

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 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

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):
- 6 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 9 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
PreK	0	0	0
K	51	58	109
1	47	45	92
2	55	61	116
3	51	49	100
4	63	53	116
5	51	46	97
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	318	312	630

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 5 % Asian
 - 10 % Black or African American
 - 5 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 73 % White
 - 7 % 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: 8%

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

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, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	30
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	22
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	52
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	630
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.08
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	8

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 2%
13 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Arabic, Assamese, Bengali, Bisaya, French, Gujarati, Khmer, Mandarin, Punjabi, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Tagalog, Tamil, Tigrinya, Urdu, Vietnamese, Yoruba

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 25%
Total number students who qualify: 157

8. Students receiving special education services: 8 %
51 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>3</u> Autism | <u>14</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>6</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>14</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>4</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>37</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</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: 7
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, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	30
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	7
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

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.

Required Information	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	98%	97%	97%	98%	97%
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.

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

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No

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

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

Reagan invests in a relationship first approach. We provide a guaranteed high-quality instruction that is individualized to support or push learning depending on the needs of our children. We believe that through strong relationships and high-quality individualized instruction comes higher performance of our 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

Reagan Elementary School opened in 2008 with grades kindergarten through five. Since that time, the school has been served by three different principals serving a population of students that has ranged from as low as 550 to as high as 700. Today the school serves 680 students in grades kindergarten through five. The student demographic has changed considerably since the doors first opened. The poverty level in the Town of Brownsburg has increased over 100% in the last seven years moving Reagan Elementary School from a fairly affluent school to one that now hosts a student population of almost 25% who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches. The population has changed, but the Reagan Elementary School staff has worked hard to meet the new educational demands. The school has a history of serving students well, marked with consistently respectable performance on state measures of student achievement. In 2010-2011, under the guidance of a new central office administration, sweeping changes began to occur. Since the changes were implemented, state standardized test scores have increased dramatically and discipline referrals have decreased considerably. Federal research suggests that schools that experience an increase of students living in poverty struggle to meet the increased demands. However, that has not been the case at Reagan Elementary School. In the fall of 2010, it became clear that change was in order to best serve the students. In an effort to do this, programs were evaluated for performance and only those with the highest marks in changing student performance made the cut. The school eliminated the assistant principal position to gain a full time instructional coach in 2011-2012. The instructional coach has full time duties to model lessons, support beginning teachers, debrief and support lessons with all teachers, lead professional development, and manage the Learning Lab curriculum. In that same school year, three full time positions were added to staff the Learning Lab, a small group intervention that allows students to get extra support in reading and math at a ratio of 6 students: 1 adult. The school day was also changed in that school year to allow for early dismissal of students on Wednesdays. This additional time allows all certified personnel to meet in Professional Learning Communities (PLC) with their grade levels to analyze student data and make decisions on the instructional needs of students in an efficient and fluid manner. The reduction of superfluous programs and introduction of a focused model of curriculum and instruction, allowed for a student-centered and data-driven culture to take hold at Reagan Elementary School. Teachers can be found discussing a full grade level of students during a PLC meeting. We live by a mantra of “your data is our data.” Teachers know in great detail all of the students in their particular grade level and work diligently with their colleagues to support and meet the academic and emotional needs of each student. District-level support increases the level of specificity teachers master with their classes. A full-time data and assessment administrator enhances teachers’ knowledge of student and class level data with data rosters that display each piece of student assessment in one quick and easy format. The real-time data is utilized to drive the professional development needs. Professional development is focused on the three specific components of instruction: math, writing, and a balanced literacy program. Because the professional development is geared specifically for teachers in Brownsburg, it is job-embedded and delivered by the instructional coaches who work with teachers to address relevant instructional questions and issues in a timely manner. Reagan Elementary School is a family-friendly environment. The Parent Support Group (PSG) is very active, both as a fundraising arm of the school and as the connection for parent volunteers. A typical day at the school sees anywhere from 10-15 volunteers coming to school to man the office, make copies, read with a struggling reader, or assist where needed to enhance student learning and support the positive culture of the school. Parents seek neighborhoods that send students to Reagan Elementary School because they understand that not only will their children receive excellent instruction, but they will also be met with a culture that feels welcoming and inviting to them. Excellent instruction has been consistently delivered at Reagan Elementary School, but the last six years have seen significant changes that have brought academic gains beyond what was once imagined. Parents and students recognize their school as one that challenges and delivers the highest level of instruction possible. We take great pride in providing individualized instruction that offers a level of rigor that supports the needs of our students. We have established a belief that “closing the gap” requires clear and specific analysis of subgroup data. We work diligently to identify clear areas of need as grade level teams and attack those needs with appropriate and research-based interventions.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Reagan Elementary School has transitioned to the new Indiana Academic Standards as a curricular framework. These standards can be accessed through the Brownsburg School website. Curriculum teams utilize an ongoing curriculum revision process. This process involves researching best practices, participating in grade level study groups, and designing lessons and activities which incorporate differentiated instruction. The curriculum teams create curriculum calendars and develop common assessments. These curriculum maps and assessments are posted on a web-based curriculum mapping program called Curriculum Trak. It allows easy online access, standards mapping, vertical articulation, and a collaborative sharing platform for our staff members. Our curricular approach is based on the ability for our teachers to model instruction (I do), then allow students time to practice this in a way that allows for quick checks of understanding typically in a whole or small group setting under the guidance of a teacher (we do), followed by a time for students to practice (you do). These different levels are differentiated based on student need so that some students spend more time under the tutelage of a teacher while other students are allowed to excel at a rapid pace. This gradual release allows students to master the skills in a most efficient manner.

Reagan uses Reading Streets as our core curriculum. We have a clear curriculum map that our teachers helped design that totally aligns with Indiana State Academic Readiness Standards. The non-negotiable standards, as mapped out in our Reading Streets scope and sequence, are taught daily as a part of a balanced literacy approach supported at the school through the use of literacy stations, book clubs, and the skills as outlined in the basal textbook. Every day, students receive a full, uninterrupted, 90-minute block of instruction that focus on foundational skills through whole group and small group settings. The use of differentiated literacy stations allows students additional time to practice these skills. Additionally, teachers recognize the importance of having students engaged in text during the majority of the reading block. Teachers not only focus on mastering necessary reading skills but they also create a culture where students value reading. Students who struggle attend an additional 30-minute small group reading intervention during Learning Lab. In addition to the reading block, students receive an average of 40 minutes of writing instruction each day. During the writing block, teachers focus on content and conventions to develop their writers. Brownsburg Community Schools was proud to have the highest standardized English/Language Arts test scores for the state of Indiana in 2017.

Reagan Elementary School utilizes the University of Chicago's Everyday Math (EDM) curriculum with fidelity. Everyday Math's spiraling scope and sequence curriculum allows our teachers to map out lessons that completely cover the Indiana State Academic Readiness Standards. After adopting this series, our teachers completed a full scope and sequence that tied our EDM instruction with the expected standards. Within the program there are multiple opportunities for teachers to differentiate the curriculum based on the specific needs of each class. Teachers use small group, whole group, and math stations to reach every learner. Struggling students attend an additional 30-minute small group math intervention during Learning Lab. Brownsburg Community Schools was proud to have the highest standardized Math test scores for the state of Indiana in 2017.

Reagan Elementary School utilizes the Pearson Science curriculum with fidelity. Pearson's scope and sequence curriculum allows our teachers to map out lessons that completely cover the Indiana State Academic Readiness Standards. After adopting this series, our teachers completed a full scope and sequence that tied our Pearson instruction with the expected standards. A hands-on, investigative approach is used to teach science at Reagan Elementary School. Teachers use science as an opportunity to give students necessary practice in reading and understanding high level, non-fiction text. Students receive instruction in a whole group setting and are then released to practice and investigate the topics through experiments and trials with a variety of materials appropriate for that grade level. In kindergarten this can be seen in watching seeds come to life, while in the fifth grade, investigations are more likely to involve rocks, matter, soil, and outdoor studies.

Reagan Elementary School utilizes the Pearson Social Studies curriculum with fidelity. Pearson's scope and sequence curriculum allows our teachers to map out lessons that completely cover the Indiana State Academic Readiness Standards. After adopting this series, our teachers completed a full scope and sequence that tied our Pearson instruction with the expected standards. While students use social studies

textbooks, they also gather information from newspapers, the internet, and periodicals to learn about the past and current events. Specific attention is given to a connection between the social studies curriculum and reading. Grade level teams seek opportunities to connect these curriculum areas so students recognize that social studies, and the non-fiction reading that comes with it, can be in every part of their day. Fourth grade students spend the year studying Indiana history, as prescribed by the Indiana DOE. The learning opportunities are extended by a field trip to the Indiana State House and Indiana State Museum.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

All Reagan Elementary School students receive 45 minutes per week of art, music, physical education, technology, and media center instruction. As a part of their instruction in visual arts, students study artists from different time periods and different parts of the world. After receiving a basic understanding of the artist's work and how it impacted the world, students are able to try their hand at art in the same method. This includes 2-D, 3-D, and clay projects. During art class, students are exposed to literature appropriate for their grade level about the artist and his/her time period, giving them additional exposure to non-fiction text, and another view of how reading is incorporated in every part of their lives.

The Reagan Elementary School music classroom does not have chairs because students are engaged during the full period in singing, playing instruments, dancing, or moving to music based on the ORFF method of music instruction. We believe in providing an opportunity for students to develop a love of music.

Children's literature is incorporated into the curriculum to help children understand that novels may take on a new meaning when used to create music or read as a song. Our music program often incorporates math skills that support understanding of curriculum and connects back to grade level standards. Every grade level participates in an appropriate leveled musical that supports a theme.

The Physical Education program is essential to developing proper locomotor, non-locomotor, and fine motor skills. All of these motor skills are needed for proper development of the brain. We incorporate and use other content areas (math and language arts) throughout exercise activities. Including these content areas within exercise is a great way to differentiate our instruction to meet the needs of various types of learning styles. We also provide a high emphasis on developing outstanding character skills and life skills including cooperative work, problem solving, perseverance, and effective communication skills.

As part of the daily related arts rotation, students spend time each week in the media center where they are guided to choose books based on their reading level. The media center specialist runs a program, titled Battle of the Books, where students are challenged to read three books from a set of twelve, and then compete in a game based on their comprehension of the books. The excitement that she builds around the chosen books and the competition it involves, is an annual favorite of the students. Additionally, a Book Swap Week is held each spring to allow students to swap books in an effort to get books into the hands of each of the students in celebration of Read Across America.

Technology training is an integral part of our rotation each week. Once per week, students attend a 45-minute session that supports technology proficiencies that Brownsburg Community Schools have developed. Indeed, students learn typing, research, and internet safety skills in technology class, but it is the level of application that we are most proud of. Students apply learned skills through project-based learning each week. Our technology teacher often works hand-in-hand with our classroom teachers (especially in upper grades) to offer cross-curricular supported learning through the different modalities that are taught. In addition, grades 3-5 are taught the skill of coding. They are exposed to critical thinking strategies and developing computer programming. Our media staff and technology teacher went through computer coding training in 2015 and are fully implementing this curriculum with our children. We are very proud that Reagan makes this cutting-edge curriculum available to our students.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

We have several assessments that help us make the best instructional decisions for our students. At the beginning, middle, and end of the year, all students are benchmarked with the DIBELS fluency assessment. Students who score either Strategic or Intensive are progress monitored bi-weekly for the remainder of the year, or until they become Core. In addition to this fluency assessment, students in grades one through five take several SRI (Scholastic Reading Inventory) tests throughout the year to monitor their comprehension

development. Reading A to Z Assessments are used in kindergarten and the beginning of first grade to track student's reading progression. Students in grades 3-5 take Acuity tests in language arts and math three times per year to ensure they are prepared for standardized testing. Additionally, teachers use math pretest and posttest data to be sure students are retaining math material. Our school district has a Coordinator of Data Analysis who creates various spreadsheets and roster reports to help teachers track and analyze this data. Reagan Elementary School's second step in the district's RtI (Response to Intervention) process is targeted placement of at-risk students into Learning Labs for literacy and numeracy. Reading and math instruction are prioritized and students requiring intensive support for those curriculum areas receive reading and math interventions in dedicated 30-minute long remediation/re-teaching labs. Strengthening these RtI intervention strategies is the third prong of our overall professional development plan. Reagan Elementary School's final component of the comprehensive school improvement process is an RtI tier 3 referral. For some students, those with the most serious of academic deficiencies, additional time on task before or after school may be necessary. An after-school tier 3 response provides additional time, as well as substantially different remedial interventions, prior to a special education referral. The tier 3 response provides after school intervention for approximately 80 students throughout the year. Bus transportation is provided for this program to ensure every student who needs to attend will be able to do so. In addition to reaching the struggling student, the school also provides a high ability program. Students who qualify, based on teacher recommendation and placement tests, are provided with a separate classroom setting and expedited and enriched curriculum. Nearly 100% of all students in this program, score at the Pass Plus level of the state standardized tests every year.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

When Professional Learning Communities (PLC) were implemented in 2011-2012, teachers felt overwhelmed by all they were expected to achieve during that meeting each week. They described feeling mentally tired on Wednesdays. Today, the perception of PLC and all that is being achieved is holistically different. Over time the push for data analysis, instruction, and lesson plans based on specific student needs, the idea of being nimble in instruction to reach students where they are, and an acceptance that high standards will always be expected is now a way of life at Reagan Elementary School. The culture of high expectations is not necessarily one you can see, but it is definitely one you can feel. Our culture has changed from “these are my kids” to one that says, “Your kids are our kids.”

Students and teachers can readily tell you about their data. Excited students come to the office every day to share their increased Lexile or the number of words they can now read in a minute based on the DIBELS assessment. Students also work to push each other with a sense of shared responsibility knowing their own achievements in learning are good for the entire school.

Staff members celebrate each other during weekly School Leadership Team, PLC meetings and staff meetings. Each meeting opens with these celebrations to create a culture where teachers understand time will be devoted to celebrating our wins, both professionally and personally. The weekly memo has a section devoted to shout outs and celebrations of the efforts of their colleagues. A teacher recently shared, “In the past five years I have been teaching, I have never felt such motivation and joy while teaching. Reagan Elementary School is a remarkable place to be a teacher and everyone challenges each other to strive for greater goals.”

In addition to these non-core subjects, students receive instruction in Character Education. Teachers in all grades conduct a weekly character lesson with their class based on the needs of the students. Our school counselor provides a resource table in our teacher’s lounge that is full of picture books, articles, DVD’s, and posters that teachers can use to help create a positive classroom culture. Some topics include anti-bullying, friendship, and organizational skills. Our school counselor conducts a monthly character lesson with each classroom. These lessons always correlate with our character trait of the month. Students can earn tokens for a special prize when they utilize the strategies from these character lessons throughout the school.

In addition, Reagan has a school-wide positive behavior system that reinforces and rewards students for making good choices throughout the day. Our students receive feedback throughout the day by being rewarded with a clip-up / down system. Students are given BEST (Being an Exceptional Student Today) Buck for each level of the clip chart. Students are offered weekly, monthly and quarterly opportunities to celebrate their character growth at our BEST Store. Students that show a pattern of not meeting daily expectations are supported through our RtI process. They are offered specialized behavior plans that have a foundation of positive reinforcement.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Parent participation is a key component to success within our school. School begins with Back to School Night/Open House when parents are given the opportunity to meet their child’s teachers. During this event, teachers share classroom expectations, remediation opportunities, and other important class information. Reagan Elementary School has an active Parent Support Group. Parents with students enrolled in our school are automatically a member of this group. Parents are encouraged to volunteer at our school. Our volunteers chaperone field trips, work in the front office, and facilitate small groups in classrooms. We also celebrate our school community through an annual carnival. Sponsors throughout Brownsburg host games and events during this fun community event.

During the school year, a Title One Reading Night is designed by the Instructional Coach to allow parents to gain a better understanding of what their children are learning in school and how to further support this instruction at home. Parents enjoy a free dinner at school followed by stations where they learn how to use read-alouds to increase comprehension, learn how to increase oral reading fluency, and get other ideas to encourage reading at home. Every student and sibling that attends the event leaves with a free book along

with other reading materials.

Twice a year, Kindergarten teachers invite students and their families to celebrate literacy and art at Eric Carle Night in the fall and Dr. Seuss Night in the spring. Families spend time reading books by the respective authors together, retelling familiar stories with puppets, playing games which focus on literacy skills and creating art projects. Families share a snack and enjoy a stage performance by the principal and kindergarten teachers.

In an effort to meet the changing demographics of our school community, we enlisted the help of the local Rotary Club to support bringing the BackSack Program to our school. This program ensures that every child facing food shortages in their home leave for the weekend with 14 shelf stable items to sustain them over the weekend. Additionally, students have developed a program that takes any unwrapped leftover school meal food, which would otherwise be thrown away, and collects these items into additional bags to go home with impoverished students. The school counselor, principal, and school resource officer use home visits along with local community partners such as Habit of the Heart and Healthy Families to work with families in need to ensure their basic needs are met. These efforts have increased the school attendance rate and headed off problems that might have otherwise gone unnoticed.

3. Professional Development:

All of the Instructional Coaches in the district work together to analyze the student performance data to decide on the most pressing needs of the student population. Based on this analysis, the coaches provide district-level professional development three times per year to each grade level for a half day. The professional development allows teachers to work with their grade level teams across the district to design plans and learn specific strategies to help their students. Teachers walk away from each session with fully designed lessons that are shared between all of the six elementary schools. This provides teachers with ready-to-use instructional materials, ensuring the work will be put to use with their students. At the school level, the coach and principal work together based on the observed needs of teachers to create the monthly professional development. Together the principal and coach lead teachers through lessons that allow them to understand best practices and how those practices support the needs of the students. During this time, videos of teachers in action are sometimes shared allow other teachers in the building to see their colleagues practicing certain skills. This provides teachers with the exposure to colleagues in which they may approach to gain additional development in specific areas. At the classroom level, the principal frequently observes teachers in action and then shares what he sees with the coach. This allows the principal and coach to discuss areas of concern and the specific strategies and techniques that may best help the teacher. The principal follows up with the teacher to share any noted areas of concern and to initiate dialogue about avenues to improve instruction. The coach then works with the teacher to model strategies, debrief lessons, and give feedback.

4. School Leadership:

Reagan Elementary School uses a model of shared leadership. We provide opportunities for teacher leadership roles within the school while keeping the principal in the forefront so teachers can focus on instruction and their students. The building is led by one principal, one counselor, and one instructional coach. The instructional coach handles many of the day-to-day tasks related to curriculum, including organizing assessment materials and helping teachers understand the curriculum maps. The coach models 12-20 lessons per week based on the needs of the students and teachers. The school counselor leads a comprehensive counseling program that includes student groups for topics, such as divorce, new students, peer relationship issues, a career program, and character education lessons. She also assists many students in need of services on an ad hoc basis. Each grade level and related arts class has an appointed representative who meet with the principal, counselor, and coach one time per month. During these meetings, we share strategies for leading PLC, inform the professional development planning for the staff, provide feedback to the principal, and gain a better understanding of practices within the school that they may then need to take back to their respective teams. The grade level representatives also meet with the superintendent and assistant superintendent on a quarterly basis to provide feedback at the district level. The principal maintains a very visible role within the school insomuch as he can call every one of the 630 students by name. This connection is made through frequent walkthroughs and observations of classrooms,

lunch and bus duties, and an active role within the school. In addition to the traditional roles of discipline and instructional leadership, the principal works with the school counselor to understand the needs of the families served at Reagan Elementary School. When chronic attendance issues arise, he and the counselor or school resource officer, visit the home to meet with the family and understand what obstacles are keeping the student from attending school regularly. These connections to families in need, allow the school to take a proactive approach before problems become too large. Through these home visits, families have reported a lack of food, clean clothing, illness, transportation, or insecure housing that have kept them from sending their children to school. Through close relationships with local community partners, the principal and counselor can help connect families to necessary resources to help get families back on their feet. This push also allows the students to focus on the key to their future: a solid education.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

To people outside of education, Professional Learning Communities (PLC) can sound like just another meeting. To the teachers at Reagan Elementary School, it is the ticket to success. When PLC was first implemented in 2011-12, teachers spent a lot of time working on the norms and making sure they were “doing PLC right.” What they learned over time is that it needs to be a time to look at specific students, or groups of students, who need help and then figuring out how to best meet the needs of those students as a team. Both narrative and assessment data is used to gain insight into what the students are doing well and where they need help. Teachers then spend time discussing exactly how they will help the students. Sometimes this means adjusting the list of students who attend Learning Lab. Other times it means carving out time during the reading block or before or after school to work one-on-one with a student who needs the extra time to focus on phonics or math facts. Whatever the case may be, the teachers work together and seek the help of the coach, counselor, speech-language pathologist, or special education teacher to get what their students need to succeed. All of the teachers meet in the cafeteria for PLC. Being gathered together, but sitting with their grade level teams, allows the meetings to be focused and grade level specific. It also allows the teachers to share resources and ask questions to ensure the curriculum is being met across the grade levels. Each meeting opens with celebrations. Hearing the celebrations of their colleagues allows the staff to share the success of their peers and students they have had or will have in the future. This again allows for a feeling of the students being OUR kids at Reagan Elementary School.