

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 Mr. John Sutherland

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

Official School Name Roy Gomm Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 4000 Mayberry Drive

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

Reno NV 89519-2132
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Washoe

Telephone (775) 333-5000

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m

E-mail JSutherland@washoeschools.net

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*Ms. Traci Davis

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail TDavis@washoeschools.net

District Name Washoe County School District Tel. (775) 348-0200

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 Katy Simon Holland

(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):
 - 62 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 14 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 14 High schools
 - 5 K-12 schools

95 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

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

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	37	25	62
1	31	34	65
2	40	28	68
3	37	33	70
4	32	27	59
5	33	44	77
6	28	45	73
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	238	236	474

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 4 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 9 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 76 % White
 - 9 % 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.

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	16
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	14
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	30
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	458
(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: 2%
11 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Spanish, Bengali/Bangla, Russian, Slovakian

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 6%
Total number students who qualify: 30

8. Students receiving special education services: 11 %
51 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>3</u> Autism | <u>6</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>7</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>1</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>3</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>20</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>9</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 4
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	21
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	5
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	7
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 22:1

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	95%	96%	96%	96%	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.

To provide students with a safe, challenging and positive learning environment helping students to achieve his or her potential and to become tolerant, productive, and independent citizens or our community.

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

Roy Gomm Elementary School opened its doors for the first time in September 1966 on the western edge of Reno, Nevada close to the Truckee River. The school's namesake was a graduate of the University of Nevada, Reno and a longtime educator in Northern Nevada who passed in June of 1966. His contributions are honored every year when two students are selected to play Mr. and Mrs. Gomm in our school's Nevada Day music performance.

Roy Gomm Elementary is part of the Washoe County School District, which serves over 64,000 students. The school sits in a middle to high income neighborhood and has 474 students. The school population is predominately white/Caucasian and approximately 80% of our parents have earned a Bachelor's degree or higher. Gomm serves students from kindergarten through sixth grade. The schools has two Comprehensive Life Skills classes for students with intellectual disabilities and two SWAS (School Within a School) classes for highly gifted students.

Our mission is to provide students with a safe, challenging and positive learning environment helping students to achieve his or her potential and to become tolerant, productive and independent citizens of our community. Our entire school community is committed to achieving this mission. Teachers hold high expectations for students, both academically and socially, and our parents support the teachers and the school through volunteering and fund raising.

Five of our teachers have earned their national board certification and our school counselor is also nationally board certified. The principal been an elementary principal for 20 years. The teaching staff is experienced and very professional, seeking out professional development opportunities, and they work together for the betterment of students and the school. There is very little staff turnover. Teachers that have retired from Gomm have a special group, "The Golden Gophers", who still support the school and attend events.

Roy Gomm Elementary Parent Faculty Association (PFA) provides funding for educational enrichment opportunities for students, such as art education and field trips, as well as for an intervention teacher, physical education teacher, and classroom aides and assistants. The PFA maintains many school traditions and encourages communication between staff and parents.

Gomm has experienced high academic achievement for many years and is rated a 5 Star School in the state of Nevada. This rating is earned for academic achievement and growth. Teachers use a variety of instructional strategies, trying new strategies and using tried and true strategies gained from experience. Teachers hold students and each other accountable. This is done through a positive, supportive approach, providing the things needed to be successful.

Students are encouraged to participate in the successful operation of the school. Students help serve lunch to each other, they serve as peer mentors, and they take on leadership roles. There are students on the school uniform committee and we have a student run fund raiser.

The Roy Gomm community is full of passionate and dedicated individuals. High academic achievement is just one characteristic of the school. Through community service, art and health education, and social acceptance, students receive a well-rounded education and go on to middle and high school where they continue to excel.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

At Roy Gomm Elementary School, content is king. Every effort is made to ensure students have ample opportunities to work not just in ELA and math, but also with social studies, science, engineering, technology, history, and the arts. Core curricular efforts are holistic insofar as allowing students to study a piece of content, apply it to unique situations, and build and present projects matched to their learning.

In science, teachers plan backwards from the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) to create learning opportunities for their students. Using this approach, and with money shared with the school in 2016, the staff prioritized getting new Full Option Science System (FOSS) kits from the Lawrence Hall of Science. These kits have served as a foundation for student learning which places an emphasis on children “doing” science through experiments and inquiry.

The staff at Roy Gomm also enriches the student experience with content from Mystery Science. This resource was built following the NGSS framework and ensures a vertically aligned experience for all students as they work with Nevada’s science standards.

With the requisite background built by the FOSS and Mystery Science curriculum, students culminate their experiences with classroom field trips and presentation opportunities. In the primary grades, students visit the state’s Animal Arc, attend the University of Nevada Reno for Science Fair, and go to the Butterfly Zoo. Our 4th grade students raise trout and then release them in local rivers. The 5th grade investigates chemistry and matter before visiting the rock quarries, and in 6th grade, students build solar ovens, participate in snow survival, and spend almost a full week in the Sierra as part of Sierra Nevada Journeys Outdoor Education experience. These opportunities ensure that all students can apply their understanding and allow for deep learning of important content.

Each year Roy Gomm has a science night and this is one more opportunity for children to build “Science Boards” and share their learning.

Math instruction follows an important developmental pattern for all of our students. Using the Nevada Academic Content Standards for the basis of all of our work, teachers move students along an important continuum of learning. Students are encouraged to express a concept concretely, then representationally, and finally abstractly. In short students learn the math before doing the math. This approach creates an important foundation not just during their elementary years, but also into middle and high school.

Teachers at Gomm use the district-adopted math materials including Bridges and Envision 2.0. This, however, is just a starting place and teachers ensure that any resource is seen as a floor and not as a ceiling. To that end, teachers use “capstone” projects in their grades where students can apply their learning in unique ways. Throughout the year, students can be seen constructing trebuchets, building geometric towns, completing engineering challenges (e.g. egg drops), and participating in Genius Hours.

Moreover, inclusion is paramount and all students get to work with grade level content. This includes our most impacted students from our Comprehensive Life Skills program.

Literacy is a fundamental focus of Roy Gomm and educators integrate English Language Arts with social studies, history, finance, art, and civics. In the primary grades, students use Core Knowledge and the district adopted series, Houghton Mifflin Reading, to ensure a guaranteed and viable curriculum in each grade and through the grades. This foundation ensures that students can work with complex and rigorous materials as they complete their study of Nevada History in 4th, American History in 5th and a study of World Cultures in 6th.

It cannot be overstated the level of rigor maintained in the intermediate grades where students use standards-aligned resources to create small business, have mock congressional hearings, and complete Document

Based Questions from the DBQ Project. Moreover, important dispositions are nurtured through Structured Academic Controversies, Socratic Seminars, Pro Se Courts, Philosophical Chairs and Fishbowls.

All of this learning in literacy culminates in our Multicultural Night where classrooms complete art projects based on previous units of study.

The success that Roy Gomm has enjoyed is not an accident. Through careful standards aligned planning, judicious use of rigorous resources, and careful attention to the unique attributes of each child, college, career and civic readiness flourishes.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The Roy Gomm Elementary community takes pride in educating the whole child. Every student receives instruction in music, art, technology, and physical education. Our PFA funds a part-time art teacher, a physical education teacher, and technology improvements at our school. Our school district funds a music teacher, a part-time educational technology assistant and a part-time non-certified librarian.

Students get music class twice per week for minimum of 30 minutes each session. The Nevada Academic Content Standards for music are followed and students learn rhythms and melodies, musical symbols, singing technique, playing technique and the cultural and historical context of music. Our music teacher works with the teachers of each grade level to plan instruction that supports and adds to grade level curriculum. Each grade level does a performance that includes singing, dancing, and acting, and each child has a role.

A PFA-funded art teacher presents an art lesson in each class once per month. The art lesson consists of a historical component of a featured artist or style, an artistic technique, and each student produces a piece of art using different mediums throughout the year. Art instruction is also supported by a parent-run art education program that also goes into each classroom six times throughout the school year. Students are taught about a featured artist and they produce a piece in the style of the featured artist.

This past school year we held our first Fine Arts Night, which featured art work from students, the school honor choir which consists of 40 students, and a piano recital that featured 8 of our students. This event was well attended and gave students an opportunity to “show-off” their skills.

Our PFA also funds a part-time physical education teacher who also serves as the school health/nutrition representative on a district committee. Students receive 30 minutes per week of physical education instruction. Our PE teacher also promotes healthy play activities at recess, such as teaching students how to jump rope and teaching different non-competitive games. Parents direct a mileage club during two recesses each week which encourages students to log laps towards completing a marathon by the end of the year. Students earn trinkets for every two miles they run and all students who accumulate 26 miles over the school year are recognized during an assembly.

Students receive a minimum of 30 minutes each week in our computer lab where they are taught keyboarding skills, office productivity software, and coding. Time in the computer lab is also used by students to create multi-media presentations and to do research. All of our classrooms have interactive white boards, which teachers incorporate into instruction, and iPads or laptops that are used to support classroom instruction or reinforce skills. These devices also assist in learning of 21st century skills.

Students spend a minimum of 30 minutes per week in our library, learning library science and research skills. Our librarian works closely with classroom teachers to support instruction and she helps identify appropriate reading materials for students of all ability levels. The library is also available to students during recesses and lunch as a place for students to read for pleasure and explore different genres of literature. The librarian also encourages reading by holding various reading contests throughout the year and by talking with individual students and directing them towards authors or books that they might find interesting.

Roy Gomm Elementary hosts many before and after school programs that students can participate in. These

include chess, Lego Robotics, drama, Spanish, art, and sports activities. Each of these programs has between 10 and 20 students each day.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Roy Gomm Elementary uses a variety of assessment data to analyze and improve student achievement. Some of the assessment data is used at the classroom level while other data is used at the school level. The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) is used in the primary grades two to three times a year to assess reading ability and progress. The Developmental Spelling Inventory (DSI) is used throughout the school to assess student orthographic development. The DRA and the DSI are both used at the classroom level. The Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) is used in all grade levels and is administered three times per year and provides an assessment of student reading and math achievement, and is used at the classroom level to help inform instruction and at the school level to see trends or areas of need. A Criterion Referenced Test is given once per year and measures reading and math achievement. It is used by the State of Nevada to evaluate schools and is also used at the school level to help determine school goals and objectives. Our teachers also use classroom based formative assessments. Students that are receiving interventions in reading or math are progress monitored using AIMSweb. All of these assessments are used to drive lesson planning and instruction. Each assessment is administered at different times of the year which allows teachers the opportunity to examine data throughout the school year. This also allows the school to create intervention and acceleration plans, analyze the effectiveness of instruction and adjust instruction accordingly.

Our school uses a variety of research-based instructional practices, often in conjunction with each other. Differentiated instruction can be seen in every classroom in our school. This allows all students to access the curriculum no matter their instructional level. By differentiating we can continue to challenge high achieving students while supporting struggling students. Differentiation is a key reason that the project and problem based learning is successful at our school. Students will learn the same major concepts through project based learning facilitated by the teacher, but each student can be challenged in different ways. Cooperative learning groups are utilized throughout the school day and this instructional strategy pairs well with project based learning activities. Accountable talk is another strategy that can be found in each of our classrooms across curricular areas. This strategy addresses speaking and listening standards and we have found it to be a very effective strategy for academic gains and for student engagement. Guided reading is used mostly in our primary grades as a literacy instructional practice with homogeneous groupings. Data based questioning is used in our upper grades in social studies and science and assists in teaching critical thinking skills.

When examining data if we find that a student is not responding to our Tier 1 instruction we provide interventions for that student. Interventions can be provided in the classroom or in a pull-out situation with an intervention teacher, which is funded by our parent group. Researched based intervention programs are used with these students and they are monitored weekly or bi-weekly to determine progress. Our Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) team meets once a week to examine data of students receiving interventions and to discuss possible changes in instruction that might benefit the student.

By analyzing assessment data, we can determine areas of need for individual students, grade levels, or school wide. When an area of need is identified we can choose the instructional practice or practices and interventions that might best remediate the need. Assessment data in the hands of skilled and dedicated teachers is key in getting desired outcomes for students. Continually examining data and adjusting instruction, for students that are struggling as well as for students that are excelling, ensures that our school maintains high levels of achievement. Combining this with the high expectations our teachers and parents have for students creates an environment where high achievement is the expected norm.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Roy Gomm Elementary engages and motivates students through a challenging curriculum and high expectations. We have created an atmosphere where academic achievement is valued by students and families. Students look forward to traditional events at each grade level, such as Greek Mythology reports in sixth grade, where they dress as figures from Greek mythology. Though the event is a tradition, the teachers have changed the requirements for students in order to integrate 21st century learning skills which helps keep students engaged and motivated.

Our school embeds social emotional learning (SEL) into daily routines. Through the use of a specific SEL curriculum and school wide positive behavior supports, students are taught and recognized for appropriate behavior, both in and out of the classroom. Older students serve as mentors for younger students through our “playground buddies” program. In this program students in 3rd – 6th grade patrol the playground offering to play with younger students who are alone or helping the younger students problem solve issues. Our full-time school counselor provides support and guidance for the students as well as teaches lessons in each classroom on friendship skills, conflict mediation, and growth mindset and is always available to assist students with problems or issues.

Parents are also an integral part of the positive school culture and climate. Not only are they involved in many of the day to day operations of the school, they support our positive behavior supports through volunteering and teachers incorporate parent expertise into the classroom. Parents can be found teaching students in computer science and math. Parents also support and encourage healthy lifestyles by running our “mileage club” during recess which encourages students to run or walk.

School staff model and practice the behaviors we expect from students. Staff willingly work together, support each other professionally and personally, and form relationships with students and families. Teachers hold high expectations for themselves and their colleagues. This is evident by the professional conversations that take place during common planning times as well as in the teacher lunchroom. Teachers pursue professional development opportunities on their own and share promising practices with each other.

With staff and parents modeling expected behaviors and supporting each other our school has developed a positive culture where students enjoy coming each day. Staff also enjoy coming to work each day as evidenced by a very low staff turnover rate.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Roy Gomm Elementary is known for having a high level of parent and community involvement. A main reason for this is our Parent-Faculty Association (PFA). The objectives of the PFA are to promote the welfare of children in the home, school and community; to enhance the educational environment; educate the school community; and to foster relationships so that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the education of children. The PFA board consists of the school principal and elected parent and teacher representatives and is responsible for planning and organizing school events. The PFA events are a combination of family/community events and fundraisers. During our Fall carnival, the PFA enlists the help of fraternities and sororities from the University of Nevada Reno to help run the event so that families and teachers can enjoy the day together. The PFA also organizes our Science Festival during which representatives from community educational groups as well as engineering and science students from the University of Nevada Reno conduct experiments and hands-on demonstrations for families.

In addition to events, we make a conscious effort to involve and engage parents in the daily operation of the school. Parent volunteers staff our before-school drop off area, volunteer in classrooms and on the playground, help in the office, and teach lessons. One program, Meet the Masters, is a parent-run art program in which students learn about four to six artists each year, their styles of art and their influence on art history. Students also create their own piece of art in the style of the selected artist. Our students are

then able to make connections between the artist and world events that they have learned about in class.

To teach our students that they are part of a larger community we conduct a Thanksgiving food drive to benefit families at a Title 1 school in our area. We partner with Reno Central Rotary Club to do a clothing drive for children in the community. Our school also has a student run fundraiser each year, where students select the recipient of a penny-drive. In the past two years students have collected and donated over \$3000 dollars to a school in Africa and to the Washoe County Sherriff's K-9 unit.

To keep parents informed of student academic progress teachers meet with the parents of each of their students in the fall to discuss academic achievement and social development. Parents receive results of each assessment. When a student is identified in need of additional supports parents are invited to a meeting and informed of the area of deficits and are involved in creating a plan of remediation.

3. Professional Development:

The professional development program at Roy Gomm Elementary is a combination of district required, teacher identified needs, and student survey results driven. For the past two years our school district has required professional development focused on reading instruction in order to meet the newly adopted state law known as Nevada KIDS, which focuses on improving reading proficiency for students in kindergarten through third grade. This professional development is a "train the trainer" model where a selected staff member attends training and then brings the information back to our staff. During professional development sessions our teachers learn and discuss instructional strategies. Teachers often observe each other during literacy instruction in order to increase consistency and effectiveness.

Teachers also identify professional development needs through data analysis and seek ways to meet those needs. Recently several of our teachers attended trainings on hands-on science instruction to assist in the implementation of the Next Generation Science Standards. Donated funds purchased classroom science kits that support the new science standards and incorporate STEM activities. At the beginning of this school year, after learning that another class for students with special needs was being placed at our school, our staff decided to pursue professional development on inclusive practices. Our focus has been on learning and implementing strategies that will maximize the effectiveness of the time these students with special needs spend in the regular classroom and how well these students are integrated into our school family.

Each year our district administers a student survey. Two years ago after examining the results in which our students rated self-management of emotions relatively low, the principal and teachers chose to implement a social emotional learning curriculum and focused on our positive behavior supports. The principal and teachers combined to find information and material that would best meet our needs. We informed parents of the school focus and conducted parent trainings on growth-mindset. Classroom lessons were delivered and students were taught self-regulation techniques. Subsequent results of the student surveys has shown a continued increase in how students report the ability to self-manage emotions.

Through a combination of approaches to determine professional development needs, teaching staff and administration feel that they have a voice in the direction of the school and there is support for identified professional development. Teachers having a voice in what professional development is needed and pursued ensures that our teachers are motivated to continually learn and to increase their professional capacity.

4. School Leadership:

Roy Gomm Elementary operates under a shared leadership philosophy. Our official leadership team consists of the principal, representative teachers, parents, and students when appropriate; however, all staff take responsibility for furthering school achievement and progress toward goals. The leadership team is responsible for creating our School Performance Plan, which includes our goals and objectives for academic achievement, student behavior, parent engagement and budget. The team monitors our school performance plan three times per year to ensure that our policies, programs and resources are focused on student achievement. The leadership team analyzes data and is knowledgeable of best instructional

practices and solicits input and feedback from the school community.

The leadership team creates the master schedule ensuring that grade level teams are provided time during the school day to work as professional learning communities. The team also structures the schedule to ensure that each grade level has intervention and special education support daily. The leadership team works with our Parent Faculty Association to direct fundraising to the resources that will best support and meet our school goals.

Students are included in school decision making process as well. There are student representatives on our school uniform committee, students conduct a yearly fund raiser and decide what community organization receives the proceeds, and students recently selected new playground equipment.

Involving all stakeholders ensures greater success in all our endeavors. Having teachers involved in developing school goals increases the likelihood that they will work to achieve those goals; having parents involved in the decision-making process increases the parental support needed to achieve the goals; and having students play a role increases their engagement and sense of efficacy.

Being a school with a single administrator it would be unlikely that we could continue to achieve at the high levels we have without everyone taking on a leadership role. This team approach ensures ownership of initiatives, and confirms that the initiatives we are pursuing are directly related to our school goals.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Roy Gomm Elementary has had success utilizing various instructional strategies, but when members of our school community were asked, “What’s the one thing that makes us successful?” the answer was overwhelming, “family.” Whether asked of a parent, student, staff member, and even retired staff members, all responded with a similar line: “It’s because we’re a family.”

We work hard at trying to make everyone feel included. We have several welcoming events for in-coming students. There is a “What to Expect in Kindergarten” night held in May where the kindergarten teachers and the principal communicate academic and social expectations as well providing resources and offering suggestions to make the transition into kindergarten smooth. Our teachers host drop in days before the start of school for students and parents to come in and meet the teacher and see the classrooms. Our PFA hosts a welcome back to school breakfast on the first day school to encourage parents to connect with each other. We have our traditional Back to School nights where parents see the classrooms and hear from the teachers, but we also make an effort to get each parent to sign up to volunteer in some way.

Our PFA hosts many family events with the sole purpose of getting families together in an enjoyable atmosphere. These include “Gopher Day”, our version of a school carnival, Bingo Night, and Field Day. We have family picnics where parents are encouraged to come eat lunch with their children and some teachers conduct lunch and learning sessions, when parents come eat lunch in the classroom with their students while the teacher “teaches a lesson.”

Each teacher makes a concerted effort to get to know each student and family. This happens before and after school when parents are dropping off or picking up. It also happens through positive phone calls home and home visits.

Though most of the things we do to promote family engagement are not new or novel, we feel that we do them very well and the results speak for themselves. If students can feel the same love and acceptance at school as they do at home then they are much more likely to perform their best and achieve at high levels.