

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mr. Monte Curtis Hawkins

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

Official School Name Belknap Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address P.O.Box 868 P.O. Box 868

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

<u>Beaver</u> City	<u>UT</u> State	<u>84713-0686</u> Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)
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County Utah (UT)

Telephone (435) 438-2281 Fax _____

Web site/URL http://www.bes.beaver.k12.ut.us/ E-mail brad.harris@beaver.k12.ut.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*Dr. Ray Terry
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail ray.terry@beaver.k12.ut.us

District Name Beaver County School District Tel. (435) 438-2291

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. Carolyn White
(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):
- 3 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 2 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 5 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	30	28	58
1	42	22	64
2	50	26	76
3	40	32	72
4	46	37	83
5	33	25	58
6	40	29	69
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	281	199	480

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 16 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 80 % White
 - 0 % 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: 16%

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

While our mobility rate is slightly higher than the 15%, there are several possible factors that contribute. One such factor includes our outgoing Sixth Grade class was 75 total students, while our incoming Kindergarten class had a total number of 55 students. One other factor is that a large employer in our county (CS Mining) shut down and is planning to re-open but they have not rehired as of yet.

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	29
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	54
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	83
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	505
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.16
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	16

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 3%
13 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Spanish

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 52%
Total number students who qualify: 250

8. Students receiving special education services: 15 %
73 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>6</u> Autism | <u>2</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>0</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>3</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>35</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>24</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: 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:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	20
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	2
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	14
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	0

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 26:1

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%	94%	94%	94%	94%
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 work with students in a friendly atmosphere, helping them become self motivated to govern their own success in an environment with high expectations.

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

Belknap Elementary is located in the town of Beaver, Utah and sits at the base of the Tushar Mountain range. The community of Beaver has a rich pioneer history and legacy. Many of the families that reside in the town cherish their ancestry and strive to uphold the traditions, beliefs and core values their progenitors left behind. An amazing sense of family exists in the town of Beaver as many of its residents don't have to look too far down the family tree to find a close relative. This sense of small town family makes for a warm and inviting place to live as the residents of Beaver strive to serve one another and help those in greatest need be it social, physical, economic or educational. In a positive sense, Beaver Utah truly is a unique place to live as the residents strive to lead lives of high character, purpose and service towards their fellow man. Belknap Elementary prides itself on continual community support in all aspects of education for each student who enters the school to be taught. The phrase "it takes a village to raise a child" is frequently heard amongst the many conversations that circulate around the community and in the school. Belknap Elementary relies heavily on the continued reliable support of all it's patrons who have an inner commitment to help students succeed. Our school enjoys the selfless service of multiple individuals willing to volunteer their own time in helping our students succeed academically and in all other areas. There is a deep belief and conviction that the success of our students in elementary school will greatly enhance opportunities for success as they become adults and leaders in the world that awaits them. Belknap Elementary has made many gains in the world of elementary education as the school continues to maintain and improve in all academic areas. From test scores, to monitoring student growth, Belknap Elementary is among some of the highest scores in the state of Utah. One key strategy that we believe truly helps our students in all aspects of receiving a quality education is a focus on hiring educators who have a desire and long term goal of staying in the community for many years to come. Belknap Elementary students enjoy consistency in education as there is a very low turnover rate in our school for teachers. Another key strategy we emphasize and hold dear is a commitment to align our everyday instruction to the Utah Core Standards. We believe this will adequately prepare our students for the next grade level and give them the academic tools necessary to experience success as they matriculate from grade to grade. Focusing on literacy is another key strategy we employ. We hold sacred in our school schedule our literacy block where students are guaranteed to receive effective best practice instructional strategies specifically related to literacy. We emphasize the importance and the absolute necessity for each student to be on grade level before they move from one grade to another. To help us accomplish our task of ensuring that our students are reading on grade level, we rely heavily on intervention supports such as our optional extended day kindergarten program which provides a true intervention for kindergarten students who have been identified as needing additional help in attaining basic phonic instruction and practice. We feel this helps to bolster our students literacy abilities and also helps to fill in any other gaps we may see in a student's ability to communicate and perform basic instructional requests and commands given by the teacher. We have also dedicated many hours and resources to fund an adequate and effective leveled take home library program. This program provides the opportunity for parents to be more involved in the literacy progress of each student. Students are required and held accountable to read everyday at home for at least twenty minutes. Parents or guardians sign off each day indicating whether or not their child met the requirement of reading 20 minutes at home. We have also implemented and funded a reading rotation system that utilizes 4 para professionals as reading aides who visit each kindergarten through 3rd grade classroom to help with small group reading strategies that extend the instructional efforts of our teachers. These reading aides rotate from class to class spending at least twenty minutes a day in each classroom 5 days a week. The school principal is in full support of honoring the sacredness of the scheduled literacy block. There is maximum effort to construct a school wide master schedule that ensures teachers an uninterrupted flow of literacy instruction during our literacy block.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Belknap Elementary School's core curriculum is very rigorous, sequential and aligned to the CORE Standards. We use the same programs and instructional strategies from kindergarten through sixth grade to keep consistency and insure a seamless line of instruction geared to each grade level. In addition the curriculum, instruction and materials are differentiated for individual sub groups and students.

Belknap Elementary School's reading/English Language Arts curriculum is considered to be a model by the Utah Board of Education Language Arts directors. We use several formative and summative assessments to determine each student's strengths and areas of need. We also monitor consistently to ensure every student is progressing. The instruction and curriculum is adapted and enhanced when needed.

Every student receives Tier I instruction on the strategies and skills applicable to their grade level. All teachers incorporate the To/With/By instruction methods for their Tier I instruction to maximize instruction, understanding and student engagement. Tier II and Tier III instruction and materials are added for students who need additional exposure and help on concepts.

Belknap has an extensive leveled library the teachers use for guided reading during the school day. The students are grouped according to their reading levels and receive guided instruction in small group settings. This library also has a section for independent reading. Every student in grades k-3 and students in grade 4-6 who are not reading on grade level receive a book on their independent reading level each night. Parents sign a form each night indicating their child read. This is monitored and recorded daily. The school provides incentives for reading each night. The teachers progress monitor every student's reading level and make changes as the students progress.

Belknap uses the same math program and supplements for all grade levels. The same Three Tier Model of instruction is used in all content areas. Students are grouped according to needs to maximize growth and progress. Their growth and mastery are monitored carefully. Additional staff is used for the students with the greatest needs. This ensures all students are mastering the concepts.

Science was a key area of focus this past year. The school purchased STEM materials and engaged in additional training to increase our Science proficiency. We also implemented a large Science Fair where many students were able to demonstrate their interest, and show their understanding of the scientific process and knowledge. Our efforts have proven to be very effective as our students science growth and understanding has increased as demonstrated by our end of year CORE assessment, SAGE.

Social Studies and History education are vital to the success of our school and community. Many students participate in the National History Day Competition which requires them to demonstrate in- depth research, citation and presentation skills. Each year we have students advance to the regional, state and national competitions.

Character education is an important part of our school as we believe in teaching the "whole" child. This year we have focused on bullying, becoming bully proof, and standing up for others. We are starting to see some success with this, but we realize this needs to be ongoing. Every child needs to feel safe, valued and accepted.

We offer a preschool at Belknap Elementary. This is a combination of special education students and self-pay regular education students. This curriculum is aligned directly with the Utah Pre-Kindergarten standards as well as our school curriculum in math, phonemic awareness, phonics and reading. We have found this to be very beneficial in preparing our students for kindergarten. They are assessed and progress monitored to assure they are acquiring the skills necessary both academically and socially to be successful in kindergarten. Our Beaver District Kindergarten Screen Test and state KEEP entry assessments have validated the impact and success this alignment has had on our preschool students. Because of the evidence

of this program, we are going to reach out to other preschools to help educated them as well. We also offer an extended day kindergarten for students who are not reaching proficiency in any area, but specifically in phonemic awareness and phonics as these skills are the foundation for future reading success. In turn, it is our belief that reading success is the foundation of overall success in school. We are constantly working to improve, but feel very confident about our methods and curriculum because of our success with SAGE (End of year CORE assessment) and DIBELS (state reading assessment). Belknap finished first in ELA, Math and Science for comparable schools in the state on the SAGE 2016-17 assessment. We were in the top seven out of 755 schools for K-3 Reading. The State Office ELA directors are coming to visit our school in April to observe and share some of our success methods with other schools in the state.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

We have a fully equipped music room and a part time music teacher. Each class has music once a week for at least an hour. This is longer and more frequent when they are preparing for a program. He works primarily on music foundations and vocal performances. He includes some instruments in his lessons and performances. We have a school wide Christmas concert that is a huge tradition in the community. This often includes music and traditions from other countries and nationalities. Each class also learns and performs an additional program based on their social studies curriculum. For example the fourth grade program is based on Utah History. It includes songs, dances, narratives, and instrumental pieces that depict Utah History. The fifth grade program is similar, but based on United States History. These musical performances enhance our social studies/history curriculum and provide an opportunity for students to learn from a different perspective. The fifth grade is always involved in the Veterans Day Program as well. We also offer an early morning guitar class and an after school orchestra.

Physical/health/nutrition education is a big part of our school and community. Our goal is to ensure the physical well-being of our students and promote healthy life styles that enhance their lives. We have organized Physical Education for 50 minutes daily. This includes exercise and various sports. This is taught by the classroom teacher. We also work in conjunction with the Utah State Extension Program to provide nutrition lessons for our students. The program teaches nutritional facts and follows up with healthy snacks or meals. The students learn and enjoy the benefits of healthy food choices at the same time. We also offer 4-H Fridays from this same agency. These classes are varied, and offer a wide assortment of learning opportunities for our students. They include food and nutrition, child care, cake decorating, archery, rockets, robots, leather projects, sewing and more. These are open to all students age eight and older.

Belknap is a leader in technology. We have a chrome book for every student in grades 3-6, and two computer labs for all grade levels. Kindergarten through second grades have Kindle carts. Most of the curriculum for 4th-6th grades is on the chrome books. The teacher provides the instruction and some guided practice for math. The independent portion of the lesson is completed on the students' individual devices. We offer supplemental technology based programs in reading, math and science for all grade levels. These programs are used to provided additional practice and enhance the regular curriculum and is aligned with the regular classroom instruction. Our well stocked school library is a mixture of old traditional library lessons and activities combined with technology education. Our school librarian often teaches science, history or character lessons. She includes instruction, activities and books to reach every student. She does a very good job of integrating other content areas while promoting reading. She meets with each class for an hour weekly and is open to all students daily.

We do not offer an actual foreign language class in our school, but we have a number of students and parents that speak Spanish. Some of them come to us only speaking Spanish. We work with them to help them assimilate into the school system and learn English because all of the curriculum and assessments are in English. This is often a challenge as we are try to teach the content along with the language. In addition, we realize the importance of honoring their culture and keeping their native language as well. We have several aides that work with these students. Three of the aides, a teacher and our principal speak Spanish and are able to assist in translating and combining the languages in our system. In addition, Beaver High School's Latinos in Action class comes over to help us once a week for two hours. They are able to work one on one with the students. This is a huge help as they can help our Spanish students work through their assignments.

Our goal is to have all of our students receive the best possible education in every area of their lives.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

Belknap Elementary School uses the Three Tiered Model of Instruction in content areas. All of our students receive Tier I instruction based on the Utah CORE Standard. The teachers use direct explicit instruction with a variety of methods and instructional strategies. We use the Big Eight instructional practices in this portion of our teaching. The teacher begins by stating and posting expectations and learning targets for each lesson. This helps the students understand what they are expected to learn and how they will demonstrate they have mastered it. Throughout the lesson, the teacher uses attention prompts, proximity, cueing, signals, time limits and voice to keep all students on task and engaged in the lesson.

Students who need extra help or instruction on the lessons receive Tier II instruction. This is an extension of the Tier I content and instruction and is usually delivered by one or more of the instructional aides under the direction of the classroom teacher. This includes additional help and practice time for the students. It is often differentiated to meet the strengths and needs of the student, and is repeated if necessary.

Students who have learning difficulties or may just need extra help and exposures to learn the concepts receive Tier III instruction. This provides multiple chances for the students to learn in a variety of ways. This is under the direction of the special education teacher or other highly qualified teachers. The instruction is differentiated base on each student's needs. We try to keep this instruction in the regular classroom, but at times it will be delivered in a quieter, less distracting environment if it is in the best interest of the student. The students' progress is monitored carefully and interventions are adjusted as needed. The Tier III level also applies to our students that benefit from deeper and more in depth instruction and concepts. We address this by grouping them into a class and differentiating the materials and depth of knowledge lessons to enhance their learning. This is monitored frequently to make sure they are understanding and capable of this extended learning.

We use a variety of formative and summative assessments and regularly progress monitor to guide our instruction. We use DIBELS for K-3 rd grades to assess phonics and reading. This is administered to every student three times a year. The students who fall into the "some risk" category based on their score receive Tier II interventions and are monitored every three to four weeks. Instruction is adjusted based on their progress. Students who score in the "at risk" category are monitored every two weeks on their progress, and instruction is adjusted if necessary. Students who score on grade level are monitored every six weeks to make sure they are still on grade level and progressing. Kindergarten students are administered a screening assessment and the Utah KEEP assessment to determine strengths and needs. The students are offered extended day instruction if they fall in the "at risk" category. The KEEP assessment is administered again at the end of the year to see if they are ready for first grade.

All students in 1st-6th grades are given the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) at the beginning of the year to determine reading levels. These are used to group students for instruction and independent reading. It is given at the end of the year to determine proficiency. All students in grades 3-6 are given the Utah SAGE summative at the end of the year to determine proficiency in Math, ELA and Science. The SAGE Benchmark assessments are used throughout the year to insure mastery and growth. The scores are disaggregated according to sub groups, and instruction is determined by the students' areas of proficiency or deficits.

We are a high performing school and are working and monitoring progress to ensure our students grow or maintain proficiency by enhancing and using the same methods. At the end of the 2016-17 school year, we were number one in Math, ELA and Science for comparable schools, but our special education and ELL students were not as proficient as we wanted. We are addressing this by adding extra help and instruction for these students. We are monitoring them carefully and adjusting instruction and content as needed. We are seeing growth.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Belknap Elementary believes that academic success for any student depends heavily on their own ability to self assess and self monitor not only their academic behavior, habits and tendencies; but also their social behavior, habits and tendencies. We engage our students by focusing on management strategies inside the classroom that provide a healthy classroom climate conducive to student learning. Such management strategies include clear and explicit expectations, procedures and routines, positive student cueing, timely attention prompts, student appropriate signals, specific time limits, proximity and movement, appropriate voice and diction, and higher order questioning methods that require students to think beyond simply regurgitating facts and answers. We also strive to create well thought out lesson plans that follow Core standards. Embedded in each lesson plan is an effort to show students what success looks like by effective modeling of the desired outcomes, and holding all students accountable for meeting the outcome in a way that is fair for their own academic ability. We believe that engagement occurs when both teacher and student fully understand what is expected and they both have a good understanding of a plan in place of how to meet those teacher directed expectations. Belknap Elementary strives to provide a positive environment that supports each student in their quest for academic, social and emotional growth. Our school focuses on engaging with all students in positive ways outside of the classroom. One directive our school principal has put in place is that of greeting each student each day in a positive manner. For example, the principal meets students at the front of the building every morning to welcome them into the school and wishes them to have a great day. Our teachers are also held to the same expectation of meeting each one of their students at the door before they enter their classroom to welcome them with a hello and a smile. This has created a safe environment and atmosphere where students know they will be treated with kindness and respect. Our student council has also been given the charge to set the example for all students by being kind, considerate and aware of all students. It is not unusual to see members of our student council greeting students in the halls, at lunch time or during assemblies. Belknap Elementary believes in living the Golden Rule as this concept of treating others how you want to be treated is frequently repeated and taught to all students. Belknap Elementary also strives to create an environment where teachers feel valued and supported. To do this, we believe that teachers need to have an opportunity to have their voices heard. We have committed to supporting our teachers with what they need, and with what they want that will help them have the desire and drive to be successful in their own classrooms. For example, our school gathers data on specific topics that are relevant to each teacher. Some of these topics include but are not limited to calendar items, field trips, professional development, personal days, collaboration, master schedule, lunch duty, playground duty, assessment, assemblies, parent teacher conferences, etc. We gather this data through multiple sources such as teacher online surveys, and in person communication through consistent faculty meetings and training. During our meetings and training, an open floor is the policy where teachers can freely share their thoughts and opinions with the group as a whole. In addition to whole group meetings and training, there are also opportunities for professional, but personal conversations with both the administrator and teacher present in which constructive criticism is given and received by both sides. Through these efforts we feel that our teachers have a sense of value and feel supported in their role as educators. In these efforts, teachers feel valued and supported wherein they have a voice and opportunities to give input and express their opinions.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The relationship between the school, families and community is vital to any success we experience. Quick reliable communication with families is critical as we do our best to share important, relevant information with parents and/or guardians relating to both the celebrations and difficulties that our students are experiencing. Being proactive in our communication with families enables us to work collaboratively in celebrating student success, and if needed, drafting plans for student improvement. Our school's PTA program is running effectively as many parent volunteers make an effort to provide activities that benefit our school directly. We have many activities in our school under the direction of the PTA that help improve our school as they raise money for specific student and/or school use that helps us accomplish our goals as a school. The PTA also runs a monthly school newsletter to help disseminate information that helps keep

parents informed. Our Community Council consists of 7 parent volunteers that help allocate state money we receive for the assistance of driving student improvement and success. With the help of the principal, our Community Council goes through a process of determining our school's greatest academic needs through the disaggregation of student academic data. Our greatest needs are identified and then money is allocated accordingly in an effort to meet those specific needs. Our school also uses a website, social media, phone tree and remind app to communicate directly with all stakeholders. Our website includes information for each teacher and employee in our school. We also use our website to communicate any upcoming events, calendar items, lunch menu items, and district wide policies that are important for parents to know and understand. Our school Facebook page provides quick, up to date and timely information that helps parents stay accurately informed. Our phone tree is a quick voice messaging technology that enables the school to leave a voice message with pertinent information that parents need to be reminded of. Our remind app functions in much the same way as our phone tree, the only difference being that parents and guardians receive a text message instead of a voice message. Parents and guardians also have access to their students' academic grades and citizenship grades by logging in to their online student profiles through the school student information system.

3. Professional Development:

Professional development plays an important role in helping our teachers improve in many academic instructional areas. We believe that professional development opportunities provide ways for colleagues to collaborate and build camaraderie between themselves that permeate our schools in a positive way. All teachers are given equal opportunities to attend professional development in an attempt to improve current instructional practices that will enhance student performance in our school. Our approach is to look at our school's specific data assessment trends over a full academic year and then determine our greatest area of needed improvement. Funding for any professional development that is in addition to what our district already offers comes directly from our school's Community Council. The council will ask for specific data to be shared with them, as well as request feedback and input from classroom teachers to determine greatest professional development needs. Some examples of professional development that has been offered to our teachers include but are not limited to topics such as student engagement, classroom management, differentiated instruction, effective collaboration and direct explicit instruction. In a perfect world all teachers would have the opportunity to attend all the professional development that is offered, but unfortunately that is not logistically or financially possible. Those teachers who do have the opportunity to attend any professional development that is offered are required to come back to the school to share with their colleagues what was learned and how to best implement the effective strategies that were taught during the professional development. Our school district also plays a vital role in offering relevant professional development opportunities that benefit our teachers in their efforts to provide quality and effective instruction. Much like our Community Council, our district goes through a process of disaggregating data to identify the greatest professional development needs district wide. A committee comprised of members from each school is organized to look at specific data and areas of improvement and then decisions are made on time and place of agreed upon professional development. All district teachers are expected to attend this specific professional development, and then expected to implement any and all strategies that will help them improve their overall effectiveness as an educator. The impact of effective professional development opportunities for our teachers and administrator is vital in helping our students receive the most proven and time tested best practices when it comes to classroom instructional strategies and management. Our teachers are encouraged to continually sharpen their saw and to always be open to changes that will have a positive impact on student learning and achievement.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy of our school derives from the leadership style of the school principal. The leadership philosophy of the principal is one of setting clear and explicit procedures, routines and expectations. Revisiting those procedures, routines and expectations often with all staff members is a vital key to maintaining the appropriate structure inside the school to help foster success in all aspects of both the student educational experience as well as that of all employees who work inside the school. An important sense of accountability and trust are also vital components of our school's leadership philosophy. The Principal relies on the input of others to help drive decisions that will affect the whole school. The

leadership team at Belknap Elementary consists of the school principal, instructional coach, literacy coach, teacher mentors and grade level team leaders. The school principal leads the leadership team in an effort to collaborate on the greatest academic and cultural needs inside the school. For example, each teacher with less than 3 years experience is considered a provisional teacher and are assigned to a mentor teacher. The role of the mentor teacher is to be a support in helping teachers successfully implement instructional strategies and methods that are handed down by the principal and instructional coach. The principal works directly with the instructional coach to identify greatest instructional needs of a provisional teacher, and formulates a plan to help implement the decided upon strategies inside the classroom. The principal acts as the primary evaluator when it comes to teacher effectiveness in the delivery of instruction and classroom management. The principal conducts many observations inside each classroom to collect multiple data points that help determine whether or not a teacher is being sufficiently effective in their direct instruction to students and in handling classroom management effectively. The principal provides feedback during debriefing discussions with all teachers and employees directly after any observation that tell them areas of strengths and areas of needed improvement. Each debriefing session with an employee provides an optimum opportunity for the principal to discuss and ensure that all policies, programs, relationships, and resources are focused on student success and achievement in all academic and social areas. By focusing on clear expectations and employee accountability to those expectations, our school has been able to maintain, and or improve in all areas of academics that have enabled students to experience a high level of success each year.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Belknap Elementary School's literacy program is the root of our success. This has been a work in progress over the years. We are now at 93% reading proficiency, and are still working to improve. Our literacy program is considered to be one of the top in the state. We have numerous schools visit us to see why we are being successful. We work from the premise that "one size does NOT fit all". We diagnose or assess each child and determine their strengths and weakness. Every student is assessed at least three times a year to determine strengths, weaknesses and actual reading levels. We develop our reading instruction and curriculum based on the data from our assessments. The teacher groups the students according to their reading levels or areas of need. Each student is given instruction on their reading level. The teachers get their leveled materials from our extensive leveled library. Every student is monitored regularly to ensure progress, or determine a need for intervention. We have a Take Home Library program that provides an independent level book each night for all K-3 rd grade students and 4-6 grade students that are not reading on grade level. These books are exchanged and recorded daily. The parents are required to listen to the child read and sign the form. Students are monitored for growth and levels change at least five times a year. Some students progress up to 10 levels in a year. We have reading aides that rotate through the younger grades for guided reading groups. This ensures that each child reads to someone daily. These groups follow the Tier I instruction and the aides reteach and practice the skills and strategies the teacher taught. The reading skills and strategies are continued through the upper grades and intervention is provided for students who still have deficits. We have a strong consistent phonics program we use from preK-3rd grades. It is also used for intervention in the upper grades. We have focused on our writing and worked collaborative to have consistent writing skills and strategies taught in all grade. We now have some of the highest SAGE writing scores in the state.

Our literacy program is so successful because of the dedication of the teachers, students and parents working together to make sure our students are proficient in reading. Reading and writing are the foundation of our school's success.