



## **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):
- 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>	28	26	54
<b>K</b>	13	15	28
<b>1</b>	13	10	23
<b>2</b>	13	11	24
<b>3</b>	17	14	31
<b>4</b>	20	14	34
<b>5</b>	8	8	16
<b>6</b>	16	13	29
<b>7</b>	13	18	31
<b>8</b>	15	21	36
<b>9</b>	17	12	29
<b>10</b>	22	15	37
<b>11</b>	19	18	37
<b>12 or higher</b>	17	16	33
<b>Total Students</b>	231	211	442

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 0 % Asian
  - 1 % Black or African American
  - 4 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 92 % 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: 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	11
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	5
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	16
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	445
(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):

N/A

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 46 %  
Total number students who qualify: 204

8. Students receiving special education services: 14 %  
64 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>1</u> Deafness                 | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness           | <u>7</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>10</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>25</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>4</u> Emotional Disturbance    | <u>24</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment       | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>9</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:

	<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.	27
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	11
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	15
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	19

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 13:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	97%	96%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	96%	100%	95%

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	33
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	55%
Enrolled in a community college	18%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	12%
Found employment	3%
Joined the military or other public service	6%
Other	6%

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 offer high-quality education in a dynamic, supportive learning environment and help learners develop knowledge, skills, & attitude for healthy, productive, fulfilling, and socially responsible lives.

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**

---

Red Rock Central School District (RRC) is located in Redwood and Cottonwood Counties in southwestern Minnesota. We serve approximately 400 students in grades K-12 from the communities of Lamberton, Sanborn, Storden, Jeffers and the surrounding area. We also provide a preschool program for 3- and 4-year olds and offer Early Childhood Family Education. Our district is not racially diverse as about 92% of our student body is Caucasian, but 46% of our student body is on the free and reduced lunch program. There has been a steady increase of students coming from split families in the district as well.

Red Rock Central Public Schools consolidated from four original school districts, Sanborn, est. 1871, Lamberton, est. 1875, Storden, est. 1879, and Jeffers Public Schools est. 1902. In 1971, Storden and Jeffers merged and in 1987, Sanborn and Lamberton paired. The year of 1997 saw the consolidation of Storden-Jeffers and Sanborn-Lamberton, creating the present-day Red Rock Central School District.

Red Rock Central School District has been a recipient of several awards. Since 2008, RRC has annually been selected as one of the nation's "Best High Schools" by US News and World Report, receiving recognition in both the bronze and silver categories. We take pride in the district's consistency in scores for the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) as they are typically 8-15% above state averages. Our 4-year college bound students have consistently outperformed the state average on the ACT, which helped us receive the ACT Red Quill award a few years back. In addition, we are also very proud of the fact that a large percentage of our seniors receive some sort of college credit through our concurrent enrollment, Advanced Placement offerings, and articulated agreements. An amazing part about those three offerings is that all of our students have the opportunity for college credit before they graduate, not just our 4-year college-bound kids. Our elementary school has received many awards and accolades for years as well. Most recently, our elementary school has been designated as a "Minnesota Reward School" by the Minnesota Department of Education for 2016.

Another strong tradition of success has been in our fine arts in the high school. In 2005, we received a "Recognition for Excellence in Music Education" award as one of the "Best 100 Communities for Music Education in America" recognizing outstanding music programs and community support from a consortium of nine entities including Music Educators National Conference (MENC). Our high school band was honored to be selected to perform at the Minnesota Music Educators Association mid-winter convention in 2017 and our high school choir has been selected to sing the national anthem at St. Cloud State University Division I hockey games the last three years. Both band and choir have an ongoing trend for many years of receiving all three superiors from the Minnesota State High School League Large Group Contest, which is the highest level of performance you can receive. There are many key strategies used within the school that have encouraged and challenged all students to develop their full potential academically, emotionally, physically, socially, and culturally. At Red Rock Central, we believe it starts with the staff. We pride ourselves at RRC of having caring and supportive staff in all grades. It is very common and of course, enjoyable, to hear our new students in the secondary say "the staff really care at this school!"

Small class sizes allow our staff to get to know each student and identify their individual strengths and needs. We average a 13:1 student to teacher ratio, and an 11:1 student to staff ratio, which has proven to be a financially worthwhile investment in creating opportunities for all of our students to be successful. Starting at the younger grades, our staff instills the core values and morals students need to be successful at our school and in life. With care and support, our students go through our educational system learning, developing, practicing, and accepting those core values. In the secondary, we always have a staff meeting at the beginning of the school year. We discuss many things, but one of those includes spending time discussing any information that is pertinent to the staff related to incoming students. This background information allows our staff to make a connection with the new students immediately. Students going through our educational system from preschool to graduation are exposed to many opportunities to develop and grow. We have many programs that align with our mission statement which encourage all students to develop to their full potential. A few of those programs beyond our standard curriculum include: Accelerated Reader, Love to Read Month, Dental Health Awareness, Nutrition Education Program, Fire Prevention Week, CPR training, Read Naturally, as well as the many character guidance and development

lessons.

Lastly, our communities are actively involved in their churches, which have helped shape and promote positive values and morals. We have a long-lasting tradition to have a bacculaureate, which is a religious service for our seniors, at the end of each school year. The ministerium from all four communities are invited and lead the service. Although optional to our students, a majority of our students take part in it every year.



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

---

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

Although Red Rock Central uses the ELA Common Core as our basic guideline, our students' needs drive our curriculum. We administer entry-level assessments in reading and grammar in grades seven through eleven to determine focus areas for each grade level. Additional mini-lessons are added to our textbook curriculum to address student needs. Mid-year benchmark assessments help us identify learning that has been achieved as well as areas that still need work. These entry-level and benchmark assessments, along with Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment III scores from the previous year, help us identify struggling readers. For these students, we offer small-group reading classes in grades seven, eight, and ten to strengthen students' skills and confidence.

In addition to using our textbook as a resource for short stories, non-fiction excerpts, and drama studies, we incorporate grade-level novel units to encourage in-depth literacy engagement, and we include selected articles and essays that emphasize other content areas such as science and technology. Scheduled free reading time in both junior high and high school promotes choice reading, emphasizing that reading for enjoyment is a life-long skill. At all grade levels, writing and speaking activities are incorporated to our reading curriculum, creating more authentic learning experiences. We use a blend of whole-class, small-group, and individual instruction in reading, writing, and speaking to further prepare them for real-life challenges in the workplace. Nearly half of every senior class enrolls in in-house concurrent enrollment classes for college credit in literature, writing, and speech.

Our district is currently using Superkids, a comprehensive core reading and language arts program, in Kindergarten through grade 2. Our district uses Reading Wonders, a basal reading program to teach grades 3-6. Included in this program are components for guided reading, read aloud, shared reading, leveled reading and independent reading.

In mathematics, our goal is for every student to have the necessary math skills to be successful whatever their career choice after high school. Daily written assignments of 20-30 minutes are the norm and all student papers are corrected and returned promptly. We address individual/group problem areas as they occur and reteach as necessary for better student understanding. All the secondary Minnesota Math Standards are embedded in the math classes 7–12 and we constantly modify our curriculum at every level whenever a specific standard is identified as a weakness according to the MCA III and ACT standardized exams. Although many of our lessons are textbook based, we use a lot of other resources and technology (calculators and websites), particularly in grades 11 and 12. Most of our students graduate with four or more credits (years) in mathematics, and our top students have earned three to six college math credits as well.

The science curriculum at Red Rock Central is based on the Minnesota Academic Standards in Science and has been aligned with the standards. All pre-K to 12th grade science courses at Red Rock Central rely heavily on hands-on activities to reinforce standards and concepts that are being learned. These activities can range from traditional laboratory inquiry investigations, to computerized simulations and real-world applications such as an insect collection or analysis of water samples collected from nearby bodies of water. It is our goal that students leave all Red Rock Central students with a deeper appreciation of the natural world, and the basic knowledge to help them make informed decisions about human actions and their impacts. In K-2, teachers create their own lessons related to the standards and use a variety of resources. In grades 3-12, we have spent a fair amount of time curriculum mapping and identifying our strengths and weaknesses related to the MCA results and benchmarks. We use a variety of textbooks, online resources, laboratory activities, and reviews to teach science.

Secondary science instruction at Red Rock Central encompasses life, physical, and earth science topics. Some topics in 9th grade include: structure and changes in matter, motion, energy, forces, electricity, magnetism, and technology. In biology, tenth graders study the nature of life, genetics, microbiology, multicellular plants, invertebrates and vertebrates. Students in eleventh grade study chemistry more in-

depth, but can choose between a concept-based course and a traditional chemistry course. Forms, properties, and interactions of matter are the main focus of both chemistry classes, as well as the factors affecting reactions, acids and bases, and solutions. Twelfth graders have the opportunity to study physics as an elective with a special emphasis on engineering, practiced through special projects.

Throughout the district's social studies curriculum, content is aligned with state learning standards including literacy skills. Specifically in grades 7-12, students actively engage in early American History, World Geography, Civics, recent American History, Government, World History, and Psychology courses. Our curriculum provides students with complex concepts, diverse viewpoints, and critical thinking opportunities. Civic engagement is a common thread in all classes. Civics students write and propose bills to a mock congress, participate in mock trials, visit the local polling place to carry out a mock election, and initiate petitions for changes within our school. To develop historical thinking and problem-solving skills, students simulate historical events such as imperialism and cold war situations. Students also create maps, investigate and debate current events, and analyze primary and secondary documents. Our goal for students' academic achievement is to create prepared, knowledgeable, respectful and competent citizens with the skills to be successful in a global, multicultural democracy.

We require a semester class for all 11th graders called Lifesmarts. This is a course to prepare students for the "real world". Students explore career and college options, which is a personalized continuation of what each individual student compiles in 9th grade social studies. This class also prepares students for the workforce and has them make personal finance decisions such as saving, investing, budgeting, the use of credit, and insurance options. This class provides students with the tools for a successful financial future.

For ages 3 & 4, we use the curriculum "Core Knowledge," which is part of the Reading Program that grades K-2 uses. This curriculum aligns with the early childhood indicators of progress. Multiple progress assessments occur throughout the year through the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) assessments and assessments within the "Core Knowledge" Curriculum. We have a high success rate in preparing our Pre-K students for Kindergarten both academically and socially. Parent-Teacher conferences occur multiple times per year and occasionally conversations about possible retention occur.

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

Red Rock Central is a small school. We have one technology director who runs our own internet service program called RRCNet, one industrial arts teacher who also teaches students to use our own digital fabrication lab, one agriculture teacher, one auto mechanics teacher, one K-12 art teacher, two K-12 music teachers, two librarians, and one guidance counselor. In addition, we have been very creative to continue foreign languages at our school.

RRCNet, Red Rock Central's Internet Service Provider for the school and surrounding communities, began as a school-to-work program in 1996. Students are employed by RRCNet and develop valuable skills that allow them to fill positions in fields of information technology including area phone companies, as technology coordinators in area school districts and farmer's cooperatives and even some Fortune 500 companies. Working with all RRCNet customers in the community and school provide wonderful opportunities for students to practice their interpersonal skills. There is a prerequisite to be an RRCNet employee; CISCO or Information Technology Essentials is a class that teaches students to build a computer, install the operating system, add peripherals, and connect the computer to a local area network and to the internet.

We are a 1:1 school, providing K-2 students with mini i-Pads, while preschoolers, grades 3-12, and staff are assigned a Microsoft Surface RT tablet. In addition, RRC offers Computer Aided Drafting and Design classes, which is a prerequisite for our very own digital fabrication lab (Fablab). Students receive hands-on experiences with 3-D printers, laser cutters/engravers, CNC plasma cutter, CNC milling machine, and CNC router. Middle school students already receive some exposure to the software and Fablab in their Tech Ed classes.

Agriculture is important to our communities and, of course, the world. In RRC's 9-12 agriculture classes,

students learn about a wide variety of topics including wildlife, horticulture, food science, soils, animal sciences, welding and electricity, and leadership.

Our auto mechanic students explore the repair of engines, electrical, fuel, emission control and other various systems used on automobiles of today. Our auto shop is busy every day with different vehicles. All of these hands-on experiences expose and prepare all of our students to a variety of potential tech trades.

The arts are valued highly at RRC as well. All students in grades K-12 have the opportunity to have art and music. Students in K-6 have art twice per week for 25 minutes. Seventh-8th graders have art for one semester each year, opposite of tech ed. And 9th-12th graders have two art elective periods available in their schedule every semester. We believe art is a universal language and we have multiple fine arts evenings for our students to display their artwork for the community. Art students also have the opportunity to attend the visual arts festival annually and enter their work into competition.

Our music schedule optimizes the chances of students being actively involved in music. We start offering band in 5th grade and have majority of the class participate. In 7th and 8th grade, we schedule choir, band, and study hall the last period of the day. Students are required to be in at least one of them, but many choose both. Each class meets 2 1/2 times per week so if a student is only in choir or band, they will have study hall the other days. In high school, we schedule choir between the 4th and 5th period. Those in choir eat lunch immediately after 4th hour and then have choir for 30 minutes. Students in grades 9-12 who are not in choir go to a shortened study hall time after 4th hour and go to lunch when the other students start choir. We consistently have 2/3 of our high school student body in choir annually. High school band is scheduled 5th hour and is prioritized in scheduling to allow anyone interested to take it.

We provide physical education (PE) as well as information on health and nutrition to our pre-K-10th grade as well as advanced PE opportunities for our 11th and 12th graders. PE is aligned with national standards and is offered every day for grades pre-K-6 while health and nutrition are integrated into multiple curricula. In grades 7, 8, and 10, we have a rotation schedule PE for roughly 4 weeks and then teach health for two weeks and rotate throughout the year. We also provide Developmental Adaptive Physical Education (DAPE) services throughout the week to those in need.

At RRC, we believe foreign language is important, but there has been consistent turnover in staff the last six years. When our German/English teacher retired 6 years ago, we contracted some Spanish time with neighboring districts five out of the six years and tried online Spanish for one year. Next year we will have another Spanish teacher in front of the classroom.

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

Red Rock Central doesn't have a lot of racial diversity, but the socioeconomic statuses of our student population vary greatly. The one size fits all model does not work for our school district. We use many benchmark, formative, and summative assessments to determine our students' knowledge, skills, or deficits as well as our teachers' impact and effectiveness. All students in grades K-2, but also 4th grade in science, take the NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association) test at the beginning, middle, and end of the year. Standardized Test for the Assessment of Reading (STAR) data is collected on a monthly basis for grades 2-4. Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) is administered at the beginning, middle, and end of the year for the elementary as well. Growth benchmarking is completed at the end of each quarter with students who are in need of progress monitoring. With these assessments along with data from STAR, local checklists and teacher observations, struggling and at-risk students are identified and referred for interventions. Students not responding successfully to the interventions are referred for special education services. Parents are kept informed of their child's progress.

In grades 3-11, we use the data collected from the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) III, the Optional Local Purpose Assessment (OLPA) while it was available, and the American College Testing (ACT) to determine success, interventions needed, and which standards need re-teaching. Throughout the year, we track comparisons between our free and reduced lunch pupils (FRP) and non-FRP using different assessments to determine the effectiveness of our interventions.

RRC believes the foundation of all curricula is reading. We identify student needs and interventions across content areas, with some exception to math, dependent on students' benchmark tests and assessment results in reading. We have two reading and intervention specialists in our district. RRC provides elementary students a reading intervention program taught by one of these specialists. This program utilizes research-based intervention strategies supported by the "Reading Wonders" curriculum for students who are struggling to understand reading concepts. The Reading Wonders curriculum is based on Common Core State Standards and is used in grades 3-6. Delivery of instruction includes: guided reading, read aloud, shared reading, leveled reading and independent reading.

Each K-2 classroom has purchased Superkids, a comprehensive core reading and language arts program, to teach reading. Each level of the program provides the systematic phonics-based reading instruction for fiction and nonfiction reading. Reading is taught with spelling and writing so children can express their own ideas in stories, reports, letters, and more. Included in this program are components for guided reading, read aloud, shared reading and independent reading. Students in grades K-2 are placed in a small group intervention according to the PRESS (Path to Reading Excellence in School Sites). This intervention focuses on the 5 areas of reading starting with Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, and Comprehension. All K-3 students receive classroom reading instruction for a minimum of 90 minutes each day.

The school has a library with two librarians, each elementary classroom has their own reading center, English classrooms have a variety of books as options, and students in grades K-11 are part of Accelerated Reader (AR), which is a computerized program that tests basic reading comprehension. Students choose their books, read independently and take an independent comprehension test on the computer.

Proficiency, growth and trend data is analyzed in all tested content areas and is used to set specific learning targets for each child and for each grade level of students. Pre-K data is also available, accessed and utilized. In the last couple of years, we also use a program called IXL up to 6th grade for reading and math. IXL provides practice problems, diagnostics, re-teaching of a lesson, and feedback tailored to each individual student. Also, for many years, we have added remedial reading classes and reading intervention classes to the schedule for students in grades 7-11. One target grade and a specific set of students are chosen annually dependent on MCA III results. The grade and students who had the lowest proficiency scores, are chosen to receive the additional reading class. We have found this is a great motivator for all students and also beneficial for those students who need the extra interventions.

Generally speaking, RRC's core teaching approach is direct instruction specifically related to the standards. However, the previous paragraphs should help identify how RRC uses assessments and benchmarks to tailor the curriculum, lesson, intervention, and needs for each individual student. Each teacher determines which instructional approach is best for their students, but uses a vast amount of data to come to that decision.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

---

### 1. School Climate/Culture:

Our philosophy at Red Rock Central School District is centered on a concern for the individual student and their growth, academically and socially. Red Rock Central School District prides itself on positive student behavior and achievement. Substitute teachers enjoy working at our school and frequently comment on how we have “such nice and respectful kids.” We have a caring staff who are part of weekly Q-comp cluster groups and child study teams that meet monthly to discuss student concerns and successes. There is constant communication between staff members regarding students, which helps us be proactive in preventing behavior concerns or escalation of student concerns.

Positive behavior reinforcement programs are implemented into our district. Some of the programs have been: “Caught Being Good,” recognizing positive behavior in students on a daily basis, “Falcon Pride Awards,” for students going above and beyond, and “Future Leaders in America,” helping build skills to be a leader. We also promote reading through Accelerated Reading and have rewards quarterly for achieving personal goals. The school counselor is busy daily meeting with K-12 students individually, in groups, or in classes to help meet their mental, emotional, social, personal, and financial needs. Becoming a one building district allowed our upper classmen to be teacher-assistants. These students take active roles in the classroom to assist the teacher and work with younger students for reading or listening to students read one-on-one, leading a small group activity, rewarding positive behavior by playing games or sports with them, and helping with assignments.

In addition, we have two Student Council groups that represent our K-12 student body. They fundraise, bring in presenters for lyceums based on desired or needed discussions, and help promote a positive climate in our school by establishing fun activities during Homecoming and Snow Weeks, dress up days, and more. Pep fests are other ways we encourage and promote school pride and support for one another. We also have an active Honor Society promoting leadership, character, integrity, and service.

As a school, we celebrate and reward our successes. The senior class can earn early dismissal a few days before graduation with good behavior. RRC students and staff could have ½ days instead of full days the last day of school and the last day before winter break dependent on meeting district goals on the state assessments. In addition, students can earn gift cards for perfect attendance. RRC also celebrates each staff appreciation week throughout the year. Local community clubs also contribute in celebrating appreciation weeks. Lastly, we have monthly staff meetings, or more, to share any happenings and successes.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

Red Rock Central's two most effective ways of communicating with our stakeholders are through JMC, a student record management software, and our website [www.redrockcentral.org](http://www.redrockcentral.org). JMC allows communication between the school and families regarding grades, progress reports, report cards, attendance, lesson plans, discipline, school and weather related announcements, and more. Parents have the ability to set parameters on when and how they get notified regarding students' grades for each individual class. For example, a parent can choose to be notified if their child's grade gets below a 70% in math, but set a higher percentage such as 90% in art. The office staff, counselor, and administration utilize JMC frequently to reach individual parents or send a notification in mass for an update on the school, early closing, changes in plans for an extra-curricular activity, etc.

We also have daily announcements that are delivered and read to every classroom. Those announcements as well as upcoming events, awards, informational sessions and trainings, Open House, and Parent-Teacher Conference information is posted on our website for parents and community members to see as well.

We have a District Advisory Committee that meets annually to discuss previous district goals and results and helps identify new goals. This advisory committee consists of at least one board member,

administration, teachers, at least one paraprofessional, parents, community members, and our student body president. Another advisory committee we have is our FFA Advisory Committee that meets quarterly. As a rural community, we want to ensure our students have all the opportunities for knowledge and exposure related to careers in agriculture. This committee consists of the FFA advisor, chapter president, principal, one board member, and multiple active agricultural community members.

At Red Rock Central, we strive to have open communication with families and encourage them to communicate with us. Many emails, phone calls, and conferences occur throughout each school year. A wonderful public relation piece we added in the last few years is having each secondary staff member send a minimum of nine emails per year praising students to their parents. Our local newspaper promotes our school and events to the best of their ability as well, which also helps with the overall communication. In addition, we offer Independent Journalism as an elective class for our upper classmen. These students write weekly approved articles related to the school's happenings, which end up in the newspaper as well.

During the year, we have banquets and celebrations for extra-curricular activities. In addition, RRC has an Honor Banquet for our seniors at the end of the year, which recognizes all of their achievements that covers everything they've been a part of in high school. That includes the extra-curricular activities again, but also co-curricular activities, cumulative academic success, college credits received, and scholarships received.

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

Red Rock Central allots 2% of the budget for professional development for all staff. The administration is very supportive of staff furthering their education, encourage staff to search for worthwhile workshops, and provide staff with any information regarding potential training. Although we have a staff development committee that officially approves the funds needed for any professional development, Red Rock Central staff are financially conservative, but educationally assertive. More specifically, administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals recognize the importance of staff development to their individual growth as well as the students' growth, but staff search for ways to receive the appropriate training for minimal cost. Occasionally, we send staff out of state for training, but most of the trainings received occur within a few hours of Lamberton, which eliminates some of the bigger transportation and lodging costs. Each request must indicate how it supports student or staff achievement or growth.

All teachers, which include part-time teachers, are part of Q-Comp. There is a Q-Comp Council consisting of administration and teachers who set annual goals. Teachers are strategically grouped into cluster groups and have weekly meetings. They set an annual personal goal and an annual goal related to the district goal set by the Council. Each cluster has multiple individuals that take on the leader role during the year. Some groups spend time on a book study that promotes educational development, while other leaders will present to the group on effective instructional strategies, research, educational trends developing, articles, or other worthwhile information.

The secondary principal attends winter and summer Minnesota Association of Secondary Principals (MASSP) conferences, is part of the southwest Minnesota Principal's Collaborative, and attends multiple annual Southwest MASSP meetings, which includes an annual law seminar. The principal collaborative consists of a group of principals from southwest MN, is led by an education specialist, and is supplemented by an experienced individual from the Regional Center of Excellence. The principals meet every six weeks during the school year and have played an active role in developing a collaborative calendar that allows teachers from all the districts in the collaborative to meet to discuss their content area and standards, share lessons and strategies, and network. In addition, principals and their data team are invited to a Data Mine workshop in August. The Southwest West Central Service Cooperative provides each district's data team with a personalized flash drive with lots of data related to the MCA III's. Each data team uses that day to start to disaggregate and analyze the data to identify student achievement and gaps, growth, trends, etc.

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

The administration at Red Rock Central consists of one superintendent, who is also the K-4 principal, and a 5-12 principal. The philosophy from administration is to make our children successful in life by educating,

informing, and preparing them for the next stage in their life as well-rounded citizens with strong moral characters. Our focus is on preparing every student individually for their futures because as we know, not all students are 4-year college-bound. In fact, college or post-secondary education, in general, is not for everyone. A quote that the secondary principal lives by is "Treat a man as he is and he will remain as he is. Treat a man as he can be and he will become what he should be" by Ralph Waldo Emerson. This mentality of high expectations is applied to the students and staff. The leadership philosophy also emphasizes students needing to be taught in ways that they can relate to, are familiar with, and enjoy. Technology plays a large part in that.

The approach from the administration is to support staff, but not micro-manage. That mentality also applies from the Board to the administration. The phrase that has been shared many of times in the last seven years is that teachers are the masters of their own domain, meaning they are in charge of their classroom. Once trust is established with the teachers, they accept administration is not there to evaluate or criticize per se, but rather support and challenge them.

Our policies, curriculum, programs, field trips, resources, and commitment to student and staff relationships all revolve around student achievement in one form or another. One example of that includes the district having to recently revisit our cell phone policy to consistently and effectively enforce it to eliminate distractions and promote a productive learning environment. Although there is a major emphasis on the state assessments, partly due to the accountability component, stakeholders at RRC recognize student achievement goes well beyond those assessments. All the assessments and benchmark tests described in other sections should give a clear indication of how much value is placed on student and staff achievement.

RRC's lowest MCA III scores have been in 8th grade science. In the last several years, K-12 staff and administration have invested many resources to improve those scores. In addition to receiving ideas from other districts, specialists from the Minnesota Department of Education met with our science department. We mapped the science curriculum, identified power standards, and found creative ways to include science across content areas and grades, like subscribing to science magazines to practice reading informational text in English classes. Science has been targeted focal point in deciding on field trips, lyceums, presenters, in recent years as well.

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

---

Red Rock Central is known for academic success and puts heavy emphasis on assessment preparation and results. It would appear based on the district goals and results, all the curriculum mapping, tweaking of lessons, committee meetings, and beyond that our one practice most instrumental to the school's success is assessment related. However, that is not the case. Red Rock Central is successful academically and graduate kind-hearted and respectful people because of the interpersonal relationships students have with staff and community members. Although RRC promotes socio-emotional development through character development programs, lyceums, and even some curriculum, it is not a practice that is written out with specific goals and objectives. Rather, it is simply a school that has many people who care about the students and in turn, the students recognizing and appreciating that and not wanting to let the staff down. It's the relationships that make our public school feel like an intimate private school. Staff go out of their way to make sure a student is doing alright and provide any personal, emotional, or financial support the student might need. We have staff that live and breathe Red Rock Central and some don't ever seem to leave the building. We have staff members who attend every sporting event, others who volunteer their time multiple evenings per week, stay later because a student wants to chat about life or homework, and many who sacrifice their evenings and weekends to prepare lessons and grade assignments. We cheer on our students, we share their joys, but we also share their heartaches. As mentioned in a previous response, when new students arrive, they quickly recognize how much our staff cares. Nobody gets paid extra for caring, but that is just what we do. We currently have three retired staff members who decided to come back right away because they are that invested in our students and school; one of them is our superintendent.

These interpersonal relationships are not just with the staff. It starts with the parents and families and extends to community members. Our local businesses, churches, and organizations all play vital parts by giving guidance, making food for special events, showing support, donating money, volunteering their time, and modeling wonderful citizenship.