

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

Official School Name Legacy Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 5150 9th Street West
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City West Fargo State ND Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 58078-4068

County 09

Telephone (701) 356-3740 Fax (701) 356-4049

Web site/URL https://www.west-fargo.k12.nd.us/schools/legacy/ E-mail jmarkusen@west-fargo.k12.nd.us

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. David Flowers E-mail flowers@west-fargo.k12.nd.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name West Fargo School District 6 Tel. (701) 356-2000

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 Dr. Kara Gravely-Stack
(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):
- 12 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 3 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 17 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	58	34	92
1	58	50	108
2	47	46	93
3	48	43	91
4	41	24	65
5	47	40	87
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	299	237	536

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 2 % Asian
 - 2 % Black or African American
 - 1 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 94 % White
 - 0 % 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: 4%

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	11
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	5
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	16
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	430
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.037
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	4

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

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Nepali, Bosnian, Dinka, Spanish

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 11 %
Total number students who qualify: 58

8. Students receiving special education services: 14 %
75 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>6</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>4</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>26</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>7</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>30</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>1</u> Mental Retardation | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 2
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	33
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	9
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	19
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 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	97%	97%	97%	98%	98%
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.

Mission: "Educate" Vision: "Everyone Learns" We believe that ALL stakeholders (parents, certified staff, classified staff, administrators, parents) should harness a "growth mindset."

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

The Legacy community in the West Fargo Public School district has its charm in the developing southern area of West Fargo. West Fargo was named a 2011 Playful City USA by the KaBOOM Foundation making play a priority for the community. West Fargo was also named City of the Year in 2013 by the North Dakota League of Cities and one of North Dakota's five safest cities in 2015 according to The Safewise Report. West Fargo's Public Library was named the North Dakota's Amazing Library by MSN.com in 2016. This gives a small taste of not just the growth West Fargo is experiencing, but the purpose, direction, and planning going into making West Fargo a true destination city.

While our free and reduced numbers are growing, our families and community are largely affluent. Parent involvement is also at a very high level at Legacy Elementary. While some may see this as a burden or nuisance, we use this involvement to better our school. We take opportunities to both communicate and collaborate with parents and guardians and educate as to what our goals are for our students and our school. We invite parents and guardians into the school, helping to create a communal partnership that will ultimately help our students grow and succeed. We have been able to celebrate awards such as Michelle Obama's Let's Move Active Schools National Award for our focus on the health and wellness of our students and staff with numerous programs in place. We also received The Star Award from our local Dakota Medical Foundation, which highlights those who have put forth exemplary leadership toward promoting health improvements.

What first catches the eye as one walks through the front doors of Legacy Elementary, is the blue and yellow banner that welcomes everyone with the school logo. As the Legacy Lions, we were extremely purposeful in choosing our logo, wanting to represent what encompasses Legacy Elementary; a sense of family and growth. An adult male and female lion stand tall around a young lion cub, symbolizing that families, community, and staff are all here to ultimately help our young ones in every way possible. The grass beneath the lions' feet symbolize our focus to help all stakeholders grow and meet their full potential within the Legacy family. Accompanied by the logo, the banner also poses the question, "How will you lead today?", encouraging every student, staff, and community member to use their personal strengths to make Legacy and the world a better place and add value to other people's lives.

At Legacy, our school Mission is: Educate. Our school Vision is: Everyone Learns. These are clear and concise goals for our students to not only remember, but actually own on a daily basis. It is clear to all stakeholders that learning is our ultimate focus. Not only is it our focus for students, but everyone. This includes students, teachers, paraprofessionals, custodians, lunch staff, administration, and all others who walk through the doors of Legacy Elementary. The importance of joy and becoming a lifelong learner can and will open up so many doors to those young and older, thus our mission and vision.

For our students to become academically, physically, emotionally, socially, and culturally successful, we have numerous strategies in place. Our district works together, often writing our own curricula to ensure we are teaching what ultimately fits our students' needs and fits the standards to the highest level possible. We also provide extra support with Homework Room, Reading Room, math supports, Multi-Tiered Support System, strong Professional Learning Communities, and taking advantage of grant and partnership opportunities to ensure our students are getting the academic support they need, with or without an Individualized Education Plan in place.

Our focus on health and wellness is also very evident and purposeful throughout our building. Building-wide flexible seating/personalized learning spaces, movement built into our curriculum along with multiple health snack and food options and initiatives in our building are working to build both short and long-term healthy habits for our students. Health and Wellness will be discussed further in the other curriculum section.

Emotionally, socially, and culturally, we have some initiatives in place for character development and 21st Century Skills. As a school we have adopted the 7 Mindsets, teaching students on at least a weekly basis about different ways of thinking that will set them up for success. Examples include Everything Is Possible,

Attitude of Gratitude, 100% Accountable, We are Connected, etc. We have deep discussions with our students and do activities to practice living these mindsets. We use 10 Life Skills which teach students strategies that they will use, not just in school, but throughout their lives. Examples of these skills include using appropriate voice tone, making and accepting apologies, sportsmanship, etc. We purposefully implement 21st Century Skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, perseverance, and growth mindset into our regular lessons, often asking students to reflect on how they used those skills throughout an activity or throughout their day. We promote student leadership and empowerment through classroom jobs, classroom responsibility awards, and our Legacy Leader Program which is a time for staff to recognize leadership qualities shown in students in a variety of ways. Our counselor works with our students and staff to ensure we all are building our skills in expressing emotions, empathy, how to calm down, problem solving, and dealing with bullying. Working to ensure our students are successful in all walks of life is of utmost importance to our school, staff and community.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Our English Language Arts curriculum has been written and is constantly growing and improving with the help of many of our Legacy teachers serving on the grade-level ELA committees at the district level. Our ELA curriculum is both vertically and horizontally aligned in the sense that skills are built each year to expound upon and be ready to dive deeper in the upcoming grade level. We are horizontally aligned in the sense that our ELA curriculum also ties in with our Social Studies curriculum, utilizing our comprehension strategies and understanding of non-fiction elements to learn about different social studies topics. We chose to write and design our own curriculum this way to increase connectedness and value between subjects. Students are much more aware of how knowledge in one area helps students to understand another core area, thus creating value. Horizontally aligning also increases student engagement and maximizes the value of instruction time. Each grade level of standards is unpacked and divided into appropriate modules. There are typically around ten modules for each grade level throughout the year alternating focus between reading genres, social studies topics, and other elements. Aligned within each of these modules are appropriate comprehension strategies focuses, skills, vocabulary, writing genres and skills, and grammar elements. Each grade level has specific amounts of time for whole group instruction, guided practice, and independent work, utilizing the gradual release system for effectiveness. Skills and strategies are also expounded upon and individualized in small group work. Every grade level has an Intervention and Enrichment time scheduled daily to work in small groups and individually to help students with the skills and strategies they need at their level. During this time, students also work independently, continuously being engaged in their purposeful learning experiences.

Our writing curriculum is broken into different writing genres including personal narrative, prompt, opinion, descriptive, compare/contrast, argumentative, etc. Within these genres, the gradual release model of delivering instruction is used to focus on grammar and other areas of writing. Examples include drafting and editing strategies, tag and quote, interesting leads, building the paragraph, character traits, etc. The gradual release system helps student to hear the inner-workings of the teachers thoughts and ideas so students cannot only see what a product should look like, but the ideas and process that the writer goes through. Throughout reading and writing, teachers use a praise and prompt model, working with students individually and small groups to praise something that the student is doing well and prompting the student with something that needs more focus, thus attributing to our growth mindset as well.

As previously stated, our reading and social studies curricula work together. The social studies curriculum is also outlined and established by our district with Legacy teachers on the committees. We do use more products such as Interact Simulations. These simulations are both used in our social studies modules and our ELA modules. The simulations provide a hands-on learning experience that really helps students to work collaboratively in small groups to dive into the topic. There are usually real-life scenarios that help students to place themselves in history and try to problem solve in a way that people had to long ago. 21st Century Skills are absolutely utilized throughout each simulation, not only strengthening the students in academic areas, but also in other life foundational skills. Civics are also looked at, planned for and taught with precision and purpose here at Legacy. The West Fargo School District has built in what we call 10 different Life Skills into our social studies curriculum. We also use a Life Skill program known as the "7 Mindsets". The end in mind with the 7 Mindsets is to create pathways and bridges with our curriculum, academics and school, to life outside of Legacy with regards to strong, positive, and productive citizenship.

We adopted our math curriculum because it clearly aligns with the high-level critical thinking and problem-solving skills that we strive for with our standards. Each teacher introduces and expands upon multiple strategies for each core skill. This sets students up for success because after exposure and understanding, students can choose the strategy which makes them the most successful. The math curriculum also uses the gradual release approach, setting each student up for success, while teachers allow students to work at their level of math, creating maximum differentiation. The curriculum also provides opportunities for pre-teaching, re-teaching, and enrichment.

Our newly adopted science curriculum is split into multiple modules, which are implemented through the course of the academic year. This science curriculum allows for students to take a very hands-on approach to their learning. Through many experiments, students are able to work collaboratively and partake in creative and critical thinking in order to hypothesize, experience, and reflect upon the different tasks. The focus of this curriculum is on real-world learning experiences, educating our students for real life events, and activities.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

All students, grades kindergarten through fifth grade, have Art at Legacy Elementary for two 30 minute sessions every six-day rotation. We use WF elementary art curriculum based in the national Visual arts standards. We focus on what an artist is and what they do to making more complicated 2D to 3D projects building on skills from previous learning in craftsmanship and the art elements and principles of design. Some of the essential skills we focus on include drawing skills with various media, cutting and gluing, watercolor and tempura painting skills, color theory, printmaking, ceramic hand building skills and sculpting.

All students, grades kindergarten through fifth grade, have Music for four 30 minute sessions every six-day rotation. In music we have a curriculum designed by our music teachers and our district. We use all sorts of resources in this curriculum such as “Spotlight on Music” “MusicPlay” and “Quaver Music”. We do various activities and work on different skills to cover the following applied areas. PERFORM, CREATE, RESPOND, CONNECT, ENGAGE. In each of these areas we work on singing, playing instruments, grade appropriate rhythms, working with melody, writing melody on the staff (treble or bass), improvisation, and so on. This is set up by grade level. Certain grades learn certain rhythms, notes, and songs so that by the end of their time in elementary school, they have gathered all of the tools they need to be a music student at the secondary level.

All students have Media and Library Skills for one 30-minute session during the six-day rotation. Our Media Specialist follows the WF Library Media Standards/Pacing Guide (which are based on the ND State standards for Library Info and Technology). We cover a variety of Library Media and Technology/21st Century Skills. Students learn how to take care of library materials and the library itself, how to find materials, genres of books, etc. A large part of our curriculum is also our Common Sense Media/Digital Citizenship piece, which covers online safety (safe websites, passwords, cyberbullying, etc.) and basic technology skills. Our curriculum is broken down into two parts: K-2 and 3-5. K-2 is introductory where the students are learning basic library, technology and online safety skills. 3-5 we expand and master those skills so students are more independent in finding what they are looking for in the library (both on the computer and physically walking around) and are able to live out their online safety skills in the real world, outside of school.

All students at Legacy Elementary have Physical Education for five 30 minute sessions throughout each six-day rotation. Each grade level follows the same pacing guide for PE. It is sport based, so we spend about two weeks on a sport and then move on to the next one. Assessments and standards vary for each grade level.

All students at Legacy Elementary have Health for one 30 minute session throughout each six-day rotation. For health, the units are different for each grade level. Each unit is about 3-4 lessons and there is an assessment/standard covered for each one as well. Topics vary from bicycle safety to parts of the digestive system.

Setting up our students for physical success is one of our passions at Legacy Elementary. Building-Wide flexible seating/personalized learning spaces is one of the foundational pieces to how we make this happen. We have collaborated with Dakota Medical Foundation (DMF) in Fargo to help support this initiative through various wellness grants. Other programs and initiatives such as Morning Fitness Club, Intramural Activities, Active Recess (indoor and outdoor) supported by North Dakota State University (NDSU) and Wellness Wednesday in partnership with Sanford FIT are some of the examples of a purposeful focus put on physical activity. The food and fuel we are putting into our body is also very important for us to teach with a

purpose. Healthy Cooking Classes, again partnered with NDSU, Wellness topics discussed in health classes as well as regular classes on our Wellness Wednesdays, and movement built into classroom lessons are vital. A building-wide healthy options (food and activity) birthday menu, along with an appetizer cart in our lunchroom as kids wait in line to eat (DMF partnership) are other ways we are looking to instill short and long-term health and wellness habits in our students and staff. There is also an importance placed on practicing what we preach where at various staff meetings our principal has involved the staff by teaching various dances, such as the Electric Slide and The Wobble during staff meetings. This includes great fun, exercise, team building and getting out of our comfort zones, which is a way we as adults can better empathize with what we ask our kids to do on a daily basis.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Instructional methods, interventions, and assessments is where Legacy Elementary really comes to life. We are proud of our ever-developing curriculum, but our various methods of instruction is where we work to transfer the joy of learning to our students. Throughout our school, one of our favorite instructional methods is the use of Whole Brain Teaching. We often talk about differentiation and the Gardner's Multiple Intelligences. Through Whole Brain Teaching strategies, we are using verbal, visual, kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligences simultaneously throughout every one of our lessons. Teachers have call and response attention grabbers. Students use hand gestures and their own voices to repeat the information teachers are portraying. Students use frequent turn and talk opportunities to explain information and idea thought processes to a leveled and appropriate partner. Students work on listening strategies while prompting classmates to add more to their thinking, explain why they think what they do, or have an example to go deeper into their understanding. Teachers and students use hand gestures and full body movements to understand concepts, ideas, and vocabulary on a continual basis throughout each lesson. Whole Brain Teaching also provides students and staff a focused, purposeful and positive classroom teaching and learning environment that has creating the utmost student engagement as the end in mind. These techniques can be used as differentiated instruction during explicit, whole group instruction, small groups, or even individual times.

Throughout different content areas, we utilize the gradual release model which includes Think Aloud, Think Together, Guided Practice, Independent Practice, and Assessment. This allows the students to take more control over their learning as they practice and understand concepts and information. This model can be done at different rates for different students, in different content areas and different environments, creating even more differentiation for our classrooms.

Small group instruction is utilized not only during intervention and enrichment times, but throughout the day in each content area. Teachers are able to decide the skills and strategies specific students need to work on so that teachers can spend some extra time working with those students.

One of the small group strategies is to pre-teach. This gives certain students a little preview as to what is happening in the upcoming lesson. When the whole group lesson is presented, the students who had received the pre-teaching have now already seen the material and their confidence has been built. Another way for certain students to get some extra practice is re-teaching within small group. This gives students more opportunities to work with the teacher and gain extra experience and confidence on a certain skill.

Enrichment opportunities are also provided within small group work. Teachers can work with students who have caught on more quickly to a skill or strategy to push those students further into deepening their understanding of the material. At Legacy, we also have an Enrichment teacher who can provide even more support to students who are working at a higher level to be challenged further within each concept. This Gifted And Talented Education Program here at Legacy is known as GATE.

Along with our special education department, we have a couple other resources to help with students who are at a lower academic level. Legacy Elementary does not receive Title funding to provide students with extra math support if those students are not already in the special education system. We do, however, work hard to utilize one of our staff to pull small groups for math to provide even more opportunities for pre-teaching and re-teaching. Many of our staff have also participated or are participating in math Ad-Vantage

Math Recovery training (AVMR) to help students who struggle with math learn the skills they need to close the achievement gap.

Hands-on and problem-based opportunities are provided with our Science curriculum and English Language Arts and Social Studies simulations. Through these experiences, students build skills in critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, communication, and perseverance.

We have a variety of assessments to use as data points to not only monitor progress, but also assessments are much more dynamic as they are used to actually utilize the data to deepen our instruction. We use the Standardized Test for the Assessment of Reading (STAR), Aimsweb, and the Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) on a regular basis to progress monitor intervention students. We also use these assessments during benchmark times to view growth and proficiency. We, in our Professional Learning Communities (PLC), strive for not only the proficiency of our students, but growth for every one of them is of utmost importance. We then use the data from these assessments in our PLCs to data dig and determine which skills, strategies, and standards we need to focus on as a group and which ones may be better to focus on in a small group setting with our students. This is the basic process for how we build our PLC goals. This is also how we can collaboratively work with other professionals in our building by utilizing common planning times and really “move the needle,” so to speak, with our students.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

As portrayed in our school logo, Legacy Elementary is all about leadership and having a growth mindset. We work to provide every student with leadership opportunities that play to their personal strengths. Not every student leads in the same way. Some lead by example, others lead by reaching out and helping a peer learn, some lead with their special talents. Regardless, every person in our building is a leader in their own unique way. We motivate our students by establishing the growth mindset. Every mistake we make helps us to learn, grow, and improve. Mistakes are not seen as something to be ashamed of at Legacy Elementary. Instead, we embrace our mistakes as opportunities to improve ourselves. This is where we will be able to learn and grow the most! One can peek into different classrooms and see students encouraging each other, celebrating when a peer has improved themselves. Imagine a student leading a class by reciting the schedule for the day's lessons. When they get to the word "comprehension," they stammer, then try again to succeed. Meanwhile, you hear comments from peers such as, "You got this!" and "You can do it!" After a few tries, the student correctly says the word "comprehension," and the classroom erupts in applause. Does this sound like a dream world? The answer is no, it sounds like a growth-mindset and leadership moment in a Legacy Elementary classroom. This is what we are about; growth, leadership, encouragement.

The staff at Legacy Elementary consistently works to lead by example for students, creating a culture of leadership and growth with every moment. Adults walk down hallways and pick up garbage that isn't theirs to show the students that everyone needs to care about the well-being of our school. The adults of Legacy Elementary follow the school rules and procedures and show their importance to students. We try to go a step further, living out the 7 Mindsets that we work to purposefully teach to our students. An example of this would be our staff holiday parties, which often times consist of opportunities to give back to our community by tying blankets for the children's hospital, painting fingernails at a local nursing home, or just going to spend time with someone that does not have anyone. We want to be sure we are leading by example and show it does not have to cost money to add value to others' lives.

As a school, we also work to show our appreciation for each other. One way we do this is by giving Staff Shout-Outs, and writing out what we appreciate about the people we work with. Administration takes the time to share some of these at each staff meeting, reminding everyone of the great things that are happening on a regular basis at Legacy Elementary.

In order for our school staff culture to take root, we have created a specific position on our Leadership Team called Memorials, Gifts, and Parties (MPG). This staff leader, along with helpers, does a multitude of things to increase the staff culture. Sympathy cards and get-well cards are written, wedding and baby showers are held, potlucks are planned, and appreciation gifts are made. We also have several staff get-togethers throughout the year, including going out for pizza, a day at the lake, laser tag, and staff lunches on professional development days. Our staff culture, much like our student culture, is rooted in relationships. We work to provide purposeful time for those relationships to blossom. It is then that we can work the best together for the betterment of our school and our students.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Collaborating and communicating with our community is of utmost importance to Legacy Elementary. We know the community has a lot of experience and help to offer to make our school a better place for our students. That is why we have reached out to create numerous partnerships with non-profits, businesses, and institutes of higher education. We have worked with the Dakota Medical Foundation, Sanford FIT, NFL Play 60, and Schools Alive to receive grants and other resources for our health and wellness initiatives in our school. We have brought in businesses within the Junior Achievement Program to teach our students about different real-life scenarios through hands-on activities. We have also invited the North Dakota Oral Health Program to work with our students on the importance of dental hygiene and they also help our students get connected with dental services if they do not currently receive them. We have worked with

several schools in the area to help provide our students with great opportunities. School bands have come in and shared some music and music history with our students. We collaborated with our middle school to help teach and reinforce the 7 Mindsets, where a group of middle school students came into each classroom once a month to teach about the mindset and do activities with our students to deepen their understanding of each mindset. We have also had North Dakota State University students come in and spend some extra time on sportsmanship and physical activities in our Physical Education classes and at recess. They have also worked with our students in Healthy Cooking lessons to teach our students skills to prepare healthy snacks for themselves.

We invite the parents and guardians of our students into the school. We have a Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) that meets once a month to discuss how we can improve our school. All guardians are welcome to attend and contribute to the meaningful discussion. The PTO also puts together nights in which families can come together for some community culture builders. This includes movie nights and Bingo nights. At Legacy Elementary, we have a Reading Room open three mornings a week, before school. This is a wonderful time for parents to volunteer and become even more connected with our school and students.

We use several technology resources to communicate with our community and families. Weekly school newsletters are sent out with all important school-related information. We also have a Legacy Blog where any community member can see how we are living out our mission and vision on a daily basis. Our blog also includes our recordings of our very popular, weekly school TV broadcast, “Marky in the Morning.” This is a show where the principal goes live through Skype to every classroom and discusses important topics and reminders to students. He also showcases different classes, having student guests explain different concepts they are learning or skills they are building or reinforcing. Individual classrooms also communicate through See-Saw, Twitter, and Remind. We want to be sure our families and community are well informed about what we are doing academically and socially. These tools are more than a one-way communication piece to us at Legacy. They are proactive ways we can build bridges that span the home to school gap. We are then able to stay connected and ultimately have excited students and families about the teaching/learning happening here every day. We feel strongly that when we become a partnership with our community, we can ultimately help our students succeed.

3. Professional Development:

As a district, we have outlined several of our initiatives we would like our staff to focus on. These initiatives are aligned to a district menu of courses that staff have the option to take. Some examples include courses that focus on technology integration, instructional strategies and practices, student engagement techniques, book studies, etc. Each teacher can choose what area they would like to grow and improve in as far as taking a course through the district. Professionals from within our district are the people leading these courses, making them extremely applicable to our district and our students.

Other professional development opportunities come in the form of workshops and trainings throughout the year. New Teacher workshops are provided to teachers new to the district before the school year starts. We care that each teacher has all of the information and resources needed to transition smoothly into the school year with their students. We also have Back to School workshops which include any new information or trainings for new implementation in our curriculum or resources, setting our teachers up for success. We have a couple ongoing trainings and staff developments throughout the year, including Trauma Training and some curriculum trainings. These curriculum trainings could either be for new implementations, or refresher courses so we can deepen our level of understanding of what we are teaching. We use North Dakota’s State Mentoring Program to help all new teachers in their transitions to the classroom and throughout their school year. We also have an Instructional Coach who works with teams and individuals on specific goals and concepts. She works alongside the teachers and staff to support by helping to plan lessons, teaching lessons, giving feedback, etc. Our Instructional Coach also offers occasional refresher courses that may be need to solidify teacher understanding of resources, concepts, and assessments.

Our administration works with every certified staff in the building to set and discuss goals, completes both

formal and walk-through observations all focused on how each individual teacher can grow and improve. Not only does Legacy administration provide feedback, but our staff also takes part in Learning Walks, where professionals go into different classrooms, observe, and help each other grow and improve in their practices. We do this as a district, but also within our building, we have worked to create an open/collaborative type environment where everyone is a teacher and everyone is a learner.

Another time for collaboration among colleagues is during Legacy's monthly Coffee Collaboration. Coffee Collaboration is a voluntary opportunity for staff to get together to share ideas about specific topics, get help and learn from one another. Everyone has valuable knowledge that contributes to the school as a whole.

4. School Leadership:

Leadership is at the core of Legacy's foundation. We are rooted in the idea that everyone is a leader in their own way, whether they lead by example, inspire others with eloquence, or use a special talent. When each person, student and staff finds their niche in leadership it is then that the leadership can ripple out in different ways and add value to the lives of others and help to make a huge impact on our surroundings. Leadership banners in our school as you enter and exit each wing of our classroom areas pose the question, "How will you lead today?" Classrooms work to celebrate and empower their peers, knowing that each person has their own strengths, goals, and is working on improving themselves. Leadership is very purposeful in our classrooms, teams, staff and building as a whole. Our growth mindset truly revolves around this leading question.

Students hold leadership positions in their classrooms and throughout the school. These jobs range from announcing the learning targets for the day to the class, line leaders, room cleaners, voice tone checkers, watering the classroom plants daily and many more. We also have leadership positions that contribute to our whole school, including being on the Tech Team to help the principal set up and record our weekly "Marky In the Morning" broadcasts from different classrooms over the internet.

Students are recognized for their leadership abilities and contributions by staff members and earn leadership badges. When these badges accumulate to ten, special recognition is given by administration in front of peers and that student will have an award placed on the Lion's Den sticker wall.

We have four leadership awards that can be earned by grade levels and classrooms, presented by our Dean of Students. The Golden Garbage Can Award is for the cleanest classroom in each wing of our school, chosen by our nighttime custodians. The Hall Star Award is for the grade level with the best and most respectful hallway procedure, chosen by our specialist teachers. The Recess Champs award is for the classrooms with the most respectful attitudes and best sportsmanship on our playgrounds, chosen by the paraprofessionals who are out at recess. Lastly, The Golden Fork Award is awarded to the grade level with the most respect towards adults, peers, and lunchtime procedures, chosen by the lunchroom staff. Again, all stakeholders are involved in this process which helps build that family culture here at Legacy.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

At Legacy Elementary, we care about the whole child and their success in all aspects of life. There are a few keys, however, to how we try to help every child reach their full potential.

It all starts with relationships. As a staff, we all focus first and foremost on building relationships with our students. This is the root of all success. When we can work together, trust each other, and grow together, that is when we can make a true difference for each of our students.

In a socio-emotional sense, every staff member takes a certain “counseling approach” to handling difficult situations. We view each event/situation as an opportunity to learn from each other and improve ourselves. At the core of this mindset, our school counselor works to see that we all understand how to provide this for our students. As a school, we work on providing a physically and emotionally safe and accepting school culture. Our school counselor teaches whole class lessons, works in small groups, and works with individuals. She uses a teach-based curriculum that focuses on four main skills: fair ways to play, problem-solving steps, how to calm down, and empathy. She also works with students on the topic of bullying which includes how to identify bullying and what to do when one is in or near a bullying situation.

Our teachers work to create experiences for our students, not just lessons. We strive for active and engaged classrooms with Whole Brain Teaching strategies, turn and talks, physical movement, and more. We want our curriculum coming to life. We teach with passion, a sense of urgency, while we aim to provide clear connections from what we do in the classroom to real life situations. We want each of our students to fall in love with learning. We believe in Legacy being a destination type school. Each room is a destination, each lesson and moment a destination you want to be a part of. When you can accomplish this, the path to developing life-long learners is well on its way.