

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):
- 3 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 5 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	42	35	77
1	41	40	81
2	38	41	79
3	48	38	86
4	66	39	105
5	0	0	0
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	235	193	428

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 4 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 91 % White
 - 0 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2016 – 2017 school year: 3%

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	7
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	7
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	14
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	443
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.03
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

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

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

French, Spanish, Tamil, Chinese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 16%
Total number students who qualify: 67

8. Students receiving special education services: 16 %
67 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>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>7</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>6</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>4</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>46</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.	23
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	8
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.	5

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 17:1

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	97%	95%	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.

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.

Educating and inspiring each student to live, learn, and lead with excellence.

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

Holmes Elementary and Spring Lake Public Schools participate in the State of Michigan's Schools of Choice program. As such, the school lists vacancies by grade level in the spring and parents may then apply for enrollment. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of vacancies, a lottery type selection process is utilized to select students. Once accepted under Michigan's schools of choice program, students continue at Spring Lake Public Schools through graduation.

PART III – SUMMARY

Spring Lake is a semi-rural community located in West Michigan. The population of the municipalities served by Spring Lake Public Schools is approximately 16,000. The Spring Lake area has light manufacturing, as well as a general service industry that is indicative of the size of the community. Our students and families represent a diverse cross section in terms of socio-economics, with a dramatic range between both ends of the income spectrum.

Spring Lake has a rich historic and school tradition and the first one-room school was founded in the late nineteenth-century in Mill Point (now Spring Lake). Our school system has morphed over the 150 plus-year period between the founding of Barber School and today. Spring Lake Public Schools currently enrolls nearly 2500 students in six distinct buildings. It is also noteworthy to mention that our entire community shares a philanthropic fervor, which includes three endowed community foundations, as well as several service organizations such as Rotary and Kiwanis. That fervor is also evident in our schools as both elementary schools are rich with active programs that include, Kids Hope, Food Basket, Hand-in-Hand, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Watch Dogs and POPs (Power of Peer support).

We utilize several key strategies that are used to encourage and challenge all students to reach their potential, but the true key is the strong relationship we have cultivated with the triad of stakeholders (parents, staff, students) that are paramount to our success. One direct example is the District Strategic Plan that was created by all stakeholders with the Mission Statement as our foundation: “Educating and inspiring each student to live, learn and lead with excellence.” Every decision we make is grounded in our Mission Statement and the guiding statement was created by all stakeholders.

At Holmes Elementary School we start the quest for excellence with the “whole child” in mind. The foundation of our student success is grounded in the social, emotional, and academic well-being of our students. The more students feel safe, supported, and loved, the more they are ready to excel in the realm of accepting rigorous programming. We firmly stand by this concept and back it up with formal whole child training for our staff and a continuous commitment to the tenants that encompass the whole child. Holmes Elementary builds on this concept with a vast network of student supports that include a child study team, counseling support, peer-to peer support, academic intervention support with formal programming for math and literacy, a literacy coach and an almost endless offering of extra-curricular activities. We also provide intrinsic inclusion by hosting an emotionally impaired resource room.

Focused academic programming and related staff training is key to the success of our students. In a contemporary world of “flashy” educational solutions, we ground ourselves in solid, research based strategies for teaching, learning, and curricular programming. As one example, every elementary teacher is availed of the opportunity to attend an intensive one-week workshop training at Teachers College in New York. Additionally, we have a teacher leadership team (grade level leaders) in place that is currently focused on the best practices of teaching and learning. This includes a blend of research and practical application in which all teachers participate in modeling workshop sessions. The grade level leaders also drive constant conversations and continuously share ideas for strategies that help maximize student learning.

While the “humanistic” side of every child is our first priority, we also understand that our job is to “educate and inspire each student to live, learn and lead with excellence.” In order to teach at a continuous level of excellence, we need to be informed about our students at a school, classroom, and individual level. We accomplish this with robust data teams that meet a minimum of three times per year (formally) and have less formal grade level sessions on a continuous basis. We employ multiple formative assessment tools to monitor student progress in math and reading (not to be confused with a one-time, summative high stakes assessment). Although it sounds antiseptic and test driven, our model is well balanced and essentially allows us to differentiate for every child in our building and we would argue that we successfully meet the individual academic needs of every child in our school.

We are proud to say that kids have come first in every academic, humanistic, financial or programming

decision we have made and believe that is, and will continue to be, the main ingredient in our recipe for success.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Our core curriculum begins with an aligned curriculum map for all core areas (Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies), as well as for the arts. Maps are aligned to state and national standards and are intricately developed by teacher teams. Our district has a maximum six-year rotation for a formal curriculum review cycle. Within that time frame, core areas are revisited frequently, especially when we see a defined need develop. All of our maps are articulated k-12 and include five major heading columns in which the curriculum map is organized: 1. Unit/Essential Question 2. Formal Standard Listing 3. Standard in student friendly language written in an “I can” statement 4. Resource/Support list 5. Assessment. We hold true to the fact that “what” we teach is the backbone of our success and we must start with an aligned, written curriculum, that is taught with fidelity.

Our primary engagement strategy to advance student achievement would include a heavy focus on the workshop model of instruction. This includes all subject areas, including math. We have worked to research, investigate and practice the key concepts of workshop instruction. What started as a foray into becoming excellent in literacy through workshop, has branched into a prevalence of using that practice in all subjects. This includes formal training, as well as opportunities to participate in “modeling” sessions in order to allow teachers to hone their craft by watching each other teach and through offering constructive feedback. In addition, we also utilize technology as a teaching tool to engage learners. One of many practical examples includes student use of apps and programs to practice skills like math facts. Teachers also utilize other technology based strategies like publishing student work (authentic audience), live streaming portions of social studies lessons so parents can watch their kids learn, and taking pictures of things like weather as part of documenting science.

In terms of how we chose our curricular approach, we have two main focus areas. The first is our core written curriculum (the “what”). The second is discussing and participating in training for quality teaching practices (the “how”). Our teams are set up in a framework where discussion and conferring abound in terms of what teaching strategies work best for our learners. As one illustration of our commitment to the “how” of teaching is every one of our teachers has been given the opportunity to participate in a week-long workshop training at Teacher’s College in New York.

Foundational skills are acquired in different ways for content areas like math, language arts, science and social studies. Teachers intertwine foundational skills in multiple content areas and these skills are built upon each other from year to year. In social studies, Kindergarten students make a map of their house, within a neighborhood, within a town to help them identify their place in a community. That same theme flows up through fourth grade where projects progress to their place in the state, their place in the country, and their place in the world. Students study many civic related themes along the way. In science, our students first learn to explore and become scientists. They take pictures of weather in first grade and make models of erosion in third grade. In all grades they follow the scientific process of making predictions, experimenting, then drawing conclusions based on observations. In math, our students learn foundational skills through traditional methods and through math workshop, which allows them to practice math fact skills by writing, reading, using an iPad and through manipulatives. Our students learn foundational skills in literacy by reading, writing and practicing all of the areas of word study like phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, and spelling. We utilize the Reading and Writing Units of Study as our primary resource and this connection (K-6) helps us manage a concrete foundational flow. We have also invested in robust classroom libraries. Within that framework, we have purposefully targeted and purchased non-fiction titles with the themes of science, social studies and cultural sensitivity. Students also practice reading and writing in cross-content projects like creating a book about Martin Luther King Jr., by reading about and describing “Constitution Day,” or writing a business plan to market a product.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

At Holmes Elementary school we have a strong complement of fine arts related courses that make up a portion of every students' day. We call this our "specials" rotation. In a five-day window, students will attend fifty-minutes per day on a rotating basis (one fine arts course each day) of music, art, physical education/health, S.T.E.M. and Media Center. All fine arts/PE courses have a written curriculum that is aligned to the specific discipline, but the primary mission of each course is also infused with key core academic needs that have been identified by school data teams. For example, S.T.E.M students just finished a building project that included creating geometric shapes (geometry standards from math). The standards they embedded in the project were identified as "need areas" by data teams. Another example from physical education includes the addition of a basic yoga unit to support the schools' focus on the Whole-Child effort and mindfulness. In addition, all "specials" courses reinforce reading standards from the corresponding grades. For our March is Reading Month Readathon day, for example, all music, PE, art and S.T.E.M. students will be reading high-interest materials related to corresponding courses, and writing about the connection

Fine Arts is also a spot where culture, diversity and civic mindedness is a mainstay of programming. The music program works toward a cultural theme each year, culminating with a major performance that includes the community. Themes have included Africa and South America in recent years and include the performance of songs in different languages. They also recently completed an evening concert that honored veterans. Our S.T.E.M. class has also partnered with art to create S.T.E.A.M.. One of their primary endeavors of cross-curricular content involves the Community Monument Project. Students in art and S.T.E.M. pull in social studies standards and create a project based on community or family traditions. They research and select a symbol of community or family tradition, design and draw the symbol in art, build the symbol with legos in S.T.E.M, then build the symbols with the Blockify App on iPads. Students then 3D print the symbol on our 3D printer and present their final product to peers and parents.

Holmes school has a wide range of extra and co-curricular offerings as well. Honors choir is open to all students in grades three and four and runs one-day per week for the entire year. Honors Choir students also perform several unique concerts each year. We also offer Girls on the Run, as well as the Total Trek Quest program. Holmes school has an active Chess Club, as well as a Robotics group. We also offer several sports opportunities, including basketball, volleyball, lacrosse, and cheer. In addition to direct participation in extracurricular activities, Holmes school also has a thriving cadre of co-curricular student support groups. They include Kids Hope, where senior aged adults partner with select students to mentor and serve as an academic role model. Big Brothers Big Sisters of America is another impactful program that has deep roots in our building, as well as the HOST program where upperclassmen from our high school come and partner with teachers to support our students.

Last, our school includes some opportunities in the summer. We have a strong summer reading program for all students, which includes a partnership with our thriving local district library. We also open our Holmes library to families to read and check-out books throughout the summer. In addition, our community recreation program offers a plethora of activities for children to participate in during the summer and is run through the school district. Last year we had over sixty-percent of our students participate in some of summer program.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

With a firmly established core curriculum, we next turn our attention to the process used in terms of assessment and instructional methods we utilize to deliver content to each student.

As a building we are dedicated to using relevant and timely assessment data to drive instruction; to accomplish this, we schedule three data meetings per year with each grade level.

Summary of Process:

We adhere to a three part process with data meetings: 1.) We begin with a vertical look: "How are we doing?" as a school in terms of data. 2.) Next, we look at areas of concern to target more explicit instruction

within the grade level. 3.) From there we identify which students are struggling and ask ourselves “why?” It is at this point that specific intervention plans are devised, including commitments as to how we will know if students are progressing.

This process guides our work throughout the entire year. Further, this work allows us to coordinate interventionist schedules and to meet student needs in a targeted, personalized manner. A closer look at all three levels:

Big Picture

In the fall we start with big picture data as all teachers look at our M-Step data to give us an overall view of how we are doing as a building. Because we know that looking at data in isolation does not fully inform curricular or instructional decisions, we look at our M-Step data relative to both the State and demographically similar districts. Our purpose is to identify areas where we can celebrate as well as areas where we need to dig in and devise building level strategies for improvement. Just this year our big picture look at data uncovered that within the area of vocabulary, our results were uneven and that distinct gaps were evident. Within each grade level meeting we started asking specific questions about our instruction of vocabulary in order to identify the critical factors that were influencing our results. We quickly learned that there was not a consistent approach to our instruction. Each grade level then determined what they were going to do to explicitly instruct vocabulary, what resources they would use to teach, and how they would progress monitor. At our winter data meeting, we had a conversation about how things were going and any adjustments that needed to be made to continue progress in vocabulary.

2. Grade Level

The next step in our data meetings is to triangulate grade level data. Using our benchmark assessments; i-Ready, Fountas and Pinnell, and Words Their Way Spelling Inventory, we generate grade level reports and analyze student performance relative to grade level/benchmark standards. This approach allows our teacher teams to identify the universal, grade level areas where they need to focus. This work includes addressing the area of concern and how the grade level is approaching that standard in terms of instructional strategies.

3. Classroom

At the classroom level we dive deeper into the data and ask ourselves, “What interventions or strategies do we need to put in place to address the needs of the student?” Discussion of student specific interventions and differentiation opportunities relies heavily on input from all team members - literacy specialist, classroom teacher, special education teacher, behavioral consultant, and principal. Each participant plays a role in designing a personalized and highly strategic set of interventions for students.

Our system of interventions results in a personalized approach to each student, a commitment to allocating the needed resources, and a concrete plan to monitor and adjust as needed. The team guides this work.

Using data is at the heart of our tri-annual meetings with teachers and it’s what drives us forward in their growth and also allows us to maximize the potential of all students. Without our data and the multiple pieces we use to paint the picture of each student, we would be wandering aimlessly without a plan. But by sticking to this model we remain focused and driven on the success of our students.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

At Holmes Elementary our number one goal is to teach the whole child. Children cannot focus on their learning when they have other issues or concerns in their lives. We make sure that we help with services and strategies to address student academic, social, and emotional growth. One example of this is our mindful lessons, designed and implemented for each classroom by the principal. All teachers participate in these activities, so they can use the strategies. The students have learned how mindfulness can improve the way their brain processes information. The whole school participates in “Mindful Mondays”. There are breathing and listening strategies given throughout the year.

We firmly believe it is our role to teach children about appropriate behavior and interactions with adults and students. We utilize a Positive Behavior Intervention System that teaches respect, responsibility, and safety. We also have the Be NICE curriculum that empowers students to recognize that their actions can affect how someone thinks, acts, and feels. Both of these are key to teaching good choices, kindness, and showing respect to all people. We use “Train Tickets” as a positive reinforcement system that recognizes students’ interactions with others. We capitalize on the teachable moments, both positive and challenging, so our message is timely, fair, and consistent. Holmes has a “Word of the Month” that allows students to learn about and focus on strategies to become a good citizen. Some of these words are cooperation, courtesy, perseverance, and gratitude.

The same considerations are used among staff and in our interactions with each other as adults. We know that an educators job can be stressful at times so as a team we take steps to create an environment where all adults feel valued and supported. A few examples of this are staff monthly potlucks, morning coffee gatherings, and celebrating together with good news and special events. This is organized through a faculty social committee. These activities build camaraderie and collegiality.

Staff’s perceptions of the school culture are an important part of our leadership focus and one that is addressed on a regular basis through surveys and direct conversations. This focus on the needs of our staff allow us to design professional development and structure other building meetings, so that all feel empowered and challenged at the same time. Administration also uses feedback to improve the leadership at Holmes.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

At Holmes Elementary School we have found success in working with families and the community by opening our doors and inviting people in. We know that our parents have high expectations for our school and for their children. We continuously strive to meet those expectations. We believe in parents and the community as partners and know that a focus on this creates successful children. While maintaining a focus on school safety, we are intentional about seeking community input. One example is the Watch D.O.G.S. program which we started two years ago. This is a national program that encourages fathers to become more active in their child’s school. It has greatly increased the presence of dads in the building and helped them feel more comfortable in school. This has opened up an opportunity to engage dads. In addition, we also have family events that are sponsored by our active parents club. Some examples would be bingo night, pool parties, and the end of the year family picnic. We have classroom volunteers that come regularly and of course we have many field trip opportunities for parents to participate in.

Another key to our partnership with families is communication. We want families to know how their child is performing and what they can do to help take their child to the next level. We do this through parent-teacher conferences, report cards, weekly newsletters, and emails. Newsletters inform parents of instructional methods, as well as important upcoming events. The teachers use, Schoology, that lets parents view their child’s work in real time-online. The parents can see what their child is working on and receive communication on ways they can help their child, if needed. We also work to create a strong home-school connection, especially for those students who struggle academically and/or socially. With

some of our students we set up home/school parent meetings. After these meetings parents leave with a game plan for how school will meet the needs of the child and what parents will do at home. This creates a strong partnership that supports all students in their development. Social media and a school blog are also ways we celebrate successes, fund school events, and share a variety of school activities.

Outside of the school day, we offer programs to all students that would like to sign up. Some of these include: Girls On The Run, volleyball, basketball, running clubs, and chess clubs.

3. Professional Development:

Our professional development (PD) is directly reflective of our District Strategic Plan and the building School Improvement Plan. These two devices provide the broad brush direction for PD, while a comprehensive needs assessment drives the specifics of training. Our grade level leaders then gather with elementary principals and we design a professional development plan. For example, we have recently targeted workshop and word study as priority academic needs at the elementary level. In the case of workshop, all teachers have/will receive training at Teachers College in New York City. The one-week training is sandwiched by a host of local sessions that include modeling lessons in which grade level teams design, deliver and offer feedback on workshop lessons as well as direct team coaching by the district literacy coach. Because we are focusing on the reading portion of workshop first, our team then meets to view formative reading data and have already adjusted teaching strategies in response to student needs. For word study, the team started with a two-day foundational training on word study that was lead by, Dr. Laura Tortorelli. Once all teachers were grounded in foundational skills, they then received smaller segments of training through coaching. The coaching started with individual lessons and has now progressed to training in segments of word study such as phonological awareness and high frequency words. In a more broad scope, we have also been focused on using data to inform instruction. Our team started with the basic process of selecting data monitoring tools and participating in training that described how to use the tools. Once teachers were comfortable with the assessment tools, they received training on how to analyze the data. As they became good at understanding the data, teachers moved to our ultimate goal of using the data to inform instruction at a classroom level.

In terms of professional development, we are proud that our plans remain focused, are based on data, and last for years. We have invested time, talent, and treasure in our academic foundation and we believe it is paying dividends in the form of steady student academic gains.

Finally, teachers are also given the opportunity to seek learning opportunities that they have a passion for or where they feel they need to improve their efficacy in the classroom. When they are excited or motivated to learn something new, we all benefit.

4. School Leadership:

At Holmes Elementary School there is one principal, a part time literacy specialist, a district wide curriculum director, and grade level chairpersons from each grade level that represent the leadership team of the building. Among the grade level teams are committees and groups that oversee various aspects of the building such as school improvement, Positive Behavioral Intervention Support, technology, and more.

The leadership philosophy of the school is a mixture of relational-shared-instructional leadership all the while keeping a growth mindset. Relationships remain at the heart of everything we do and leadership is no exception. We recognize and believe in the inherent goodness of our profession and aspire to inspire all staff to be their personal best for students. Our philosophy is centered around the belief that the teaching profession is to be honored and celebrated. There are few roles more important to our future as a society. It is our hope that by cultivating this philosophy in our profession we will help to maintain joyful learning in our schools. We believe it is the most important mission in our work. Within shared leadership we believe in the power of collaboration. It is a powerful way for us to learn as we recognize the experts we have among us.

A key part of this leadership is leading our staff through the data meetings. Keeping relationships front and center we respectfully have the difficult conversations that need to happen in order for us to grow as

educators. We let the data drive our discussions and find out what's working for different grade levels and how we can implement that in other areas. As leaders we also have a process in place to collaborate with staff on individual goals they are working on for the year and help develop and create a plan for them for the year.

Staff meetings are also a time for collaboration among teachers to lead and share learning that drive conversations around instructional practices. The building principal is not the sole leader of the building in terms of academics and instruction. Teachers are recognized and called upon to lead in their areas of expertise. We have found that through this shared responsibility we can provide a greater sense of collegiality, trust, and fidelity of instruction.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

At Holmes Elementary we have always held to the notion that our main theme is investing in people NOT programs. Therefore, when asked about the ONE practice that has been the most instrumental to the school's success, we would say it's the investment we make in our people. This includes staff, students and families. We know there is not one magic program that will turn a building into a high achieving school. Rather, it's what the people, in and outside of the building, do with what they've been given in order to make a difference in the lives of children.

At Holmes we invest in people as well as focusing on practices that set high expectations for student academic growth and staff development. One direct example includes tri-annual data meetings where grade levels come together to review data, set goals, read research, and write plans all in the name of student achievement. We share these plans and seek input from parents and families to build the partnership between home and school. We know the benefit of investing in families as partners. By doing this we not only create strong children but we also help create strong families and a sense of community centered around the school.

We invest in our people through various resources of both money and time. This happens when we encourage staff to attend relevant professional development that they are invested in that will make a difference in their classroom and to the building. If our people are passionate about it and it aligns with our mission and vision, we find a way to make it happen. Whether it's creating a STEAM program, implementing a Watch D.O.G.S program, attending a technology conference, buying a teacher books to fill their classroom library, or allowing them time to observe a colleague teach, we invest our resources in our people.

We do all of this for our staff, students, and families because we live by our philosophy that relationships are at the heart of everything we do. Ultimately it's the children in Spring Lake Public Schools who benefit from all of these investments. Holmes attributes our continued growth and success to these measures all the while keeping in mind that our work is never done. Every day makes a difference and we approach each opportunity in that manner. "It takes a village..." is an old adage that we hear time and again but to us, we see the success of investing in that village.