



## **Part I – Eligibility Certification**

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The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2018 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2012 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, or 2017.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
9. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
10. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
11. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
12. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2017-2018) unless otherwise stated.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 0 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 0 High schools
  - 1 K-12 schools
- 1 TOTAL

### SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
  - Suburban
  - Rural or small city/town
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2017 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
<b>PreK</b>	18	10	28
<b>K</b>	15	10	25
<b>1</b>	15	14	29
<b>2</b>	24	20	44
<b>3</b>	16	16	32
<b>4</b>	21	19	40
<b>5</b>	24	17	41
<b>6</b>	16	21	37
<b>7</b>	16	20	36
<b>8</b>	18	22	40
<b>9</b>	11	16	27
<b>10</b>	24	18	42
<b>11</b>	18	18	36
<b>12 or higher</b>	15	12	27
<b>Total Students</b>	251	233	484

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 1 % Asian
  - 1 % Black or African American
  - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 95 % 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: 4%

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.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	5
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	13
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	18
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	480
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.04
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	4

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: 28 %  
Total number students who qualify: 136

8. Students receiving special education services: 13 %  
63 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>12</u> Autism                 | <u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>5</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>7</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>14</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>5</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>18</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>1</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: 4
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	32
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.	16
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 15:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	94%	94%	96%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	100%	95%	88%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2017.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	30
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	50%
Enrolled in a community college	24%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	20%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	7%

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.

To ensure student learning through staff collaboration and a focus on results.

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

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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The Fertile-Beltrami Public School is located in the town of Fertile, MN. The school district is located in a rural farming community and serves the towns of Fertile and Beltrami, and their surrounding rural communities. The school district was formed in 1975 and combined the former Fertile and Beltrami school districts.

Norwegian immigrants settled Fertile in the late 1800's, the current population for Fertile is 842 and Beltrami is 106. The Sandhill River runs through Fertile and was integral to the foundation of the town. One of the first businesses in Fertile was a flour and grist mill that was powered by the Sandhill River. Also within the city limits is the Agassiz Environmental Learning Center (AELC). The AELC is located along the Sandhill River and hosts many educational programs, which bring the students out into nature and educates them about the outside world. The AELC is utilized throughout the school year by many schools, and has programs for all seasons.

The Fertile-Beltrami School staff and school board is committed to educating for success in an environment of learning, respect, and responsibility. Fertile-Beltrami has a strong commitment to small class sizes, which allows for a more individualized direct instruction of our students. Our teachers are devoted to their students and work hard to ensure that standards are delivered in a meaningful way for all students. They take pride in their students' accomplishments and push them to be their very best. The teachers use Professional Learning Communities to work together to ensure the lessons being taught are delivered effectively and are maximizing the potential of all students. Our special education staff work closely and collaborate with the classroom teachers to make sure the needs of students with Individualized Education Plans are met and they too are getting the most out of every lesson and assignment.

Small class sizes have allowed our teachers to form close relationship with their students. By truly understanding their students, teachers can tailor their instruction to best meet the individual needs of each student. The pride that our teachers have in the success of their students is because of the hard work they put in on a daily basis. When students are struggling, teachers use all available resources to help get them up to speed. When students are meeting grade level expectations, teachers find resources to push them further and build upon their knowledge and understanding.

Professional Learning Communities at Fertile-Beltrami use the principals of Teaching for Authentic Intellectual Work (AIW) to guide their collaborative sessions. Authentic Intellectual Work is an evidence based systematic approach teachers use to evaluate their tasks (assignments), instruction, and student performance (student work) for authenticity. This process is used as a way for teachers to monitor what they are doing and get peer feedback as to how they can make changes, which will better their practice and ensure that they teach authentically.

AIW promotes teachers asking higher order thinking questions, which foster substantive conversations within the classroom. AIW also encourages assignments and lessons in which, students are constructing the knowledge and are able to display that they have a deep understanding of concepts. Another key component of AIW is to encourage tasks and instruction to have value beyond school.

Teaching for Authentic Intellectual Work has many benefits to the Fertile-Beltrami School. Teachers are using a common language to working collaboratively on ways to improve upon what they have done in their classrooms with their students. Teachers are designing new instruction and assignments more deliberately and authentically. Students at the Fertile-Beltrami School are engaged in their learning and actively a part of their education.

Another key factor in the success of the Fertile-Beltrami School is that it has had tremendous support from the community. We have a very generous Education Foundation. The Fertile-Beltrami Education Foundation is a non-profit organization committed to expanding education opportunities beyond the basic curriculum, increasing programs for gifted and talented students, and inspiring students and teachers to pursue creative ideas that improve education. The foundation provides grants to teachers and programs for

projects that the school would not otherwise be able to fund. Some examples of these projects and programs include an after-school program for grades 2-5, Lego Mindstorms kits, Spheros – programmable spherical robots, and financial help to offset the costs of educational field trips.

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

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

The Fertile-Beltrami School uses the Minnesota Academic Standards to guide its curriculum. These standards are put in place so that all students have access to high quality content and instruction. The Minnesota Academic Standards provide the scope and sequence for the school's core curriculum.

Fertile-Beltrami uses its local literacy plan as a guide to ensure that all students in Kindergarten through Grade 3 read well by the end of third grade. Fertile-Beltrami provides research based reading instruction, assessment, and curriculum aligned with the 2010 Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in English Language Arts for all students. Benchmark Literacy is the program used by the Fertile-Beltrami Elementary School to help deliver the ELA standards.

Using a balanced literacy approach, each classroom teaches literacy through whole class, small group, and individual instruction during a 90-minute literacy block each day the elementary school. The 7th through 12th Grade students receive their ELA instruction in 45-minute blocks daily. Students participate in Shared Reading, Interactive Reading, Guided Reading and Independent Reading. To ensure there is alignment to the standards, teachers meet weekly in grade level teams with a reading specialist to discuss scientifically based reading instruction and interventions.

The Minnesota Academic Standards in Mathematics are delivered in multiple ways. The program used daily for delivering the standards is Everyday Mathematics. Everyday Mathematics is a program that is grounded in research based on how students learn. The program is able to deliver the standards and each concept builds on previous learning to develop sound math comprehension and build the necessary foundations to foster future learning. Math curriculum is supplemented with multiple interventions including IXL and ALEKS math.

Fertile-Beltrami uses a diversified approach to deliver the Minnesota Academic Standards in Science. Curriculum maps are used to uphold that all standards are being taught and that each year students are building upon their scientific knowledge base. Textbooks are used to supplement the science curriculum, which is hands on and conceptually based. At each level the scientific concepts are grade appropriate and aligned, ensuring a solid foundation in scientific literacy and preparing them to further their understanding of scientific concepts.

The Social Studies curriculum at the Fertile-Beltrami School is designed to increase student understanding of citizenship and government, economics, geography, and history. Fertile-Beltrami delivers the Minnesota Academic Standards in Social Studies intentionally and deliberately, so that students understand Social Studies facts and concepts, and can use them to make sense of their world. The teachers are preparing the students of Fertile-Beltrami for future challenges by requiring them to think critically about important issues. It is also essential for students to be able to effectively communicate using informed messages and show their ability to problem solve, which will help them to be productive and proactive citizens throughout their lives.

The Core Curriculum at Fertile-Beltrami is focused on providing students with the essential knowledge that will have them ready for college and prepared to enter the workforce. The Core Curriculum ensures Fertile-Beltrami students are literate and have the skills necessary to be successful readers and writers. Fertile-Beltrami's Core Curriculum is designed to satisfy more than just the basics to survive beyond high school, it lays the foundations for life long aptitude in mathematics. Fertile-Beltrami offers numerous high school science courses to supplement the standard science offerings. Students have the opportunity to extend their learning in science through Advanced Chemistry, Anatomy and Physiology, Environmental Science, and Zoology. The Core Curriculum also gives Fertile-Beltrami students the skills necessary to be informed, productive and proactive citizens, and has them ready to tackle the civic challenges that will present themselves in both college and their careers. In addition, Fertile-Beltrami students are afforded the opportunity to take up to 45 college credits, through partnerships with area colleges in our dual credit

College in the High School program.

Fertile-Beltrami offers a School Readiness program for four-year-old students. This program is designed to get students ready for Kindergarten. The core curriculum is also introduced at an age appropriate level and pace. Since we have started this program the curriculum has grown. The School Readiness staff has weekly literacy meetings with the reading specialist to evaluate programming. School Readiness has implemented a phonetics based reading program to build the foundations of reading to help meet our local literacy goal of all students reading well by 3rd Grade. Since this program began, the expectations for our students in the primary grades have increased. Students are entering Kindergarten with a greater knowledge base and are much more prepared for school when they show up each Fall.

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

At Fertile-Beltrami students are exposed to many opportunities outside of the Core Curriculum. Fertile-Beltrami has visual and performing Arts, Business and Technology, Industrial Arts, Ag, Physical Education and Health, Spanish, and Library. These additional curricular areas compliment Fertile-Beltrami's Core Curriculum. They help students achieve success not only academically, but build skills for life-long learning and promote college and career readiness.

Within the Arts, all students in grades 4-8 are taught Art during the school year. Students in 4th through 6th grades have art class for six weeks and 7th and 8th grades take one semester of art. It is also a requirement for graduation that all students take one year of fine arts instruction. Taking an art class, or being a member of the band or choir can meet this requirement. Whether students take visual art classes or performance art classes, they are igniting the creative parts of their brains and gaining skills that are a benefit to all academic areas.

The Fertile-Beltrami School and its community have a true sense of pride in their music department. All students Kindergarten through 8th grade receive music instruction during the school year. In the elementary Kindergarten through 4th grade have music instruction for 90 minutes per week and an elective choir option. The 7th and 8th grade students have General Music class for one quarter each year and all 7th through 12th Grade students may take band and choir as an elective.

Fertile-Beltrami offers a wide variety of opportunities through its business and technology department. Along with a traditional business program consisting of finance and accounting principles, they also offer Web Design and Video Editing, and Computers for 10th through 12 grades. Seventh and 8th graders take a combined computer and keyboarding class for one semester and 9th grade takes a yearlong career class. The apex of Fertile-Beltrami's business program is its Web Masters course. This is a course open to seniors that must apply and be "hired" into the class. The class maintains the school's website and also runs a business. The business they run manages and maintains websites for many businesses and organizations. The class uses the profits from the business to cover costs and award a scholarship each year to a graduating senior.

Industrial Arts is introduced to the Jr. High students through Fertile-Beltrami's Inventions and Innovations curriculum. This class introduces students to the research and development that is required to create new products and highlights those products that have been beneficial to society. Students can choose to expand upon those principles with woods, welding, and Manufacturing Technologies. These classes teach skills that prepare students for trades based college programs and the workforce after high school.

Ag Education is another area of the Fertile-Beltrami school that has been impactful to students. Fertile-Beltrami is located in rural Minnesota and is a farm-based community. The knowledge gained in these courses is evident when the students compete in events for Future Farmers of America. Students at Fertile-Beltrami have been very successful at competitions and have qualified to compete at state and national conventions.

All elementary students get thirty minutes of Physical Education each day. The Physical Education curriculum incorporates activities students will utilize their entire life. These skills are carried forward as students enter Jr. high. Seventh and 8th grades have Health and Physical Education for a semester and 9th

grade has them for a whole year. Fertile-Beltrami also offers a class in life fitness where students focus on fitness activities and planning for healthy lifestyles.

Spanish has been a recent addition to Fertile-Beltrami's curriculum and is offered to students in grades 10-12. Learning a foreign language gives students an understanding of other cultures as well as a better understanding of their own language. Spanish teaches students the second most common language spoken in the United States, and helps reinforce the ELA standards taught in the Core Curriculum.

Elementary students visit the library for 30 minutes each week. During this time they are introduced to how libraries are set up and different types of literature that are available to them. Each week consists of short readings with the librarian and an activity based on that reading. Students return books and check new ones out that they will read at home the following week.

This summary is just a brief introduction to the additional curriculum delivered to the students of Fertile-Beltrami. These other curriculum areas enhance the Core Curriculum and contribute to the solid foundations that Fertile-Beltrami students receive during their education. Both the Core Curriculum and the supporting curriculum contribute to student success in their post-secondary education and their careers.

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

Fertile-Beltrami uses multiple data sources to identify students who are at risk of not reading at grade level. This data is used to diagnose individual student areas of weakness in reading. Assessments are given to help determine personal reading strategies students currently use to read successfully on their own. In addition, the assessments also identify strategies students are not using successfully in their reading practices. Next our teachers and reading specialists use this assessment data to develop appropriate individualized student instruction and interventions. Progress monitoring data is continuously used to assess student growth. In addition, instruction and intervention is constantly monitored for effectiveness. Using multiple sources of data gathered throughout the learning process, our staff effectively addresses student weaknesses and helps them to attain successful reading skills.

Students at-risk of not reading well are identified using a comprehensive assessment system including screening, diagnostic, and progress monitoring assessments. All students in Grades K-3 are screened three times per year for proficiency. When a student is identified as not reading up to the literacy targets, diagnostic assessment may be used to determine the individual student's reading needs. However, in all individual cases reading interventions that target the specific student's reading difficulties are implemented and reading progress is monitored with AIMSweb assessment probes.

Teachers implement the continuum of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support of literacy instruction for all student. Screening, diagnostic, and progress monitoring assessments are used to best match interventions to the student's reading need and evaluate progress toward targets. The interventions use scientifically-based and standards-based literacy instruction to ensure proficiency for all.

Student progress toward reading proficiency is monitored while receiving intervention instruction. The purpose of this is to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention and to support the adjustment of instruction as needed to maximize growth towards reading proficiency. The AIMSweb Progress Monitoring probes are used once per week with students that are not reading up to targets. Other available progress monitoring instruments used by Fertile-Beltrami include but are not limited to Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, the Fry Word List, Running Records and Miscue Analysis of Running Records from Guided Reading books, Abecedarian Reading Assessment, teacher-made assessments and comprehension conversations.

Fertile-Beltrami also utilizes Americorps Minnesota to provide further reading and math interventions. Minnesota Reading Corps and Minnesota Math Corps provide a systematic approach to intervene when students are not at grade level in both reading and mathematics. The math and reading tutors provide rigorous practice, and skills reinforcement. The tutors provide continuous formative assessments, and progress monitoring. Their methods have been very beneficial to the success of students struggling in

reading and mathematics at the Fertile-Beltrami School.

Fertile-Beltrami is a 1:1 school K-6. All students have their own iPad. The iPad alone is not impactful, as an intervention or instructional model. However, with the direction of our teaching staff the iPads are a powerful tool used to help struggling students achieve grade level expectations and ensure those at grade level can maximize their learning and understanding of concepts.

To help ensure the success of students as they transition from the elementary school to the secondary school all 7th and 8th grade students have at least one 45 minute study hall per day. During this time students can work directly with their teachers to help reinforce their understanding of topics and receive assistance on assignments. For struggling students Fertile-Beltrami has smaller guided study halls that have smaller teacher to student ratios to allow for more direct instructional help.

Another effective intervention utilized by Fertile-Beltrami is its Student Assistance Team (SAT). The SAT meets weekly to discuss referrals from teachers. These referrals are made when teachers have concerns that students are not performing at grade level. The SAT analyzes interventions already tried and makes suggestions for future interventions.

## **PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS**

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

The Fertile-Beltrami School educates for success in an environment of learning, respect, and responsibility. As students arrive each morning, a member of the administrative team greets them at the door. Students are always welcomed with a good morning and a smile. This morning check in acts as a positive start to the day and sends the message to students that staff is glad they are here and ready for another great day. Next students have morning recess; this time provides the schoolchildren opportunity to burn off some morning energy and get the pupils ready to engage in the classroom activities.

As classes begin there are a variety of morning routines that help students become engaged in the learning process. These activities include morning messages, welcome songs, and morning reports to name a few. Most days begin with a morning message that incorporates current events associated with topics being learned at the time. Many students look forward to this event. Another key feature of morning messages is a skill review where students examine posted information for errors. Morning songs combined with physical movements are also incorporated in the morning routine. All of these activities are designed to initiate learning and make each student feel like school is a place they want to be.

Fertile-Beltrami teachers are excellent at celebrating milestones within their classrooms. Every year third graders are commended for the hard work they have put into learning math facts by receiving a Sundae Party. Each math fact mastered by students adds an additional component/topping to their sundaes. Another great example of celebrating milestones at Fertile-Beltrami is the reading incentive activities that take place during February. Each year during “I Love to Read” month teachers plan an engaging kickoff symposium and activities throughout the month to celebrate reading. The month is capped off with one big celebration. These elementary wide celebrations have included blow up games, a baseball game, a pool party, and sledding.

the administration at Fertile-Beltrami has an open door policy and is always ready to work with teachers and help them problem solve any issue they may be having. They also are actively moving around throughout the day checking in on classrooms to see what is taking place. Teacher and student noteworthy activities are highlighted by administration through a variety of methods including staff meetings, school board reports, and most recently through several social media platforms.

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

The Fertile-Beltrami community takes pride in its school and parents are willing participants in planning and hosting events.

We at Fertile-Beltrami have a strong partnership with parents and the community, and communication is vital to this. Parents have anytime access to our online information system, from which they can view many things including attendance, lunch activity, and the grade book. Through the student management system teachers can easily communicate with parents through its messaging function. It is very simple to use and teachers can create individualized or whole group messages. Individual classroom communication is done through class letters, which give parents a general idea of what is happening in the classroom and provides a place for teachers to place announcements for parents. Other pivotal types of communication for the school and parents are IEP and 504 meetings. These meetings are designed to ensure the Fertile-Beltrami School is doing all it can to best educate students that need more individualized programming.

Many activities take place that encourage families to be a part of their students' education. Our Early Childhood Family Education program offers family based activities in the evening. These activities are designed to bring children and parents together for fun educational events. Early Childhood Initiative is an outside community non-profit that works in partnership with the ECFE program to provide help and financial support for these events.

The first big activity for parents at the Fertile-Beltrami School is Kindergarten Round-Up, and it is scheduled in the spring before students begin Kindergarten. This night is a time for parents to come into the school see their child's classroom and meet their teachers for the first time. It is also a time used to educate parents about procedures they may need to know and follow as they begin this partnership in educating their child.

The first event of the school year for our families is Back to School Night. This is Fertile-Beltrami's open house and it occurs the week before school starts. This is a night when students meet their teachers, drop off school supplies, and take care of any paperwork and fees that need to be paid for the coming school year.

Another well-attended night at the Fertile-Beltrami Elementary School is Bingo for Books. Bingo for Books is just what it sounds like, students play bingo and they win books for prizes. There are books for all different age and reading levels, and every student goes home with at least 2-3 books.

Recently the Fertile-Beltrami School has started doing a Science Fair. This experience has been an excellent time and opportunity for our students to show off the hard work they have done. It also is a time to demonstrate to the parents and community what they are learning in the classroom and how they can apply that knowledge.

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

Professional development must be of high quality and relevant to the needs of the teachers. Fertile-Beltrami takes this into consideration each year it plans professional development days. The school commits four of its staff days to meaningful and impactful professional development. Along with these four days the school has twelve early out days. Early out days give teachers an hour and a half of Professional Learning Community (PLC) time.

During PLC time teachers work in groups and apply a process called Teaching for Authentic Intellectual Work. This time specifically targets assignments, student work, and instruction. Teachers bring to their team items that are not working and the team uses a standardized process to provide informative feedback that can be used to improve them. This evaluation process helps to ensure that teachers are using effective means to teach the standards they are intending to teach.

Every year we try to dedicate one of our four professional development days to technology in education. The technology day has two purposes. The first of which is to expose teachers to new technology that can be used in their classrooms, with their students. The second purpose is to provide time for teachers to collaboratively trouble shoot issues they might be having with technology in their classrooms. This day is not a technology for technology's sake day, but rather a day dedicated to meaningful and relevant technology that can be readily put to use by the teachers.

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

The leadership philosophy at Fertile-Beltrami is that all in the school community are vital to the educational success of our students. We all need to work hard each day to ensure that we are educating for success in an environment of learning, respect, and responsibility.

The principal leads by example. He is a lifelong learner and takes advantage of any professional development opportunities he can. He recently completed the National Institute for School Leadership's - Minnesota Principals Academy. The Principals Academy is a two-year training that is directly related to effective leadership within a school.

Student achievement is the ultimate goal of any school. For our students to be successful, all staff members need to excel at what they do and work together. The principal at Fertile-Beltrami believes the team approach works best, and no one person can do it alone. All members are treated with respect and reminded of their importance to the students they work with.

The Principal agrees whole-heartedly with the saying “it takes a village to raise a child.” The education of Fertile-Beltrami’s students involves many people. Most people realize the important role that teachers play, but there are so many other essential players too. The Dean of Students works proactively with students to intervene before problems arise that might have a negative impact on a student’s education. The counselor provides students with academic and social guidance. Paraprofessionals provide students and teachers with academic supports on a daily basis. Bus drivers are the first to greet students and play a pivotal role in getting students to school safely. The Fertile-Beltrami village is made up of many people and they are all actively working towards the common cause, maximizing the potential in all of our students.

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

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We are a case study in early literacy intervention because of our focus on reading intervention - based on a continuous feedback loop with students and teaching professional.

We foster a distinct and differentiated system of tiered support. We customize programs to the individual student solely derived by their specific needs.

We hold regular grade level literacy meetings with our reading specialist and teachers to make sure that we are evolving programs and support to maximize the potential of all of our students and setting meaningful goals for administrators.

In the classroom, we reinforce our programs daily through tailored instruction, focused curriculum and targeted intervention.

Interventions are rigorous individual leveled instruction designed to meet the need of the child with a focus on exceeding grade level exceptions and growth potential.

The outcomes have spoken for themselves. We have experienced strong growth in literacy results across the board. Year over year students are exceeding grade level literacy exceptions and outperforming their peers on Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments. The long-term results are also impressive, the impacts are beyond just the one school year, and growth results are on a continuous trajectory.