum and presentation of information to learners is routine. Teachers align tasks and objectives to learning goals for each student, focusing on the concepts, principles, and essential skills that students master. Content of instruction addresses the same concepts with all students, but is adjusted by degree of complexity based on the ability of the learners. Teachers vary instructional approaches from whole group to 1:1 and modify instruction as needed in relation to individual and diverse students in classrooms.

Each PLC team meets weekly to discuss, evaluate and disaggregate data to determine the best instructional practice to meet each student's individual needs, using the four essential questions to guide their discussion:

- What do we want our students to understand, know, and be able to do?
- How will we know they have learned it?
- How will we respond if they have learned it?
- How will we respond if they already know it?

Teachers identify the student's breakdown, pursue research based interventions, tailor them to each individual student, converse with teammates and seek out other building and district resources to impact student learning. To monitor student performance, each PLC meets every 6 weeks for "Student Talks", where the specialists working with a student meet, review individual student data in content areas, and set up individual interventions and/or plans. Students who are struggling in Reading and Math are offered additional supports designed by the Intervention teams, while students who are performing above the norms, are given opportunities to access more challenging curricula. Student performance is monitored using District wide and authentic teacher created assessments based on Missouri Learning Standards. Student Growth Percentage (SGP) is measured to determine expected quarterly growth in Reading and Math.

As we have embraced the mission that our school embodies, we are confident that all children are provided a variety of learning opportunities so that student achievement is attained by all of learners.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### **1. School Climate/Culture:**

Chesterfield staff unequivocally understands that a positive school climate is essential to each child's learning. It is the foundation upon which our academics are built. We embrace our responsibility in developing solid citizens, beyond their time with us. We coach each student and staff member to discover and own the authentic leader inside of them.

Chesterfield proactively and intentionally uses three facets to create a positive school climate. We utilize Caring School Community to develop autonomy, belonging and competence. Class meetings, cross age buddies/families, school-wide events and homeside activities, infuse these values into the children's daily lives. We also teach and model our nine character traits of responsibility, respect, perseverance/effort, caring, cooperation, honest, courage, patience and self-control. We brainstorm ways we may demonstrate them in our classroom and at home. We utilize the Leader in Me process to develop each student into a leader of his/her own learning. Students develop individual academic and behavior goals. Each student monitors his/her progress in his/her goal binder and is coached along the way. We also seek for each student to have an authentic leadership role at school based on his/her interests and strengths.

Chesterfield is committed to a child-centered philosophy integrating student voice and choice including curricular decision making. Teachers use students' current knowledge, questions and curiosity about their world, emerging technology skills, and hands-on experiences to create powerful, engaging instructional opportunities. The student leadership team, comprised of any intermediate grade student who is interested in joining, plans leadership activities, student-led service learning and student-led assemblies. Class meeting dialogues include student opinions about various topics. The effectiveness of our efforts to promote student engagement and motivation is measured by an annual survey given to all students, staff and parents. This data is utilized in the development of our annual school improvement plan.

Chesterfield also respects, values and supports our staff the same as we do our students. We have various leadership committees portraying the components of the school with each grade level represented to ensure all voices are heard in school decisions. At weekly grade level PLC meetings, teachers discuss student academic and social performance that then drives further staff dialogue. We offer various learning opportunities for the staff such as the "7 Habits of Highly Effective People" philosophy. Again, we use the anonymous climate survey along with the National Education Association survey to help measure how our staff is thriving.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

The philosophy of Chesterfield Elementary encompasses the idea that it takes all stakeholders to develop successful students; the parent community involvement is critical to this belief. We maintain ongoing partnerships with many members of our surrounding community, such as the City Hall, local business leaders, and charitable organizations. For the last four years, the students in our building have hosted a Leadership Day, where every student is highlighted as a leader in some capacity. The students engage in a student - facilitated school wide assemblies where topics can run the gamut of academics, character, or social emotional strategies. Students then invite our guests into their classroom to share their academic gains, goal setting, and data binders. They truly are the "leaders of their own learning".

Chesterfield proactively plans for future academic years by surveying the staff, parents, and students, including topics that involve competency in academics, character, and climate. The data we receive from all involved is beneficial in planning and executing activities for the following school year that will in turn, meet the needs of our students. The beginning of each academic school year includes a Parent Volunteer Training that typically includes over 250 parents in attendance. The parents are given a variety of options to find a "place" in our school that best fits their strength. Many parents are interested in mentoring students that are "at-risk" within our school demographic. It is within these cultivated relationships that a child that might otherwise fail is nurtured and develops success.

Throughout the school year, the staff and students facilitate a Family Leadership Evening. Families are invited to rotate in different parts of our building, writing a Family Mission Statement, participating in a challenging STEM activity and creating a meaningful craft to commemorate their night. The feedback we receive from the parent community concerning this event is overwhelmingly positive and powerful. We also include our surrounding community leaders in our Veterans Day Assemblies as well as classroom presenters that include topics ranging from disability awareness to career readiness and environmental service.

Our community celebrates our school's accomplishments during school-wide events, modeling for our students that it really does "take a village" to impact the lives of our students.

### **3. Professional Development:**

The Chesterfield staff prides itself on consistent learning of new ideas, strategies and initiatives that impact instruction. This learning comes from many resources, the foundation of which is the consistent implementation of PLCs. Teachers meet weekly in PLCs to discuss student needs, look at data from common assessments, and share effective teaching strategies. Administrators are involved in the PLC work by joining in these discussions that have a specific focus.

Once a month we have Early Release days on which the staff is given yet another opportunity to engage in professional development. District wide initiatives allow the entire staff to meet with colleagues from other schools to learn together about a new curriculum and/or best practices. Building wide opportunities give us time to closely examine our own instructional practices. For example, next year we will receive a new math resource to support the newly written curriculum; thus we spent the last Early Release Day examining the new resource materials. Also these professional development days allow us to meet in vertical teams with teachers in the grades above and below ours to discuss any trends in student achievement, both positive and negative. Such open and honest conversation allows us to tailor our teaching to meet those needs and improve student achievement.

Additionally, monthly staff meetings take place in a different grade level or subject area of our building. We do this to showcase the grade level or subject area and give these staff members the chance to share best practices and new ideas with the whole school staff. Book studies are another focus of the staff meeting. This year we've been reading and discussing key points from Mathematical Mindsets and GRIT, Jennifer Serravallo's Reading Strategies and Writing Strategies books.

The Rockwood School District has a Professional Development Committee with a representative from each school that meets once a month. During these meetings our building representative learns new techniques for meeting students' academic, social and emotional needs and learns about upcoming workshop opportunities available to all staff members. This representative is responsible for sharing the information with the whole staff. We compile all of our learning in a binder available to the staff to access for independent professional development.

### **4. School Leadership:**

The structure of School Leadership at Chesterfield Elementary is that of participatory management centering on the needs of our students, both academic and social/emotional. We have three major "structures", the BLT - Building Leadership Team, the ILT - Instructional Leadership Team, and the Character Ed/Leader in Me Team, each team having representation from every grade level along with specialists that meets once a month. The BLT makes decisions related to management issues; the ILT leads the school in instructional initiatives, while the Character Ed/Leader in Me Team addresses school wide discipline and character education matters. The principal oversees the effective management of the three structures.

BLT agenda items consist of school wide events, schedules, calendars, and budgetary concerns. Most recently, this team determined the distribution of some \$25,000 among the grade levels in regards to

technology needs. Representatives surveyed their grade levels, brought a list of the needs to the main committee and collectively determined the distribution based on priorities. Additionally, this team proposes new initiatives such as restructuring of the format for Spring parent-teacher conferences to better meet the needs of the students who may need additional supports over the summer months. Finally, this team sets the agendas for school-wide events such as Curriculum Night and Meet the Teacher at the start of every school year.

The ILT serves as the Vertical Team that addresses consistency in the educational programming among grade levels. Over the past two years, this team wrote new assessments in the area of writing, which correlated with the new Language Arts curriculum and became a template for District – wide writing rubrics. Student performance helped guide this team in including specific skills needed for our students to master in each grade level in the area of writing. With the introduction of the new math curriculum next year, this team is creating ongoing professional development opportunities for the staff, serving as presenters and facilitators for implementation with fidelity. Administration serves as a guide and support in the work of these committees, facilitating effective implementation.

To address the emotional needs of our students, the Rockwood School District has introduced SEL, Social Emotional Learning component in our schools. Providing additional personnel to help train staff and work with students, each school is responsible for an effective implementation of this initiative. The CES implementation plan is chaired by the Assistant Principal and Character Ed/Leader in Me Team, who provide the staff with ongoing professional development in the area of social emotional learning, teaching and integrating lifelong skills, such a teamwork in daily instruction. Based on feedback from the staff, student, and the parent community, this additional component has had a profound positive impact on our students' educational experience.

## **Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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Our school builds off of the foundation that students understand the what, the how, and the why they learn. 75% of our students achieve at the proficient and advanced levels on our statewide yearly assessments and some grades reach 90%. Our students are engaged in their learning, they know their voice matters, and they see how what they learn in the classroom is connected to future goals. Various projects serve as motivating links that provide a purpose for writing, reading, and research skills. Frequently, students are given choices on their final presentation format, whether it is a Google Slides document, a written report, or an audio recording.

All of our students are given formal and individualized reading and math assessments 2 to 3 times per year to monitor progress. All assessment scores are reviewed to ensure that all of our teachers do whatever it takes to help all students be successful. An example of this approach centers on the individual teacher growth plans that set a goal as a PLC to ensure that all students would improve at least 3 levels on the BAS, Benchmark Assessment System, an individualized reading test from August to May. The teachers work together to implement strategic plans to help students who are not on track to meet this goal by the end of the year, while also enriching the learning of students who have already met the goal. The results directly correlate to the TEI, the Teacher Evaluation Instrument, at the end of the school year.

The expectation that students show good character underlies all that we do and is the foundation for learning. Students are offered leadership opportunities in their classrooms as well as school-wide. The leadership skills filter into academics by providing a sense of belonging in our school and motivation to take charge of one's learning. Students are members of family groups, 10-12 students led by a staff member, who meet monthly to collaborate on activities that highlight social and emotional growth. The overall sense of belonging and focus on character traits that are implemented seamlessly in our lessons leads to less student disruption of the learning, as evidenced by our low student discipline referral data less than 1% of our student body, more involvement in lessons by students, higher achievement, and happier students, as shown on our climate surveys with more than 95% of students indicating they like school.