

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2019 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Mrs. Jill Glenn

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

Official School Name Fredericksburg Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 401 East High Street

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

Fredericksburg IA 50630-7730  
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Chickasaw County

Telephone (563) 237-5364

Fax (563) 237-5888

Web site/URL https://www.sfcougars.org/

E-mail glennj@sfcougars.k12.ia.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\*Mr. Fred Matlage

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail matlagef@sfcougars.k12.ia.us

District Name Sumner-Fredericksburg Comm School District Tel. (563) 578-3341

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 Mr. David Hassman

(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

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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. 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, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2019 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.
3. 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.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2013 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, or 2018.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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 (2018-2019) 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, 2018 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	14	10	24
K	8	9	17
1	13	16	29
2	14	9	23
3	15	16	31
4	10	6	16
5	17	8	25
6	0	0	0
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
<b>Total Students</b>	91	74	165

\*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 0 % Asian
  - 0 % Black or African American
  - 13 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 87 % 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 2017 – 2018 school year: 6%

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, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	7
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	3
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	10
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	168
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.06
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	6

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 5%  
8 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: 41%  
Total number students who qualify: 68

8. Students receiving special education services: 13 %  
21 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>4</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                 | <u>2</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness           | <u>1</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>2</u> Developmental Delay      | <u>0</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance    | <u>4</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment       | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>10</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: 8
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.	9
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	7
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	2
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 18:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Daily student attendance	96%	97%	97%	97%	96%
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 2018.

<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.

Our school is committed to excellence in lifelong learning, leadership, and character.

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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Fredericksburg Elementary School, established in 1960, is an important hub of daily life in our rural town of Fredericksburg. With a population of around 900, we house 165 students. The standards we embrace, the expectations we uphold, and the character and caring we display are all mirrored in the families of our community. We influence the families, and they influence our school.

For the most part, families are highly involved with our school. Our typical 98% attendance at parent-teacher conferences reflects that involvement. Poverty is prevalent, with 41% of our students eligible for free or reduced lunches. We strive to support families with parenting classes, free school supplies at registration, and referrals to helpful supports.

We are lucky to have a diverse student body. Our school is a place where students learn equality, acceptance, and understanding, all of which our world needs. Quite a lot of our students come from families who work in agriculture. Many parents work in manufacturing. The overall atmosphere at our school is one of down-to-earth grit combined with compassion and caring. We believe that students can succeed if they put in the work. And, we are there with ferocious support to provide the compassion, motivation, discipline, and high expectations they require to succeed.

Curricula are aligned with the Common Core standards to contribute to the success of every student. Ten days are set aside for professional development each school year. Instruction coaches have been in place to ensure fidelity and better teaching practices.

Traditions at our school center on literacy, family involvement, and community. Reading Buddies, a tradition at least fifteen years old, takes place every other week. Students from higher grades are assigned a buddy for the year. They choose books to read to their younger buddies, and then the younger student reads to them. During these times, teachers take turns collaborating within their PLCs (Professional Learning Communities.) This tradition has been powerful, not only for literacy, but for forging friendships for years to come. It has helped prevent bullying problems from older to younger students. Some seniors at our high school have commented that their "Reading Buddies" were now freshmen at their high school, and they expressed concern hoping that high school was going well for them.

February has been "Reading is Fun" Month for at least a couple decades. Students are challenged to track reading minutes and collectively reach a certain amount by the end of the month. Each week, reading logs, signed by parents, are turned in, and the minutes are tracked in the school hall. If students reach their goal, there is bowling and a party. Students challenge themselves. The whole school works together towards a common goal. Families support them.

Our annual Family Reading Night has drawn crowds to our school for a community supper and engaging workshops. Parents take away age-appropriate strategies to use at home with their children.

Cougar Day is a beloved tradition. Students enjoy outdoor activities such as an obstacle course, softball throw, long jump, and running races. Many families are in attendance, supporting their children in a day of sunshine and fun. The day ends with parents joining their children in the school to enjoy artwork and projects. Valuable qualities such as teamwork, perseverance, good sportsmanship, and caring are nurtured in the weeks prior to this event.

Students continually invest in their community through service projects. Students planted twenty trees around the school property last fall, gaining hands-on science knowledge. They sing at the nursing home. They have raised awareness and done fundraising for our local pool. They raise funds for Hoops for Heart. Food is collected every month for our local food bank. We value these and other service activities because they instill in our students awareness of the needs of others. Students learn that they have a voice and can make a difference in our community. Through our academic priorities as well as these other activities, we intend to help students develop integrity, compassion, honesty, caring, and leadership. By doing this, students will have the great start they need to reach their full potential.



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

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

#### **1a. Reading/English language arts:**

Learning standards for Reading/English are addressed in each lesson as the curriculum is aligned to the Iowa Core Curriculum Standards. A scope and sequence of learning materials are followed, so that students do not miss out on essential skills. PRESS and Lexia are used for our intervention time, and our school chose these because they are research-based.

Universal instruction is reviewed closely to make sure that 80% of students are proficient in each grade level. If proficiency is not met, class-wide interventions are used and students are also placed into skill-specific tier 2 and tier 3 intervention groups. Students are progress-monitored weekly and moved based on need.

We implement a mixture of problem-based learning and explicit instruction, as well as technology to enhance curriculum as often as possible. All instructional decisions are based on student data. For example, FastBridge CBMR scores are used to identify which students need a fluency intervention; diagnostic assessments (PRESS or Quick Phonics Screener) are used to identify which students need to work on targeted specific skills; summative assessments (Iowa Assessments) are used to check the overall health of our system; and formative assessments are used daily to see who is understanding, as well as who is not.

At our school, each student matters. Therefore, we have initiated a new program to provide tailored literacy help. Every student receives interventions. Cougar Time is a daily, thirty-minute block where students join with other students of different classes and grades and work on literacy skills. For example, students in grades 3-5, depending on their needs, work in one of these areas: fluency, comprehension, rate, or enrichment with a variety of challenging literacy tasks. Technology is regularly used. Students are frequently assessed and advanced to continue growth.

#### **1b. Mathematics:**

The Iowa Core drives our math instruction. We use Houghton Mifflin curriculum, which not only covers the learning standards of the core, but goes beyond the basic requirements for each grade level.

We begin with number and operations, which includes addition, comparing and ordering numbers, counting, reading and writing numbers, decimals, division, estimating, fractions, integers and rational numbers, mental math, mixed numbers, multiplication, number theory, place value, ratio, proportion, percent, and subtraction.

Next is algebra, which includes readiness and applications, coordinate graphs, equations and inequalities, expressions, patterns and functions, and properties. The scope of Geometry covers basic figures, plane figures and spatial sense, solid figures, and transformations.

Measurement covers education in area and perimeter, capacity, length, money, temperature, time, volume, weight, and mass. This curriculum also includes data analysis and probability, problem-solving, reasoning and proof, and communication, connections, and representation.

Teachers use the numerous leveled resources and links for practice, problem-solving, enrichment, and help for ELL students. Each chapter has a pre-test and post-test to monitor student learning, as well as unit tests and test preps. We analyze the results of the Iowa Assessments to see if there are any problem areas. The lower grades use calendar math and an online math program called Math Seeds. Other online math programs used in the upper grades are First in Math, Aleks Math, and Zearn. Our special education program uses IXL Math as well.

Each classroom has "I Can" statements posted to show the learning standards from the Iowa Core. The math

class starts with a problem of the day, math vocabulary words, review of previous learning, and introduction of next concepts. We use a variety of manipulatives to make the new learning hands-on. We have a guided learning and working together component before students practice independently. Struggling students work in small groups with a teacher.

### **1c. Science:**

For science, we use a combination of the FOSS (Full Option Science System) science kits and Mystery Science to meet the needs of the NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards.) The district follows the recommendation of their scope and sequence utilizing one or more of the following units of study per grade level: physical science, earth science, and life science components. We chose this approach because the standards align to the NGSS and allow teachers to determine which specific course to teach at various times of the school year. We use the components of the investigation guide, teacher resource book, student books, equipment kit, and the technology and STEM involvement provided through our AEA. Each module comes with the content, teaching instructions, and tools needed for the investigation.

Each teacher has his/her instructional approach, and through using the FOSS science curriculum and Mystery Science series, we can differentiate our instruction to meet the needs of our classroom. This hands-on science approach is interesting and fun for the students and the teacher! Students are able to make effective and thoughtful problem-solving choices through the detailed lessons and materials provided. The FOSS kits provide both formative and summative assessments. The kits have embedded assessments for a survey prior to each unit, and performance assessments at the end of units with an investigation I-Check for each investigative area. The assessments are used to guide the students' learning and meet students' needs as that is the way that true scientists work. As teachers, we encourage the students to keep an open mind, explore, and inquire. They plan and conduct investigations, gather data, and explain with evidence. Students and teachers alike love this approach to teaching and learning science together.

### **1d. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement**

Currently, in social studies, we use the McGraw-Hill curriculum focused on Adventures in Time and Place. Kindergarten focuses on our town. First grade focuses on communities and the United States. Second grade focuses on the United States. American History is covered in third grade. Fourth grade focuses on regions of the United States. Finally, American history, world history, and Native Americans are the focus of study in fifth grade. We use the unit assessments provided with our curriculum.

Our first grade classroom teachers spend time reading aloud non-fiction picture books on historical figures such as Lincoln and Washington. We have students create a diorama using a shoe box. Pictures of places around our community are important tools for teaching social studies. We read Scholastic News as well.

Grades 3 through 5 have many project-based activities and reports in social studies. For example, our fourth grade has a living wax museum featuring important people in U.S. History. Students have also created state postcards and dressed up like prominent figures from the past. Britannica Online is used frequently as well as Google classroom apps such as Slides and Spreadsheets for various social studies assignments.

Our fifth grade class recreates Native American homes. Daily Geography is a regular part of fifth grade social studies. Students read Scholastic News for a variety of topics as well as the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for holidays and elections.

Sometimes students are asked to collaborate, and other times, they work independently.

For these project-based activities, we assess students using rubrics. Rubrics have been developed for the presentations and projects that we have our students create. We also use technology and trade books to enhance our lessons as often as possible.

### **1e. For secondary schools:**

### **1f. For schools that offer preschool for three- and four-year old students:**

For preschool, we use The Creative Curriculum which has over seventy objectives in the areas of literacy, math, language, social, emotional, cognitive, physical, science and technology, social studies, and the arts. Learning is accomplished through play and observation.

We have observed a distinct difference in students who attend preschool and those who don't. Students who attend preschool are set up for success in many ways as they enter kindergarten. They have been acclimated with the building, they know how to follow a routine, and most importantly, the foundation for early academic skills has been laid. Skills such as letter identification and sounds, numeral recognition, and counting are stronger in these students as they begin kindergarten.

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

Fredericksburg Elementary School provides a rich education in the areas of arts, physical education, library, character education, and Talented and Gifted. Students in grades kindergarten through 5th participate in a Music class every other day. On the opposite day, they enjoy physical education. Both Music classes and physical education classes last thirty minutes. Music classes incorporate vocal and instrumental instruction. A wide range of learning happens here including music history, genres, theory, performance techniques, composing, and enjoyment of music. Students are challenged to master the pieces, to perform at their best, and to go beyond what they thought was possible for themselves. Through all this, students' skills are growing in memorization, coordination, counting, pattern recognition, imagination, and creative thinking. Students have several opportunities each year to share what they've learned. This builds self-confidence. Our music teacher emphasizes fun and enjoyment. Music is something students will carry with them throughout their lives and is a great coping mechanism.

Physical Education classes are taught with discipline. Students have learned to listen carefully and quietly to instructions so that they can begin to have fun and move. The goal is for students to develop the skills and attitudes needed to be active and well for the rest of their lives. Not only does she implement exercises in a fun way which builds strong bones, muscles, and hearts, but her activities help students develop self-confidence, respect for peers, teamwork, goal-setting skills, and problem-solving. The released endorphins from physical activity aids students' academic learning. Stress is also reduced and can help the student succeed with peers and teachers. We value physical education as it is crucial for our students' success.

Art and library classes are offered once per week for each class for thirty minutes. In art class, students' creativity flourishes alongside knowledge of artists, art history, and different mediums. In library class, students learn internet searching skills, internet safety, research skills, and how to find "good fit" books of interest within their lexile ranges.

Character Counts is very important at our school. Our guidance counselor promotes these life skills at every monthly assembly. She always involves a group of students who in turn teach these valuable characteristics to the student body at the assembly through movies, skits, or other methods. Our guidance counselor lives what she teaches. She spends time in each classroom bi-weekly doing more in-depth training on developing these essential character traits.

Local sheriff deputies visit our school regularly to teach the DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) curriculum to our 5th Graders. Families are deeply involved with this curriculum and at graduation.

### **3. Special Populations:**

Our teachers use many different approaches to make learning effective for our special students. For example, students' tests and assignments are modified to meet their learning needs. Students may test in another area to increase focus. Teachers may read a test to students, as long as it is not a reading test.

Students may listen to an audio track of a book and follow along. For spelling, students either have a shortened list or a different list tailored to their needs. These are just a few examples of the many interventions that enable special students to successfully learn.

In general, students participate in math in their regular classrooms. Then, they go to a different classroom where they are re-taught with examples of how to solve the problems. Teachers provide one on one support while students complete math assignments. For reading, students are taught in a separate classroom with small groups, which enables them to get the tailored instruction they need.

Students with special needs are assessed frequently. The FastBridge is administered three times per year, and special students are progress monitored weekly to determine which interventions will be most effective. Every other week, there is a writing assessment. Math facts assessments are also every other week. These assessments and others are done religiously. They are very important to our teachers in helping them understand how best to help our students grow from week to week. Every student is in an "intervention" Some may be to work on a specific strategy to improve reading while other students have an enrichment time to continue their learning at a higher level.

Our certified teacher works with our seven ELL students to improve vocabulary and help in the immersion process. These students are monitored frequently by multiple staff to give them opportunities for success.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

Academic growth is supported with consistent instruction aligned with the Common Core coupled with a growth mindset climate in the classroom. As our teachers consistently expect students to reach milestones in their learning and hold them accountable, students generally flourish. Teachers coach students along their ups and downs by using a growth mindset which empowers our students to overcome difficulties, to persist when things are hard, and to build resilience.

We recognize that reading is the foundation for any academic success, so we strive to build a culture of literacy at our school through Reading Counts, Family Reading Night, Reading is Fun Month, as well as many other classroom initiatives and goals.

We use PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports) to improve student climate and culture. We teach the learning expectations and demonstrate them two times per year. We also have visuals posted in our building to remind students to use their Cougar Character. Students are acknowledged for using appropriate behavior, both through verbal praise and written notes. Students are acknowledged during the announcements for positive behavior, as well as at monthly assemblies. Students work together as a student body to encourage positive behavior. Their current challenge is to have a new letter revealed in a secret message posted in the hallway. On days with no office-referred behavior, a new letter is revealed. Students have earned hot chocolate, extra recess, a sledding party, and a dance party. Our goal is for each student to receive six praises per day and for the parents to hear about praises too.

The teachers in our building all have a simple similar philosophy: we will do anything to benefit our kids. We all try to do what is best for our kids each day. That is why we get along so well and feel valued and supported. We know each other's strengths and weaknesses and try to help each other out in our strength areas. A team approach that is focused on using each staff member's strengths to do what is best for our kids sums up our school culture.

In addition, we have created a nurturing environment among ourselves. Although we each have challenges, families, and other obligations outside of work, we invest some of our time and efforts into relationships at work. We celebrate birthdays, new babies, and marriages together. We are there for each other when death or other challenges present themselves. We recognize that we are all humans who need compassion, understanding and support.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

In our small town, our school is a major hub of activity and, on the whole, mirrors the values, standards and caring our community embraces. We are pleased that each time we hold parent-teacher conferences, we consistently have a 97-99% attendance rate. This shows the commitment our families have to collaborating with us for the success of their children.

We work hard to make our school feel open to families and community members, and we believe they do feel very comfortable in our school. Our annual Family Reading Night draws families in for a night of celebrating and improving reading. "Dads and Doughnuts" and "Moms and Muffins" happen each year in kindergarten. Various classroom projects draw in parents, including a wax museum, parade of states, and pop bottle biographies. Music concerts, DARE graduations, and Cougar Day are a few of our special events where students are surrounded with support.

We strive to create a climate where parents can reach out for help and feel we are here to support them. We offer parenting classes. Classroom teachers get to know the families and partner with them to meet students' various needs. Parents access students' grades through Infinite Campus. Teachers and administrators make themselves easily accessible to parents through phone, email, and often text. We want to support families.

We love having visitors! For example, we had guest readers such as a farmer, a beekeeper, and a lifeguard. We invited and honored local heroes such as our mayor, police officers, volunteer firefighters, and doctor. Our doctor meets with our upper elementary students each year to discuss personal development. Firefighters aid in fire prevention education. Sheriff deputies are here regularly teaching DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education). Classes take trips to the post office to learn about their work. We've had many agricultural families bring in farm animals over the years to educate students.

We invite college athletes and other students from state universities to demonstrate skills, inspire, teach or just spend time with us. We consistently have student teachers here who learn from our experienced teachers and share new approaches.

Local businesses help fund field trips. Our Women of Fredericksburg provide snacks and prizes for many various projects. Students sing at the local nursing home, plant trees, pick up garbage, raise funds for our local pool, raise awareness and funds for Hoops for Heart, donate to the food bank, promote and practice recycling, and many others.

Our local newspaper features our many events. In addition, they have published articles written by our 3rd-5th Enrichment students, highlighting community concerns from their perspective.

A committee composed of students, teachers, administrators, and community members meets multiple times a year to identify challenges and recommend solutions to help our students.

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

Our PD (professional development) consistently centers on improvement so that our students can succeed. Last year, during professional development, we discussed our beliefs about literacy in our district and literacy education in each of our schools. We put our thoughts into words with a district-wide vision statement. We determined to become "a place where every student will develop and demonstrate effective reading, writing, speaking and listening skills through engagement in high-quality, balanced literacy instruction across all content areas." While developing a comprehensive reading plan, it was clear that our curriculum was outdated and ineffective. Our search for a new curriculum involved many dedicated people and was lengthy, careful, and thorough. All teachers were involved in the research of the current curricular materials in order to determine what would best fit our student population. After months of research, staff presented their findings and proposal to our local school board. The board agreed to purchase the new curricular materials in the current year so the teachers can train and prepare for next year's implementation. The teachers are currently working through each component during PD time and PLCs (professional learning communities) with excitement for the upcoming school year.

While much of our effort has been on literacy instruction, we also feel that the new SEBMH (social emotional behavior mental health) focus is essential. Some of our students have had trauma in their lives or live in unstable environments. Our professional development this year has been focused on what we can do to help these students succeed in our school. We all know that students' basic needs must be taken care of first before any academic learning can occur, so we are trying to train our staff on how to help our kids and their families with SEBMH needs.

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

For school leadership, our building is unique in that we only have a half-time principal and guidance counselor, as well as many other part-time specials teachers. Because of this, we really do rely on everyone pitching in and doing their part to make our school run. Teachers are on many different committees, each one using their strengths to contribute to our team dynamic. We all keep the same philosophy in mind, that we will do whatever it takes to help our students succeed. No one specific person leads more than others, but rather we are all focused on how we can help our students and school be successful.

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

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Each student matters. We see each student as a person with feelings, needs, wants, and dreams. These little people are in our classrooms, in our halls, and on our playgrounds, relying on us to be there for them as they grow. It is our opportunity and responsibility to help lead them to become well-adjusted adults. We embrace any challenge that comes our way. As a team, we will do whatever it takes to help each child succeed because each student matters.

Because each student matters, and because each student is unique, we work hard to tailor academic instruction to meet individual needs. With consistent assessments and follow-up, teachers identify students in needs and pair them with the resources to help them succeed academically. And, this is done over and over and over again. Our teachers persist to help each one individually. We love to see our students grow academically!

Because each student matters, we take emotional and behavioral issues seriously, and we problem-solve. We talk, we share, we collaborate to come up with ways to help each child to cope with their problems so that they can learn. If something doesn't work, we do not give up. We try something else. We keep trying. We eagerly seek for help and ideas beyond our own. We strive to change ourselves and our ways if that is helpful. Our persistence shows how much we care about each one.

To sum up, each child matters. When we put time, effort, innovation, caring, and creativity into meeting individual needs, whether they be academic, assessment-related, or socio-emotional, we see success with our students.