

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):
- 5 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 3 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 3 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 11 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	15	18	33
K	20	13	33
1	14	12	26
2	18	10	28
3	9	10	19
4	14	15	29
5	8	18	26
6	14	8	22
7	6	9	15
8	5	7	12
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	123	120	243

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 0 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 100 % 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: 15%

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	13
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	16
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	29
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	195
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.15
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	15

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: 71 %
Total number students who qualify: 172

8. Students receiving special education services: 12 %
28 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>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>5</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>9</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>8</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>2</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 2
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.	14
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.	6
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 16:1

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	94%	94%	94%	95%	95%
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 prepare each individual student to be a productive citizen, to be an informed, responsible decision maker, and to be a lifelong learner.

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

St. Paul Elementary moved into its current building in 1992 as a PreK-7 school. In 2012, 8th grade was added following high school consolidation. St. Paul Elementary is a Title I School that serves 234 students in grades PreK-8.

This small, rural school is located in the town of St. Paul, VA, which lies in the heart of the beautiful Appalachian Mountains in far Southwest Virginia. St. Paul has approximately 1,000 residents and is a place of extraordinary natural beauty, where the pristine Clinch River serves as the lifeblood of the community. The citizens and families of St. Paul have a lot of pride in St. Paul Elementary School and their town. When coal revenue decreased, the town began working to revive itself by relying on the natural treasures from the environmental riches of the river and the rich ecosystem that it feeds. It is their charge not only to preserve what they have but to help it thrive. Our community has seen stores close and unemployment rise, but we are excited about our future as a school and as a town. One of St. Paul's valued treasures is its people. Because of their vision, hard work, and dedication, the town is seeing new businesses. The community has a vision for the future, but more specifically in the children.

The population in the community is made up of 99.94% White, .03% African-American, and .03% Hispanic. The greatest diversity is the socioeconomics of the students with 71% of our students receiving free or reduced lunch. The median household income is of \$48,313. The lifeblood of our community has always been coal mining. In 2011, the community saw a downturn in coal production. Because of this decline, St. Paul Elementary qualifies as a Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) school. As a CEP school, all students eat school breakfast and lunch at no charge. As well as free breakfast and lunch, the local churches provide school supplies, United Way provides weekend food backpacks to needy students, and town businesses and churches provide Christmas presents. We try to make sure basic needs are taken care of in order to maximize learning.

St. Paul Elementary has a diverse student body, 11.5% identified with a disability and 10% identified gifted. We set high expectations for all our students and strive to prepare each individual student to be a productive, informed citizen that is a responsible decision maker and a lifelong learner. The teachers work diligently to enhance differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students and are given autonomy of choosing the best practices for their classroom.

Students with disabilities are integrated into collaborative, differentiated, co-teaching classrooms where they receive the general curriculum with needed support, as well as, time set aside to address individual needs in reading and math. We strive to provide our students with the best 21st Century education possible. The students are immersed in technology. All classrooms are provided with interactive boards or panels and teachers and students have access to computer labs or mobile labs. A STEM coordinator, paid for by the town of St. Paul, provides weekly challenges for all students. Teachers provide as many real-life experiences as possible with hands-on activities and field trips to the Environmental Education Center, Challenger Learning Center, and Washington D.C. Our students also participate in the Virginia Space ThinSat program.

We want to make sure our students are productive citizens in a global workforce. We support leadership development through the National Junior Honor Society, public speaking through monthly programs, and larger productions with University of Virginia at Wise. Because our student enrollment is low, we see more students who are shy or have undeveloped skills participate in these programs. At the end of each year we see significant growth in leadership skills and witness higher self-esteem.

We feel that parental involvement is extremely important. We have a Family Engagement Coordinator (FEC) that helps increase parental involvement and communication. The FEC works with parents in grades PreK-4 and helps parents build a strong understanding about the school, curriculum program, and student support. The FEC plans weekly activities with parents and students and sends home monthly newsletters and calendars. The FEC resource room is open daily for parents to check out instructional materials to use at home with their children. We have gotten a lot of positive feedback on parental involvement.

St. Paul Elementary is the epitome of a “Community School”. Our success is because of the stakeholders, teachers, parents, central office staff, community members, and town council.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

St. Paul Elementary School provides a rigorous student-focused curriculum. Teachers use explicit and differentiated instruction in small group, whole group, and individualized setting that is data driven and aligned with the Virginia Standards of Learning. The core curriculum for grades PreK-5 consists of 120 minutes daily of uninterrupted differentiated blocks in reading and math and 45 minutes daily for history and science. Grades 6-8 core curriculum consist of 90 minutes of uninterrupted block instruction. Student progress is tracked in grades PreK-3 with PALs and teacher reports, grades 2-8 quarterly Region 7 benchmark tests in reading, science, math, and social science, teacher reports, and grades 3-8 SOL test. Students who receive Title I or special education services are provided individualized instruction with a multisensory reading intervention program. When the teachers see that a student is not responding to the core curriculum, remediation is provided in small groups or pulled out for individual instruction

Reading/English Language Arts: In grades PreK-2 we focus on children learning to read. The teachers provide a balance reading approach that includes phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, vocabulary, word study, guided/shared reading, and writing. Formal and informal assessments are used to track student progress and grouping. Teachers differentiate and provide explicit instruction with small groups, leveled readers, and learning centers. Reading is enhanced in the computer lab with online programs that personalize reading practice and writing. In grades 3-8, we focus on children reading to learn. The teachers provide explicit instruction that addresses basic and higher level literacy skills in vocabulary, comprehension, writing, and public speaking that address the Standards of Learning. The teachers track student progress with region 7 benchmark quarterly assessments, reading performance program, teacher assessments, and SOL test.

Mathematics: St. Paul Elementary has a balanced differentiated math program that uses explicit instruction to develop skills in problem solving, number and number sense, computation and estimation, measurement, geometry, probability and statistics, patterns, functions and algebra. Teachers track student progress with Region 7 benchmark tests, teacher assessments, and SOL tests. Students that don't respond to the core curriculum are provided remediation and extra practice with an online program. Students that have proven mastery at the end of 6th grade are accelerated to Pre-Algebra in 7th grade and Alg. I in 8th grade. Students who have not mastered 6th grade skills take Math 7 in 7th grade and Math 8 in 8th grade. This gives them another year of math before taking Algebra I.

Science: St. Paul's Elementary science curriculum is designed for building inquiry and STEM skills; therefore, offering many opportunities for students to participate in scientific investigations from kindergarten through eighth grade. Hands on activities are used to reinforce understanding and explanation of content in the strand areas of Scientific Investigation, Reasoning and Logic, Force, Motion and Energy, Matter; Life Processes, Earth Patterns, Cycles and Changes, and Interrelationships in Earth/Space Systems. The science instruction encourages students to be involved in problem-based learning and scientific inquiry, which, requires them to use reasoning skills with an environmental understanding.

The SPE campus is adjacent to the Estonsa Learning Center campus, an internationally known outdoor wetlands classroom. The wetlands provide opportunities for students to study a wetlands ecosystem, which encourages students to be mindful in the preservation of a natural resource. SPE is also located near the Clinch River, the home to about 50 species of mussels, which is more than any other river in the world. The students participate in mussel monitoring with our high school students. These two outdoor classrooms have helped students understand and appreciate science.

Social Studies: The overall goal of the history/social studies curriculum at St. Paul Elementary School is to prepare students to be informed and responsible citizens in a democratic society by studying the historical development of American ideas from exploration to the present. While focusing on political and economic history, the standards provide students with a basic knowledge of American culture through a survey of major issues, movements, people, and events in United States and Virginia history. Students are engaged

and practice these skills through interactive notes, mock elections, collaboration and meetings with local town council members and business leaders, and through the use of mock trials. Mock trials have proven to be an effective learning tool for students by helping students understand the law, practice critical thinking, and gain greater confidence with public speaking by assuming the roles of attorneys and witnesses in a fictional criminal or civil trial.

At St. Paul Elementary, our main goal for Pre-K is to get our young learners ready for Kindergarten. The Core Curriculum is designed for students to be able to understand letter knowledge, phonemic awareness, print word awareness, and phonics to prepare them for reading skills. The curriculum provides hands-on tools and experiences that help the children master needed skills. They learn a routine, school rules, master all letter names and sounds, count to 100, and even sound out and read some words. The program focuses on safety and how to create a calming environment which helps children feel safe.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Students at St. Paul Elementary participate in a wide range of curriculum resources. Students in PreK-3 have P.E. and recess daily and music and library exploratory on rotation. The resource teachers incorporate state standards and reinforce core curriculum. The music teacher has monthly programs that support public speaking, literature, and history. In music class, students learn about sound, reading music, listening skills, and stage presence. In P.E. class, the teacher works on fitness while incorporating skills that helps students with math facts, reading, and team work. A monthly visual arts program is offered after school that helps students develop their artistic skills.

Students in grades 4-8 have two 45 minute resource classes a day. P.E. is taught daily and a wide-range selection of curriculum enriching class options are offered on a rotation schedule. Those classes include band, general music, art, technology, library, and Spanish.

Music: Students are given many opportunities to develop their musical ability. Grades PreK-4 have general music, grades 4 and 5 participate in general music and learn to play the recorder. Grades 6 and 7 learn general music and basic guitar skills. Grades 6-8 have an opportunity to join the middle school band. Students showcase their skills during monthly performances, musicals, Christmas tree lighting, and the spring concert. Students in grades 3-8 have the opportunity to join the JAMS afterschool string band.

Art: Students in grades PreK-4 are given opportunities to attend after school art class. Students in grades 4-8 attend art class on a rotation basis. Students learn about different mediums, art history, and culture. Students' art work is displayed throughout the building and is entered in regional art contests.

Physical education/nutrition: All students participate in a daily physical education class and are taught about health and nutrition. During physical education classes, students participate in obstacle courses, circuit training, and skills strengthening. Students participate in Choose My Plate program, 4-H health initiative program, and Wise County health Abstinence Education Program. The school nurse teaches safety, preventative measures, hygiene, and nutrition. Students in grades 4, 6, and 8 participate in the DARE program and Bully Prevention program.

All students are taught computer skills. Students have access to online reading and math programs, office productivity software, and interactive boards. Students in grades 6-8 are taught keyboarding, word processing, and formatting. Students in the 8th grade participate in the middle school FBLA competitions. Students have access to two computer labs and 8 mobile labs. All classrooms have access to interactive panels or boards and mobile labs. The ITRT (Instructional Technology Resource Teachers) helps keep teachers updated on new technologies and resources.

Foreign Language- Students at SPE have the opportunity to take foreign language classes as one of their electives at Eastside High School. The class introduces the language and begins the development of competency in the areas of listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing.

Gifted education program and NJHS (National Junior Honor Society). Students in the gifted program and in the NJHS are challenged with enhanced curriculum. They take a chartered trip to the area they studied. Last year they went to Washington, D.C. and this year they will be going to Jamestown/Williamsburg. We feel that these educational trips enrich the children's knowledge and allow them to experience something that many of them may never have the opportunity to experience otherwise.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

The faculty and staff at St. Paul Elementary have had intensive training on differentiated and explicit instruction. They use effective instructional approaches and strategies to meet individual needs. Such activities include: modeling, remediation, small group instruction, and literacy centers to help reach all students. The teachers scaffold and differentiate their lessons in a way that help students master taught skills. Students participate in weekly STEM challenges, use a hands-on approach, and various technologies to maximize learning.

The teachers use varied formative and informative assessments to track progress and to identify the students who have not responded to the general instruction in the classroom. When those skills are identified and remediation is provided to help the students master the taught skills. The teachers use daily spiral reviews to reinforce taught skills and encourage students to read books in their target range, which helps to improve their reading skills and comprehension.

PALS (Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening) is used to identify fundamental components of literacy and spelling inventory is used to find missing spelling features. Students are provided instruction based on the level that was identified. Online reading and math programs are used to monitor students' progress and to provide extra practice and remediation.

Technology is used daily to provide opportunities to accelerate student achievement in reading and math. These programs provide instruction based on the students' individual levels. Longitudinal SOL data are used to evaluate the effectiveness of our curriculum and teacher instruction. Data is collected at the teacher, student, and classroom levels to monitor progress. When an area is identified as a weakness in the instruction and/or curriculum, adjustments are made. This strategy has been very effective in school improvement.

Region 7 Benchmark tests are given in grades 2-8 in reading and math. These data are evaluated at the school, teacher, and student level. The data are analyzed and changes or remediation are provided as needed.

Special education and Title I teachers assess their students and provide instruction with is a multisensory reading intervention program for the lowest performing students. The program addresses reading success through an intensive, structured, and spiraling curriculum that incorporates phonemic awareness, phonics, spelling, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency.

Gifted and NJHS (National Junior Honor Society) students' curriculum is enriched with high expectations and overnight educational fieldtrips, afterschool art, and various musicals.

The teachers at St. Paul Elementary involve their students as much as possible with real-life activities. The STEM coordinator provides weekly challenges, the science teacher's work with the outdoor science classroom coordinator to provide hands-on activities, and they take their students on valuable field trips.

St. Paul Elementary teachers identify students who are not responding to the regular instruction and put an intervention plan in place as soon as possible. We believe early intervention is the best. To address any area of concern we target students and offer them afterschool remediation in reading, math, writing, and science. The algebra readiness paraprofessional provides extra support to struggling students in the regular classroom. The special education and Title I paraprofessional provide extra support in the regular classroom and small group and individual pullouts.

When students don't respond to the classroom interventions, they are referred to the Child Study Team. The

team is comprised of the principal, teachers, parent, guidance counselor, special education teacher, and school social worker. During the meeting we discuss concerns and the interventions that were used and discuss other interventions that need to be explored. After the meeting, the teachers use the recommended interventions and track the student's progress to see if it is working. The team meets monthly to discuss the data. If the student does not show progress, the team decides if more interventions need to be tried or if the child should be referred to the school psychologist for evaluation.

Teachers at St. Paul Elementary realize that every student is unique and at times may not respond to the general education instruction. Because of this, all students are monitored and remediated as needed. This is evident with our SOL state test scores in reading and math.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

St. Paul Elementary provides students with a safe, family friendly environment where failure is not an option. We set high expectations for all faculty and students and celebrate our successes. We provide incentives to motivate students to do their best and to build leadership and character skills. Students are given opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities such as Gifted and Talented field trips, ProArts programs, and the JAMS musical program. The National Junior Honor Society has been one of the most successful programs for our students in grades 6-8. We are seeing students develop into young leaders. We are also seeing younger students' academic grades improve so that they will be eligible for the program when they enter 6th grade.

The Family Engagement Coordinator (FEC) provides an inviting environment for our parents and community. The FEC events include the following: Back to School Bash, Science Night, Reading Night, and Science Fair Night. These events have motivated a lot of families to get involved with the school. Weekly STEM activities have helped increase attendance and end of the year celebrations to the pool and football field have motivated students to perform at their best.

Students and families feel welcomed at St. Paul Elementary. The faculty and staff know and address students by their first names, know the student's strengths and weaknesses, and provide support as needed. We have a weekend food program, Christmas Angel Tree program, and a basic essential needs program that is provided for anyone that is in need. Parents keep the staff informed of any events that may impact them at school and support is provided as needed. We have two-way communication through e-mails, communication app, newsletters, monthly calendars, and an electronic program where parents are able to monitor student's daily progress.

The cafeteria walls are used as a living yearbook. Students' pictures are printed on canvases and displayed on the walls. Students and parents feel valued when they see these pictures displayed for no reason other than being a SPE student.

We expect all students to do their best and to take responsibility for their actions. We provide a zero tolerance bully free environment. The faculty and students feel like their opinions and contributions are valued. Everyone is respected and treated fairly. The construction of self-worth contributes to teachers' motivation and creates a positive climate for everyone in the building.

St. Paul Elementary has a small staff with one administrator. The administrator relies on the faculty's leadership skills to help the school run smoothly. The staff feels valued because they have a part in making decisions in the daily operation of the school.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

One of the successes St. Paul Elementary has found in working with family and community members is having a Family Engagement Coordinator. The Family Engagement Coordinator plans activities with grades PreK-4; Back-to-School Bash with free school supplies, Boo Hoo Breakfast for PreK and Kindergarten families, Grandparents' Tea, Movie Night on the football field, Appalachian Heritage Day, cookies and ornaments with Santa, and information workshops with parents. The coordinator plans afterschool activities; Literacy Night, Spooky Science Night, Science Fair Night, and parent meetings.

The coordinator has a learning club for students who are four years old but are not in the PreK program, every two weeks at the school, as well as a toddler story time for students age birth to four that meets monthly at the school. During these times, the Coordinator has a lesson and talks to parents about literacy. Students who attend receive free books and instructional materials. The Coordinator also gives books to students at the local food bank.

St. Paul Elementary promotes leadership with the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) for grades 6-8. We try to teach our students to give back to the community. Students in grades PreK-8 participate in a canned food drive for the local food bank, and the student in the NJHS fills backpacks with supplies for children in homeless shelters.

St. Paul Elementary School works with all stakeholders. We have partnered with the Town of St. Paul to help our children. The town provides a STEM Coordinator for one fourth of the school day, financial support for field trips and community events, access to Lake Estonoa science classroom, and security from town police.

St. Paul Elementary teachers talk to students and parents weekly about any concerns or issues they may have. We have open house at the beginning of the year, where parents meet with the teachers and parent teacher conferences at the end of the first and third nine weeks grading periods. Parents have 24/7 online access to student's grades and can request a conference at any time. The Family Engagement Coordinator has a Family and Community Engagement team consisting of Title I parents and the Coordinator that helps plan and work school events.

To keep parents and guardians informed, we send home monthly calendars, event newsletters, and use an "all call" system as well as communication apt.

3. Professional Development:

Professional development is a vital component of St. Paul Elementary School's improvement plan. The faculty and staff participate in a variety of professional development opportunities throughout the year, which has shown to have a positive impact on student achievement and school improvement.

Professional development needs are identified through collected data from discipline issues, test scores for overall and subgroups, and the vision of the school moving forward. Classroom observations and data are used to evaluate the success of the professional development, and let the administrator and teachers know if additional training is needed.

Our division provides various professional development opportunities for administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals. One of the most powerful professional development conferences was the Ron Clark Academy. Several teachers and administrators have attended a two-day training. This training was very motivational and set a tone for high expectations and leadership. Our division has provided professional development on identifying difficulty behaviors, explicit and differentiated instruction, special education updates, technology updates, data, and curriculum alignment.

One of the most beneficial professional development activities for our staff is peer observations at other schools within the district. Teachers at St. Paul Elementary observe identified successful teachers in the county. We feel that this is a beneficial cost saving strategy. SPE teachers learn new strategies, ideas, or about new programs from their colleagues who have proven successes with very similar demographics.

St. Paul Elementary has a part-time Instructional Technology Resource Teacher (ITRT). The ITRT works with teachers to keep them updated with current technology and digital resources for the classroom. Teachers are provided monthly training in the classroom and via Google Hangouts on topics such as Google Classroom, gradebook, using Chrome Books in the classroom, and interactive board technologies.

4. School Leadership:

SPE's principal believes that leadership is a privilege. The principal is the one that carries the responsibility to inspire others and to direct them to attain the vision and goals of the school and to empower others to develop leadership skills.

The leadership team is comprised of the principal, school nurse, and two classroom teachers that assist the principal when the principal is absent. The principal believes communication is a vital part of successful

leadership and that one should value people. The principal equips the faculty and staff with responsibilities and leadership roles that showcase their talent. As a staff, our goal is to help students succeed. We have started the National Junior Honor Society to encourage students to develop leadership skills and to become productive citizens.

The principal is a visible person in the school and community and is involved in all school and most community activities. Faculty, staff, students, parents, and community feel comfortable giving suggestions and discussing any concerns.

The principal sets high expectations for all faculty, staff, and students. Failure is not an option. Teachers continue to develop skills needed to help students succeed by attending workshops and peer observations. The principal provides instruction on using data to find strengths and weaknesses and does daily walkthroughs identifying high quality instruction. The principal supports and values the faculty and staffs' talents, empowers strong instructional classroom leaders to become leaders in helping others develop strong instructional skills. The teachers are encouraged to learn from each other but are given the freedom to develop their own skills. This can be seen throughout the building as a variety of teaching styles are visible.

The principal stays abreast on current policy, but also relies on the special education and Title I teachers to follow local, state, and federal guidelines. The principal keeps classroom teachers up-to-date on current changes to curriculum and testing guidelines.

The principal creates a safe environment with a zero tolerance to bullying. The principal, faculty, and staff make every child feel special by displaying random pictures of students having fun. The school nurse works along with the faculty and staff to help students become problem solvers of difficult situations. The principal has a 9 week reward system in place that celebrates good behavior. The classroom teachers reward their students weekly for good behavior and hard work.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

One of the most successful strategies at St. Paul Elementary is using data to drive our instruction. St. Paul Elementary teachers use pre and post assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of their instruction and content alignment.

The teachers use data to help them align their curriculum with state and division standards and help them monitor students' progress. The data is broken down into strands to find any weak areas in the curriculum. The principal and teachers look at the longitude and vertical data to track student and teacher growth. The principal and teachers have grade level meetings to discuss formative and summative data at the end of each 9 weeks, making needed adjustments.

Teachers use data to identify students' weakness and strengths. When students' weaknesses are identified, remediation is provided in small groups or individually.

Because of tracking students and identifying their area of need, we notice significant growth for our economically disadvantaged and students with disabilities in reading and math.

Data have helped us place additional emphasis on rigor and technology enhanced items (TEI) and is used for remediation. When data shows that a child is not performing, remediation is provided. If the interventions are not effective, the child will be referred to the child study team consisting of the classroom teachers, special education teachers, school social worker, parents, and principal. Data is used to track the child's progress and other decisions about continued interventions or referred to school psychologist for testing.

Special education teachers and Title I teachers use data to identify missing skills. Children that are identified are provided with individualized instruction. Data is kept on the instruction and student progress. When data show that interventions are not working, new interventions are implemented.

Using data to evaluate instruction and alignment has helped SPE become successful. Teachers look at the data to determine if the curriculum is aligned or if there is an instructional issue. There are times that data will show that there is a delivery problem, curriculum needs to be presented in an alternate way, or individual children or a group of children need additional instruction.