



## **Part I – Eligibility Certification**

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

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

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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

### DISTRICT

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

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

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

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
<b>PreK</b>	0	0	0
<b>K</b>	12	6	18
<b>1</b>	8	4	12
<b>2</b>	6	7	13
<b>3</b>	8	3	11
<b>4</b>	13	12	25
<b>5</b>	8	7	15
<b>6</b>	0	0	0
<b>7</b>	0	0	0
<b>8</b>	0	0	0
<b>9</b>	0	0	0
<b>10</b>	0	0	0
<b>11</b>	0	0	0
<b>12 or higher</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	55	39	94

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 2 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 0 % Asian
  - 0 % Black or African American
  - 0 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 90 % White
  - 8 % 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: 3%

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

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

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	2
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	1
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	3
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	92
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.03
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

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: 50 %  
Total number students who qualify: 47

8. Students receiving special education services: 12 %  
11 Total number of students served

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

- |                                  |                                                |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <u>0</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>2</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>1</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>4</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>4</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>0</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: 5
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	6
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.	3
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

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

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	96%	95%	94%	95%	93%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

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

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

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

Yes  No

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

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

We prepare our students to become leaders and independent learners. Our districts motto is: "Leaders and Learners Today and Tomorrow."

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

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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Iron River is a small, friendly community in a peaceful, picturesque setting, located in the heart of northwestern Wisconsin's vacationland. Iron River was once a separate school district in Wisconsin until the late 1960's. Now, Iron River is just one of many small communities that make up the School District of Maple. The School District of Maple covers approximately 500 square miles. It consists of two elementary schools, Northwestern Elementary School and Iron River Elementary School, one middle school, and one high school. Northwestern Elementary School has an enrollment of approximately 530 students compared to Iron River Elementary School with an enrollment of 93. Iron River Elementary School is located at the far eastern border of the district, in the Town of Iron River. It mostly consists of students blended from two communities, Iron River and Brule. Iron River has a population of approximately 1000 people while Brule's population is 600. Approximately 50% of the students receive free and reduced breakfasts and lunches. The community members of the school district are employed in a variety of occupations. Most people must commute to neighboring cities such as Ashland, Superior, or Duluth, Minnesota for their jobs, due to limited opportunities in the town. Each city is approximately 30 miles from Iron River. The School District of Maple is actually the largest single employer in the district, with over 120 employees. The community supports the school district and the school district supports the community. All school functions are packed with family and friends, whether it is the winter holiday concert, the spring concert, the Halloween parade, or parent teacher organization (PTO) evening events. The community shows up and supports the students.

The aim at Iron River Elementary is to have an enriching and safe environment that encourages academic achievement for all students. As a result, the majority of students score proficient or advanced in all core academic subjects on the Wisconsin state standardized assessment (the Forward Exam). It has always been the goal to meet the needs of students while instilling a lifelong love of learning. New and ongoing support for teachers is provided by district and school level professional development. Additional professional development is provided in best practices for planning effective lessons. The district has contracted Cooperative Educational Service Agency #12 (CESA 12) to help provide professional development to ensure fidelity in our reading program for the past two years. Teachers collaboratively analyze and use formative and summative assessment for driving instruction. This occurs during school-wide data meetings. Students receive a minimum of 120 minutes of instruction in both reading/language arts and math as well as the recommended minutes in science and social studies. Teachers use whole group, small group, and individual guided reading instruction within a balanced literacy framework for instruction. The rigor in the instruction is evident through the students' scores on the STAR Assessments. During math instruction, teachers use our new Math Expressions curriculum. The special education teacher supports students by using push-in and pull-out models for instruction. Interventionists support students in grades K-5 who have been identified as at-risk on pre/post-assessment data and/or teacher recommendations.

Students, staff, parents, and community members strive together to achieve our vision. We prepare our students to become leaders and independent learners with the desires, the skills, and the abilities necessary for lifelong learning. We have created a learning environment which is centered on students, directed by teachers, and supported by home and community. Our districts motto is: "Leaders and Learners Today and Tomorrow."

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

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

Iron River Elementary School has a core curriculum that consists of daily instruction in teaching in the areas of Reading/Language Arts, math, social studies, and science. We follow the state standards, and curriculum provided by the school district. However, we take the information that is needed to be taught and add our personal touches to the lessons to make them interactive and to go with our individual teaching styles. Through this, and our small class sizes, we are able to differentiate instruction for the needs of each student. We seek to provide instruction that uses auditory, visual, and kinesthetic learning.

Our district and school adopted Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Journeys as our Reading/Language Arts program two years ago. This is a very comprehensive program that focuses on vocabulary and oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics and fluency, text-based comprehension, grammar and writing, and spelling. We teach all components of the Journeys curriculum in its entirety and with fidelity. Our scope and sequence is followed and through our balanced literacy approach students are given the tools and practice needed to be successful in their state testing at the end of the year. Teachers schedule a 90 to over 120 minute literacy block for meaningful reading and writing instruction and learning. Teachers also teach through Daily 5 (literacy enriched choice and independence), Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) books, literature circles, guided reading groups, Response to Intervention (RtI) groups, and buddy and peer reading. The lower elementary levels (Kindergarten-1st grade) place a strong emphasis on developing the foundational skills that are necessary for reading. This includes letter/sound correspondence materials, phonemic awareness, phonics, and high frequency word recognition. This strong foundation that is built in the early grades, allows the upper elementary levels (2nd-5th grade) to focus on fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Two years ago, our district also adopted Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Math Expressions as our math program. Math Expressions' single focus is the Common Core State Standards. Therefore, we teach this program with fidelity. It is a comprehensive program that sequences math progressions into 8-10 different units, depending on grade level. This program starts at the student's level and teaches by fostering critical thinking skills, provides visual supports, and concludes with extended fluency practice and real life application. Our math curriculum includes intervention, on-level, and challenge differentiation so that all students' needs are being met. In our math lessons, students are encouraged to invent, question, model, and create. However, they are also learning and practicing important math strategies and learning how to explain and talk through their answers. At all grade levels, there are a variety of manipulatives and hands-on learning tools to support the lessons. Teachers supplement by including math facts worksheets, games, and activities. We also use a variety of computer based math games such as Xtramath, Sumdog, and Front Row. Our math lessons use a variety of instructional strategies such as whole group, small group, pairs, and independent work. We differentiate and modify instruction so that all students have success. We also use Response to Intervention (RtI) and math centers as a way of reteaching and challenging our students to reach their highest potential.

Iron River Elementary School furthers our students' knowledge and understanding of the world around them through interactive and critical thinking social studies lessons. We teach subjects and enhance students' knowledge in world cultures, American history, geography, economics, important people in history, and major events happening around us. We use MacMillian/McGraw Hill textbooks, the Scott Foresman Social Studies program, Scholastic news articles, and academic based databases and websites such as Pebble Go and BrainPop. We also do research projects, papers, PowerPoints, and other art and writing projects centered around our different social studies units and topics.

Our Science instruction includes hands-on learning through the use of experiments and projects, STEM lessons, Scholastic News articles, and Harcourt Science text. We teach units on Weather, Space, Life Science, Matter, Energy and Forces. Students in 4th grade also make their own invention for their Science Invention Convention. We have guest speakers come in from the Cable Museum to do interactive lessons with the students. We are also in the early stages of starting to implement and use the Next Generation Science Standards as our guide in the scope and sequence of our science program.

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

As a staff, we know how important it is for our students to be well-rounded and have exposure to the different fine arts. We believe that the other curriculum areas work along with our core instruction to help our students be the very best they can be.

Music classes meet every other day for forty minutes. The emphasis in each class is on developing rhythmic skills, music reading skills and listening skills, through singing, playing and rhythmic movement. During the school year, two formal concerts are given by the students; performing as separate grade level ensembles and as an all-school combined ensemble. Students playing xylophones, recorders, synthesizer keyboards, and percussion instruments enhance the performances. Student artwork is also incorporated into the musical performances through slideshows and backdrops. These performances play a major role in the cultural life of our little community and are viewed with great pride, due to their quality and overall artistic presentation.

Kindergarten through 5th grade also has a forty minute block of art class every other day. The art curriculum covers all the various mediums of art from painting and ceramics to printmaking and textiles. In Art we survey the history of art from 40,000 year old cave paintings through the cultures of Egypt, Greece, and Rome up through the Renaissance, Gothic, Impressionism, Cubism, Modern, and Postmodern movements. The halls are always filled with student work and many kids have even been awarded ribbons and other awards for their art work at different fairs and Boy and Girl scout events.

As a school, we believe that kids need to be up and moving. Our physical education class is four days a week for forty minutes. Our program teaches students body control, healthy nutrition, and the importance of exercise. We introduce fun ways to stay fit, so children will enjoy exercise. PE also teaches resilience and proper social skills at the elementary level. Here the different grades learn about various team sports and athletic activities. We also have an additional forty-five minutes of unstructured physical exercise each day on the playground where the students are able to use essential skills that they are learning in their physical education class.

Iron River Elementary School believes that teaching students things like character education and life skills are important to the physical and emotional health of our students. The students meet with a guidance teacher every week for thirty minutes. The guidance curriculum is designed to meet the social emotional learning needs of all students. It focuses on building strong character through lessons on kindness, empathy, impulse control, anger management, problem solving and conflict resolution. The backbone of the lessons is designed to be a violence and bullying prevention program through promoting peaceful resolutions and treating everyone with respect.

The students have library every week for thirty minutes where they are exposed to various books, authors, genres, and reading strategies. The Library Media Center exists to enrich and supplement the curriculum. Our goal is to make sure students are able to locate, evaluate, and use information effectively in a variety of formats. The library program develops positive attitudes toward libraries and promotes lifelong learning and use of library services.

Students also have a scheduled library lesson with the district Library Media Specialist (LMS) at least once a month where the students focus on how to use technology. These lessons include how to search the school's library catalog, use the databases that are provided, how to evaluate websites, cite sources, avoid plagiarism, and use their Google Apps tools to create content. Students are introduced to these topics by the LMS. Then the classroom teacher carries them out throughout their day to day lessons and assignments. We also have a computer lab and Chromebooks cart with 30 laptops for the students to use. Teachers are able to utilize these tools on a daily basis as we help our students develop 21st century skills in the area of Technology Literacy and Employability Skills.

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

Teachers at The Iron River Elementary School have implemented new ELA and math curricula with fidelity. Through these curricula, instruction is scaffolded year-to-year, ensuring skills build on each other. Teachers

use Daily 5, Literary Circles, math centers, and Response to Intervention (RtI) as instructional methods to help enrich as well as reteach students.

The School District of Maple uses STAR Reading and Math benchmark assessments to determine which students may need additional instruction and/or interventions in these areas. The STAR assessments are computer adaptive assessments and are administered three times per school year, fall, winter, and spring. Students who score between the 25th and 75th percentile rank on these assessments are considered to be in the average range, though our district benchmark is the 40th percentile. This assessment tool helps us determine which students may benefit from an intervention, either in the general education classroom through RtI time or the Title 1 program, described below.

Students in grades Kindergarten through second are also assessed using the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS). PALS is a screening and progress monitoring tool for measuring the fundamental components of early literacy. This assessment tool has been effective in determining a student's instructional oral reading level, comprehension level, spelling level, and other early literacy skills. It has also been beneficial in identifying students who require additional literacy instruction beyond the classroom, as well as identifying those who require an additional challenge.

The Title I program at the Iron River School consists of a reading intervention in a small group or one-on-one setting, four days per week for approximately 30 minutes each session. The Title I program follows newly adopted Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Journeys reading curriculum to reinforce vocabulary, phonics skills, decoding strategies, and comprehension. In coordination with what students are learning in the classrooms, the Title I program also uses a supplementary intervention curriculum to teach the same skills they are learning, but in a different way. In addition to formal curriculum, the reading specialist identifies books aligning with students' interests to help foster the love of reading. Teachers, as well the Title I Reading Specialist, attend data meetings every other week to determine which students could benefit from additional instruction in the area of reading.

During data meetings, all staff determine the effects of the Response to Intervention and Title I interventions provided to students and make data-based decisions to meet the students' needs. Weekly progress monitoring ensures the needs of students are being met through the Title I program. If the interventions are not successful and students are not making the growth necessary to close the gap between themselves and the benchmarks, a change in intervention takes place. This could be a change in group size, intensity of the intervention, or possibly a referral for a special education evaluation if all interventions are unsuccessful.

Once a student has met the criteria for special education under a Specific Learning Disability (SLD) and the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team determines the needs of the student, an IEP is written. Since IEPs are individualized, all interventions vary. The special education teacher provides supplemental and direct instruction in the areas of math, reading, spelling, and writing either one-on-one or in small groups. This instruction aligns with the core curriculum as well as the Wisconsin State Standards to ensure students are learning the same content as their peers. It should also be noted the special education students are in their general education classrooms for all core instruction times as well. Interventions fluctuate in intensity in the special education classroom and are fluid throughout the year in order to meet students' specific learning needs.

Weekly progress monitoring is accomplished using a norm-referenced assessment tool, Fastbridge Learning. Through this program, the special education teacher can progress monitor each student in the areas of math, reading fluency, and reading comprehension. Similar to the Title 1 program, if students are not making the desired progress, interventions are adjusted.

The special education and general education teachers collaborate daily to discuss strategies to differentiate instruction in the classroom. Often times, students are able to demonstrate their knowledge, but in different ways. Through the use of technology, modified assignments, and project-based learning students at The Iron River Elementary School are able to "show what they know." High achieving students are also supported through the use of enrichment.



## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

There is a positive learning environment at Iron River Elementary School. Our goal is to create a climate where students feel secure enough to go to any staff member to discuss a concern. We believe that as a staff we engage and motivate our students by example. They watch us and see how we value and respect each other as professionals and as people. We encourage our students to work hard and demonstrate qualities like respect, responsibility, cooperation, perseverance, and kindness to help prepare students to be college and career ready.

Since we are a smaller school, we have the advantage of fostering close, nurturing relationships with students and families. District-level support is provided through professional development, collaboration, and training for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Professional Learning Communities. Weekly Professional Learning Community meetings provide collaboration time to address student needs with all grade levels together at the same time. The professional opinions and experience of the staff is an invaluable tool for decision making. These meetings are focused on our students, but they also allow for communication, planning of school events, and community outreach opportunities. Teachers show they value students' lives and identities in a variety of ways. Examples of this include teachers taking the time to learn the names of every student in the building, not just those in their own classrooms, and getting to know their students' families by attending after school community events.

We also have students take an active role in providing a positive school climate. We have developed a peer mentoring program here at school between the 5th graders and the kindergartners. The 5th grade students are in charge of helping the kindergartners get breakfast in the morning and get to their class on time. Fifth grade is also on "zip-up duty" in the winter, and help the younger kids put on their winter gear. We also have reading buddies between students in different grades, where the older students can read and model good reading techniques to the younger students. The 5th grade class also goes around and teaches the younger kids about school expectations by having PBIS stations where they model and explicitly teach the school rules.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

Iron River Elementary School believes that family and community involvement is essential to educating our students. Our district website highlights student activities and parent communication along with social media, weekly class newsletters, frequent emails and phone calls, and quarterly report cards. We also have Parent Teacher Conferences twice a year. Students and their families actively engage in the use of home/school folders, student planners, and assignment notebooks.

Being a small rural school, we have an advantage, in that we have parents and community members at our school every day. Community members come and read with students once a week. Some of these volunteers have been coming and reading for over twenty years. Different parents come in and help with book orders, and school and class celebrations. The Iron River Lions Club also comes in and volunteers for eye and hearing checks. They also provide gifts and snacks for every student around Christmas time. Different businesses in our community also donate school supplies and winter clothes and different restaurants give coupons for reading incentives. The local law enforcement and fire/ambulance department also comes in every year to teach kids about safety.

As a school, we also have many special occasions where the community and parents are welcome. Kindergarten has a Mother's Day Tea where all the mothers come in and the kids do a small program for them. First grade does a puppet show. Second grade has the parents come in for a play and talent show. Third grade does an amazing wax museum where the students make displays and dress up with a historical person they have studied about in social studies or literature class. Fourth grade students make their own inventions and have parents come do a walk-through of all their projects. Fifth grade has a D.A.R.E. and elementary school graduation where parents come and hear them perform skits and speeches and receive

awards from throughout the year.

We also have an amazing Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) that puts community events together where the whole family is invited. Every year, we host a Halloween Parade and Carnival, different family movie nights, book fairs, reading garden maintenance, and the End of the Year Carnival. The PTO also sponsors different fundraisers that help pay for school and class field trips.

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

As a district, we have a growth mindset and are committed as educators to be lifelong learners. At the beginning of every year, teachers set Student Learning Objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely (S.M.A.R.T.) that are based on our local data. We let our data drive our instruction and revisit our goals throughout the year.

In the last three years, our district has adopted a new math and language arts curriculum. Most of our professional development has been familiarizing ourselves with these two new programs. In the past, we have had teachers sent to different workshops, but now we have been having the professional development brought to us by having curriculum instructors and CESA 12 staff come in and present. This way all teachers can receive the needed training. Ongoing professional development has continued to be supported by CESA 12. Our district Professional Learning Communities encourage the alignment to State Standards and are performing and teaching with fidelity.

Essential to instruction is the need for an adherence to an instructional framework across the district, specific to each building and the individual needs of our students. Our district has selected the Gradual Release of Responsibility instructional framework, and have been implementing design, theory, and practice into our building PLC conversations and district initiative discussions and teachings. Furthermore, developing our model for tiered and layered instruction both academically and behaviorally comes into practice the guidance, support, and directive from the Wisconsin Response to Intervention (RtI) team who continued to work in tandem with us.

Many teachers have also attended technology workshops and math conferences. Teachers also have meetings every month with the district math coach where we come up with strategies and teaching techniques to help students at all academic levels. The math coach helps us look at the scope and sequence of our math curriculum and bridge gaps between grade levels.

Along with academics, as a district we feel it is extremely important to make sure our students are physically safe. We are in the midst of having ongoing ALICE (alert, lockdown, inform, counter, and evacuate) training making sure as a staff, we are prepared and can do everything in our power to keep our kids safe.

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

At Iron River Elementary School, the principal is shared with our larger elementary school in the district. The principal spends about 20 percent of his time at the Iron River Elementary School. For this reason, the principal is just one of the instructional leaders, and because of this a majority of the decisions are based on a group consensus. All teachers are involved in many of the decisions and all decisions are centered on what is best for our students. Iron River has a lead teacher that is responsible for overseeing operations when the principal is not in. Our district superintendent also stops by the school periodically to provide additional support.

Our district motto is “Leaders and Learners, Today and Tomorrow” with an overall emphasis on students being supported by the shared contribution of all stakeholders working together to guide and educate our students together. Shared leadership is encouraged, modeled, supported, and driven throughout the district by valuing the expertise of all who align for the common good of best possible learner outcomes.

As the main instructional leader for teachers, the principal conducts walk-throughs into classrooms, along

with yearly evaluations using the Wisconsin Educator Effectiveness model. The focus of the walk-throughs and evaluation is student learning. All feedback on instruction is provided to staff with that focus in mind. As instructional leaders for student, the principal and teachers also incorporate behavior lessons. Some of this is done through conversations in the classroom with large groups, along with individual conversations with students when problems arise. Our school follows the guidelines of PBIS and has yearly training for our students. Clear expectations are set to help students be successful in school and are posted throughout the building. All teachers are leaders in their own classroom. They determine their own routines, structure, and guidelines for learning while following our curriculum and state standards. Weekly collaboration and data meetings occur among all teachers and interventionists to help determine the needs of the students and how to meet those needs through conversations with their peers. In our small school, all teachers must be strong leaders in order to make things run smoothly on a daily basis.

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

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On the Iron River sign, just coming into town it says, “Iron River - where everybody knows your name.” At Iron River Elementary School we take that to heart and believe that it is one thing that sets us apart from other schools. As a staff, we know every student by name and the majority of the families in the community. Teachers meet informally on a daily basis and talk about strategies and specific learning skills of each student. Previous teachers give feedback and we look at the student from all angles. We get to know our students educational strengths and struggles as well as individual family dynamics and social-emotional needs of the students.

Every other week, we also have data meetings. These meetings involve all academic staff. At each meeting, we start with Kindergarten and move through 5th grade. Each child in our school is addressed and we talk about the academic, emotional, and behavioral needs, how classroom performance is, and what interventions are offered. We have ongoing planning and strategies to help our struggling learners. As children progress through the grades more information about each child as a whole is contributed by past teachers. We look at multiple forms of data and use that data to drive instruction.

Iron River Elementary is like a large extended family. It is a community based school where there is respect, excitement, and productivity. Each child is acknowledged for the unique individual that they are and teachers are committed to giving students every tool and skill that can possibly be given so that each student can have the opportunity for success. As a staff we want our students to reach their full potential, ambitions, and goals in life. We believe we are successful in this endeavor by our constant communication and collaboration by all staff members in our school. It is commonly said that students can go anywhere from here. We have had students from our school go on to become doctors, lawyers, engineers, and many other highly respected professions. As a school, we do everything we can to provide our students with every tool they will need to be successful. We want our students to reach for their full potential, ambitions, and goals in life. As a staff, we strive to show them the joys of learning, and how the knowledge they attain in school can directly apply to their everyday lives.