

U.S. Department of Education
2018 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [] Title I [] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal Mrs. Cindy Erbes

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

Official School Name Richland Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 106 Broadway PO Box 139

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

Abercrombie ND 58001-0139
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Richland

Telephone (701) 553-8321

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Web site/URL http://www.richland.k12.nd.us/

E-mail cindy.erbes@k12.nd.us

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Tim Godfrey

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail tim.godfrey@k12.nd.us

District Name Richland #44 Tel. (701) 372-3713

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mrs. Lisa Amundson

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Part I – Eligibility Certification

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

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

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 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	13	7	20
K	9	12	21
1	12	11	23
2	12	6	18
3	9	11	20
4	9	10	19
5	9	8	17
6	11	10	21
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	84	75	159

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 1 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 92 % White
 - 6 % 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: 11%

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	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	12
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	17
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	157
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.11
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	11

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: 18%
 Total number students who qualify: 29

8. Students receiving special education services: 6 %
10 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>0</u> Autism | <u>4</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>1</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>1</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>3</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: 10
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.	11
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.	1

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 14:1

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

Required Information	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

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

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

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

Students will be taught the skills and gain the knowledge to experience success, positive self-worth, and to become responsible citizens in society.

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

Students will be taught the skills and gain the knowledge to experience success, positive self-worth, and to become a responsible citizen in society. This is the mission statement for the Richland #44 school district. The Richland Elementary vision is to create a safe, nurturing and healthy environment that ensures learning for every child and an opportunity for all children to become safe, responsible, respectful, individuals who strive to achieve their best. Our philosophy is that we believe all students should have an equal opportunity for an education, regardless of race, creed, color, social status, or religion. We firmly believe that education must be considered a process of growth in which the individual is motivated by the structured environment of the whole community.

It is the duty of the school and community to help each and every boy and girl develop their potentials to the highest degree possible. Each student should gain, in addition to fundamental skills, the development of self-discipline, self-worth, respect for authority, and acceptance of responsibility for his or her own actions.

It is our belief that all students have a place in society and we will endeavor to help all students attain success. While each student is individually different, we will strive to motivate and counsel him/her to become responsible citizens in today's society.

Everyone at Richland Elementary has a role. Students will: complete tasks on time, work independently, accept and fulfill reasonable responsibilities, be courteous, be cooperative, develop a healthy school and community spirit and show respect. Teachers will: strive to obtain the sincere goodwill of parents and students, have a sincere and empathic interest in children, be courteous and considerate of others, be efficient and on task, display professionalism and integrity, support school policy, display discipline that is effective and positive in nature, be supportive of other staff and school personnel and teaches students the academic and social skills needed to succeed. In addition, Richland Elementary believes parents should: encourage their child to do his/her best, foster their child's independence, communicate positively with staff, promote academic and social responsibilities, and instill a positive attitude toward education.

Richland Elementary School is located in Abercrombie, ND, which is in Richland County. This is approximately 30 miles south of Fargo, ND, and 20 miles north of Wahpeton, ND. RES currently serves 155 students in grades PK-6. There are two separate buildings in our district, Richland Elementary (PK-6) and Richland High School (7-12) in Colfax, ND. We serve a rural community of farming, but also act as a bedroom community to many commuters.

History shows that early pioneers were very concerned about education for their children. Many of the earliest pioneers came to the Abercrombie area in 1870. By 1872, before the town of Abercrombie was established (1879) the first school district in the township had been organized. The Abercrombie School District was comprised of the Abercrombie Township and included what later became the towns of Abercrombie and Galchutt and the surrounding farm area. Some accounts tell that the first school was originally a one-story building and the second story was added later to accommodate upper grades and high school students. A new red brick building was finished and occupied in 1904 for \$10,000. In 1941 the students of the Abercrombie school moved into another new school structure. School bonds were issued to finance the project and WPA labor was employed. In 1967, Abercrombie, Christine, Colfax and Galchutt formed Richland School District #44. An addition to the elementary school was completed in 2000 and again in 2010 to update and meet all state and federal code regulations. In 2012, a four-room addition was completed at the elementary school to include a library, kindergarten, preschool, music room, and 6th-grade classroom.

RES employs 15 certified staff, which includes classroom teachers, a counselor, special education teacher, speech teacher, Title 1 teacher, and 1 administrator. RES also employs 8 classified staff to include a secretary, custodians, para-professionals, kitchen staff, and technology coordinator. Richland #44 School has maintained a staff at a stable rate providing consistency to students in the district. The elementary principals have been in the position for over 10 years, which has created stability in programs and curriculum updates. State test scores are consistently above the state average in the areas of reading and

math for students in Kindergarten through 12th grade.

While there are 4 distinct communities in Richland #44, the school district unites all of our families and students into one family, the Richland Colts.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1. Core Curriculum:

Richland Elementary School (RES) strives to align and enhance our core curriculum based on our North Dakota Academic Content Standards and our student performance outcomes. We use a continuous growth mindset in persistently assessing, reviewing and improving our core curriculum resources and instructional strategies. RES students consistently score high on state assessments in reading, language arts, math, and science. Richland Elementary School is passionate and dedicated to promoting lifelong readers and learners. Through professional learning communities (PLC) and other professional development opportunities, the teachers at Richland Elementary have mastered the art of choosing the resources that best meet the needs of the students while also meeting the state standards and benchmarks identified for each grade level. As the North Dakota Academic Content Standards moved to Common Core State Standards (CCSS), Richland Elementary adopted Sails Literacy in the 2006-07 school year. Like all our curriculum adoptions, a committee consisting of teachers along with the principal researched available resources narrowed the choices, invited presenters from various companies and made an informed selection based on alignment with state standards, engagement criteria, and overall rigor. To ensure its success, we proactively provided professional development in the form of purchased company training. In addition, per feedback from the teachers, the principal provided a PLC, one-graduate credit, independent study course voluntarily completed by all grade level teams over the summer prior to implementation. Our PLC mindset and commitment provides a viable, guaranteed curriculum at each grade level. We are having great success with Sails Literacy because we find it immerses students in the three critical strands of literacy learning: Oral Language, Written Language, and Visual Language. Sails Literacy meets the diverse needs of students through guided reading, independent reading, and shared reading. In addition, Sails Literacy, our teachers use a variety of resources and strategies to increase student achievement in ELA. In the primary grades, we incorporate guided reading and Daily 5 as a means to individualize instruction. Phonics concepts and skills are taught through a variety of methods including interactive notebooks and the Sadlier program. Our guided reading library provides leveled reading materials for small group instruction as well as individualized learning. Leveled Readers are sent home on a weekly basis to promote repeated reading and family support. RES is committed to increasing rigor in classroom reading materials utilizing zone of proximal development scores for authentic literature, novels, trade books, and nonfiction materials. Reading comprehension is supported by the resource, Readworks.org which provides a large, high-quality library of non-fiction and literary articles. We also provide students with personalized digital libraries accessed with their iPads and laptops which is monitored by classroom teachers.

Teachers plan and supplement for grade level writing instruction using research-based curriculum appropriate for their grade level and student needs. To supplement the writing and spelling we have found that Benchmark Literacy and Spelling City together meets our needs. Again, from teacher feedback, the principal provided a PLC on Benchmark Literacy in the summer prior to the 2016-17 school year. We have found Benchmark Literacy develops writers by effectively teaching the writing process. Writing is celebrated and presented throughout RES through SeeSaw, Google sites, shared writing notebooks, and classroom books.

The primary teachers at RES have found the Guided Readers and Writing Through the Year by DeeDee Wills and Deanna Jump very effective for their students. Writers Workshop incorporates all of the ELA state standards while infusing a love of writing. These units are created by two kindergarten teachers with over 20 years of classroom experience.

Richland Elementary School students continue to thrive in mathematics. Our curriculum is aligned to our North Dakota Academic Content Standards. RES has been using Saxon Math as our primary resource since 2004. According to the Saxon website, “To master mathematics, students need to build on prior learning – what new concept they can learn depends on which concepts they already know.” Saxon Math provides a learning structure proven to advance students steadily and assuredly to higher levels of understanding. In Saxon Math, concepts from every math strand are woven together and connected throughout the year. Skills and concepts are reinforced throughout the year helping students build a strong foundation of understanding.

We have found the spiraling curriculum within the Saxon curriculum to be very beneficial for our students.

A deliberate dedicated time is given to math instruction. The morning math meeting is a routine established in the primary grades which evolve at each grade level. Direct instruction, guided practice, small group instruction, individualized re-teaching, and independent work time are vital components of our overall student success. The deliberate use of classroom visuals and hands-on math manipulatives, help propel students from concrete learning to abstract reasoning. In addition, we provide enrichment opportunities through differentiated groupings. Our elementary students have successfully competed in the Math Olympics, a regional competition. The competition takes place at the North Dakota State College of Science. Our RES science curriculum aligns with the North Dakota State Content Standards. The goal of our science curriculum is to empower our students with an understanding of key scientific concepts and processes. We also seek to develop 21st-century skills including collaboration, communication, critical thinking and problem-solving. Our curriculum includes Life Science, Physical Science and Earth & Space Science. Our curriculum also employs inquiry-based learning, hands-on experiments and real-world field trips including class ventures to a planetarium, Science Museum of Minnesota, and Chahinkapa Zoo. A growing emphasis on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math) education is also increasingly evident in our science curriculum. Students utilize our Makerspace, a place in which students can gather to work on projects while sharing ideas, equipment, and knowledge, to carry out project-based learning as part of our science curriculum. Social Studies at Richland Elementary School aligns with the North Dakota State Content Standards. Our teachers provide engaging instruction and activities that teach students how to navigate utilizing social studies skills and resources such as maps and timelines. Students also delve into important historical events, economic concepts, geography and human development and behavior. RES social studies curriculum also focuses on government and the role of citizenship within political institutions and in communities. Our curriculum also places an emphasis on the importance of culture as well as individual and group identity. Students make trips to Fort Abercrombie, Bonanzaville Pioneer Village, Hjemkomst Center, Fargo Air Museum, and the historic Bagg Bonanzaville Farm. Our 4th grade students visit the state Capitol in Bismarck, North Dakota in May to culminate their study of North Dakota. This trip includes visits to the Heritage Center, Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center, and Fort Mandan.

Preschool

The preschool program has been serving families in our district since the fall of 2011. The Richland Elementary school board was progressive and thought to include a room to have a district preschool program. The preschool program follows the school schedule, with students attending full days, every other day. We strive to keep the class sizes small and are able to provide para support as needed. The RES preschool schedule allows for students to be serviced by Title 1 interventionist, speech therapist, and occupational therapist. This has helped us to identify children with special needs and provide early intervention services. It is funded through Title 1 funds and parent tuition.

It is the philosophy of the Richland Elementary Preschool Program that children are encouraged to learn and grow by providing a foundation of developmentally appropriate experiences. Our goal is to provide a safe and nurturing environment where all children can succeed. We believe that each child is a unique individual and that all children can learn. Our child-centered, academic-based preschool program, which follows the North Dakota State Pre-K Standards, reflects the integration of physical, cognitive, social, emotional, language, self-help and aesthetic areas for the total development of the child. The teacher creates thematic units to align with the state standards and student interest. We are able to provide weekly physical education and library times, as well as, a monthly art time. To help the preschool students feel more comfortable and connected to the school we have implemented a weekly 4th Grade Buddy program. Each preschooler is paired with one or two 4th graders to work on STEM, character building projects or service projects. A way that we aid in the transition to kindergarten, we offer the opportunity for all enrolled preschoolers to attend together for special events throughout the year.

The Richland Elementary Preschool provides an opportunity to transition from home to school with a foundation on which to build. We recognize that parents are the child's first teachers and children learn best when parents are involved in their educational program. We, at Richland Elementary, strive to develop a strong relationship with parents and maintain an open line of communication between home and school.

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North Dakota Academic Content Standards. RES has been using Saxon Math as our primary resource since 2004. A deliberate dedication of time is given to math instruction. The morning math meeting is a routine established in the primary grades which evolve at each grade level. Direct instruction, guided practice, small group instruction, individualized re-teaching, and independent work time are vital components of our overall student success. The deliberate use of classroom visuals and hands-on math manipulatives, help propel students from concrete learning to abstract reasoning. In addition, we provide enrichment opportunities through differentiated groupings. Our elementary students have successfully competed in the Math Olympics, a regional competition. The competition takes place at the North Dakota State College of Science.

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2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Music plays an important part in our curriculum at RES. All students in grades K-6 receive 100 minutes of general music instruction per week. Performances are stellar and include a Veteran's Day Program, Holiday Program, Spring Program, Community Caroling, and individual class and grade level performances. Our music curriculum follows the North Dakota Content Standards and the National Core Arts Standards for Music. Students in grades 5-6 are offered band instruction as an elective. While this curriculum is optional, we have a strong enrollment in the band at the elementary school level. Students perform twice a year for the community and are provided the opportunity to compete at the Young Musicians Festival.

Physical Education curriculum at RES aligns with North Dakota Content Standards. Students in grades K-6 receive 90 minutes of instruction weekly. Our teachers provide exercises, skill building, and engaging games that promote a lifetime of physical activity. At RES, we believe strongly in the research supported the link between physical activity and academic performance. Therefore, in addition to physical education instruction, we provide midday recess and an afternoon recess for grades PK-2. Jump Rope for Heart is an annual student event that promotes heart health awareness. We have been one of the top performing Jump Rope for Heart schools in North Dakota for several years running.

Health and nutrition instruction are incorporated at all grade levels in isolation and in connection with our science curriculum. Our school lunch director also promotes healthy lifestyles with cafeteria visuals. Teachers require and reinforce healthy snacks by communicating with parents and reinforcing positive student choices. Over the past several years we have received the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Grant through the state of North Dakota which allows us to serve fresh fruit and vegetables as a snack three times a week.

Visual Arts are incorporated across the curriculum and also taught individually at all grade levels. All students at RES receive 30 minutes of art specific time with an art teacher. Last year we brought in the artist Gary Harpo to be in residence for a week to work with our students on writing and illustrating. Art contests are also provided throughout the year by community organizations and welcomed within the school.

We are in year three of a district 1:1 technology initiative. The aim of this ongoing project is promoting student engagement and enthusiasm for learning; encouraging collaboration among students, teachers, parents and community members; and providing greater opportunities for personalized learning. Currently, all students in grades 5-12 are equipped with laptop computers. This has allowed our teachers to also incorporate computer literacy, digital citizenship, and keyboarding skills into their curriculum. We will be moving our 1:1 initiative down to 3rd grade next year. We have a computer lab, laptop carts, and ipads available for our students who are not 1:1. Our teachers have accomplished admirable effectiveness in their integration of technology into the curriculum.

We have also started implementing Projects Based Learning at RES. Our teachers have been trained by the Buck Institute and are using PBL to strengthen our core curriculum and get the students engaged and using the 4C's (Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, and Creativity). We have also installed a makerspace for our students. This spring we will be holding our first district-wide exhibition night in order to invite our community in to see the projects our students have been working on this year.

Our librarian/media specialist provides 30 minutes of library and media instruction per week for all students in grades K-6. She also supports classroom research projects and perpetuates a school-wide passion for reading. In addition, our librarian hosts a monthly event called Coffee with Kids. These events are themed and are a way to invite our community to come to the school and read with our students. An annual Book Fair is held for parents, students, and community members; which brings a wonderful selection of fun, engaging, and affordable books motivating kids to read more.

Our Guidance Counselor at RES provides a North Dakota State standards-based, counseling curriculum (Second Step) to students in grades K-6. The main domains of this curriculum include study skills/goal setting, self-esteem, and conflict resolution/ problem-solving. For career awareness and exploration, we use Just Imagine and Did You Ever Wonder? Students participate in 30 minutes per week of counseling curriculum. Our counselor also facilitates individualized and small group social skill development and assists students with conflict resolution and problem-solving. In addition, students participate in the National Red Ribbon Campaign, a drug prevention program, and curriculum.

Enrichment opportunities are a valued part of our curriculum at RES. Our students compete in the county spelling bee and Math Olympics every year. We strive to provide quality lyceums, trips to see theater, and concerts in an effort to broaden our students' horizons and to inspire them. North Dakota State College of Science Wildcat Singers and Stage Band, Conservation Lyceums (Sam Ting), Chahinkapa Zoo, Farm Safety, and On the Move are just a few ways that RES provides students with amazing talent and educational experiences. We have also had Missoula Children's Theater at RES to work with our students this year and have them booked to come back again next year.

Strong leadership programs at our high school directly impact and enhance our elementary curriculum at RES. Future Farmers of America (FFA) and Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) are two high school organizations that bring agricultural education and family consumer science curriculum, respectively, to our students. High school students partner with elementary students in the form of activities, presentations, and community events (i.e., Farm Safety, 9th Grade English Kindergarten Book Project, 1st Grade Transplanting Project, etc.) At Richland Elementary School, our aim is to help students develop essential skills and knowledge through our strong core curriculum, other curriculum areas, and from a broad range of enrichment opportunities.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Teachers at Richland Elementary strive to use evidence-based instructional methods to enhance student engagement while learning. The entire elementary staff emphasizes strategies from Improving Academic Literacy workshop lead by Dr. Kevin Feldman. We have implemented his philosophy of “Everyone Does Everything.” All students are engaged in all lessons by using precision partnering, callbacks, and responding to all questions in a variety of ways. This strategy is used across all grade levels to hold them accountable. Learning targets are shared with students prior to lessons. Data-driven instruction at all grade levels is determined through a variety of formative and summative assessments. Project-based learning has been implemented at every grade to enhance the 4C’s of learning and engage students in the learning process. Richland Elementary students are assessed quarterly each year using the Stars reading and math assessments. During the past four years, 70 percent of the elementary students scored at or above 50 percentile of the national reading average. Also, during the past four years, 77 percent of the students at Richland Elementary scored at or above the 50 percentile of the national math average. AimsWeb benchmark testing is also completed quarterly, along with AimsWeb weekly progress monitoring of students receiving interventions. Richland Elementary has developed a multi-tiered support system (MTSS) after attending workshops lead by Wayne Callender, to establish learning pathways for every student at Richland Elementary. Students are assessed and placed into the learning pathways based on their assessment in reading and math. The MTSS team meets quarterly to review the progress of students placed in learning pathways that involve interventions to improve students academic performance to function at grade level or above in reading and math. Data is reviewed to determine if interventions are effective. Richland Elementary Title I and Special Education programs implement math and reading interventions using SRA Corrective Reading Program, Lexia Core 5 Reading, Saxon Math, MobyMax, Connecting Math Concepts, Reading Mastery, Barton Spelling and Reading, and Benchmark Literacy to improve skills and build confidence while learning. Each intervention program also has a progress monitoring component to determine effectiveness. Special Education and Title I teachers, speech and language pathologist, school psychologist, para-professionals, parents, and administration work effectively with classroom teachers to meet the needs of all students.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

School climate and a positive culture are crucial factors to the overall success at Richland Elementary. All students are valued and known by name. Teachers and staff get to know student interests and engage in casual conversations throughout the school day. The teachers, principal, school counselor and support staff become familiar not only with students but also in understanding their home lives and family situations. They work together to provide support and proper communication channels when conflicts arise. Each and every student understands how important he or she is to the overall success of the school. When one of our students accomplishes something, we all accomplish something. When one of our teachers is honored for an award, we are all honored. We build each other up and stand on the shoulders of those who helped make Richland Elementary School what it is today. We are part of something bigger than any one of us. It makes us proud and humbles us.

Teachers at Richland create a positive school environment. Their love of teaching and love of children make it possible. Classroom teachers, as well as teachers of art, music, physical education, provide many opportunities for students outside of the regular school day. Teachers are available for student assistance both before and after school. The music teacher participates in musical programs across the state for students that excel in music. Together the entire staff at Richland Elementary works as a cohesive unit that provides the best education and positive social environment possible to our students.

The climate and culture at RES reflect the values of our community and the rich traditions of our school district. Students feel safe, connected, and supported at RES. High expectations and a strong work ethic are the norms. Every child and adult is expected to grow and learn and contribute and they do so, but not by working alone. The strong sense of belonging motivates students and adults to actively learn, to be engaged, and to strive to do their best. Collaborative relationships abound!

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Richland Elementary School strives to foster a strong school, family, and community connection. Our Back to School night provides an opportunity for staff, students and families to connect prior to school starting. Parents and students are able to meet the teachers, visit classrooms, and gather in the gym for an ice-cream social. Each year the elementary staff and students look forward to hosting a Veteran's Day program. Area veterans are honored through artwork, songs, a guest speaker, and an opportunity for coffee and fellowship. This is an amazing opportunity for our students to show their respect and connect with our area veterans. Each month, RES hosts Coffee With Kids. This a fun and exciting time for parents, grandparents, relatives, and community members to join staff and students to read together while sharing a snack and coffee. Coffee With Kids has been held at the elementary school, the high school, Fort Abercrombie, and Crooked Lane Farms. We have well over 100 community members each month attend Coffee With Kids.

Our Parent/Teacher Organization is very active and productive. They are ready and willing to help with any request. One of our most popular annual events is Fun Night. Fun Night features food, games for all ages, a bouncy house, a petting zoo and a chance to win prizes. Our Parent Teacher Organization spends a great deal of time planning and organizing this school carnival. PTO also provides funds for classroom use, meals for teachers during Parent/Teacher conferences, Teacher appreciation celebrations, and they organize and host Movie Night. Movie Night is a time where families are invited to come to our school and share a movie and popcorn free of charge.

RES takes pride in hosting several opportunities for students to share their projects and school work with families and the community. Examples include a Poetry Night, Wax Museum and a preK - 12 public exhibition of our Projects Based Learning projects. Music concerts are held twice a year and are always filled to capacity. Parents, friends, and community members show their support and pride by attending these events so faithfully.

An After School Program is available for students who need a place to go after school. The program provides activities and a safe environment for students. A Back Pack program is also available for families in need.

School/home communication is very important to Richland Elementary School. This is done in a variety of ways. Each teacher on our staff provides communication with parents either on a daily note which is sent home with students or Remind. Each teacher and administrator also has a Weebly website. Other methods of school/home communications are Seesaw, and a monthly district Newsletter. To maximize the effectiveness of parent and community support, Richland gathers important feedback through the AdvanceEd Stakeholder Surveys each year.

RES recognizes the importance of school, families, and community working together to create the best learning environment for our students.

3. Professional Development:

Richland Elementary School utilizes our AdvancED goals to align our professional development opportunities. The opportunities have been presented at local/regional, state and national levels. During the school year, weekly staff development opportunities are available every Wednesday for teachers as well as days set aside by the academic calendar. Teachers also have the opportunity for PD through personal interests and goals which is supported by the district and Parent-Teacher Organization. Examples of some of the personal conferences we have attended include Happy Go Teach, Metro Tech Conference, and state preschool/kindergarten conferences.

Our AdvancED goal has guided our staff to attend the Ron Clark Academy (RCA), Improving Academic Literacy (IAL) with Dr, Kevin Feldman, and the EdLeader21 Conference. These opportunities have given our staff strategies and opportunities to lead and to reach our goal of effective student engagement. We have incorporated a house system similar to that of RCA that has formed relationships between Richland Elementary and Richland High School students. During this time together we focus on service projects to assist the communities in which we live. IAL has not only given us strategies but helped us to create our own learning walks to observe and learn from other teachers in our building.

Richland Elementary has been dedicated to incorporating Projects Based Learning in our school. Our administration has given us numerous opportunities to be trained by sending us to High Tech High in San Diego, Buck Institute, and Metro Projects Based Learning. All teachers at RES have implemented cross-curricular projects into their classroom and are showcasing them to parents and the public at our first exhibition night in May.

We are also very fortunate to have a nationally trained staff member in the Nurtured Heart Approach. She has attended many conferences and is continuing to train not only our RES staff but RHS staff and parents as well. This professional development has taught us strategies to focus on the positives and creating relationships with our students.

Additional professional development is required from the State of North Dakota. Some of these requirements include Title I, trauma, suicide prevention, bullying, ethics, AED/CPR training. Morale and team building activities are also incorporated by our administrators. RES has facilitated book studies with, Move Your Bus by Ron Clark, Teach Like a Pirate by Dave Burgess, and PBL in the Elementary Grade by Buck Institute.

Most recently our school board and administration have given teachers the opportunity to participate in the Teacher Leadership Academy. This allows teachers to obtain their master's degree in leadership and is reimbursed by the district in return for years of service. During this academy, teachers coursework will be specific to the needs of our school and district.

The Marshall teacher and principal evaluation tool is being implemented. The program "Rubrix" is aiding principals in the collection of data when observing teachers for the evaluation process. Early release times have been implemented to allow for a more comprehensive professional development plan. The school's mission statement will be reviewed and revised if necessary. A district leadership team was created to drive change based on a collection of data. Training is being provided to the members of the District Leadership Team to implement the MTSS process. The school district is moving from the RtI process to the more comprehensive MTSS process, which will provide the necessary support for students that are below grade level.

Professional development is highly valued by RES and our administration. Our teachers receive monies towards PD yearly and can also request extra funds from PTO. We feel fortunate to have this support from our administration and school board to further our educational needs.

4. School Leadership:

At Richland Elementary School, we pride ourselves on school leadership that involves the superintendent, principals, teachers, support staff, School Board members, parents, and community patrons. RES embodies a philosophy of collaborative teamwork where staff members concretely and positively contribute to each student's success. Our District Leadership Team was developed to drive our strategies and goals developed by stakeholders. All stakeholders that understand the vision and mission of our school and participate in the necessary work of achieving it, are integral to our overall success. School leadership begins and ends with every one of us, and we strive to develop leaders within our staff and students. We have a shared focus on learning and high expectations for student achievement. The Teacher Leadership Academy and EdLeader21 provide the opportunity for professional growth within our school. Through AdvancED, multiple teachers have had the opportunity to make a difference for the benefit of learners by volunteering their time to serve on an engagement review team. We have a shared responsibility in accomplishing our goals, and this work involves a continuous process of self-reflection, inquiry, communication, and action research.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The Richland Elementary School’s historical data demonstrates that our district’s commitment to small class sizes has consistently resulted in high proficiency levels among our students. Our research-based decision to reduce class sizes allows students to build strong foundational skills in the elementary grades. With our district’s commitment to a smaller student-teacher ratio, our students receive more individualized instruction. Teachers at Richland Elementary School get to know each of their students as learners and are able to forge strong relationships. This maximizes teacher effectiveness in terms of differentiation, intervention and enrichment. Strategies such as Daily 5, guided reading, small group and individualized instruction are far more manageable and successful in classrooms with small class sizes. We are particularly attentive to ensuring a low student-to-teacher ratio in the primary grades where students are building important academic and behavioral skills that will contribute to their continued success at school. By maintaining small class sizes, we can better meet the needs and strengths of all students.

Another strategy we employ for the purpose of personalizing instruction is data-driven decision making. Because each child is of singular and equal importance, data-driven instruction that targets individual needs is the most important practice contributing to Richland Elementary School (RES) success. Recognizing that each child is unique and requires differentiation in order to reach maximum potential, RES rejects an instructional “one size fits all” viewpoint. Instead, with school-wide on-going data analysis, a road map of academic success for each student is constructed. Moreover, by serving the needs of each student, RES is an exemplary performing school. Invested in the belief that data analysis is an effective tool to determine individual student needs, each RES staff member is trained in formal and informal data analysis. With an emphasis on math/reading comprehension and fluency, data-based decisions drive differentiated instruction and professional development. At local and regional levels, staff members receive data analysis training and are provided classroom technology to run reports independent of making an appointment with a content specialist. This “on-demand” data analysis availability allows teachers to quickly determine and address academic concerns, which promotes an expedited reduction in a student’s learning gap.

We hire and retain highly qualified teachers and support staff. There is a very low teacher turnover rate at Richland Elementary School. We place a high value on relationships and positive interactions. We function as a professional learning community where collaboration, innovation and action research are encouraged. We actively seek parental and community participation in the shared responsibility of student and school success. Richland Elementary School is a great place to work, play, and learn. The positive climate cultivates a commitment to the shared belief in continuous learning and collective leadership. Everything we do places student and adult learning at the forefront. We set and maintain high expectations and standards for the academic and social-emotional development of all students and the performance of all adults. At RES, we provide rigorous standards-based content and instruction to ensure high student achievement. We utilize an ever-growing array of student-centered strategies that elevate student engagement and motivation. We integrate 1:1 technology in grades 3-6 into our curriculum and provide students with enriching opportunities to develop 21st-century skills. Teachers lead STEAM and Makerspace activities, which has contributed to creating an environment that encourages students to explore and excel in science, technology, engineering, art, and math. Our commitment to excellence at Richland Elementary School is built on tradition, yet is a continuous work in progress.