



## **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 2018 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 2012 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: 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, or 2017.
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 (2017-2018) unless otherwise stated.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 18 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 8 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 4 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
  - Rural or small city/town
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2017 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
<b>PreK</b>	16	24	40
<b>K</b>	50	41	91
<b>1</b>	38	49	87
<b>2</b>	29	61	90
<b>3</b>	48	55	103
<b>4</b>	47	44	91
<b>5</b>	54	51	105
<b>6</b>	0	0	0
<b>7</b>	0	0	0
<b>8</b>	0	0	0
<b>9</b>	0	0	0
<b>10</b>	0	0	0
<b>11</b>	0	0	0
<b>12 or higher</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	282	325	607

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 3 % Asian
  - 5 % Black or African American
  - 24 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 8 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 58 % White
  - 1 % 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 2016 – 2017 school year: 21%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain.

During the 2016-2017 school year, JB Hunt Elementary had a 21 percent mobility rate due to the district common practice of balancing transfer students. When one school has more students than the state allows, another school with availability will assist that school by allowing their student to enroll until an opening becomes available in their attendance area. Last year, JB Hunt Elementary had several grade levels under capacity and was able to assist other schools in the district.

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, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	92
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	39
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	131
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	625
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.21
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	21

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 22 %  
133 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):  
Amharic, Arabic, Chinese; Zhongwen, Mandarin, English, Kiribati, Laotian; Pha Xa Lao, Marshallese, Spanish, Telugu, Vietnamese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 44 %  
Total number students who qualify: 268

8. Students receiving special education services: 9 %  
52 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>9</u> Autism                  | <u>5</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>10</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>4</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>19</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>4</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 13
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, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	26
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	12
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	7
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

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 23:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
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 2017.

<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  No

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

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

Provide a personalized education, foster relationships, and increase knowledge by motivating, challenging, and nurturing all students.

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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Opening for the first time in August 2005, J.B. Hunt Elementary, located in Springdale, Arkansas, was built on land generously donated by the founder and CEO of J.B. Hunt Transport and his family. Meeting the needs of students is at the heart of our legacy, and at Hunt, we are most proud of giving our best to proactively meet the dramatically changing needs of our student population. In our inaugural year, of 514 K-5 students, 20 percent received free/reduced lunch benefits and seven percent were English Language Learners (ELLs). In 2017, of 607 students, 44 percent receive free/reduced lunch benefits and 21 percent are ELLs. Pre K classrooms are hosted in the building through the Arkansas Department of Education Better Chance Program. Hunt is one of 18 elementary schools that mirror the area's demographic growth, and we fully and passionately embrace our district motto "ALL Means ALL, Teaching Them ALL, Learning for ALL."

Springdale, known as The Poultry Capital of the World, is home to the largest poultry producers in the U.S., generating ample employment opportunities. This draws culturally diverse families, many of low socioeconomic status to the area at an incredible pace. Springdale is also unique as it is home to the largest population of Marshall Islanders in the U.S. Due to Springdale's dynamic growth, Hunt is home to a spectrum of culturally diverse students within a contrasting socioeconomic range. Families served include professionals, managers, skilled workers, unskilled laborers, and production line workers.

Hunt is a family committed to the whole child, ensuring equal access to a superior education. We have an active Parent Teacher Association (PTA), and along with volunteers, community and business partners, our efforts to support students and their families, are multiplied. PTA provides school-wide events, mentoring programs, financial support, and an award of a scholarship to a dedicated graduating senior who formerly attended the school. Hunt's business partnerships provide mentors and financial support for school-wide events. In 2008-2009, Hunt was named the Partners in Education school of the year for our J.B. Hunt Trucker Buddy program. To foster family relationships and promote educational investment, the school hosts many annual family events. Our Family Literacy Program (FLP) invites parents into classrooms, teaches them how to support student learning at home, and provides them the opportunity to learn English. Community visitors educate FLP parents on basic living strategies such as opening a bank account, paying utilities, and using coupons. Additionally, students who are graduating, return and celebrate with fifth graders as they transition schools to support academic success.

Hunt's mission is to provide a personalized education, foster relationships, and increase knowledge by motivating, challenging, and nurturing all students. Emotional and behavioral support programs and extra-curricular enrichment allow students to meet these goals. We partner with Youth Bridge and Ozark Guidance Center to provide on-site counseling services, and we host one of three elementary Alternative Learning Environments for students who require emotional and behavioral accommodations to succeed in the classroom. Students also receive cognitive enrichment through access to programs like Odyssey of the Mind, a rigorous, creative problem-solving competition, facilitated by parent and teacher volunteers. Before and after school opportunities such as art, science, sewing, cooking, and music clubs offer experiences and skills beyond classroom curriculum. To celebrate culture and promote leadership opportunities for our growing Marshallese population, a stomp club was formed to feature a combination of Marshallese and African-American rhythm routines. Stomp became very popular with students, positively impacting self-esteem and student achievement of those in the club. Girls on the Run is another opportunity that focuses on physical activity and self-esteem. For over ten years, we have applied for and received a grant to provide after-school tutoring for students who need academic intervention.

Hunt is recognized as a forward-thinking, high-success school by our state and community. Our teachers continually refine their practice to reflect the changing world. We were one of the first schools in the district to pilot interactive whiteboards in the classroom. We have continued growing by incorporating one-to-one access to student devices. As a result, many teachers have innovative training implementing technology while creating authentic, deep learning experiences. Furthermore, our highly qualified faculty mentor university pre-service teachers, allowing us the privilege of shaping the teachers of the future.

Hunt is a dynamic, responsive community of learners. As the demographics of our region will continue to change, our staff will continue its positive, proactive approach with the commitment to serving students academically, socially, and emotionally. Whether our students come from across the street or across the ocean, these students are ours. We love them all and are willing to work tirelessly to ensure our vision, to prepare all students to be college and career ready, lifelong learners, and productive members of society.

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

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

Hunt Elementary understands the value curriculum in the classroom plays in shaping students' knowledge, social skills, and character. Our research-based lessons are aligned with Arkansas State Standards and a district curriculum guide. Following the curriculum guide allows us to be responsive to highly mobile students in the district to prevent overlapping instruction and learning gaps. Instructional decisions are supported by data to plan for student remediation, enrichment, or interventions.

Literacy is taught through a workshop model. A strategy is presented during a mini-lesson using teacher modeling. Students participate in guided and collaborative practice before independently applying the strategy to authentic reading and writing activities. Large amounts of time are devoted for students to read and write while teachers confer with students individually and in small groups. The goal is for students to become thoughtful, strategic readers who develop metacognitive awareness of their strategy use. Instruction through guided reading and book clubs play a pivotal role in developing strong readers. Multiple and varied assessments and screenings are administered to determine students' reading capabilities, and the information gathered is used to plan instruction. Additionally, teachers use anecdotal notes and running records from conferences to drive instruction and monitor progress. The heart of our literacy curriculum is to create a lifelong love of reading and writing. Avid readers themselves, Hunt teachers share their reading life with students to cultivate our literacy community. Drawing on strong mentor texts, students learn writers' craft and see the reciprocal nature between reading and writing. Our young authors' writing takes many forms—books, PowerPoints, stories, letters, and poetry.

Math is also a strong curricular focus at Hunt, integrated across the curriculum. Taught in a workshop model that focuses on problem solving, teachers employ a variety of methods of instruction, including Cognitively Guided Instruction and Number Talks. Teachers' lessons, in the form of whole and small groups, engage students with real-world problems to ensure that students understand the relevance and value of their learning and develop strong number sense. Further, students are engaged through literature, songs, games, technology, and manipulatives. Additionally, teachers utilize technology programs such as FASTT Math, IXL, and Khan Academy to differentiate instruction and solidify learning.

Science at Hunt focuses on hands-on exploration that is inquiry based. At least 20 percent of science instructional time each week is devoted to hands-on inquiry based labs. Walking through our hallways a visitor would discover kindergarteners testing effects of force and motion and fourth graders constructing a Morse code circuit to witness how energy can be transferred by sound. Quality lessons that emphasize science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) allow students to solve problems in innovative ways. Third graders collaboratively design tornado proof homes to learn about natural disasters, while fifth graders' curiosity drives the construction of three simple machines into one Rube Goldberg machine.

At Hunt, social studies comes alive through interactive, hands-on learning. For example, first graders research and portray, in costume, a famous American. Third graders broaden their research to worldwide notable individuals. They create biographical PowerPoints and host a living wax museum to depict the famous person. Fifth graders step back in time to learn about key figures in the Revolutionary War and culminate learning with a written biography and a biography bottle, a soda bottle transformed into the influential person. School-wide elections, deep investigation of the functions of branches of government, founding documents, and historical movement help students learn the democratic process and the impact on their personal life experience. Service-learning opportunities abound at Hunt, such as veteran appreciation, food and clothing drives, and community service projects, which teach students authentic investment as active citizens.

The Child Development Early Learning Standards and the Develop, Inspire, and Grow program guide our preschool curriculum. Read-alouds, shared reading, and emergent literacy activities shape our balanced literacy program. Math is taught with hands-on activities and manipulatives. Thematic units and art complete the core curriculum. These standards scaffold into K-3 standards by developing students'

phonemic awareness and reading foundation, number sense, and social skills to prepare students for kindergarten and beyond. Students who attended our preschool exhibit stronger social skills, language acquisition, and literacy readiness.

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

Instruction for Hunt's K-5 students includes 45 minutes of art, music, library, and technology lab once per week, and physical education and health twice per week. In addition to nurturing creativity, self-expression, healthy choices, and technology skills, students engage in social and character development instruction provided by the school counselor once per month. These lessons incorporate positive character traits, community citizenship, bullying awareness and prevention, and social development. Specialty area teachers integrate one-to-one student use of technology to promote further learning by providing visual models, resources, assessments, and inspiration. For authentic and connected learning, they regularly collaborate to create impactful cross-curricular experiences.

Art class, for students in grades 1-5, immerses learners in a positive environment where they create, explore, and navigate through visual images. Facilitated discussions use Visual Thinking Strategies methodology to analyze historical and contemporary artworks, allowing students to read images and understand their culture and other cultures, through works of art. This cultivates socially responsible, empathetic learners who can express themselves through artwork and use essential skills and art concepts to discover real-world solutions. Cross-curricular subjects are supported and deepened, while elements of art, state, and national standards are mastered. Students share their art with peers, family, and community through regional competition, hallway displays, and online.

Our music program provides an engaging platform, developing self-expression, creativity, cultural exploration, and 21st century problem-solving skills. Accessing curriculum from a variety of sources including online music curriculum supplements, and Orff and Kodaly instructional methods, students develop vocal and instrumental technique while they enjoy learning to read, play, create, and analyze music from a diverse spectrum of cultures and time periods. Connections to units in the general classroom are carefully integrated and include creating arrangements, lyrics, and speaking parts for students to reinforce content while building self-confidence and musical skills. Students explore college and career music opportunities and experience mp3 creation, editing, and publishing their personal compositions through technology. To advance musical learning, a fourth-fifth grade choir with 85-members meets twice per week, a 12-member fourth-fifth grade stomp club meets twice per week, and a 25-member 5th grade recorder club meets once per week before school. Performances for these popular groups are incorporated throughout the year to draw families together, celebrate musical learning, and to represent Hunt in the community.

In PE, students acquire skills and knowledge in health science, nutrition, athletics, and a spectrum of lifetime healthy activities. For many students, this provides the first exposure to choices such as archery, bicycling, and fishing. Technology is incorporated to assess, track, and provide real-life application using current health tools for fitness. Collaborating with state and community foundations such as the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, The First Tee, and the city of Springdale, our PE program provides student access to lifetime health activities in our local community. Brain break activities and morning fitness routines incorporate exercise in the classroom to increase learning and focus. Hunt's PE program has received multiple awards and grants including the Healthier United States Gold School of Distinction. With grant funding, Hunt is able to provide refillable water bottles for every student for the next ten years and has installed a regulation size track with eight fitness stations to promote fitness and be enjoyed by students and community.

The library and media center is a hub of student learning and readily accessible resources. Free-flow checkout and thoughtful student assistance occur throughout the day. Lessons actively engage students in literacy and genre exposure, and provide skills to effectively utilize media resources for learning. The library collection consists of a student section, a parent center with parental support resources, and a professional collection for staff development. Through continual collaboration with the general classroom teachers, instruction is reinforced to provide multiple opportunities to acquire content skills and knowledge. While lessons meet all Arkansas Library Standards, they also include the Arkansas Computer Science Standards

and support the Next Generation Science Standards and social studies curriculum. Students locate online research sites, use the Online Public Access Catalog to locate available books, experience author studies, and learn about internet safety and research skills. Using STEM activities to increase interest in certain skills and subjects, Hunt's program expands student engagement across multiple curriculums.

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

Continuing Hunt's focus on the whole child, inventories, including spoken language, interests, learning styles, strengths/weaknesses, and background knowledge are given to develop a personalized instructional planning for each student. Parents complete surveys to offer student insight and increase family collaborative relationships. Pre-assessments are valued tools, allowing teachers to modify curriculum to personalize instruction in the classroom.

Hunt's teachers use their understanding of how students learn best to guide instruction through whole and small group instruction, which leads to partner and independent practice. Instruction is scaffolded to shift from teacher modeling and thinking processes to student collaboration and independent practice. With a focus on student thought processes, we utilize methods such as Cognitively Guided Instruction in math and inquiry-based science lessons to create student-centered instruction experiences. Workshop models of instruction for math and literacy allow teachers to meet with small groups, creating greater focus and personalized learning experiences for academic growth.

Hunt's teachers use data from multiple formal and informal assessments to drive instruction. Kindergarteners receive one-on-one developmental screening, providing insight to early math and literacy development stages. All K-2 students receive dyslexia screenings to anticipate obstacles and development needs. Learning inventories, running records, Development Reading Assessments, Benchmark Assessment System, ACT Aspire, and other assessments are effectively used to gain and share insight into student skill levels. NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments in literacy and math give teachers a snapshot of what students know and support setting goals for future growth. Student-led conferences are held to cultivate student ownership of learning, which increases students' ability to self-reflect. Teachers guide students to self-assess based on their data, develop literacy and math goals, determine strategies to achieve the goals, and then share the results with parents and family at conferences. This practice allows parents to see the children's ownership and pride in learning successes, support self-selected growth goals, and assist with areas in need of improvement, giving voice to the child.

To provide academic growth opportunities at all levels, Gifted and Talented (GT) services are included in every classroom at the K-1 level. For grades 2-5, the GT pullout program provides advanced problem solving to continue growth of high achieving students. Personalized technology support programs, such as IXL, Khan Academy are accommodations tailored to foster growth for each student from their current mastery level. Results-based accommodations are incorporated in the classroom to differentiate curriculum according to individual learning levels, promoting advanced growth as well as closing achievement gaps.

To bridge content understanding across language acquisition barriers, ELL proficiency levels are analyzed to plan instruction and integrate purposeful student talk, supporting the language acquisition process in a safe environment. Utilizing English Language Development (ELD) lessons, teachers provide ELLs with the language structures that are needed to communicate effectively in their second language at their level. The ELD program provides the "bricks and mortar" for English so that ELLs can learn and use language authentically.

When students show academic and behavioral deficits beyond Tier 1 instruction, a team comprised of teachers, administrators, counselors, interventionists, and the school psychologist meet in a Multi-Tiered System of Support to initiate the Response to Intervention process. Personalized modifications are collaboratively generated and implemented to open the doors of success for all students. Students' progress is continually monitored to ensure growth and to determine if strategies need to be intensified or more additional support from Tier 3 instruction is required.

Counseling, speech, and resources support students with classroom learning needs in small group and

individual instruction. A dyslexia interventionist serves students who show areas of deficit on the screening assessment. The interventionist uses a multi-sensory, systematic, phonics-based approach to teach processes for decoding and encoding. Using state reward money to further student growth, Hunt hired additional support aides for literacy interventions and to close achievement gaps. Additional support for literacy include the READ 180 program, Leveled Literacy Intervention, and reading mentorships. Resources for math are accessed through technology programs to personalize support, creating growth from the student individual mastery level. For behavioral support, the Superflex Adaptive Behavior Curriculum is used to help students with High-Functioning Autism, ADHD, or other social challenges that interfere with developmental growth, supporting continued learning in the classroom environment.

## **PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS**

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

The culture and environment at Hunt is student-centered, filled with professionals passionate about building the relationships that shape each child socially, emotionally, and cognitively for success. Every student is valued, celebrated, and known by name throughout the school. Each of the faculty is a team member, with strengths that complement one another to create a safe and positive learning environment. 50 percent of the teachers have been at Hunt for ten or more years; with grade level teams are carefully selected and supported. With encouragement and assistance provided, teachers take personal responsibility for developing lasting relationships and personalizing the education for all students. Academic growth, positive character, and accomplishments are celebrated. The school is decorated in exemplary student work. Large, colorful photos of students are in the halls and offices. Special spaces are plentiful for parents and volunteers to mentor, read, or share time with students. Parents are highly involved, appreciated, often volunteering in the classrooms, resulting in a learning environment that welcomes each child and prepares them for the rigorous instruction they receive every day.

To further meet needs, students with food insecurity receive a weekly snack pack through our partnership with the Samaritan Community Center. Students with inadequate clothing or shoes receive assistance through our PTA collaborative Community Kids Closet program. The excitement on each student's face as they receive the snack packs or as they ask to wear their new shoes back to class is evidence of the incredible impact of meeting basic needs. In addition, Hunt has two mental health support services available for students, with extended services during school breaks and monthly family support sessions.

Social development, positive discipline, and effective use of time devoted to academic engagement, are keys to student success at Hunt. Within the classroom and in group counseling sessions, social skills and character development are reinforced. During monthly Husky Howl assemblies, character words are introduced with examples on how students may incorporate these traits into their daily practice. Classroom awards are given to reward the character trait from the previous month. Students displaying good character are celebrated as an Honorable Husky and are announced over the intercom each morning. Achievement and growth ceremonies are scheduled to reinforce dedication and perseverance in academics for math and reading. Teacher academic and life accomplishments are also highly celebrated, providing positive learning role models for students. A special place in the main hallway is also dedicated to successful Famous Huskies in the news.

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

At Hunt, borders between school, family, and community are fluid. From our Family Literacy Program, to local cultural and school-led collaborative events, Hunt provides a wide spectrum of meaningful student and family engagement. The annual Stick Horse Rodeo event includes high school students, the Ozark Rodeo Committee, and local businesses to help teach economics and agricultural impact. Students loved when J.B. Hunt visited wearing his ten-gallon cowboy hat. Since his passing, Mrs. Hunt and family continue to visit, sustaining the Hunt legacy of community and business contribution to education.

Utilizing the latest technology, educators reach out to parents on a daily basis. Teachers use secured Facebook and Instagram groups, Remind 101, and Bloomz to send personalized messages about student learning and reminders about upcoming events, in addition to traditional weekly folders with letters in English, Spanish, and Marshallese. Parents participate in two-way communication to respond, question, and provide insight to teachers, better supporting students. This has allowed our staff to take action when interventions are needed.

We host an annual walkathon where parents are encouraged to join their child in walking around the school track, promoting fitness, and pledging funds for school improvement. Several local businesses sponsor students, contribute time, and provide supplies to make the event successful. Our annual Husky Hoedown, a family carnival night, also creates an inviting atmosphere for families to feel connected and play together.

During this event, current and former students, parents, teachers, and community members work as a team to accomplish funding goals, allowing teachers access to materials that enable student academic growth. This year's event allowed the purchase of several software applications that enhance the personalization of math and literacy instruction.

There are frequent opportunities for parents and families to interact with their children and build rapport within the school. Some examples are Daddy/Daughter Dance, Mom/Son Date Night, Grandparent Luncheon, and family barbeque days and curriculum nights. Statistics indicate that parental involvement is directly tied to increased academic achievement and attendance, and this is the experience at Hunt. To further promote family involvement through literacy, students designed a Little Free Library that has been placed near the school to serve our surrounding neighborhoods. The Hunt choir performs at events for families throughout the community in collaboration with city and local businesses. These include performances at The Naturals baseball field, the Nature Center groundbreaking, and caroling events. These build student music skills and self-confidence, while celebrating giving back to the community.

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

At Hunt, personalization of learning is just as important for our teachers as it is with our students. Teachers utilize multiple sources of feedback and data to create personal learning goals based on student need. Teachers access a variety of professional development (PD) from regional and district to job-embedded opportunities to meet these goals. In Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), teams identify needs, create goals, and implement methods to grow instructional practice. Professional Growth Plans (PGPs) are also aligned to meet the needs demonstrated by students through a variety of assessment data. Vertical teams analyze efficacy and align instructional practice across grade levels, ensuring continued success.

To meet the shift in demographics, Hunt selected PD to refine effective and strategic content instruction including ELL strategies and the Gradual Release of Responsibility method, an overarching practice in instruction across our lessons. A majority of Hunt teachers enrolled in education classes to add endorsements to their licenses and to expand their teaching certification specifically in teaching ELLs. Many teachers participated in English as a Second Language (ESL) Academy, while another cohort completed a two-year masters-level university course, Project Teach Them All, to incorporate cultural understanding and assist students in crossing the language acquisition barrier to understand content.

Currently, the district's PD focus is refining the workshop approach in English Language Arts to further reading proficiency growth. This method, leaning heavily on the work of Allington, Krashen, and Calkins, enables our teachers to incorporate strong practices while unifying reading instruction across the district to benefit our highly mobile student populations and facilitate lifelong reading habits in every student. For a balanced approach and number sense in math, PD in Cognitively Guided Instruction was selected based on the need to improve essential math skills. Teachers also selected PD to learn how to authentically integrate technology into instruction. Many 3-5 teachers trained in implementing the eMints model to embed technology in lessons, creating deeper learning experiences. This student collaboration model prepares students to problem solve, innovate, and develop 21st century skills.

For student mental well-being, Hunt partners with Youth Bridge for training in mental health and behavioral support for students who have experienced trauma. Teachers develop strategies to provide a safe environment and to lower anxiety that impedes learning. PD including internet safety, parent involvement, cultural education, and intervention are woven throughout the year to provide teachers the tools that will increase our ability to support the whole child.

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

At Hunt, we cultivate leadership by making school personal. Our administrators utilize a servant leadership style, prioritizing authentic relationships with teachers, families and students. As a result, those belonging to the Hunt family feel valued and motivated to go above and beyond expectations. Hunt's administration encourages this progressive environment through organized grade-level teams based on teacher strengths. Highly motivated, Hunt teachers seek to lead students with the same powerful relationship model. Parents

and guardians respond to the teacher-to-student relationship with eager support, willingness to volunteer and/or provide services, and in turn, better support their child's education in the home and at school. An active PTA and Watchdog Dad group are present as a result, creating a cyclic effect that allows us to meet student needs and further promote student achievement.

To promote student leadership, Hunt teachers organize opportunities for students to take ownership of their environment from classroom jobs to extra-curricular groups. Fifth graders provide positive role models through jobs including a rotation of student safety duties, flag responsibilities, and office assistants. For academic leadership, fifth graders pair with kindergarteners to encourage growth in literacy skills through our Kinder-buddies reading program. Older students volunteer to partner with our special needs students, assisting with transitions, and morning/afternoon routines. Student volunteers serve as mentors for at-risk students, reinforcing foundational literacy skills through peer-to-peer interactions.

The school counselor provides further leadership through citizenship opportunities. In student council, third-fifth graders learn to select and organize fundraisers to benefit individuals, families, and the community. These include collecting books, food, water, clothing, supplies and funding for Arkansas Children's Hospital, veterans, hurricane relief, and underdeveloped countries in addition to semester community projects. Through the Ambassador program, students from each class in K-5 assist new students in making positive adjustments to the school.

Hunt teachers serve as role models on curriculum writing and alignment teams, joint council committees, and curriculum adoption committees across the district. With the support of our administrative team, many teachers have earned higher degrees and certifications that have grown their instructional and leadership capacity. Teachers in every grade level and specialty team lead future teachers by mentoring education graduates throughout their internship. In addition, 23 percent of our teachers have achieved National Board Certification. Many teachers within the district received mentorship in National Board Certification from two lead teachers at Hunt. This has impacted our professionalism as we continually reflect on ways to make our students' learning and school exceptional.

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

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At Hunt, the heart of student academic growth rests in perfecting daily instruction, developing strong learning practices, and making effective use of instructional time. Personalization of education through individual and small group instruction was necessary to achieve student academic growth. To meet this need, three years were dedicated to teacher knowledge and application of the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model (GRR), provided by the district, trained professionals, and expert instructors. This instructional framework model shaped teacher thinking at Hunt, resulting in less teacher-focused instruction to a student-centered learning environment. In this I do, we do, you do method, vertical alignment was essential for eliminating skill gaps between grade levels and repetition in instruction. The positive student growth was the reward from the time and investment teachers utilized in planning and vertical team alignment. GRR is now the overarching framework for instruction at Hunt, and has made the most impact in student academic success, allowing teachers to guide, differentiate, and give students the strategies to master deeper content and skills at individual student levels.

After pre-assessment, teachers provide a model of their thinking aloud for students through scaffolded instruction in a brief focus lesson. The thought process, objectives, and purpose are given while linking content to student background knowledge. The guided instruction follows, as the teacher leads students through the process, usually in a whole group setting. Guided instruction provides opportunities to redirect learning, implement formative assessments, and develop skills and strategies to accomplish mastery. To provide further access to content and begin the transfer of responsibility, collaborative learning is utilized. This problem-solving opportunity allows students to apply new knowledge, re-examine understanding, and practice content and language with peers. Productive group work is expected, and accountability strategies such as group task assignments are an essential key in student assessment. The final phase in the transfer of responsibility is through independent practice, applying new knowledge, transferring skills, and developing strong understanding. Any stage of the responsibility model can be revisited at any time throughout the process as new strategies, skills, and standards are implemented to build foundations for further comprehension. Allowing for targeted and differentiated instruction, students acquiring the English language are supported through peer practice, while interventions and deeper learning opportunities are incorporated to meet students at their developmental level. The model also promotes thinking process awareness, social development, and problem-solving skills our students need for the 21st century.