

U.S. Department of Education
2018 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 Mrs. Sheryl A Jordan

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

Official School Name Staunton Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 6990 N. County Road 425 West

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

Brazil IN 47834-7258
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Clay County

Telephone (812) 448-8270

Fax (812) 446-1038

Web site/URL

http://www.edline.net/pages/clay_community_schools

E-mail jordansh@clay.k12.in.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*Mr. Jeffery Fritz

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail fritzj@clay.k12.in.us

District Name Clay Community Schools Tel. (812) 443-4461

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. Kevin Kumpf

(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 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):
- 7 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 2 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 10 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	23	18	41
1	30	21	51
2	29	27	56
3	16	31	47
4	28	20	48
5	37	16	53
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	163	133	296

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 93 % White
 - 3 % 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: 15%

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	26
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	17
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	43
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	296
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.15
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	15

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0%
0 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 47%
 Total number students who qualify: 140

8. Students receiving special education services: 19 %
57 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>2</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>10</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>8</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>33</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>3</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 12
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.	12
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	4
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	10
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 25:1

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	96%	97%	97%	97%	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.

In our diverse and ever-changing world, Staunton Elementary exists to create a secure and supportive environment which promotes life-long learning for continued student success.

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

Staunton Elementary School is a rural school located in the heart of the small town of Staunton, Indiana. Located within a few blocks is the local post office and the town's community center. The town's small Optimist Park is adjacent to the front entrance of the school. Many of our students' parents and grandparents, who attended Staunton Elementary or the former Staunton High School and continue to live in this close-knit community. The school is situated in the western section of Clay County near the Vigo County line where many of the town's skilled and semi-skilled residents find employment opportunities outside of their community. The school serves kindergarten through fifth grade students with an enrollment of two hundred ninety-six students. Staunton Elementary School students feed into North Clay Middle School (grades 6-8) and eventually into Northview High School. Our ethnic make-up includes 93% Caucasian, 3% multi-racial, and 2% Hispanic. Our growing diverse population provides students and staff the opportunity to experience and embrace cultural difference. During the 2017-18 school year, 53% of students qualified for free and reduced lunches. Of these students, 127 or 77% are at the poverty level and receive free lunches. A community food pantry and our weekly backpack program help support students and their families with their basic needs.

Staunton's certified staff consists of thirteen highly qualified classroom teachers who instruct and support both our general education and special education students each day. Students are provided standards-based Art, Music, and Physical Education activities once weekly in forty-five-minute blocks. Our Special Services department includes a Resource teacher and a Speech pathologist who both provide services to children based on their varied individual needs. Our students are supported in their daily activities by our staff of seven Paraprofessionals. A school nurse and counselor ensure that all students' physical as well as social and emotional needs are met. Our staff also includes the principal, secretary, three cooks, custodians, and one library assistant.

The present school building was constructed in two phases. The original structure was built in 1957-1958 with an addition and remodel completed in the 1980's. The second phase of an extensive building renovation project was completed in 2011. These renovations and additions included: updated classrooms with additional technology, a new office complex with an added nurse's clinic, five additional classrooms, an expanded computer lab, and a full-size gymnasium. These renovations and additional classrooms added to our building allow all K-5 classrooms, including music and art, to have separate areas for instruction and student activities. With the addition of a gymnasium and added space, outside agencies and groups frequently utilize our facilities for meetings and community events.

In partnership with our families and the community, Staunton Elementary strives to continue to provide a safe and positive learning environment that is challenging, innovative, and inspiring for each student. Our commitment to excellence has been recognized by the Indiana Department of Education with the honor of being named a Four-Star School in past years and most recently in 2016-2017. Staunton Elementary has also received an "A" rating for exceeding student growth in the areas of English/Language Arts and Math.

Staunton Elementary School's continued and growing success can be attributed to the commitment of our dedicated staff at providing a challenging curriculum with best practice strategies and instruction which will equip our students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to meet the demands of an ever-changing world. Teachers provide students with a learning environment that is both engaging and motivating through the use of technology and supplemental resources. Daily small group and one-on-one instruction allows students to receive additional support when needed, as well as providing challenging activities for enrichment opportunities. The Response to Intervention (RTI) framework is utilized daily with results recorded to show student progress in their academic learning. Student recognition programs include Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) which recognizes students who exhibit outstanding character contributions in the areas of being respectful, responsible, safe, and a learner. Students nominated by staff are announced during an award's ceremony and receive recognition along with the honor roll and perfect attendance students. A "Making a Difference" board is located in the main hallway. This board recognizes all students who receive the honor and is highly visible to all guests, peers, and staff.

Opportunities for students to showcase their talents are achieved through their participation in Student Council, sports clubs, music productions, science fair, art club, field day, and our spring carnival. Student Council members exhibit their leadership skills as they conduct our Veteran's Day program and greet visitors as they arrive for our grade-level VIP (Very Important Person) days.

With the continued support of our parents and community, and our commitment to providing students with a challenging curriculum, we believe Staunton Elementary School students will thrive as life-long successful citizens.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Staunton Elementary School's core curriculum is aligned with the Indiana Academic Standards for grades K-5. These Indiana Academic Standards are the foundation that drive our daily instruction. Primary educators use these standards to lay a foundational ground work. In the intermediate grades, educators build upon these foundational skills. This approach allows students to achieve the higher depth of knowledge needed in the critical standards provided by the Indiana Department of Education. Staunton Elementary School's curriculum is developmentally appropriate and emphasizes a scaffold approach to learning. Through the use of formative and summative assessments, data-driven instruction is achieved. Student engagement is achieved through the use of interactive white boards, computer related activities, and cooperative learning groups.

Staunton Elementary School implements a balanced literacy approach to reading in the 90-minute reading block. Using the district-developed curriculum maps, educators begin with the adopted reading curriculum, Reading Street, by Scott Foresman. Educators supplement the scope and sequence of the adopted series with leveled and differentiated supports that include whole group, small group, and one-on-one instruction to fill gaps that have occurred. Student supports are based on the use of running records, DIBELS, and corporation assessments. Through direct instruction and modeling, students learn specific reading strategies, such as inferencing, making connections, visualizing, and using background knowledge. Teachers use developmentally appropriate best practices, additional purchased resources, and other programs to support the needs of individual learners. Educators in K-2 focus primarily on the five components of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension) that align with the Indiana Academic Standards. Students are instructed at their individual level to ensure a solid foundation is attained to build on in subsequent grades. Students in grades 3-5 expand upon foundational skills learned in previous grades which are necessary to achieve the critical standards.

Language arts and writing instruction are infused within the entirety of our circular approach to learning. In daily writing, students are given the opportunity to brainstorm, draft, revise, edit, and publish. Students are taught to write across the curriculum using the six traits of writing. Through modeling, use of rubrics, conferencing, and anchor charts, students apply these six traits in their own writing. This process, along with spelling and grammar, are then incorporated in all content areas.

Math instruction at Staunton Elementary begins with the Indiana Academic and Process Standards. This allows students to have a conceptual understanding of the mathematical content. A district-created curriculum map guides educators through scope and sequence of the adopted math textbook, McGraw-Hill My Math. Student engagement is achieved through the use of hands-on activities and manipulatives which connect the abstract to real world experiences. Technology is used in math instruction to deepen understanding of concepts and support learning through the online application from McGraw-Hill entitled connectED. This provides students a visual representation of lessons, problem of the day, and visual manipulatives. Grades 3-5 are also provided with a virtual tutor. Math applications such as IXL, Mimio Connect, and Khan Academy assist students in acquiring and expanding their foundational skills.

Inquiry based and hands-on experiences through STEM activities promoting critical thinking and problem solving is the basis for Staunton Elementary School's science curriculum. Aligned with the Indiana Academic Standards, lessons cover earth, life, and physical sciences and the scientific method. Science is used to enhance reading instruction on a daily basis covering informational text, text features, and text structure. Teachers use the adopted series, McGraw-Hill Inspire Science, which includes online integrated activities to strengthen and develop science concepts and content vocabulary. Collaborative group work is incorporated as a follow up to whole group instruction introducing science topics. Science Spin from Scholastic News is used for supplementary science instruction in K-2. Students achieve a deeper understanding of scientific research through an opportunity to participate in the annual district science fair.

Social Studies curriculum introduces good citizenship and civics in the early grades. Students learn to

embrace diversity and cultural differences as their understanding grows beyond the family and community. Social Studies concepts are enhanced through resources other than textbooks. Real world experiences, field trips, and guest speakers are a few resources used to develop civic and cultural awareness.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Incorporating opportunities into our daily curriculum allows students to excel beyond the core academics. This is achieved through the arts, physical education, and technology/media classes. Our highly qualified staff ensures students' social, emotional, and physical needs are met through activities that expand outside the realm of core academic learning.

Immersing the students in the arts is essential to student achievement at Staunton Elementary. All students in grades K-5 receive 45 minutes of art instruction once per week. Students are given the opportunity to show knowledge and expression in a less traditional way than in the regular classroom. Art instruction offers students the opportunity to create projects which reflect self-expression using a variety of media. Each week students are exposed to various artists and their works. Students are given the opportunity to expand their reading skills as informational texts are read to learn about each artist. Often the teacher collaborates with the grade-level teachers in order to connect lessons with the historical events and themes being studied in the classroom. Student math skills are supported as students learn about symmetry and shapes, and also develop problem-solving skills as they learn to evaluate and interpret artists' work. Field trips to museums and historical sites allow students the opportunity to experience real world connections.

Staunton Elementary students in grades K-5 receive 45 minutes of music instruction each week. Students learn about various composers as they sing, dance, and learn to play a variety of instruments. Instruction compliments the math curriculum as musical notes are related to fractions. Various cultures are explored through the different genres and time periods in which musicians lived and produced their music. Each year students perform at an evening program and many audition for individual parts in the musical production.

Our K-5 students receive 45 minutes of physical education instruction which is focused on building positive character traits as students participate in team building and collaborative activities. Providing students with the opportunity to learn new activities and to take part in individual as well as team sports, encourages students to continue to develop skills and habits for maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Students are able to gain self-confidence in their abilities as they practice and participate in school activities, such as the sports club, field day, and the president's challenge for physical fitness. The annual Elk's Hoop Shoot provides not only local but national recognition for students exhibiting outstanding basketball skills.

Library skills are taught to all K-5 students for 15 minutes each week. Students visiting the media center each week are able to expand their interest and love of reading as they choose books linked to their personal tastes. Students' reading skills are built upon as they learn and read non-fiction and fictional literature as well as informational text. Students in second through fifth grades utilize library materials as they expand their knowledge of how to locate information and research topics using a variety of sources. Our librarian brings books to life as community members are invited to read aloud to students and often portray popular book characters.

Technology plays a vital role in the education of our students. Each classroom is equipped with and utilizes the MimioTeach Interactive Whiteboard daily to enhance instruction, to engage students with hands-on activities, and to acquire additional resources beyond the textbook. Students are able to build upon their reading and math skills through the use of the interactive activities and programs which target and expand the grade-level standards. The IXL program, which provides standards-aligned content, targets math, reading, language arts, science, and social studies skills and allows students to build upon skills at an accelerated or remedial pace.

Keyboarding skills are provided to Staunton Elementary students in grades K-5 two times per week for a 45-minute time period. Our computer lab is popular with students and utilized beyond the scheduled times. The Type to Learn program begins in kindergarten to teach the foundational skills needed to become

proficient. As students become more efficient at using technology, students utilize their new and improved skills to expand their ability to research topics online for creating, editing, and publishing reports.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Staunton Elementary staff is committed to providing each student with best practice instructional methods in order to ensure all students achieve a high quality and challenging curriculum for optimal learning and achievement. The implementation of key intervention strategies and the use of ongoing assessment provide staff with current data in order to modify instruction to meet the continuous changing needs of each student.

Teachers utilize the three-tiered RtI model to identify students in order to provide high quality instruction with flexible grouping, frequent assessments, and quarterly benchmarks. Students in Tier I receive on-level instruction in the classroom setting. Students designated as high ability are provided with rigorous and challenging activities beyond the standard grade-level curriculum. Some activities include participating in mental math teams and district wide competitions. Tier II students receive a more focused instruction in a small group setting. This provides those students with additional targeted skills instruction based on current assessment data. Our Tier III students require more intensive individual instruction provided by a highly qualified classroom teacher. Our resource room teacher provides additional individualized instruction to our students who qualify for an IEP. Current assessment data is used to ensure groups remain fluid and to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional practices. The use of this multi-leveled instructional approach provides all students with differentiated lessons and outcomes for grade-level Standards.

Additional key instructional methods are used to meet the needs of our learners. These instructional practices are used across all curriculum areas. Lessons begin with direct instruction by highly qualified teachers as a foundation for student learning. Direct instruction includes an introduction, guided practice, independent practice, conclusion, and assessment. Following direct instruction, small group instruction is utilized. Small group instruction provides students with additional support when needed or allows teachers the opportunity to provide enrichment. Some examples of small group activities utilized in classrooms include: partner/buddy reading, peer response and editing, literature circles, study buddies, and centers. Teachers form these small groups based on data obtained through frequent formative and summative assessments.

Strategic reading is another method used by teachers to provide authentic instruction. This method provides students with an opportunity to connect with the text before, during, and after reading for a more authentic reading experience. Students who connect with the text become a more engaged and excited learner as it gives them a purpose for reading. The KWL (what students Know, what they Want to know, and what they have Learned) is an important part of the strategic reading process as students set their goals for reading. It is used across all content areas and at all grade levels. Group discussions and journal writings assess student understandings upon completion of their reading.

Technology is an integral part of the learning process and provides students with engaging activities to enhance the instruction of grade-level standards. Individualized instruction is made possible through the use of the MimioTeach Interactive Whiteboard and bi-weekly scheduled computer lab time. Teacher use of the IXL program, Skills Navigator, and Kahn Academy provides support and extension activities to sustain student growth. Data provided by these sites allow for guided lesson planning to ensure mastery of priority Standards.

Assessment data provides us with the tools necessary to make informed decisions to maintain student excellence. Formative assessments, such as weekly tests, classroom observations, homework, and exit tickets drive daily instruction and purposeful lesson planning. Summative assessments include benchmark tests, end of unit tests, NWEA (K-5), DIBELS (K-2), AND ISTEP (3-5), allow educators to see an all-encompassing picture of student learning.

Our teachers administer NWEA testing in the fall, winter, and spring to identify student strengths and areas of concern. Student RIT scores determine groupings for specific skill instruction. Following each testing session, groups are reevaluated to determine effectiveness of instructional methods and level of student

growth. Skills Navigator, an additional component of NWEA, is used to strengthen and build upon individual student's skills at their level of achievement.

Through the dedication of staff, students, parents, and community, Staunton Elementary has attained and will strive to continue a pattern of high academic growth and achievement. We believe that academic excellence is achieved for each student through high expectations, best practice instruction, authentic assessment, and data-driven interventions.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

It is the collaboration of students, parents, the administrator, and staff that creates a foundation for positive climate and culture at Staunton Elementary. It is through teamwork that Staunton Elementary has been recognized by the Indiana Department of Education as a Four-Star School for several years. This joint effort has allowed us to sustain and build upon these academic achievements.

As students arrive, the staff greets students as they enter their classroom. Students are motivated and want to attend school each day when they feel welcome as part of our school family. Music heard throughout the hallways creates a calm and soothing pathway to learning.

Being respectful, responsible, safe, and a learner has become the cornerstone for creating our positive school atmosphere. The school-wide PBIS model, Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports, encourages and acknowledges students as they develop exceptional character qualities. As students exhibit these exceptional qualities, immediate feedback is given through a tangible reward system. The "Making a Difference" board, located in the main hallway, provides a lasting visual display to recognize those students. Classroom teachers motivate their students using various reward systems. These rewards promote a positive environment and enable the development of leadership qualities which support each students' emotional and social growth. Acknowledgements for academic achievement and attendance are recognized each nine weeks with a school-wide awards program. End of year rewards are received by students who exhibit outstanding academic achievements with state standardized testing scores such as ISTEP and IREAD.

As a result of the collaborative environment at Staunton Elementary, our staff feels like a team and a valued member of our school family. Scheduled meetings and built-in planning time gives staff the opportunity to share and discuss school success stories, acknowledge personal goals met, and receive kudos for their accomplishments. The entire staff is invested in each other's success. Our PTO shows their support by providing staff with funds for purchasing additional materials for their classrooms, appreciation luncheons, and personal gifts during holidays. The administrator plans several after school events for staff such as dinner out and game nights. Small treats are often found in teacher mailboxes.

The positive climate is not only felt by students and staff, but by our parents and citizens throughout the Staunton community. Visitors feel welcome as they enter our building to join us for activities such as VIP Day, Field Day, a Veteran's Day program, or just drop in to join students for lunch.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

At Staunton Elementary, we believe that parent and community involvement and communication is essential to the academic as well as to the physical, social, and emotional growth of our students. Through a multitude of activities each year, Staunton Elementary School's community support system ensures the continued success of each student.

Prior to the beginning of school, parents and students are given the opportunity to meet the staff during our Open House. At this time, parents and students become familiar with teacher expectations, core curriculum, and classroom procedures which lead to a successful academic experience. Parent communication is continued through the use of the Power School app which provides daily information regarding student attendance, grades, and lunch balance. Electronic and printed newsletters sent home by the principal and teachers keep parents informed of upcoming events. Our school website provides parents with contact information. The local newspaper is an avenue to feature students' accomplishments. Parent/teacher conferences held each fall provide teachers the opportunity to discuss academic data related to a student's educational challenges and achievements. Teachers also provide resources and offer ideas to help parents support their child's continued development and academic growth.

Parents and volunteers are an essential part of our students' continuing success. Volunteers are seen daily in our K-5 classrooms and spend countless hours assisting teachers in providing students with valuable curricular and extra-curricular activities such as field trips, a fall carnival, and movie night.

Throughout the school year, staff members and students organize events which allow continued community involvement and allow students to practice their leadership skills. Our VIP (Very Important Person) Day recognizes those who are influential in supporting students' on-going success. As guests arrive, they are greeted by students who make them feel welcome before joining their child for lunch. Another opportunity includes a Student Council organized and led Veteran's Day program in which veterans throughout the community are personally invited to attend and are recognized by the students for their service. As the school year comes to a close, the annual field day activities are attended by numerous family and community members who volunteer to help organize and facilitate the events.

Staunton Elementary students and their families recognize the importance of giving back to their community. Students who participate in contributing to Hats on for Riley each month, which supports Riley Children's Hospital, the local food pantry drive, and weekend backpack program, learn the value of working together to achieve a goal.

3. Professional Development:

Professional development at Staunton Elementary is connected to our PL 221 School Improvement Plan and focuses on providing students with best practice instruction. Our professional development is a continuum which centers on providing meaningful learning experiences for our students. Data-driven development provides our staff with the necessary skills to meet individual student needs for continued student growth.

The Response to Intervention (RTI) model is utilized in a professional development capacity. This training ensures all teachers place students in the correct tiers and are familiar with the appropriate resources to remediate skill deficits and is used for students who are significantly below grade level. Teachers meet regularly after school to collaborate with cross grade-level teachers and the administrator.

Teachers and the administrator meet each grading period to discuss instructional strategies being utilized, analyze current assessment data, and monitor students' progress towards their set academic goals. Common prep time built into the schedule allows for grade-level collaboration on lesson planning and the discussion of implementing grade-level state standards. Staff meetings are utilized for teachers to share information and ideas learned from attending grade-level meetings, workshops, and webinars. Teachers continue to build their pedagogical skills as they attend district provided grade-level trainings or utilize contracted professional development days to attend workshops outside the district. The information is then shared with the entire staff. Professional texts purchased throughout the year are used for after school book studies. Areas of focus include best practices for teaching process writing, math, and reading skills. Staunton Elementary and the corporation are also members of the WCESC (West Central Education Service Center) which provides opportunities for staff to attend workshops sponsored by the Indiana Department of Education and well-known presenters on topics relevant to individual needs and our school improvement plan focus areas.

As our corporation prepares our students to be proficient and competitive in the global digital age, a technology specialist assists teachers and provides ongoing training in use of the MinioTeach Interactive Whiteboard and online assessment tools and programs to create authentic learning experiences for improved instruction and student engagement. Teacher teams throughout the district meet to create, discuss, and modify curriculum maps to provide a curriculum that is consistent with each grade-level teacher and across the district. These professional development opportunities have served to provide our teachers with the ongoing training and support needed to sustain student success at Staunton Elementary.

4. School Leadership:

At Staunton Elementary our commitment to collaborative leadership is the basis for our continued success at establishing a positive climate and culture. This philosophy and belief is shared by our principal, staff, and school community.

The principal's commitment to establishing and preserving strong relationships with all students, parents, and staff is essential for continued academic excellence and achievement. Each morning the students and parents are greeted as they enter the building by the principal and staff. The principal's instructional leadership qualities are an additional component necessary for continued staff development. Resources necessary for teacher growth are provided throughout the year. Established policies and procedures are student centered to align with our mission of continued student growth and achievement. Teachers are empowered to strengthen their professional skills as they assume various leadership roles within the school and district. As part of the annual evaluation process, the principal cultivates an atmosphere of reflective practice by providing effective verbal feedback to strengthen pedagogical skills.

Our leadership commitment continues with our teaching staff. Within the building, our teachers assume leadership roles on numerous committees. Teacher leaders chair numerous committees, such as the PBIS, Crisis Intervention Team, RTI, and the PL221 School Improvement Plan. Their active leadership roles and participation ensure the continued success of each students' social, emotional, and academic growth. At the district level, teachers serve on committees dedicated to student instruction and the newly adopted district initiatives. Leadership roles are assumed on Curriculum Mapping, High Ability, Technology Initiative, and Textbook Adoption committees. Participation in these leadership activities ensures staff ability to provide students with the most up to date learning processes.

Our student and parent leadership roles are also an integral part of our school's continued success. Leadership opportunities are offered to students through their participation in Student Council. Students model these leadership qualities as they facilitate our Veteran's Day program, become student mentors, and support the community through a variety of philanthropic events. Active parent engagement is achieved through the many activities provided by our Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO). Throughout the year, the PTO provides teachers with additional supplemental resources such as the A-Z Reading program. The Spring Carnival, Donuts with Dads, Muffins with Mom, Field Day, and Movie Night are family events supported by our PTO. These events serve to strengthen the relationship between home and school which promote high and sustained academic achievement.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Data-driven instruction and decision making is key and is the focus in creating and developing instructional practices relevant to each learner's needs. Academic success for each individual learner is the expectation at Staunton Elementary School. The entire staff is a contributing factor for each student's continuing success. Reaching ambitious goals mutually created by students and teachers is why Staunton Elementary has been recognized many times as a Four-Star School for academic excellence. Our ability to meet each student at their specific academic level has allowed us to reach this standard of excellence.

A collection of state and national data, as well as data from classroom assessments, all derived from the current school year and previous school years, are tools used for setting high goals and expectations in order to meet and exceed the needs of each individual learner. Using this data, teachers are able to yield information to assist them in making more accurately informed decision. Meeting individuals at their own level provides active learning opportunities for all of our students. Current assessment data from the NSEA (Northwest Evaluation Association) for each student is displayed in our data room in order for teachers to continuously progress monitor and analyze student improvement. As students progress and move through the academic tiers, instructional practices are adjusted based on student growth. Teachers focus on many different aspects of each assessment data set to get a clear and complete picture of each student's academic strengths and challenges. This is a cyclical practice that is utilized the entire year.

Intentional lesson planning utilized by every teacher targets identified student needs. Data acquired through formative and summative classroom assessments guides daily and weekly instructional practices. The RTI model allows teachers to group students according to needs and strengths. Small group instruction allows for a more individualized, differentiated, and flexible delivery of the curriculum. Remediation students receive a more targeted intervention plan based on continuous progress monitoring assessments. High ability students are provided with resources and activities to expand their learning experiences and challenge their thinking. As student goals are met or exceeded, students are reassessed and new loftier goals are established with input by both the teacher and student. Instructional practices are adjusted as needed when student progress has not increased at an appropriate pace to meet grade-level proficiency.

By utilizing data-driven instruction and decision making, all students are provided with best practice, high quality instruction to maximize student academic excellence.