

**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 Mr. Richard Fournier

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

Official School Name Fruit Street School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 175 Fruit Street

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

Bangor ME 04401-4141  
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Penobscot

Telephone (207) 941-6270

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Web site/URL http://fruitstreet.bangorschools.net

E-mail rfournier@bangorschools.net

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\*Betsy Webb Ed.D.

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail bwebb@bangorschools.net

District Name Bangor School Department Tel. (207) 992-4153

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mrs. Susan Hawes

(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):
- 7 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 10 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	22	17	39
K	35	41	76
1	39	33	72
2	36	30	66
3	42	30	72
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
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>	174	151	325

\*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):
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 4 % Asian
  - 4 % Black or African American
  - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 82 % White
  - 6 % 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: 13%

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	20
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	22
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	42
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	319
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.13
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	13

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 2%  
8 Total number ELL

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

Portuguese, Spanish, Chinese

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 32%  
Total number students who qualify: 103

8. Students receiving special education services: 10 %  
31 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>2</u> Autism                  | <u>3</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>6</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>0</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>10</u> Emotional Disturbance  | <u>10</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.	17
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	9
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	7
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

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 19:1

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%	96%	96%	96%	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.

Fruit Street School will offer high quality instruction and comprehensive programs to provide academic excellence for all students. A high quality education is attainable by all of our students who will receive the encouragement and opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that prepare them for citizenship in a global society.

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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The first thing you'll notice about the students at Fruit Street School is their excitement about learning. Every morning, students arrive smiling, happy, and eager to attend school. Their parents are equally excited about and supportive of this neighborhood school; these middle class, professional families value education. They also have high expectations, and the school principal and staff rise to those expectations with the school's guiding philosophy of accelerating students at the moment they're ready to be challenged.

Bangor is a small city of 33,000 that serves as a regional service center for Eastern Maine. Bangor draws individuals and families from Maine and beyond to access educational programs, social supports, and medical care, which has resulted in a high mobility rate for the city. The neighborhood surrounding Fruit Street School, however, is less mobile and more affluent than other areas. It's a mix of old and new, with both urban and rural settings. Older, mature single-family homes sit alongside apartments, and the outskirts are characterized by newly constructed, stately homes abutting pastures.

The school was built in 1954 to originally serve grades 4-5. Several decades ago, it became a K-3 school, with pre-K added in the 1990s. It is the largest of Bangor's five pre-K to grade 3 schools, serving 325 students through 17 classroom teachers, two special education teachers, four specialists, seven support and resource staff, five educational technicians, a custodian, a secretary, and a principal. The average student-classroom teacher ratio is 19:1. The relationships among staff are close, friendly, and encouraging. It's obvious that the staff care about each other professionally and socially, and this warmth is emulated by the students.

Although many of the students come from the more affluent families in the city, 32 percent still qualify for free and reduced lunch. Although Maine is not an ethnically diverse state overall, Fruit Street has the most diverse population of the five primary schools in Bangor, with the largest black and Asian populations. Approximately 60 percent of families are new to Bangor, drawn from other parts of Maine, out of state, or from different countries by major employers such as Northern Light Medical Center.

Because of the parents' emphasis on education, Fruit Street enjoys an involved Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) which helps organize and fund annual events including a winter carnival, a spaghetti supper, and an ice cream social. Parents are supportive of academics and the arts, helping to fund author visits, book fairs, and a visiting artist for art class. School events such as academic showcase night, literacy and math PEAK (Parents and Educators Accelerating Kids) nights, the third-grade chorus concert, and the annual art show are always well attended by families.

The key strategies used to encourage all students to develop to their full potential are a well-attended community school program, a robust visual and performing arts program, leadership development of faculty, and an initiative of accelerated learning.

Community school is a before-school and after-school program with offerings that reinforce and extend student learning. Examples include coding club, physical education (PE) club, math club, art and literacy club, snowshoeing, snow science, chorus, and LEGO club. Community school has a high participation rate; ninety-five percent of students attend at least two before-school or after-school offerings each year, and 19 teachers elected to lead a community school activity this year. Community school contributes to student success by generating enthusiasm for learning among students and giving students concrete examples of how material learned in school can be applied to lifelong hobbies - or even leading to career pathways.

At Fruit Street School, visual and performing arts intersect with other content areas. There is a close collaboration between teachers so that art and music enhance what's happening in other content areas. For example, the "Downeast to Bangor" social studies unit for third graders includes coordinating songs and art lessons. Reinforcing lessons with the arts helps make content more memorable so that students can succeed.

Teachers are empowered to take on a leadership role which makes them more invested in the future trajectory of each student's educational pathway. The principal has a sustained vision for the school and

teachers are active members of the school core competencies (SCC) teams which meet throughout the year to help evaluate student data and set school-wide goals.

Acceleration is the key strategy that has encouraged all students to develop to their full potential, which is in line with the Bangor School Department's mission of "Academic Excellence for All." At Fruit Street School, all classroom teachers are trained in, and effectively utilize, the workshop model to assess each student's grasp of the concepts being taught. This enables students to receive further instruction tailored to their learning levels, which allows acceleration to take place immediately. As a result, third graders at Fruit Street School scored 39 percent above the state average in math assessments and 24 percent above the state average in English language arts assessments in 2017-2018. Fruit Street School math scores were the highest in the state for the past two years.



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

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

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

The English language arts (ELA) curriculum for pre-K through grade 3 includes reading and analyzing authentic literary and informational texts, equipping students with the skills of vocabulary, decoding/phonics, fluency, comprehension, and understanding literary elements. It focuses on reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Every day, students are expected to read aloud and silently. There are 12 authentic texts at every grade level based on themes that address STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics), history, social studies/civic engagement, and social-emotional learning. This curriculum was chosen because it emphasized five pillars of literacy instruction (comprehension, fluency, phonological awareness, phonics, and vocabulary), conforms to the workshop model of whole group, small group, and individual instruction, and provides clear alignment to Maine’s Standards for ELA as detailed in Maine’s Learning Results. The instructional framework is the workshop model, which allows for differentiated instruction for small groups or individuals. Unit assessments and literacy assessments (Fountas & Pinnell) inform teacher instruction, shape differentiated instruction, and guide goal-setting at grade level data meetings.

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

The mathematics curriculum is designed for students to build foundational math understandings and skills in the operations of math. Students are taught to think mathematically, to use math vocabulary, and to apply math skills and concepts to solve complex multi-step problems. Students practice math journaling daily to help teachers understand what the student grasps or doesn’t grasp about a particular concept. The curriculum was chosen because it aligns to Maine Learning Results and the National Council of Mathematics Standards, supports Bangor’s commitment to college and/or career readiness for all students, and requires students to apply math to solve multi-step and complex real-world math problems. The instructional approach is the workshop model, which allows for differentiated instruction for small groups or individuals, and problem-based learning. Formative and summative assessments, including unit assessments and math fact fluency, are used at the classroom level for differentiated instruction and acceleration, at grade level data meetings to guide instructional pacing, and at vertical grade level meetings to ensure continuity of learning for students as they progress.

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

Science is taught through project-based learning in kindergarten to grade 3. The approach is through hands-on, inquiry-based activities in which students investigate a claim by gathering evidence and using reasoning. The activities have cross-curricular connections, including constructed response, song and dance, art and sculpture, engineering and design, and math and data analysis. End of unit assessments are used at grade level meetings to guide instructional pacing. Topics covered include earth and space science, life science, and physical science. The curriculum was chosen because it aligns with Maine Learning Results and Next Generation Science Standards, challenges students with real world problems, and requires higher order thinking skills.

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

Social studies, history, and civic learning/engagement are embedded in the ELA curriculum in grades K-3. Themed units in the ELA curriculum focus on exploring communities in kindergarten, becoming a classroom citizen and celebrating diversity in first grade, understanding communities and pioneering new ideas and new worlds in second grade, and becoming a citizen and connecting character, culture and community in third grade. In addition, grade three students study history in a locally-focused unit entitled, “Downeast to Bangor.” Specially themed days such as Constitution Day, Veterans Day, and President’s Day are filled with activities for students to learn about history and civics. This approach was chosen because it

aligns with Maine Learning Results and complies with the Maine Department of Education's mandate to teach selected Special Observances and Commemorative Days. Student progress is monitored throughout the year with end of unit assessments to show student growth, and determine student needs. For example, in grade two, understanding of map concepts is assessed at the end of a unit about mapping.

**1e. For secondary schools:**

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

The pre-K curriculum includes social-emotional themes such as school readiness, family, community, animals, and nature, with ELA, math, science, and civics embedded. The curriculum emphasizes literacy and numeracy, aligning with K-3 standards. Kindergarten teachers report that students who attended pre-K are better prepared to navigate the school and classroom routines, make friends easier, and exhibit less anxiety than those who did not attend pre-K. Attending pre-K also sets students up for higher achievement in later grades: forty-five percent of third graders who attended pre-K were at least meeting benchmark in reading, with an additional 45 percent exceeding the benchmark, resulting in 90 percent of third graders meeting or exceeding proficiency if they attended pre-K.

**2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

Fruit Street School has a rigorous visual and performing arts program. The art and music teachers work closely with classroom teachers to coordinate lessons so that the art and music curriculum support other content areas in addition to teaching visual art skills and music concepts. All pre-K to grade 3 students participate in music class every week for 30 minutes, and in visual art class every other week for one hour. Lessons are aligned to the Maine Learning Results for visual and performing arts. All third-grade students participate in chorus and in a school and district performance.

Physical education and health are essential to helping students reach their full potential. Pre-K students participate in physical education once per week for thirty minutes, and students in K-3 participate in PE two times per week for thirty minutes. The physical education curriculum adheres to the K-3 Maine Learning Results and Maine's Early Learning Development standards for pre-K. The PE teacher is trained in adaptive physical education for students needing modifications. Nutrition and health are embedded in the ELA curriculum for pre-K to grade 3.

Integrating technology into the educational process is one of the core competencies of the school department's Ten-Year Strategic Plan. The goal is to enhance students' awareness and curiosity about a changing world and to equip students with the practical skills and intellectual orientation to experience it virtually and in person. There is a minimum of six Chromebooks in each K-2 classroom, and there are 1:1 Chromebooks for third graders. Students also have access to iPads to enhance learning as needed. Coding club is offered as an optional before-school activity, and an average of ten students from second or third grade participate.

The school librarian is a valuable resource for the entire school, and the library serves as a hub of learning for all students. The librarian assists teachers with selecting texts that are directly related to content areas. All students visit the library weekly for thirty minutes. During library time, the librarian reads a story aloud, instructs students on the use of the library and its technology, and then assists students with book selection. Students in grades 1-3 are instructed in using the library for research using Mike Eisenberg's and Robert Berkowitz' Super 3 method of plan, do, and review, in conjunction with a classroom assigned project.

Social-emotional learning is essential to build the social skills and character necessary to excel in school and in life. The school guidance counselor provides instruction to all pre-K to grade 3 students for one hour every other week. Topics include building friendships, displaying kindness, growing self-esteem, reporting bullying, and building perseverance.

Preparation for post-secondary education or career aspirations is an important component of the Bangor School Department's Ten-Year Strategic Plan, and begins as early as kindergarten. Careers are addressed in all content areas by introducing careers of literary characters, scientists, and historical figures. Students and staff are encouraged to wear apparel from their favorite college on College Gear Day each spring, which prompts developmentally appropriate class conversations about education beyond high school and the importance of lifelong learning. College and career conversations are also prompted by volunteers, including local college students, police officers, and firefighters who come to visit once per year to read aloud to students.

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

Fruit Street School strives to meet the needs of all learners, regardless of whether they are performing below, at, or above benchmark. The principal and a team of teachers meet regularly to define and refine school core competency (SCC) goals, which informs classroom and student goals. Every three weeks, the SCC team meets to review student assessments and data, and formulates a response to intervention (RTI) plan for both struggling students and exceptional students.

The primary method of addressing individual student needs is through the instructional framework of the workshop model. Lessons begin with a guided mini-lesson for the whole class. The teacher reviews the learning target verbally and in writing. The teacher performs quick checks of each student's understanding during the mini-lesson. Students are then directed to workstations based on their grasp of the content. The teacher monitors each workstation and differentiates instruction within each group and for each individual student. The lesson concludes with all students together for a summary and to share observations and reflections.

Struggling students may be referred for supports provided by special education teachers, an English Learner (EL) teacher, a reading recovery teacher, or a Title I teacher, or receive extra help through the after-school program. To meet the needs of exceptional students, teachers in the same grade level may work together to create differentiated instruction, or a student may be referred to attend a higher grade for a subject in which they are advanced. To tailor the workshop model to each individual student's level, classroom teachers may also receive assistance from the literacy coach.

Subgroups at Fruit Street School include ten percent of students identified with special education needs, 32 percent of students who are economically disadvantaged, and two percent of students who are English learners. The special education and economically disadvantaged subgroups at Fruit Street School have outperformed the state average of these subgroups in ELA and math. Over the past two years, special education students meeting proficiency was ten percent above the state average in literacy and 25 percent above the state average in math. Economically disadvantaged students at Fruit Street meeting proficiency was 28 percent above the state average in literacy, and 50 percent above the state average in math. Only two of the eight English learners participated in the MEA (Maine Educational Assessment) since only third graders take the exam. The Maine Department of Education does not report results for subgroups with very small populations, so these results are not available.

The achievement gap between all students at Fruit Street School and the special populations is significantly less than ten percent.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### **1. School Climate/Culture:**

Creating a positive school environment begins with the principal and every staff member being visible, accessible, and setting an example for students. The principal and teachers greet students outside the school every morning with a smile and encouraging words, and the principal reads a poem to students every day. Students observe all of the staff treating each other with kindness and respect during every interaction. The school custodian maintains a spotless building, which inspires students to keep it clean and instills pride within the school. Students are motivated academically by a “Remarkable Rams” bulletin board showcasing exceptional student work, and students earn prizes such as pencils for the Principal’s Math Challenge. The art teacher and librarian collaborated on a social-emotional project for students that involved a library read-aloud about kindness, and each student painted a kindness rock in art class.

Teachers feel valued and heard because they are encouraged to be leaders within the SCC team. They help to set classroom, grade level, and school goals, giving them ownership over the direction of the school. Teachers feel supported through continuous professional development offerings so that they are equipped to handle the academic, social, or emotional needs of students.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

Creating a welcoming environment in which parents and community members are invited to the school has helped encourage support of the school and its students. Fruit Street School and the PTO hosts many diverse events at which parents and community members can communicate with school staff, learn about student achievement, and discover ways to support students. Prior to the start of the school year, an open house night encourages parents to walk through the school and meet the principal and teachers. At the annual Title I parent meeting, school staff inform parents about supports available for students. During two PEAK (Parents and Educators Accelerating Kids) nights, teachers lead parents through informational sessions about how to support their child’s literacy or math skills at home. Academic Showcase is an opportunity for students to show the community what they’ve been learning in every content area and the project they’ve completed. PTO events include book fairs, a spaghetti supper, a winter carnival, and an ice cream social.

The school also encourages family and community participation through volunteering. Approximately 50 individuals per year complete the volunteer training, and help out at the school in a variety of ways, such as assisting in a classroom, preparing materials for art class, volunteering in the library, or helping with activities on field day. The local colleges, Husson University and University of Maine, bring groups of college students to the school to volunteer in a classroom or to read to children.

The school leadership encourages an open line of communication between teachers and parents about student achievements and challenges. The Bangor School Department has a mobile app to keep parents informed of classroom activities and academic success. Each teacher can form a group on the app where they may post photos and keep parents up to date on what’s happening in the classroom. The community stays informed about student achievements through the school website, school newsletters, and the district’s biannual newsletter, “The Communique.”

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

The Bangor School Department uses a data informed approach to professional development. Student data are reviewed at the school level to identify student needs, and data from all schools are evaluated at the district level to determine the professional development areas that will best support student achievement.

Professional development for elementary teachers is planned by the district. For example, the district arranges for a University of Maine instructor to lead a course for a cohort of teachers on site at the school. Over the last four years, the district has offered three courses in ELA and one in math. Ninety percent of

the teachers at Fruit Street School have taken at least one course, and 63 percent have completed two or more. Teachers may take up to nine graduate courses per year, reimbursed by the school department. Teachers are encouraged to pursue graduate study, as their contract provides for salary adjustments at the Masters, CAS (Certificate of Advanced Study), and Doctoral levels.

The district assigns a literacy coach to Fruit Street School who supports best practice in literacy instruction. With support from the principal, the literacy coach provides school-based professional development for teachers based on review of student literacy assessments.

In addition, the district plans two days of high-quality professional development before the start of the school year (Teacher Academy), and a day of in-service during the school year. Teacher Academy gives teachers the opportunity for peer-to-peer collaboration and sharing within and across schools. The Bangor School Department is a member of SPRPCE (Southern Penobscot Regional Program for Children with Exceptionalities) and PREP (Penobscot River Educational Partnership), collaborative organizations comprised of 22 school districts that aim to improve teaching and the educational experience. Fruit Street School teachers and staff members have free access to several learning opportunities per year hosted by SPRPCE and PREP that enhance and expand their knowledge, most recently in the area of social-emotional development and learning.

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

The principal's leadership philosophy is centered on building relationships, and having informal and formal professional dialogue around the individual needs of the students is a priority. The principal maintains an open-door policy for teachers, staff, students, and parents. The principal empowers teachers to be leaders within the classroom and involves teachers in the decision-making process so that the best interest of students is represented. This collaborative leadership takes place within the framework of the SCC process. Teachers create SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) goals for their classroom, make decisions through grade level teams, and then outline schoolwide goals through the SCC leadership team meetings. The role of the principal is to ensure the core learning experience is met and individualized so that differentiation and acceleration is taking place for each student. The principal supports teachers through resource facilitation such as Title I, RTI process, and special education programs. The principal also monitors the progress made towards SCC goals.

Several teachers serve as leaders on the SCC leadership team, and their roles are to gather student assessment data from the grade level teams and voice teacher feedback as SCC goals are created.

Every staff member at Fruit Street School is committed to the Bangor School Department's Ten-Year Strategic Plan. All initiatives and activities at the school level are filtered through the four overarching goals of the strategic plan: Academic Excellence, Professional Excellence, Quality Instructional Program, and Environment for Success. Utilizing these filters enables all staff to focus on the mission of Academic Excellence for All.

An example of how the school's leadership philosophy of building relationships ensures student achievement is the response to the Maine Department of Education's recently released policy to address chronic absenteeism. The SCC team has set an attendance goal for the school, and every Thursday the principal meets with the school nurse and social worker to identify any student who is chronically absent. They discuss issues affecting the student's attendance and strategies to get the student back in school, and build relationships with the parents to help create a culture of student attendance.

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

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The one practice that has been most instrumental to the school's success is accelerating students at the moment they demonstrate understanding of a concept. A student who understands a lesson does not wait for others in the class to catch up. Acceleration is the expectation of the parents of students at Fruit Street School.

The instructional framework used in the classrooms is the workshop model. Lessons begin with a guided mini-lesson for the whole class. The teacher reviews the learning target and performs quick checks to determine each student's level of understanding of the material. At this point the teacher groups students by their level of understanding into workstations, and then monitors each workstation and differentiates instruction within each group and for each individual student. An advanced student may also be placed in a higher grade for that subject so that they are appropriately challenged.

For example, Fountas and Pinnell's A to Z reading level scale is used for student reading assessments. If most kindergarten students are reading at level C or D, and one student is reading at level H, the student reading at level H may be advanced to join a first-grade class for reading. Since Fruit Street School has several classes at each grade level, if there is one advanced student in each class, they may be grouped together at a workstation for reading.

Constantly challenging students has resulted in 69 percent of students meeting or exceeding proficiency on state assessments in ELA compared to the state average of 50 percent, and 85 percent of students meeting or exceeding proficiency in math compared to the state average of 37 percent.

This practice ensures that every student is progressing academically, and the mission of Academic Excellence for All is being met every day inside the walls of Fruit Street School.