

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

Name of Principal Ms. Lily Belle Albright

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

Official School Name Unionville Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 8144 E SR 45

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

Unionville IN 47468-9743
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Monroe County

Telephone (812) 332-0175

Fax (812) 339-2717

Web site/URL https://www.mccsc.edu/unionville E-mail lalbrigh@mccsc.edu

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Judith DeMuth
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail jdemuth@mccsc.edu

District Name Monroe County Community School Corporation Tel. _____ (812) 330-7700

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 Dr. Lois Sabo-Skelton
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Part I – Eligibility Certification

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

1. 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

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):
- 14 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 3 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 4 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 21 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	0	0	0
K	20	17	37
1	20	17	37
2	15	17	32
3	17	17	34
4	19	14	33
5	24	10	34
6	8	12	20
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	123	104	227

*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
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 1 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 94 % White
 - 3 % 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: 12%

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, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	14
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	12
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	26
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	218
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.12
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	12

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: 29%
 Total number students who qualify: 65

8. Students receiving special education services: 21 %
47 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>8</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>4</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>6</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>25</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>2</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:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	10
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.	3
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 22:1

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

Required Information	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Daily student attendance	97%	96%	97%	96%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2018.

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.

We strive to create students with respect for nature, who use technology and creativity to generate solutions, while integrating health and wellness into their lives.

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

Unionville Elementary is a rural school with approximately two hundred fifteen students in grades K-6. It is an economically diverse community comprised of families from all socio-economic levels. Unionville began as a K-12 school before eventually losing the middle and high school grades over the course of a thirteen year period.

The Unionville school community has strong parental support throughout the school year as demonstrated by an ambitious PTO and volunteerism. Parents are an integral part of our students' education. They willingly assist teachers both in and out of the classroom and work closely with them to solve behavioral, attendance and homework problems.

The staff of Unionville Elementary has and continues to participate in a variety of initiatives. The impetus for these on-going efforts is directly related to our goal of having students demonstrate mastery of the Indiana Academic Standards. The teachers at Unionville are willing participants in staff development activities and school wide initiatives that aspire to produce continuous growth in student achievement.

Unionville Elementary School incorporates STEM learning opportunities throughout the school day. In 2016, we began examining curricular areas of importance to us, which led to the development of a vision for learning: Environment, Art, Resources, Technology, and Health (EARTH). E.A.R.T.H. is our model for 21st century learning. It is a framework for delivering STEM curriculum through the lens of environmental and outdoor education.

This vision is realized through curriculum/instruction, schoolwide routines/activities/traditions, school grounds/environment (interior and exterior), and community partnerships. We have a Read and Ride Lab, a dedicated science lab, hiking trails, fitness track, outdoor lab, garden boxes, pond, dock, and 13 acres of outdoor space we utilize in our E.A.R.T.H./STEM projects.

Unionville Elementary School's curriculum reflects the Indiana College and Career Ready Academic Standards and supports the school's mission of helping each child achieve to his or her potential. Each curricular standard is defined and clearly understood by teachers and used as the basis for instruction. Regular assessments, both formal and informal, are used to determine student needs and to guide daily instruction. Curriculum is annually reviewed by the school system in accordance with adoption of curricular materials. All classrooms, the library, and the main office maintain copies of curricular standards.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

Instruction is based on a balanced literacy approach, incorporating skill and strategy development, literature study, and opportunities for authentic reading and writing. Classrooms have access to a variety of reading resources, including the adopted curriculum, Benchmark Literacy. Literature sets were purchased for use across all grade levels, with a focus on high interest "good fit" books that also align to the E.A.R.T.H. framework. Additionally, teachers utilize "Storybook STEM" and the accompanying library as a part of their reading/English language arts curriculum.

Skills in phonological and phonemic awareness, word recognition, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension are taught through modeling, direct, and indirect instruction. Practice activities are incorporated through independent reading, buddy reading, guided reading, shared reading, Reader's Theater, teacher read-aloud, and literacy centers. Reading conferences allow for the curriculum to be focused on students' needs. Mini-lessons focus on reading comprehension strategies and text analysis of different genres. Indiana State Standards guide the instruction, which is further defined by a set of Monroe County Community School Corporation "essential learnings" or "power standards."

To further enhance our literacy program two preventionists and one special education aide are employed at Unionville Elementary School. These aides help each grade level, each day, to provide additional academic support during a time we refer to as "Arrow Time," a special time in the day dedicated to an essential aspect of literacy that the teachers have determined as a critical component of the curriculum (essential learnings). Common formative assessments (CFA) are utilized to measure student proficiency before, during, and after instruction. Teachers compile and analyze CFA results, then divide the students, according to their performance, into small instructional groups.

Grade level teams meet weekly in professional learning communities (PLC) to plan for tiered instruction. Teams also meet monthly with a larger group, including the social worker, school psychologist, principal, instructional coach, and special education teacher to review progress and to discuss tiered intervention and distribution of resources.

1b. Mathematics:

The math curriculum at Unionville Elementary is coordinated with the Indiana Standards and the Common Core Standards. It is integrated into other subjects throughout the day. Teachers utilize the adopted curriculum: Envision, Big Ideas, and Connected Math along with supplemental materials designed to provide targeted hands-on mathematical experiences. Students are encouraged to explain their mathematical thought processes both orally and in writing, as well as to complete engineering challenges that involve building, measuring, and problem solving. Supplemental support on basic fact computation is also provided.

Students are engaged in differentiated instruction and are accelerated (grade skipping and promotion), as appropriate. Curriculum maps have been created to guide teachers in supporting students in ways that allow them to learn at high levels. CFAs, rubrics, and scoring guides exist for all math essential learnings.

To further enhance our math program two preventionists and one special education aide are employed at Unionville Elementary School. These aides help each grade level, each day to provide additional academic support during a time we refer to as "Arrow Time," a special time in the day dedicated to an essential aspect of mathematics that the teachers have determined as a critical component of the curriculum (essential learnings). CFAs are utilized to measure student proficiency before, during, and after instruction. Teachers compile and analyze CFA results, then divide the students, according to their performance, into small instructional groups.

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1c. Science:

Throughout the day, students are engaged in interactive activities and experiences that pertain to the world around them. Students document these experiences/observations in a science notebook. They use this notebook to make connections and reflect on their learning. In addition to the utilization of the adopted curriculum, FOSS and Labaids, teachers have developed units focused around E.A.R.T.H. topics. These units are strongly rooted in STEM topics. Unionville Elementary School has grown into a learning environment where STEM learning is seen throughout daily activities. Our school district has aligned reading and math standards to common formative assessments (CFAs) and curriculum. Teachers have built on this work and have created interdisciplinary units centered on STEM/E.A.R.T.H. topics.

In addition to the work happening in the classrooms, students have opportunities to participate in STEM/EARTH centered clubs. During Club Friday, students expand their learning with hands on projects and activities according to their interests. The monthly topics range from Lego club and coding club, to a fiber arts club. After-school clubs include Lego club, running club, and a robotics club.

We have embedded and meaningful relationships with many community partners including: Sycamore Land Trust, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Indiana University School of Biology, Indiana University School of Public Health, IU Hospital, YMCA, and Monroe County Parks and Recreation. Members of these groups serve us with classroom presentations, monetary support, and curriculum guidance.

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

Unionville Elementary teachers approach the teaching of social studies in a cross curricular way, utilizing novel sets, project based learning, guest speakers, and global literacy to enhance the adopted curriculum. The Indiana Standards serve as a guide and are integrated across the school day. It is a priority of our teachers to make connections between the social studies standards and the E.A.R.T.H. vision.

When creating a framework for implementation of the E.A.R.T.H. vision, the faculty of Unionville Elementary wanted to find a way to naturally integrate social studies and history topics. After much thought and deliberation, the team decided that assigning each grade level a continent to use as a theme throughout the year would provide a point of context and comparison.

Teachers use literature as a springboard to connect their grade level continent, creating invitations and investigations that incorporate STEM, E.A.R.T.H., and social studies topics across the curriculum. They utilize what they have learned about our local environment to compare and contrast with the global environment.

In addition to the above-mentioned strategies, structures, and materials, our 5th and 6th graders have the opportunity to participate in a simulation known as Biz Town. This program combines in-class learning with a day long visit to a fully interactive simulated town facility. Each student assumes a job/role in the town, which they have to apply for. This provides a unique opportunity for students to apply their knowledge.

1e. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Special Area Classes:

All teachers, including special area (art, music, physical education, and library) attend a weekly professional learning community meeting. These meetings provide time for special area teachers to collaborate around instructional issues. They discuss essential learnings, instructional strategies, and assessment plans. They work to find ways to integrate the E.A.R.T.H. vision into their curriculum and work closely with classroom teachers to provide extensions and connections to their work. The E.A.R.T.H. vision has natural connections to all special area classes.

In addition to the teaching done in his or her content area, each special area teacher provides push in assistance, which we refer to as “classroom support.” During classroom support time, special area teachers provide academic interventions in one on one or small group settings. This allows the special area teacher to make additional connections to the content being taught and learned in the classroom. It also allows the students to receive additional academic and relational support.

Health Curriculum:

Health is one of the guiding principles within the E.A.R.T.H. vision. We have an adopted health curriculum, CATCH. Additionally, 5th grade students across our school district receive instruction through the Family Life curriculum. As a school, we integrate healthy practices into our school day in a variety of ways. We have a “Minds in Motion” course in our hallway. This course is designed to strengthen the cognitive function of students, as it emphasizes movements shown to have positive impacts on brain development. Students go through the course with their classmates as they travel through the hall on their way to their destination. We have a “Read and Ride” lab. This is a space equipped with 35 stationary bicycles. Classes visit the Read and Ride Lab at least once a week, where they read a book and ride a bike. We have a set of 15 recumbent tricycles on our playground. Each student gets a chance to ride the trikes on a rotating basis. This resource provides an opportunity for increased engagement in school and a chance to move in an innovative way on the playground. The bikes are ridden around a track on the playground. This track is encircled by a fit trail, which includes stations for completing a variety of exercises.

Many of these experiences have been made possible through the acquisition of grant money, earmarked for the implementation of programs that positively impact student health outcomes.

Social Emotional Learning:

Unionville implements a schoolwide curriculum for improving student social emotional skills, known as Second Steps. Additionally, teachers seek out ways to integrate joy and to encourage healthy coping mechanisms. Our school social worker leads groups, designed to build social skills and coping strategies.

Technology:

Technology is a central part of our work. We are certified as a Common Sense Media School and have a 1-1 ratio of iPads for student use. Teachers are proficient in incorporating the use of technology into their lessons. Our core curriculum is featured in an online format. Computer science curriculum and digital learning lessons are embedded. All students are taught keyboarding skills, which they apply across the curriculum.

Unionville Elementary does not have a formal foreign language program.

3. Special Populations:

Unionville Elementary School uses a Response to Intervention model to address the varying needs of all students. Core instruction is strong. The strength and power of learning happening at the universal level is a critical component of the overall success experienced by students. When students struggle to show proficiency, individualized intervention plans are put in place. Teachers, along with the principal, instructional coach, school psychologist, social worker, and instructional aides, review progress monitoring data. This team creates intervention plans according to results obtained through universal screeners and upon teacher request. The master schedule is organized in a way to provide extra support to those who show a need. The intervention schedule is altered as needs in the building change. If students have academic holes that need to be filled, we are mindful to alter the pace of instruction so that the student does not fall further behind. We continue to support all student levels by reviewing formative and summative assessments. Students who are struggling with a particular standard are given additional time and instruction to support and improve learning. Following instruction, they are reassessed to ensure mastery.

The following achievement gaps exist, according to the 2017 spring state assessment, Indiana State Test of Educational Progress (ISTEP):

ISTEP ELA Special Education 82.4%, General Education 92.8%
ISTEP Math Special Education 64.7%, General Education 89.7%
ISTEP Science Special Education 70%, General Education 92.7%

Closing the achievement gap is a priority for our school. We practice special education inclusion and provided extended learning opportunities to students who need additional time to master skills.

Students who are performing above grade level are provided with instruction that is appropriately challenging. All classroom libraries contain books at a variety of levels so that students can find a “good fit book.” The reading/writing workshop structure of our language arts block is conducive to allowing students to progress at their individual reading/writing level. Students in the intermediate grades participate in math acceleration and grade skipping, as necessary. We also have a volunteer two times a week who is assigned to provide extension to students performing above the grade level expectation. Our district provides off site self-contained services for students identified as high ability.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

We believe a healthy school culture and climate is critical in creating a place where high levels of learning can occur. The faculty and staff at Unionville make strategic efforts to cultivate an environment where children feel known, appreciated, supported, safe, and engaged. This is done through the relationships that the adults hold with the students and also through a variety of initiatives designed to impact the school climate and culture in positive ways.

Students and staff begin their day with a morning walk together and a cheer: “Today’s a new day! Today’s going to be a great day! Everyone here cares about me!”, before heading to class. This routine sets the tone for the day and for the school. It evokes feelings of preference, optimism, and care. We create opportunities for students to work with students between grade levels as a strategy for strengthening connections across the school. This happens during experiences such as Club Friday, recess, bus buddies, and study buddies. Students are encouraged to have a voice in the decisions being made in our school. They exercise this right in their participation on the student advisory board and in informal ways, such as notes left for the principal regarding a variety of issues. Students are celebrated constantly, both formally and informally. We utilized a G.O.A.T. ticket system to recognize good decisions and accomplishments. G.O.A.T. is a modern acronym standing for Greatest Of All Time. Students and staff can earn G.O.A.T. tickets, which are entered into a drawing for prizes.

An anti-bullying program exists as a means to reduce the likelihood of bullying occurring at Unionville Elementary. This program, along with the many strategies we use to build social skills and relationships, has been very effective in creating an environment that feels safe.

The adults engage in practices to positively impact their work environment. They gain tremendous energy and inspiration from the success of students. The support of the community and the greater school district has also been wonderful in helping teachers find satisfaction in their work. The teachers accept ownership for maintaining a healthy work environment. They value joy and kindness and are deliberate about infusing those qualities into their interactions with each other. It is common to receive emails from colleagues with praise or to find a note in a mailbox or an inspirational quote on the chalkboard in the lounge. In addition to these informal practices, a cheer committee is charged with the responsibility of prioritizing the positive climate and culture for the adults.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Unionville has strong ties to the community. We value the involvement of the community and actively seek ways to infuse their participation in our school. In addition to the many community partnerships that exist within our school, we have developed a relationship with a local assisted living facility. Once a month, residents come to our school to spend time reading with our kindergarteners. It is a wonderful experience for both the senior and the student.

Unionville Elementary has many strong volunteers who give their time, weekly, to support our students and staff. We enjoy the support of a retired teacher and spouse who comes and makes copies, a retired teacher who devotes two full days to providing extended learning opportunities to our students performing above grade level, and numerous parents, grandparents, and neighbors who come in and provide extra practice for students who need a little additional support or would benefit from a connection with another caring adult. The volunteers in our school are a part of the “secret sauce” to our success. Their engagement is tremendous.

The faculty and staff at Unionville communicate regularly with families. The traditional parent teacher conferences, monthly school newsletters, and weekly class newsletters are used. Additionally, some teachers utilize Class Dojo, an app for facilitating a connection between home and school. Teachers are sincere in seeing the home as an extension of the school and visa versa. They respect the role of parents

and are proactive in garnering their participation. The school Parent Teacher Organization is very active and provides strong support for the work of the teachers and principal.

Many of our traditions reinforce our bond to the community. These traditions bring multigenerational community members into our school on a regular basis. Some examples of these traditional events are our Annual Staff/Student Volleyball Game, Chili Super, Grandparent's Day, Carnival, Veteran's Day Music Program, and Mother's Day Tea.

3. Professional Development:

Professional development is determined by areas of need, area of interest, and available funding. Reviews of student data, the focus of the school and district, along with opportunities provided by community partners all play a role in deciding upon professional development.

Our teachers have had the opportunity to build their expertise in delivering E.A.R.T.H. and related STEM curriculum by collaborating and attending related trainings. Some of the trainings that have been available to our teachers are as follows: Storybook STEM, Professional Learning Communities, Global Literacy, Project Wild, Teaching Outdoor Education Through Children's Literature, Common Sense Media Training, Instructional Technology Workshop, Nature of Teaching, Collaborative Planning/Release Time, Movement and the Brain, Flying Wild, and AG in the Classroom. Additionally, we have had the wonderful opportunity to work alongside an expert in delivering environmental education. He is a community partner with Sycamore Land Trust who conducts lessons with our students. The planning he does with our teachers and the modeling he does during the lesson have provided a rich learning experience for all.

Some of the most powerful professional development that is accomplished by our teachers is during weekly PLC meetings. This informal professional development is timely and meaningful. It is in response to instructional questions that arise through the process of collaborating around the questions of 1) What do we want our students to know and be able to do? 2) How will we know when they have learned it? 3) What if they have trouble learning it? and 4) What if they already know it? These questions are central to the work of PLCs and the answers have a big impact on the instructional strategies utilized to ensure all students learn at high levels.

4. School Leadership:

School leadership is distributed across the school environment. Due to the structure and size of Unionville Elementary, each and every teacher is engaged in leading some function of the school. We have limited human resources and work efficiently to make sure all necessary tasks are completed in order to make our school function smoothly and effectively. Our faculty and staff engage in leadership in both formal and informal ways. Each teacher is a member of a committee, which serves as a leadership team for propelling specific work in the school. Teachers demonstrate a high level of commitment to our school. We have many teachers who have taught at Unionville for decades, others who live in the community, and others whose children attend the school. The teachers' work is intertwined with their lives in a very positive way. Their hearts and minds are dedicated to making Unionville Elementary School the best it can be. Faculty and staff go "beyond the call of duty" for their students, families, and school.

Students are encouraged to take on leadership roles in many ways. Each student is engaged in a partnership called Study Buddies. Study Buddy relationships are developed across grade levels. Primary classrooms are paired up with intermediate classrooms and then students within those classrooms are assigned a partner. Typically, older students mentor the younger students, but there are examples where the opposite is true. The relationship is certainly symbiotic. Another opportunity for leadership exists on our Student Advisory Board. Students are elected to represent their class as a part of this group. Elected students work closely with the principal and the student president to make decisions and plan community service. This group of students provides an open line of communication between the students and the staff. They meet regularly and always have an opportunity to share concerns, ideas, and questions, which are plentiful.

The principal strives to create an environment fertile for success for all. She believes that the school should

emote the feelings of joy, kindness, support, curiosity, respect, and pride. The principal's work is organized in a way to create an environment where faculty, staff, students, and families are informed, feel safe and are motivated to achieve at high levels. She keeps the school mission at the forefront and has high expectations for faculty, staff, and student engagement and performance.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Through the process of communicating E.A.R.T.H. as a priority for our school, we have come to recognize the immense power in a shared and clear vision. This vision has brought inspiration, engagement, pride, accolades, and resources. The implementation of this vision is evidence of our healthy school culture and the willingness of its teachers to engage in instructional innovation and take risks.

The Unionville faculty and staff have been pleased to receive an outcry of support. As a result, we have engaged in over 20 community partnerships, which provide expertise, professional development, enriching experiences, and resources to our school. Our clear vision has helped us to identify those partners who best match our curriculum. It has led to partnerships that are mutually beneficial and rewarding. We have sought out partnerships, but often individuals and organizations reach out to us because they want to be a part of the innovation occurring in our school. These partnerships, since the fall of 2017, have led to the acquisition of \$51,357.18 in grant and donation monies to support our vision.

We have recently received some awards and praise related to our vision for teaching and learning. We were named the recipient of “The Indiana Outdoor Classroom of the Year.” Additionally, we have been rated an “Indiana A School” and a “4 Star School.” In addition to these awards, we have received extensive media coverage in the local newspaper (The Herald Times), The Associated Press, and Indiana Outdoor Magazine. We have a very strong following on social media, and home prices in the school district are on the rise as is our school enrollment.

It is very rewarding and professionally fulfilling to receive such diverse recognition. We are very proud of the fact that our journey provides evidence that project based/outdoor education and high levels of learning are not mutually exclusive ideas.