



## **Part I – Eligibility Certification**

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

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

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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

### DISTRICT

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

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

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

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
<b>PreK</b>	16	10	26
<b>K</b>	8	3	11
<b>1</b>	9	8	17
<b>2</b>	8	8	16
<b>3</b>	8	15	23
<b>4</b>	6	9	15
<b>5</b>	5	12	17
<b>6</b>	0	0	0
<b>7</b>	0	0	0
<b>8</b>	0	0	0
<b>9</b>	0	0	0
<b>10</b>	0	0	0
<b>11</b>	0	0	0
<b>12 or higher</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	60	65	125

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 3 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 0 % Asian
  - 0 % Black or African American
  - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 94 % White
  - 1 % 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: 7%

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

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

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	5
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	5
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	10
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	139
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.07
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

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: 39 %  
Total number students who qualify: 49

8. Students receiving special education services: 27 %  
34 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>4</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>10</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>12</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance    | <u>5</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: 3
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	7
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	6
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	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 18:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	91%	97%	95%	96%	99%
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.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
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.

To provide learning opportunities for all students to become responsible citizens in an ever-changing world.

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

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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The community of Osceola can be described as a typical midwest farming community whose economy is driven mostly by agricultural businesses. The community supports two agricultural equipment businesses, a large agricultural cooperative, and a large Chevrolet business. The township of Osceola, Nebraska, (population 867 as of 2012) is located in Polk County, which could be described as the central part of the state of Nebraska. It is the county seat of Polk County and has the county courthouse, county fairgrounds, and county hospital. The people maintain old fashion midwest values and still live in a community where locking your doors is not the norm. The surrounding area has several cattle feeding operations and rural family farms. Many of the children in the community either work or live on a farm and summer jobs of detasseling corn and farm work are common.

For the past 75 years the community and school have worked together to have a Homecoming Parade. Homecoming is a week long event that culminates in a traditional football game and welcoming of the school's alumni. In 1956, the town doctor, Charles Jeffrey donated funds to build a hospital and elementary building. After the elementary was built the name Jeffrey Elementary would become its official name. The community also has the annual Polk County Fair that includes all four communities in Polk county. The District is accredited by the State of Nebraska and until this past year when the district changed to the state's school improvement process, the district was a member in good standing of the AdVancedEd/North Central Association. Osceola Public Schools offers a comprehensive program for students in Pre-kindergarten through grade twelve. These programs cover a wide range of curricula from the "basics" to vocational, special education, and computer education. The district is governed by an elected six-member board of education which meets on a monthly basis or as circumstances dictate.

Jeffrey Elementary has many strategies that encourage students to be the best they can be. Students feel challenged and are striving to do better. In the last two years students at Jeffrey Elementary have been introduced to the Academic Wall of Fame. Students who have received perfect scores on the state standards test have their picture put on a plaque and are now hanging from that wall. Students who score in the 95th percentile on MAPs testing also find their picture on a plaque on the wall. Students are driven by intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to get their picture on the wall. Before the state standards test every year Jeffrey Elementary holds a pep rally to get students excited about the tests. Jeffrey Elementary has had guest speakers at these pep rallies that have received perfect ACT scores and are now getting full ride scholarships to college. They speak about learning how and why it is important to become great test takers. Also at the pep rally students learn what kind of incentives they have. For instance, students in the past have been able to play the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) along with teachers in friendly games of dodgeball and kickball. The teachers at Jeffrey Elementary take pride in these incentives and it helps the students understand that this is more than "just a test".

Another incentive program at Jeffrey Elementary is the Bulldog PRIDE program. Throughout the classrooms students are met with posters reminding them of the school's expectations. Each letter stands for a different expectation. For example, the "P" stands for Purpose. There is a purpose in everything you do. In all areas throughout the school, students at Jeffrey Elementary know what that purpose is. A purpose in the hallway is to get from classroom to classroom without bothering others who are learning. Teachers, paras, and administrators are always on the lookout to catch students "doing good" in the school. The staff likes to point out these good behaviors rather than dwell on the negative ones. If students are caught "doing good" in school their name goes into a two-week drawing for a chance to win a Bulldog Pride Shirt, pencil and a thermal water bottle along with getting their picture in the local newspaper. Students who are caught "doing good" and are not drawn as winners have their own paw put on the Bulldog PRIDE Wall. After the first initial paw is up they receive a little paw for every time after they are caught "doing good".

The community and support of local parents help create these wonderful programs at Jeffrey Elementary school. Osceola has a strong community support group who want to see its students succeed and be the very best they can be. If it wasn't for the parents and community members, our students would not have the opportunities they do.

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

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

The teachers at Jeffrey Elementary School consistently communicate with one another regarding the individual needs of students and align the Nebraska State Standards with the core curriculum. As new standards are adopted, teachers add them into the appropriate place within the curriculum. Teachers at Jeffrey Elementary do not teach directly from a book, rather follow the required state standards.

Jeffrey Elementary School's reading/language arts entire curriculum has continued to evolve over the years. In the past, the school used MacMillan McGraw Hill, however data trends over the last three years led teachers and Administrators to the realization that a more rigorous curriculum was needed. The Jeffrey Elementary staff reviewed data from norm referenced and state-mandated assessments and found vocabulary to be an area of concern. After reviewing multiple reading series, Reading Street was found to be strong in vocabulary and would help build vocabulary skills needed to be competent readers. The teachers also ensured it aligned with the Nebraska State Standards and the five essential components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Jeffrey Elementary School's focus in reading/language arts is to meet the students' individual needs, which requires grouping them according to reading ability. By working with students in small groups, students can achieve success in reading. Struggling students receive additional supplemental reading instruction from a reading teacher who targets specific skills and deficits.

Jeffrey Elementary uses Saxon for its mathematics instruction and feels it ensures academic success for students. The curriculum spirals so classes are constantly reviewing skills that have been taught throughout the school year. Students retain the information better because they practice past learned concepts daily. A representative from the Educational Service Unit assisted the teachers in aligning the curriculum to the Nebraska Standards to ensure all concepts were covered. The categories within the standards covered are number sense, algebraic, geometric, and data concepts. In addition to these basic math skills each classroom enhances learning through a calendar time. During this time teachers work on sequence of numbers, patterns, and graphing. This is a time when math concepts are introduced or reinforced along with communicating mathematical ideas. Upper grades practice mental math, facts, and problem solving daily. Students are assessed on a regular basis to monitor skills and problem solving.

Jeffrey Elementary uses the Pearson Science curriculum that incorporates technology and many hands-on activities and experiments. The staff went through the curriculum and aligned it to the Nebraska State Standards to ensure students were learning the necessary information at each grade level. Because vocabulary was a district focus, teachers felt this curriculum supported the goal of intense vocabulary exposure. This vocabulary exposure consistently builds throughout the elementary grades. The topics explored are inquiry, physical science, life science, and earth and space science. Fifth grade travels to the Edgerton Explorit Center to have hands-on experiences with a variety of science topics. The students participate in demonstrations of science experiments that go beyond what the classroom teacher can do. Third grade students are visited by the High School chemistry students where the chemistry students reinforce the scientific methods the third grade students have learned. Collaboratively, they work together making predictions and discussing the outcomes of these hands-on experiments.

Jeffrey Elementary teachers work diligently in making learning applicable to students' lives by helping them become responsible citizens. Even without a formal social studies curriculum, teachers and students address the standards and build a sense of community through numerous lessons and activities such as reciting the pledge of allegiance each morning together as a school. The fifth grade class holds a mock election and they register the whole elementary school for a primary or general election. Teachers use Scholastic News and CNN Student News to discuss topics that are relevant to current events. They also like to make history come to life by taking field trips to the Stuhr Museum, where students get to experience first hand what life was like long ago in Nebraska. Students get to learn about the history of Nebraska, Osceola, and Polk County by visiting the Polk County and Nebraska History Museums. Many topics and concepts are covered throughout all grade levels such as: economics, Nebraska History, States and Capitals, United States

Geography, Black History Month, Introduction to the Revolutionary War and Influential People in History.

As state standards evolve, gaps in current curriculums are discovered and teachers continually and cohesively work together to supplement the curriculum where needed. This process ensures all standards are being met and that individual students needs are being addressed. Jeffrey Elementary school is fortunate to have a preschool integrated into its school. A preschool allows children ages three and four an opportunity to acquire the essential skills required for learning in an academic setting. Jeffrey Elementary follows the state requirements for teaching preschool students.

Jeffrey Elementary uses Creative Curriculum to align to the Gold Standards for teaching preschool students. With the Creative Curriculum there are 38 research-based objectives that the teacher observes in the classroom. These objectives can be seen with Gold in different color bands. As the students reach new levels of development they move from one color band to the next. Students are monitored on a wide variety of skills. A few of these skills are letter recognition, letter sounds, numerical sequencing, and the ability to follow directions.

Children that come to preschool begin to receive the skills that are needed to make them successful in school. They are exposed to school rules and expectations before entering Kindergarten. Having this exposure before entering Kindergarten helps them understand how to be good learners.

Based on teacher observations students who attend preschool have better fine motor skills used in cutting, writing, and coloring. Generally students who have attended preschool are able to write their name, attend to story time and instruction, and are familiar with classroom routines such as calendar time. Osceola has offered a private preschool for many years and, since incorporating a public preschool more students have had the opportunity to attend. This has increased the number of students coming into kindergarten with these readiness skills.

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

At Jeffrey Elementary School, students are exposed to many other curriculum areas. Students have opportunities to be in classes such as Art, Music, Physical Education, Apps class, along with outside groups that provide extra learning. When students leave Jeffrey Elementary they have a good base for continuing their education in the future.

Jeffrey Elementary students attend Art class two times a week for 30 minutes. Students receive instruction from a K-12 Art teacher. Students create art projects that include multiculturalism, different seasons, and use many types of art mediums. Students' artwork is displayed in the hallways for other students and parents to see. Artwork is judged while on display at the local Polk County Fair. The Art teacher is very active in painting art murals in the hallways of the school, often with the assistance of students. In cooperation with the local Historical Society, the fifth grade teacher brought in an author/illustrator and the students helped design the illustrations for her new book. The fifth grade students wrote, illustrated, and published a Thanksgiving book called What? I'm On the Menu? The students then shared the publication with each class in the school.

Jeffrey Elementary students attend Music classes two times a week for 30 minutes and perform in a winter and a spring program. The instructor uses many different types of media and technology to help teach music. The students are exposed to many instruments such as drums and mallets. Students have the opportunity to learn about influential musicians throughout music history. In addition, students are exposed to drama, musicals and are taught the difficult skills of reading and music. Fourth grade students, learn how to play the recorder to help with the transition into fifth grade where they are able to sign up for band and play more difficult instruments. Students are given the opportunity to try each instrument to ensure success with the instrument they finally chose. Jeffrey Elementary students then attend a band class once a week, specific to their chosen instruments and then attend a whole band group on Friday.

Jeffrey Elementary students attend a Physical Education class two times a week for 25 minutes where they participate in a variety of games and activities that encourage students to stay physically fit and active

throughout their lives. They learn about how their bodies work and the importance of stretching after working out. This is supported as students continue to move into the middle and high school. They are able to participate in a wide variety of events. The school also participates in the National Jump Rope for Heart Association program and every spring an elementary track and field day experience that simulates an upper level track meet. Every other year the 3rd and 4th grades attend a Food and Fitness Day that is put on by the local Extension Office focusing on incorporating healthy food and fitness choices into their daily lives.

Jeffrey Elementary students have the unique opportunity to learn using one-to-one technology. Primary grades each have iPads, while intermediate grades use laptop computers. Students use technology in a variety of ways. The science and reading curriculum has many technology features used to enhance student learning. Computers and iPads are used for researching, creating projects, and testing. Students attend a Technology class taught by a Media Specialist two times a week for 25 minutes. Classroom teachers do internet safety lessons throughout all grades.

Jeffrey Elementary School utilizes the Polk County Nebraska Extension Office. Annual Programs include, Clean Hands and Healthy School, Project Learning Tree, and Healthy Choices Healthy Me in kindergarten. First grade participates in Clean Hands Healthy Schools and Creative Colors programs. Third grade participates in The World of Wheat Science, Farm Safety Day, and Food and Fitness. Fourth grade participates in Farm Safety Day, Ag in Nebraska, and Food and Fitness programs.

Osceola students have a well rounded curriculum that encourages students to be culturally well rounded. Teachers at Jeffrey Elementary want to continue to expose students to a large array of activities to help them become better students.

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

To organize reading groups and interventions within the school, teachers utilize the data provided from the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) assessment. DIBELS is administered to all students three times a year. The first round of testing is done the first or second full day of school as to not waste any time in beginning instruction. Rules are reviewed with the staff before testing begins. Fidelity checks are done on all teachers giving the DIBELS fall testing.

When DIBELS is complete, reading meetings are held for each grade level. Present at these meetings are the building Principal, Reading Specialist, Special Education Teacher, and the classroom teacher. Classroom teachers must be present, and if another team member is unable to attend the Principal will decide if the meeting will continue. Other assessment data will also be reviewed and taken into consideration. Reading groups are then developed and those students who did not meet benchmark in DIBELS are placed in an intervention group based on the Decision Rules for Reading Intervention. Students who are placed in an intervention are given a placement test if applicable before beginning the intervention.

Students who are labeled as “strategic” or “intensive” based on DIBELS descriptions are progress monitored twice a month. Once a student has met their DIBELS benchmark goal three consecutive times, they transition out of the intervention. The teacher and Reading Specialist meet and confer before a student is exited and moved into a new group based on progress made.

To ensure a variety of instructional techniques/methods are used and appropriate interventions are implemented, teachers at Jeffrey Elementary have been receiving regular training from the local Educational Service Unit in the Marzano Model, focusing on being a reflective teacher. Along with receiving Anita Archer training, they have been working with a Project Manager from Nebraska Multi-Tiered System of Supports Implementation Support Team to improve the current MTSS plan.

Students who fall within the first tier (grade level students) are instructed in the core curriculum during the 90 minute reading block. Tier two students (students less than two years below grade level) are instructed in the core curriculum with differentiated instruction using ability grouping. These students also receive 20-40 minutes of additional reading intervention outside the regular reading block. Tier three students (two or more years below grade level) are often pulled into a parallel program with a small student to teacher ratio.

These students also receive 30-60 additional minutes of intervention outside of the 90 minute reading block.

As instruction begins for all students, and teachers have developed instructional groups to meet individual student needs a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) intervention plan is developed for those students who fall below the appropriate benchmarks for learning. The school has a cadre of teachers who are trained by the Nebraska Multi-Tiered System of Implementation Support Team. The school's MTSS team has a set of Decision Rules for fall and winter that spell out the determining needs, assessments used, support programs, time per day, and dates started for each grade level in the building. Programs such as Stepping Stones, Kindergarten Sound Partners, Sound Partners, Sound Partners Plus, Reading Mastery, Reading Naturally, and/or Corrective Reading are used during this intervention time, depending on the need of the individual student.

If there is an achievement gap and progress is not being made or not being made with the ambitious goals set in DIBELS, the students are referred to our Student Assistance Team (SAT). The SAT is used for students who are not responding to interventions and are performing at least one grade level below their peers who are in the same grade. Student Assistance Teams are formed for each student referred and may include the classroom teacher, Interventionist(s), Reading Specialist, Principal/Administrator (person with authority concerning provision of resources), person with knowledge about behavior interventions, and parent or guardian. The team members are determined by the assessed needs of the student. The team is initiated by the teacher of the student who is performing one or more grade levels below peers and not making adequate progress to their progress monitoring goal after receiving one round (eight to ten weeks) of intensified intervention. System-wide issues are ruled out before referring students for individual student problem solving. The team meets within two weeks of the referral to determine what data is needed and who will collect data so that a clear problem identification statement can be developed.

Within Reading Street, the core reading series, there are weekly assessments to monitor student achievements and instructional methods are determined from these. There are three tracks for students to work from during small group time, (Strategic Intervention, On-Level and Advanced). If students are high achieving, they will be placed in the Advanced curriculum for small group instruction.

Teachers at Jeffrey Elementary continue to seek out new research based interventions to help students reach benchmark. As students continue to change teachers will continue to use differentiated instruction to reach all students.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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

Jeffrey Elementary students are engaged and motivated in many ways during the school year. Every year begins with expectation stations. Students rotate through these teacher led stations where they are instructed, given examples and shown the correct way to act and behave in the hallway, lunchroom, bus, playground, bathrooms and special events. During the year all staff members “catch” students demonstrating these positive behaviors without any reminders and fill out a “Bulldog Pride Slip”. Students who receive these “pride” slips are acknowledged on the Bulldog Pride Bulletin Board in the hallway. In addition every two weeks these students are put into a drawing where 3 students are chosen and receive a special Bulldog Pride Shirt, pencil and thermal cup.

The staff decided to put a strong emphasis on the importance of students putting their best effort into district and state testing. The staff kicks off the beginning of the testing sessions with a motivational theme, which is carried into the hallways. There is also a pep rally to get the students excited. Each class makes a motivational desk tag with a treat to be given to the grades that are testing. This is done by even the younger students who make treats, even though they are not being tested yet. This helps build excitement and students realize the importance of doing their best, even before they are at the tested grade levels. Students are also able to receive different levels of parties based on meeting, exceeding or receiving perfect scores on the state tests. The staff feels this extra attention has made students eager and excited to try their hardest on these tests. To announce student accomplishments in testing an Academic Wall of Fame was created. Students who perform at a certain criterion on district testing and state tests are recognized on this wall. Each student has a personalized plaque and picture to hang on this wall until they graduate from elementary school.

At Jeffrey Elementary the Accelerated Reading Program is used as a supplemental program to the core reading series. The staff uses this to encourage students to read beyond what is expected in the core reading series. Individual goals are set for each student and if the student reaches his/her goal they are able to attend a planned celebration. Most classrooms do this monthly, however, in the month of December and May a school-wide celebration is held. This year the school-wide celebration was Christmas Around the World. Each teacher took a different country to share and the students rotated through the classrooms visiting each country. Our May celebration will take place at a YMCA in a neighboring community. In addition to our AR program there is a Reader of the Month program. Using the monthly reading data from AR, students are recognized for hard work. Each month a student is chosen based on their reading comprehension performances. These students receive a certificate and small prize. A picture recognizing these students is shared on the school Facebook page and in the local newspaper.

The Jeffrey Elementary staff is a cohesive group who consistently collaborates when making decisions about curriculum, behavior, student data and placement. The staff has a wide variety of teaching styles and talents to ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn. Thanks to these strengths, as a staff a lot of praise and encouragement is given to each other. The Administration also gives encouraging words which helps teachers to continue to want to strive for excellence everyday. Teachers are valued and given freedom to make decisions within the school and Administration consistently listens to the needs of teachers and students and provides the appropriate supports.

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

Jeffrey Elementary consistently strives to improve relationships and connect with the community. Currently there are 15 mentors matched with students 4th through 12th grades in the state Teammates Program. Mentors meet with their mentee once a week over lunch and spend quality time with them discussing topics such as school, home, friends, sports and whatever else the student wishes to share. Pinnacle Bank in Schools is a program promoted by the local bank. Representatives from the bank set up a booth run by fifth grade clerks who have applied, been interviewed and chosen for the job. They are available on a bi-weekly basis for K - 5th grade students in Jeffrey Elementary to deposit money into their

personal savings account. The Parent Advisory Council (PAC) is a group of parents and teachers that meet bi-monthly unless they are working on a particular project, to raise funds and make improvements for the elementary school. Examples of these projects are new water fountains with bottle fillers, purchasing items for classrooms, Academic Wall of Fame plaques, providing meals for evening gatherings, and sponsoring the all-school special occasion celebrations.

Participation in school leadership and support systems include Title I Family Game Night where parents are invited to school to participate in various choices of board games with their child. Room parents volunteer at the beginning of the year Open House to help set up room parties throughout the year. Open House is held the night before the first day of school and is a time for students and parents to meet their new teacher and see their new classroom. Kindergarten Round-Up is held in the spring for the incoming Kindergarteners. Children spend part of a day, including lunch, in the Kindergarten room going through stations as they are exposed to procedures and rules of the classroom. This gives the teacher an opportunity to get to know the students and gives the parents a chance to complete paperwork and meet the school staff. Preschool home visits give the teacher a chance to go to the home of each student and complete an activity and assessment with the child. This is done in the early fall and again in the spring semester.

Parents and community are informed about academic achievements through Parent Teacher Conferences, Puppy Paws (weekly newsletter), Elementary Facebook page, and the Remind app, which is a way to communicate with the whole class or individual parents. Other ways to share our successes are through school assemblies, 'Bulldog News' Postcards, the Polk County Newspaper, and Preschool and Fifth Grade Promotions.

Jeffrey Elementary school is supported by different community organizations such as, the Legion Club which provides a week of Young Patriot's Camp. The camp provides students with experiences such as: interacting with people at the nursing home about their memories, visiting the Polk County Museum, honoring veterans, learning from city and county board members about their roles in government, and other activities that build their idea of citizenship.

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

Jeffrey Elementary works to ensure professional development opportunities are aligned with academic standards and support student achievement as well as school improvement by scheduling monthly trainings and activities. A full day of professional development before school begins is also planned. Areas of development have included Marzano and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) workshops, standards alignment, and data analysis. Outside of school-wide meetings, teachers participate in trainings and workshops at Educational Service Unit 7 (ESU7), which include tech integration training, Kagan training on student engagement, and early childhood and reading workshops. The school has sponsored teachers to attend the Nebraska Educational Technology Association (NETA) conference, Google Summit, and the Summer Tech Institute. Training is provided for teachers who have students with differing needs such as an autism conference or behavior conference. District Administration attends Administrative Days in Kearney, Nebraska. The Elementary Principal attends principal cluster meetings at the ESU7 where new and updated practices are shared.

Several elementary teachers have had the opportunity to attend the NETA Spring Conference. They have been able to learn about apps and programs that will enhance and expand learning in the classroom. Jeffrey Elementary teachers have also attended the Summer Tech Institute held in Norfolk Nebraska. A smaller more hands-on conference with teachers presenting how they use technology in the classroom has been helpful for expanding technology throughout the building. Google Summits, held in Lincoln, have been used to further skills in all aspects of Google to help students be more interactive in their learning. These tech opportunities have allowed teachers across Nebraska to build networks with one another and offers a support group in problem solving with technology, blended learning, and differentiating learning.

Some teachers have had the opportunity to attend Kagan Cooperative Learning Trainings. Teachers have found these trainings very useful in providing strategies for keeping students engaged. Teachers have found success in implementing teaching techniques or structures such as Numbered Heads Together, Timed

Pair Share, Pairs Compare, Kinesthetic Symbols, and Lyrical Lessons. The different structures are designed for different outcomes including improved thinking skills, mastery of a subject matter, team building, classroom management and improved communication skills. Cooperative learning techniques have impacted student learning in all classrooms.

Jeffrey Elementary teachers participate in job coaching, which the Educational Service Unit provides. Teachers who participate in the program are visited once a month and coached in the areas of: planning, reflecting, problem solving, or data collection. At Jeffrey Elementary, 80 percent of teachers decided to be coached this year.

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

The leadership in Osceola Public Schools is made up of one Superintendent, two Principals and six members of the school board. The Superintendent's role is to ensure the school is functioning at its highest level while staying inside its monetary realm. The Principal's role at Osceola is to continue to guide teachers to reach all student learners. The Principals work to ensure decisions are made to the best interest of the students. The district's leadership philosophy at Osceola Public Schools is closely aligned to the district mission statement. Osceola Public Schools provide learning opportunities for all students to become responsible citizens.

The Osceola School Board, along with the administrative team, continually works to ensure all policies are up to date and aligned to the district philosophy and guiding principles. According to state statute all schools must review district policies regarding fees, parental involvement, bullying, and internet safety. The Osceola School Board reviews these policies during the summer months and makes necessary changes at that time. The board, just like the administrative team, works to ensure all policies are there to make sure students are successful.

Osceola Public Schools is part of the Educational Service Unit (ESU 7) and they offer a wide range of trainings and supports such as, Marzano training. Over the last two years, Osceola teachers and Administrators, have been integrating the Marzano strategies into the school. Teachers have become more self reflective, thus creating a more cohesive group. The ESU has also offered support with its Marzano implementation by sending its trained staff to the school to help guide discussion. The ESU has helped facilitate those critical and often uncomfortable conversations about teaching and learning which has led to personal and professional growth amongst teachers. The relationship between the ESU and Osceola Public Schools has, led to improved teaching strategies, and a higher level of student success.

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

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Jeffrey Elementary is a special place, with wonderful teachers and tremendous students. These teachers care for all students, not just those in their classroom. From preschool through the fifth grade, students feel a sense of belonging, and compassion from the teachers. There is no one program that makes students at Jeffrey Elementary so successful. Students at Jeffrey Elementary are successful because their teachers operate as one unit.

Jeffrey Elementary school employs some of the best educators in the profession. They are always looking for ways to improve their teaching and connect with each student. The teachers at Jeffrey Elementary work to include differentiated instruction so all students can be taught. They collaborate to ensure students move from one grade to the next with the fewest gaps as possible.

Small group instruction is one strategy all teachers at Jeffrey Elementary utilize to ensure improved student learning at the appropriate knowledge level. Grouping students by ability helps teachers at Jeffrey Elementary reach all students. For instance, reading groups are created based on results from DIBELS and MAPs test scores. After the groups are created students receive specific instruction that is based on their instructional level. Small groups allow for students to learn at their level and receive extra help where needed.

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is another example of how small groups continue to support student instruction. The students that receive these additional services are students who have scored at an Intensive area on the DIBELS test. Here small grouping allows for the teacher or teachers to work one-on-one with individual students. Students in these groups work in programs such as Stepping Stones, Read Naturally Live, and Sound Partners depending on what the individual student deficiency is. The teachers that run these programs work diligently to move these students back up to grade level as quickly as possible. Small groups allow each teacher a better opportunity to help get these students caught up.

At Jeffrey Elementary school teachers don't teach from a specific program. They don't use a specific book that gives them the best strategies for teaching. Students at Jeffrey Elementary are successful because the teachers care about them and work extra hard to see that all students learn and succeed. There is no one instructional strategy that reaches all students and the teachers understand that. They know every day is a new challenge and are excited to meet the new challenge head on.