

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):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 2 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	10	9	19
1	14	13	27
2	8	13	21
3	5	13	18
4	14	20	34
5	13	7	20
6	11	8	19
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	75	83	158

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 5 % Black or African American
 - 4 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 88 % 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: 8%

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

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	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	2
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	13
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	158
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.08
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	8

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 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: 77 %
Total number students who qualify: 122

8. Students receiving special education services: 13 %
21 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>1</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>2</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>6</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>10</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>2</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: 6
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.	8
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	4
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	3
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

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 20:1

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

Required Information	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	96%	97%	96%	97%	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.

Through a partnership, all Richland R-1 students will become effective communicators, responsible citizens and self-motivated learners.

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

Richland R-1 Elementary is located in Stoddard County in a very rural farming area of Southeast Missouri. In 1959, the small Missouri towns and schools of Essex and Grayridge decided to consolidate into one larger school district. In 1962, the two schools officially joined and the school board decided on an outside the box solution to determine the name and mascot for the newly consolidated school. This solution called for the students to select the name and mascot. The students selected Richland for the school's name and Rebels as the mascot. This is an interesting fact because neither Essex nor Grayridge was named Richland or had rebels as a mascot.

Richland School is the largest single employer in the rural community of proud blue collar families. Fertile farm land for producing foods and textiles is the main source of income for many patrons as well as a tax base for the school district. During harvest season, Richland is a buzzing rural area with crop dusting planes flying low to the ground, large tractors in fields full of corn, soybeans, rice, and beautiful white cotton. Trucks and trains importing and exporting crops to the grain bins and cotton gins is the final step before harvest concludes and the many farmers start planning for the next planting season.

Upon entering the school building, a whirlwind of positive energy exists; a welcoming staff member opens the door, students nod in greeting and colorful fliers lining the ceiling and walls invite students to participate in a variety of activities. These activities include reading activities such as "read and feed" where special tents and campfires are arranged for students to relax and read and popcorn is served. Also, robotics and maker space areas are utilized to allow for deeper level critical thinking along with Hour of Code activities.

Richland Elementary uses a 3 Tier RTI (Response to Intervention) approach toward student learning. Tier 1 includes the curriculum and instruction that all students receive. For Kindergarten through 6th grade English Language Arts, this includes utilizing Reading Wonders, MyON, Spelling City, Reading Eggs, and Study Island to build reading and comprehension skills. For Tier 1 mathematics instruction, enVision 2.0 math and IXL are utilized. Tier 2 services are provided for students who need more direct and explicit instruction. Students are identified by review of AIMSweb assessments, baseline and summative test results, and teacher recommendations. Services are provided daily during 30 minute small group sessions which are focused on the specific needs of each student. Tier 3 services are provided for students who are not making significant progress through Tier 1 and Tier 2 instruction. Qualifying students score in the lowest 5% of their grade level on AIMSweb and weekly assessments and receive an additional 60 minutes of intervention daily, as well as after school tutoring twice a week. If a child does not show improvement after 6 weeks of Tier 3 intervention, that child is referred to a Student Intervention Team (SIT). The team reviews student data to determine if further intervention or referral for intellectual/academic evaluation are needed.

All core teachers utilize common planning times to meet with each other and the principal to discuss student achievement data, student's behaviors, and instructional planning.

Richland Elementary students are competitive with much larger schools. Just this year, Richland won numerous awards at a Regional Scholastic Meet and a Regional History Day event along with the sweepstakes for winning the most of any school. Richland Elementary has been the top academic achieving school in all of Southeast Missouri for the past six consecutive years, as well as one of the top in the state. It has also been one of the few elementary schools to achieve 100% on the state report card known as the APR (Annual Performance Report) for many consecutive years. Richland Elementary has also taken the lead with technology by being the first school in Southeast Missouri to be One to One, K through 6th grade and the first school in the Midwest to purchase 3D technology.

There are 158 students enrolled but the school serves as the hub and heart of the entire community. Richland Elementary hosts a number of family-centered events throughout the school year, including holiday family "adoptions," free pictures with Santa, lunch with grandparents and Veterans, and a Back-to School Cookout. Each Friday, qualifying students are given a food backpack to take home as a supplemental food source. Students, families and community members rally around events held at school such as; athletic

events, music programs, plays, and non-school related activities such as elections and benefit auctions. The mission statement embodies this relationship between the school and the community: “Through a partnership, all Richland R-I students will become effective communicators, responsible citizens, and self-motivated learners.”

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Richland Elementary has a specific, district led and created curricular approach. Reading and English/Language Arts are taught daily through literacy centers using district created student learner outcomes to guide for individual instruction and learning. Learning centers allows students the opportunity to learn and practice reading skills by utilizing a variety of student engaging programs and strategies. Programs utilized in our building to ensure student success and growth include McGraw-Hill Wonders, MyOn, Study Island, Reading Eggs, and Accelerated Reader. In 2014-2015, we implemented the Wonders Reading program in grades K-6 building wide. This program was chosen when a lack of reading foundational skills in our students was noticed. Since its implementation in 2014-2015 our students have become fluent readers and have had an increase in overall reading scores when leaving their grade level.

Students at all grade levels (K-6) use the 6 +1 writing model. This approach allows teachers to provide consistent, evidence based feedback on student writings and emphasize writing skills across the curriculum. This writing model provides students with the chance to craft narrative, informational and opinion texts on topics of their choice. Student choice (in reading and writing as long as age appropriate) is a key component to our success. This was implemented in 2012 after finding a need for a consistent program to get students where they needed to be before the statewide assessment. With a 77% free and reduced lunch rate, we have found a significant comprehension issue in a large number of our students. Research has shown that writing instruction helps increase fluency and comprehension. This focused instruction is implemented for all students. Intervention and enhancement is provided for students as needed.

Mathematics is taught daily through math centers using district created student learner outcomes to guide for individual instruction and learning. Learning centers allows students the opportunity to learn and practice mathematical skills by utilizing a variety of student engaging programs and strategies. These skills include fractions, real world word problems, algebraic equations, geometric shapes, multiplication, division and domain specific vocabulary. In 2015-2016, Richland Elementary School adopted the Pearson enVisionmath 2.0 math program. Since that time, we have noticed an increase across each grade level in number sense and understanding the value of digits that make a number. Our first year of implementation along with teacher researched supplemental materials, we had increases on the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth grade mathematics part of or MAP assessment. Some of the supplemental math programs that have positively influenced Richland's success include Study Island, Accelerated math, IXL, and Math Seeds. Richland's staff utilize their common planning and collaboration time to constantly search for any new math strategies that will help our students.

Using the Missouri Learning Standards as a guide, our district has taken the approach to have 75% of our literacy block be informational text. This lends itself beautifully to covering science standards in ELA and vice versa. Our teachers have a variety of resources available for science instruction including MyON, Studies Weekly, and ReadWorks. These resources are designed to promote literacy in the area of science with the inclusion of differentiated books and reading passages, including fiction and non-fiction paired texts over the same topic. Teachers assign reading tasks based on topic and specific student reading Lexile Levels. Objectives to cover include domain specific vocabulary, solving real world problems, becoming very familiar with the steps of the scientific method, and the ability to productively research and problem solve. Many of these objectives are accomplished with student engagement in a recycling program, volunteering at a local food pantry and greenhouse projects.

Teachers are encouraged to utilize a personalized learning approach for social studies instruction. This experience revolves around student learning preferences and specific interests. Students are given tasks based on individual needs and skills. These tasks have included; using the iMovie app on classroom iPads to create videos, Google Slides presentations, and creating and acting out performances and plays. MyON, Readworks, and Studies Weekly are also used to promote literacy in the area of social studies.

Objectives to cover include domain specific vocabulary, solving real world problems, becoming very

familiar with branches and duties of government, and the ability to productively research and analyze historical events. Many of these objectives are accomplished with student engagement with local legislators, a highly competitive history day competition, as well as educational field trips to museums and local historical sites. Ultimately the goal is to develop student appreciation for historical events and governance so students will become active participants in society.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The fine arts are essential in our student's developmental process. In the elementary art classroom there are many opportunities that support student growth. Encouraging creative thinking, self-expression, building language skills, as well as social skills. Fine arts also support critical thinking skills that students use in math, language arts, and science. Educators encourage students to express themselves through their artwork. Art history is a fundamental element in the art classroom. We critique and research a piece of artwork using our critical thinking skills. We discuss what events were happening during the time of the creation of the piece. This gives the students a different perspective of our history, through the eyes of someone who was living during that particular era of study. Students also work on their fine motor skills by using control when painting, gluing, and cutting with scissors. The art class gives students a sense of accomplishment when they see a final product they have created through the skills they were taught.

Music is a universal language. The art form is found in every culture, helps bring communities together, improves self-esteem, and provides joy and inspiration. In the elementary music classroom, educators have the unique opportunity of instilling a love for language, movement, and creativity at a very young age. Learning lyrics by heart develops reasoning and can imprint information that a child will remember long after he has forgotten a math fact or the plot of a story. Performing a song takes memorization skills that you do use in recalling math facts, story plots, and which president was in office during a certain era. Playing an instrument develops important coordination of the hands and eyes and increases body-kinesthetic awareness. Collaborating with others, thinking creatively, fine-tuning auditory skills, and recognizing patterns are other capabilities that are taught and rehearsed in the music classroom

Physical Education in the elementary setting is the prime time to instill in children the extreme importance of being active. At this young age, they learn that being active helps develop good cardiovascular fitness, which makes their heart strong. Being active also builds muscles and makes them healthy. Activity also helps the function of the brain, increasing focus and learning. Children learn lifelong skills such as fine motor, gross motor, locomotor, and manipulative skills. Developmental skills such as balance, coordination, rhythm, and spatial awareness are vital skills used in all aspects of life. Running, playing and learning about sports activities teaches our young people how to have good character, good morals, and good sportsmanship. Learning how to treat people and getting along with others are important life lessons such as teamwork.

Technology is an everyday tool at Richland Elementary. Students have the advantage of having a computer class as a part of special area classes that provides engaging and coding activities for students. We see our students with increased responsibility, independence and a sense of confidence and accomplishment, to name a few of the advantages of technology. Students work independently, and also experience collaboration when they work together on projects. Computer time promotes the use of higher order thinking skills and is a natural form of discovery through trial and error. Technology increases children's skills in the classroom; as classroom teachers introduce new concepts into the classroom (Phonics, Language, Math, Social Studies, Science, etc.) the students have the opportunity to have these new concepts enhanced in the computer lab.

The library media program at Richland Elementary not only supports the acquisition of essential skills and knowledge of the library, but also supports the regular classroom curriculum. Standards and curriculum calendars for each grade level and subject area are used during the planning process so that library is supporting and enhancing the learning that is taking place in the general classroom. The librarian maintains a balanced collection of media sources which represent a wide range of subjects, levels of difficulty, and format. The library maintains a healthy budget that is able to keep the collection current, and provides

several programs and databases that are heavily used by the staff and students. The library program provides students with learning experiences that encourage them to become proficient users of information and technology. This is done through inquiry based learning. The library media program provides opportunities for students to experience S.T.E.M. activities and has begun building up its collection of resources to support S.T.E.M. through Makerspace activities.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

At Richland Elementary School, we are constantly looking for new, effective methods that will motivate and challenge our students to meet their maximum potential. Teachers vary their teaching strategies to reach all students. This is accomplished in many ways including a variety of scaffolding strategies, small group activities, student-led instruction, co-teaching techniques, hands-on activities, benchmark testing throughout the school year, and data-driven instruction. In preparing our students for the demands of the twenty-first century, teachers at Richland integrate the use of technology in instruction through the following methods: One to One, Study Island, Google classroom, kahoot, blogging, GoogleDocs, and several other resources.

For students with Individual Education Plans (IEP's) or 504's, the special education team provides individualized modifications in written form to each teacher in order to ensure the appropriate modifications are being met within the regular education classroom.

In meeting the diverse needs of students, Richland also offers instruction beyond the typical elementary school curriculum by allowing teachers to design the interior of their room in an out of the box fashion if so desired. Teacher freedom allows for instructional centers to be more productive as well as each classroom to have a more relaxed atmosphere where students thrive. Teachers use flexible seating and purposeful classroom design to encourage student mobility and maximize engagement.

On any given school day, you can expect to find teachers staying after school for tutoring. This is made possible by our district maintaining what had been a popular statewide compensation program for teachers who provided instruction outside of contracted hours even after the state stopped funding it.

At Richland Elementary School, we believe it is extremely important to be available to parents and guardians in our district. We utilize our school web site, Facebook, phone calls, emails, and scheduled meetings if needed to maintain open communication with parents. The school website offers lesson plans, assignments and due dates, school events, school policies, and easy-to-access contact information for anyone in the district.

Richland Elementary School teachers continually progress monitor students and track data to monitor student achievement and growth. Analyzing data is an ongoing process starting at the beginning of the year. The two primary sources of data utilized are previous years' scores and benchmark tests given to the current students by utilizing Wonders based assessments as well as STAR testing. This data is used to determine strong points in the curriculum. The curriculum requiring improvement is modified to increase mastery for the upcoming year.

Benchmark testing otherwise known as progress monitoring is a tool for beginning-of-the-year alignment. Data from the progress monitoring tests are broken down by strands which allow teachers more clarity on student's weak areas. By using initial scores, teachers can create a more focused curriculum and set goals as to where they want their students to be by the end of the year. The benchmark or progress monitor test is given multiple times throughout the year so teachers know which students need remediation, which students are on track and which students need enhancement. Teachers also use this data to help structure review sessions before student assessments.

Richland Elementary School has a unique approach to increasing student achievement. Goal setting is achieved by sharing previous assessment scores with students and students strive to achieve higher scores. Staff and students are not only given incentives after testing but throughout the year to help motivation. These goals, incentives along with forward thinking staff members that focus on student engagement, inspire students to perform to the best of their abilities. Once assessment information is received from the

State, Richland relays this information to parents and the community through school newsletters, local media, banners in the gym as well as an assessment assembly to honor achievement

As important as it is for teachers to share our success with other teachers and schools, it is just as important to share our success with parents and patrons. The staff communicates our curriculum goals and our test data with parents through email, phone calls, and personal contacts. The counselor contacts parents and encourages dialogue about student achievement. The principal sends out newsletters which covers activities and celebrates our students' performance.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

A positive climate and culture can only occur when all staff members have ownership. Teachers at Richland Elementary are the voice of the school. Teachers decide on programs to be implemented, school calendar, technology needed, as well as other aspects for the path forward. Stipends are created to help pay for the immense amount of time put in after regular hours by teachers, as well as ensuring Richland's teacher salary scale is comparable and competitive with all area schools. Administration ensures teachers are given the credit that is deserved in all media outlets for the numerous positive accomplishments. Other gestures of appreciation such as monthly donuts, special meals, jean days, and nice gifts during teacher appreciation week also help to ensure teachers feel appreciated. Lastly, during times of need or crisis, it is amazing to see how our teachers and administration come together as a family to meet the need(s) of the teacher in need. Finally, when hiring new staff members, other staff members are involved in the process to ensure new staff are outside the box and forward thinking as well as getting a feel for how new staff will fit in with existing staff.

A large part of a successful school is keeping students engaged and motivated not only academically, but also providing them with supports socially and emotionally. A student's Maslow Hierarchy of needs must be met for a student to truly be successful now and later in life. This has evolved at Richland Elementary School over the past five years. A strong program continues to evaluate where it is at and make necessary changes as the school continues to address its diverse and changing needs. As a staff, we can provide academic, social and emotional supports to our student body in several ways.

Students are also supported emotionally. We have had our entire student body take a Bullying Self-Assessment last year to collect our school's climate needs. The Principal shares facts about bullying to make students aware of what bullying is and how it can be addressed at Richland Elementary School. The Principal has also increased self-esteem by having multiple TV's mounted throughout the school displaying pictures of students being active in a positive ways during the school day as well creating a student of the month program with the main focus being positive behavior. Finally the school hallways have been brightened with stripes of school colors in each hallway, framed pictures of active students are changed out frequently by the building Principal and multiple colorful positive posters hanging from the ceiling through the district.

Richland administration has set a goal of over ninety-five percent of student body being active in a school activity to help meet social needs as well as increasing the climate of the school. Numerous opportunities either existed or have been created, such as robotics, coding, athletics, cheerleading, video production, History Day, Father-Daughter dance and family fun nights to ensure the participation goal is met. Richland has many lower socio-economic students with transportation issues so many students stay after school and food is provided to ensure their nutritional needs are met.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Richland Elementary School is located in a rural community with one convenience store, one cotton gin and one bank which makes the school a cornerstone of the community. The elementary school is frequently a venue for both school-related and community events. Richland Elementary School utilizes various mediums to communicate with and involve parents and community. Through technology-based media, weekly school newsletters, and various opportunities for parents to meet with teachers, Richland Elementary School has developed a strong rapport with the community.

The Student Information System (SIS) allows parents and students to view grades, missing assignments, disciplinary notes from teachers, and attendance in real time through the Parent Portal. The elementary school teachers maintain their own websites, which provide additional information about their courses, events, assignments and resources that a student may need. Since Richland is One to One with Chromebooks, it is easy with Google classroom and DOJO for teachers, parents and students to remain in

constant contact.

Richland Elementary has many activities which have a positive impact on family and community engagement. Activities such as, Welcome Back Bash is organized for families, teachers, staff, and community members. During this celebration food and beverages are served and families meet and greet the child's new teacher. Book Fair family night, Girls Scouts, Boy Scouts, family fun night, pictures with Santa and multiple other opportunities to help families feel a part of Richland Elementary occur throughout the year.

Richland Elementary School also participates in several community service activities. These include canned food drives, construction of blankets for local charities, collection of warm clothing, adoption of families during the holidays, as well as raising money for unexpected crisis that may arise during the school year.

Richland School hosts a Veterans Day Assembly each year, which includes a lunch, family photo and program to honor those who have served our country. The entire school district, including the band, choir, and student council are involved in the ceremony. Veterans with children or grandchildren in the elementary are invited to stay and enjoy lunch with their children or grandchildren.

Care For Kids led to the creation of the Backpack Program at Richland School. Richland has many families who are struggling due to unemployment, medical bills, low paying jobs and many other circumstances that place the family into situational poverty. Food and any other items that may help are sent home with the children on Friday's to help families eat and survive.

3. Professional Development:

The goal of the Professional Development program is to provide professional development opportunities which will directly enhance teachers' abilities to improve student achievement. The Richland Professional Development Plan focuses on the following areas: on-going assessment and revision of curriculum, developing instructional strategies, providing training in best practices, and providing a mentoring/mentee program for first and second year teachers. The district utilizes data from the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP), along with individual subject area benchmarks and staff surveys. This helps the district identify strengths and weakness of individual students in areas of academic achievement. The teachers then use this data to select areas that are needed for professional development. Through professional development, the district's teachers are learning to develop better progress monitoring methods to create units of instruction. Continual academic success is achieved through the cooperative efforts of teachers vertically aligning the curriculum to meet state grade-level standards.

Our specific professional development goals for this year include, provide training and support to increase student achievement; provide varied instructional strategies within the classroom in order to meet the needs of different learning styles; monitor student progress, provide prompt intervention, and initiate cross-curricular coordination; provide training and support to provide a positive school environment; increase parent involvement through activities and communication; provide staff with technology training during professional development days; and provide staff with time for technology collaboration during professional development days.

Richland Elementary continues to provide its teachers with funds for professional development and a budget that is distributed through the professional development committee. The professional development committee is comprised of elected colleagues that represent all teachers in the district K-12. The committee monitors and assesses each professional development request to make sure it pertains to the areas that need strengthening for student academic achievement. Through a process, each individual teacher is allowed to request and participate in professional development activities throughout the year. Teachers summarize the information obtained in these professional development activities and share with their colleagues. Finally, all tested area teachers are mandated to visit one of the schools that out-performed Richland the previous year. The goal is to observe ideas or strategies that helped these schools to achieve their success. Our

teachers bring those ideas or strategies back and present to Richland staff so we continue on our path of excellence.

4. School Leadership:

Many individuals work in close collaboration to provide leadership at Richland Elementary School. Administrative personnel include the building principal, the guidance counselor, the district-level special services director, and the curriculum and testing coordinator. The twelve certified teachers and three paraprofessionals daily teach, gather performance data, and provide valuable input to the administration. The patrons of the school are encouraged to communicate concerns, issues, and recommendations to the school.

The staff participates in weekly collaboration meetings. During these meetings, discussions pertaining to curriculum, student achievement, current practices, common topics of interest, and problem solving occur. Dialogue between the various stakeholders allows for thorough vetting of solutions and a sense of common vision. The expertise of faculty members is used to provide training to other teachers in the building. In this manner, leadership is being continuously developed. Topics such as analyzing student testing data and creating formative student assessments to guide instruction have been presented.

The principal meets weekly with the district superintendent and curriculum director. These meetings allow for regular exchange of information on educational needs, building, and district initiatives. During these meetings, budgetary issues and available resources are discussed. The guiding principle in the discussions is to do whatever is best for students and maximize student achievement. The district maintains a focus on gathering and utilizing relevant data to support those decisions. School climate and safety are continuously evaluated.

With the evolution of Every Student Succeeds Act, it is imperative that high expectations are set and a direct path on how to achieve and master these expectations needs to be clear and understood. The Principal at Richland Elementary sets high standards that are attainable and commands the path to attain. Once the expectations are outlined and understood, one must have accountability. Making someone accountable does not mean that they are being watched or targeted. It means that the administration checks the progress and the process of reaching the desired goals. Most importantly is Richland's Principal ensuring all staff members have everything that is needed to accomplish the set goals.

The school culture at Richland encourages all members to develop leadership skills to help each student maximize their achievement. A nurturing environment and willingness to help every student is evident in the decisions and actions taken each day. This occurs by the creation of a safe and positive working environment where the leader has a vested drive in the well-being and performance of the staff and students.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

At Richland Elementary School, we have created a climate of high performance expectations for students, accountability for teachers, and have nurtured a competitive environment among the grade levels. Students and staff strive to score higher than the previous class, as well as be the highest in Southeast Missouri.

Teachers consistently are progress monitoring students to gauge how they are progressing toward mastering Grade Level Expectations.

Of the 91 students tested in Richland Elementary School, 84% of these students scored advanced or proficient on at least one test. Also 68% of the students scored proficient or advanced on multiple tests during the 2017 assessment period.

At Richland we track students instead of comparing different groups of students. Thus means we track the students from third grade on to see how this specific group of students is improving instead of comparing this year's third grade class to next year's third grade class. In mathematics and communication arts, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced has increased significantly since 2011. In communication arts, students scoring proficient or advanced has increased annually, on average 5 to 10% from grade level to grade level which shows great scaffolding by Richland's staff. In mathematics, students scoring proficient or advanced since 2011 have increased virtually at same pace as the increases in Communication arts during the same time period and across grade levels. These increases in assessment scores demonstrates great collaboration and scaffolding among staff. These increases in Closing the Achievement Gap are mainly due to one of the following three reasons:

First, hiring new staff members that are forward thinking, outside the box educators that do not blame kids, but hold themselves accountable. In addition, rewarding teachers and students for their achievement, whether it be monetarily or by other means.

Second, students with disabilities and low income subgroups both have shown improvement and closed the Achievement Gap. The IEP subgroup showed the most significant increase in closing achievement gap. Since 2011 Richland has hired new staff that have worked diligently to address this achievement gap and have made great gains. In communication arts and mathematics, students achieving proficient or advanced have increased 50%, rising from 40% of the students scoring proficient in 2011 to 90% scoring proficient in 2017.

Third, from 2011 to 2017, Richland has exceeded the Annual Performance Report (APR) which is Missouri's report card for schools). The 2018 results place Richland at top of the state with 100% proficiency. The APR grades school on student attendance percentages as well as State and Federal Government set standards to meet on all assessments.

There may be other factors contributing to Richland Elementary success, but without a doubt we know the greatest single factor is the classroom teacher. Without forward thinking, outside the box educators that are empowered, success at Richland or any school is not possible.