

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 Mr. Marco Marando

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

Official School Name Amerman Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 847 North Center Street

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

Northville MI 48167-1118
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Oakland County

Telephone (248) 465-2100

Fax

Web site/URL

http://amerman.northvilleschools.org

g/_____

E-mail baughmanaa@northvilleschools.org

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*Mrs Mary Kay Gallagher

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail gallagma@northvilleschools.org

District Name Northville Public Schools Tel. (248) 344-3500

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. Cyndy Jankowski

(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):
- 6 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 9 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	17	24	41
1	21	22	43
2	31	26	57
3	45	54	99
4	61	71	132
5	78	55	133
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
Total Students	253	252	505

*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
 - 25 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 71 % White
 - 1 % 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: 3%

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

N/A

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	5
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	11
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	16
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	517
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.03
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 5%
27 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Bengali, German, Russian, Italian, Hindi, Japanese, Mandarin, Tamil, Telugu, Spanish, Chinese, Marathi, Polish, Kannada, Malayalam, Albanian, Arabic.

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 2%
 Total number students who qualify: 8

8. Students receiving special education services: 3 %
13 Total number of students served

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

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>1</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>6</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>2</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>2</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>1</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: 3
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.	21
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	8
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	4
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 23:1

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%	96%	95%	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.

Aspire, Achieve, Amaze.

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

At Amerman Elementary School, we are a kindergarten through fifth grade school, as well as being home to the District’s Alternative Learning Program for Students (ALPS) serving students in grades three through five from each of the six elementary schools in Northville. The Alternative Learning Program for Students (ALPS) is a magnet program designed to meet the unique educational needs of academically talented students who exhibit strengths across all content areas. The curriculum is consistent with the Board adopted curriculum, aligned with the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and math, and Grade Level Content Standards in science and social studies. Teachers collaboratively plan to create interdisciplinary units, with a focus on STEAM education and student inquiry, from a lens of being a reflective learner. The ALPS classroom places a greater emphasis on depth and application of knowledge through projects that are typically longer in duration, require high levels of thinking and subject integration.

PART III – SUMMARY

Northville is a suburban community in southeast Michigan. Located 31 miles west of Detroit and 18 miles northeast of Ann Arbor, Northville is in the heart of the state's educational, cultural, commercial and medical centers. The city's Victorian downtown is rich in small-town atmosphere and history. The scenic landscape of the township has attracted considerable housing development and population growth over the past 35 years. Most residents are employed in professional career fields including engineering, education, management and medicine.

All six of the school district's elementary schools are setting the bar for strong school improvement processes, tiered intervention and support systems, and in every school are advancing their work in building a culture of leadership and learning through the innovative school-wide framework of The Leader in Me that empowers students and helps unleash each child's full potential. Amerman was just named a Lighthouse Status school in March, 2019 through The Leader in Me/Franklin Covey process. With this accomplishment, Northville Public Schools became the first district in Michigan and the second district in the country to achieve Lighthouse Status across all elementary schools.

Amerman is also home to the Alternative Learning Program for Students (ALPS), serving academically talented students in third through fifth grades from the district's six elementary schools. In these classrooms, students are able to work with students with similar abilities and grow their knowledge base through project-based learning opportunities. Our school has a commitment to educate and inspire lifelong learners. We strongly believe that students learn best when they are actively engaged and motivated, that we have a shared responsibility to helping student learning and that mutual respect among students and staff is essential to students' performance. A few of the strategies we employ to encourage and challenge all students to develop their full potential are: student voice and choice, student leadership opportunities in the classroom and school-wide, establishing a physical environment that celebrates all learners and members of our school community.

We also have a strong and consistent MTSS (multi-tiered system of supports) team. Student voice and choice are seen in our students' leadership binders and their monthly goal setting. Depending on the need of the student these goals can be academic or behavioral. Student voice and choice are also seen in school-wide events and decision making, whether it's a project to clean-up and restore our courtyard, picking the theme for the year, choosing the colors for the new makerspace, creating daily announcements or planning a surprise thank you assembly for a beloved custodian, our students are challenged and encouraged to be active members of their school.

In addition, our leadership roles within classrooms and school-wide give students the opportunity to apply what they are learning including those life skills of problem solving and working with others to address needs and tasks to benefit the greater good. Establishing a consistent physical, social emotional and academic environment that honors and celebrates our commonalities and differences has been a key strategy that helps all in our school community feel safe and engaged in order for learning to be at its best. We accomplish this through common language of kindness and potential, "Bobcat Boosts" to fill emotional bank accounts and inspirational quotes/messages chosen by students all throughout the building. Our MTSS system, led by a core team that includes a Learning Consultant, Resource Room teachers, School Psychologist, Social Worker and Principal, reviews multiple points of student data and works closely with classroom teachers to find and monitor students with the right level of support academically, emotionally and behaviorally to close gaps and ensure the students are meeting their potential. Whether this is Tier 1 classroom supports all the way to Tier III intense additional support beyond the classroom, we work as a team to ensure that all our students are able to grow and develop as lifelong learners and positive members of any community.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

1a. Reading/English language arts:

In reading, Amerman teachers implement a Balanced Literacy Approach. Using the Michigan State Common Core Standards and MAISA Units as our curriculum guide, teachers use multiple points of data in order to ensure that every student finds success as a reader by differentiating instruction each day. Our approach is balanced as a result of implementing Reader's Workshop; Small group instruction; Read Alouds with Accountable Talk; Shared Reading; and Independent Reading opportunities for our students. With the addition of student goal setting and tracking, our students have voice and choice in their progress and success. In writing, Amerman utilizes the Michigan State Common Core Standards to teach students 21st century writing and research skills. Teachers use best practice instructional approaches, including writer's workshop model, to motivate and reach all students. This curricular approach is under the umbrella of balanced literacy instruction and fosters student voice and choice in writing. Writer's workshop allows children to study exemplar texts of various types of writing. Students observe the characteristics of the writing piece and use the observed author's craft in their own writing. In writer's workshop, students are given the opportunity to choose their own topics and pursue their interests. They use technology to share their writing with a larger audience. Students are often given the option of posting their writing on websites, applications, and word processors for reasons that fit their type of writing. This is also our second year working with a literacy coach. During this time we have focused on read alouds with accountable talk, comprehension strategies, and small group instruction.

1b. Mathematics:

In math, Amerman uses best practices with a focus on math workshop to teach the Common Core State Standards. Math workshop was chosen because it deepens conceptual understanding and engages students in activities that support critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity--the skills of 21st century learners. Math workshop allows for differentiated instruction as well as explicit instruction. The school tracks data trends through our MTSS process and weekly professional learning meetings within each grade level. During this meeting, teachers discuss what strategies are working in the classroom and what improvements need to be made to meet the needs of all learners. With this format, teachers form groups (tier 1 and tier 2) to support the students in their classroom setting. Some of the strategies utilized are: formative and summative assessments, mathematician notebooks, math investigation of the month, data--math as a investigation result of data dig, exit/entrance tickets and content vocabulary lessons. In addition to math workshop, classrooms have been provided access to online resources such as Freckle and Moby Max to support learning. Both programs are available to students at home as well. All of these practices have been supported and enhanced with the help of our math coach. This is our third year working with a math coach. She has helped guide our practice in the conceptual understanding of math through number talks, small group instruction, different ways to utilize manipulatives, and the importance of reflecting on their learning through class dialogue and visual representations.

1c. Science:

In science, Amerman is currently implementing the Next Generation Science Standards as our K-5 science curriculum, using FOSS (Full Optional Science System) as our primary resource. At each grade level, the year is broken into three units - Physical Science, Earth and Space Science, and Life Science with Engineering Design integrated as appropriate throughout the year. Teachers implement a variety of resources and best practices to meet student needs. The past few years, staff have focused on using the Science and Engineering Practices and science phenomena to help engage students in scientific inquiry, exploration and discourse. On any given day, in science, students are participating in: hands-on scientific investigations, application of science content through reading and writing, student talk, cooperative and collaborative learning, problem-based learning, Technology-based activities (Mystery Science, BrainPOP, Freckle, Moby Max), STEM challenges, claim-evidence-reasoning, asking questions and analyzing data.

Lower-elementary teachers use both summative and formative assessments to evaluate student progress, while upper-elementary teachers use summative assessments, formative assessments and standardized testing. Teachers use this data to drive instruction, as well as provide student choice and voice in the classroom. While teachers often use the results of formative assessments for immediate feedback on lessons and activities, teachers use summative assessments to drive PLC discussions. Over the past few years, the school improvement team has analyzed science data from the standardized tests and recognized some of our needs such as: support girls in the sciences, integrate science and ELA, and content-area vocabulary. As a result of this data dig, we hosted a “Women in Science Month” and provided professional development to teachers on integrating science with reading and writing. Additionally, our school improvement team recognized a math area of improvement (measurement and data) which we could support in science. We have since created a monthly STEAM Showcase which highlights student work in the sciences and math from different grade levels across the school.

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

In social studies, Amerman Elementary teaches the Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations. Teachers plan for instruction using units and learning objectives that are relevant and meaningful to students. Reading and writing standards are also integrated into social studies so that kids can develop those skill and learn content in authentic ways. Each grade level uses formative assessment and common grade level tests to assess students’ learning. Teachers vary instruction to present students with opportunities to grapple with problems that people in our society were faced with over time. Technology is integrated as appropriate so that students can access material that is normally not available to them. They can build background knowledge by visiting virtual museums and traveling the world on Google Maps. In social studies teachers challenge students to take on different perspectives and to critically think about what it means to be a good citizen of the United States of America.

1e. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Northville teachers work collaboratively, creating units of study for all content areas, and align content to the approved state and national standards. These units of study provide a scope and sequence for teachers, as well as an overlay of best practice instructional framework. This best practice overlay includes components such as standards’ alignment, learning targets, big ideas, inquiry/essential questions, and summative assessments. These units of study are used by Amerman teachers to implement the curriculum with fidelity. Arts (visual and/or performing): Students in Amerman’s Art Program are supported to cultivate their love and practice of art. Student artists work on concepts such as balance and design, contemporary & traditional art, and artistic ingenuity. Amerman celebrates student artwork throughout the year with seasonal art displays and the Reflections Program. Physical Education/Health/Nutrition: Students in Amerman’s Physical Education Program grow their skills to become healthy, active, and mindful citizens. Student focus on motor skills, physical fitness, rhythmic activities and sports through a lens of sportsmanship and teamwork. Students in Amerman’s World Language Program begin the Spanish language in kindergarten. On a weekly basis, students are immersed in the Spanish language and culture. Students learn how to effectively communicate, using both oral, written, and listening skills, Technology/Library/Media are embedded into our classrooms. Every teacher has access to a computer lab, Chromebook carts, and an iPad cart. Each classroom is also equipped with an interactive whiteboard.

3. Special Populations:

At Amerman Elementary, our composition of students is such that even our largest subgroup, English Language Learners, is less than 10% of our student body. This is the same for our students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged. However our English Languages Learner students and economically disadvantaged students make up the majority of the students receiving MTSS interventions and supports. If the achievement gap is 10 or more percentage points, we use our MTSS process to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our students. This starts with high quality instruction that employs best practices and differentiation at the Tier I classroom level for all students. We align our screening practices with the District structures and procedures. We use the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment three times a year as a Universal Screener. When a student does not meet District-set benchmarks, we conduct additional assessments including common and nationally normed assessments to triangulate data. English Language Learners will also get support from our District's ELL coordinator and designated support personnel. We have seen the success of our academic interventions and support systems in NWEA growth, M-STEP scores, and the decrease in the number of students needing intervention in early elementary vs. upper elementary.

When a student receives Tier II or Tier III, we also use AIMSweb assessments to progress monitor a student's growth, so that we can review support plans regularly to ensure that a student is responding to the intervention and that he/she is closing the achievement gap. In addition to reviewing academic data we collect behavioral data on all students using the SRSS (student risk screening scale). This data is used to help us identify students in need of behavioral supports which may include, but are not limited to, our students of special populations. Our supports can include a Check In/Check Out system to encourage independence, self-monitoring and positive reinforcements of desired behaviors. In addition, depending on the student, we use such strategies as mentoring, 2x10 and peer mentors. Our social worker also provides Tier I supports by teaching whole class lessons to support the social-emotional learning of our students and provide common language for students and staff. For Tier II and Tier III support, our school social worker also provides small group social intervention groups. To address the gaps of our students whether they are performing below, at or above grade level, we have found the regular review and discussion of our students' data allows for us as a team to support our teachers and students to meet the diverse and individual needs of our students, especially those of special populations.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Over the past five years, Amerman has used The Leader in Me framework and our commitment to continuous improvement and review of our data and systems to guide our school improvement process. These systems are: leadership, culture and academics. The goal of these systems is to foster and maintain a school culture/climate that supports a team effort that helps us help our students grow, aspire, achieve and amaze everyday! This is accomplished in a variety of ways from teachers greeting students every day at arrival to monthly student-led R.O.A.R (being safe and responsible, outstanding effort, always being kind, respecting yourself and others), assemblies that honor and recognize students for showing positive leadership and character traits. As 21st Century Educators, we also focus on creating trusting and meaningful relationships with our students. We receive ongoing ACES (adverse childhood experiences) and trauma informed training to help support students who may be at risk due to past trauma. All staff have been trained and informed on how to build trusting relationships with these at risk students. Working with our MTSS core team, we have systems of support in place for students identified via our SRSS (student risk screening scale) data collection on all of our student population.

We also implement various strategies from weekly leadership awards, positive office referrals, marble jars, Class Dojo points, shoutouts on announcements, to Oh yeahs and Oops tallys which all help build positive relationships through the consistent use of language and behaviors of high trust. To ensure that our staff feels supported and valued, our PTA provides breakfast, lunch, and dinner for each staff member during conferences, teacher appreciation week, and other times of high stress. Our social committee organizes monthly breakfasts, and many more activities to help each staff member feel valued, loved, and welcomed. Staff often join together in events to show our solidarity to being a Bobcat such as Themed Halloween costumes, holiday get togethers, breakfast with a buddy, staff monthly breakfasts, PTA volunteer appreciation, Girls on the Run kindness group, staff contests, bowling event between two district schools, and Bobcat Boosts Shout Outs.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

At Amerman, we use print, electronic, and verbal systems that help engage families. Amerman uses the AdvancEd Survey for another data point and parent input. With this survey, there is also the Annual Education Report that is shared with the community. We also share our school improvement goals each year. All of these items are found on our school website as well for parents to reference. We are also a Leader in Me Lighthouse School. With that, we have two new parent liaisons who have been trained to help support continuous improvement of family communication. They come to our bi-weekly Lighthouse Staff meetings, to help create, support, and present information. They developed a family training night that focused on each family's "why", creating a family mission statement. After some background discussion, each family created a family mission statement using these principles. Both parent liaisons are excited about this work and being leaders for our school community with more family training sessions to come. In our weekly newsletter, that is sent to everyone in the school community, are tips and celebrations to enforce the 7 Habits of Highly Effective Kids. One example of this is our Bobcat Boost. Here is an example of a communication that was sent earlier in the year. Give your child a "boost" for the month of November to celebrate their leadership! We know that displaying our November Character Trait- Be Responsible and our Habit, Begin with the End in Mind can happen anywhere! Please print, fill out and send in to your classroom teacher at any point during the month of November. This boost will be added to their "Victory" section of your child's leadership notebook! Along with those forms of communication, we also have monthly PTA meetings where school leaders share information about school happening for the month, school improvement goals, and current initiatives. We also have a yearly board meeting for the entire district hosted by our student and staff leaders. During this board presentation, we celebrate all of our achievements, goals and plan for the coming year for continued improvement. The PTA has their own mission statement and identified goals that connect to the school goals. The PTA also sponsors classroom initiatives through grants and contributes many different learning experiences to the school; such as Science Alive, Guest Author, Metro Parks (animal study), Robot Garage, Lansing Trip and many more.

3. Professional Development:

Our school's approach to professional development is one of ongoing opportunities both formal and informal to ensure responsive and meaningful capacity building of teachers and administrators. Each year the School Improvement Core team reviews the data and selects three to four key skills and areas to focus on in the upcoming year. Throughout the year, we have one-two Extended Times (ET) each month that are set aside for in-building professional development. The School Improvement leaders structure and plan teacher to teacher professional development centered around our school improvement goals. For example, this year small group instruction has been a focus area. We have had professional development sessions on what small group instruction may look like in reading, math, and writing. We also have a professional teacher google site where we house resources shared at these ETs including videos of our own teachers modeling specific best practices and strategies that align to our school improvement goals. Knowing that a student's well-being greatly impacts their academic achievement, we use these times to also provide professional development on such topics as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) and trauma informed strategies as well as student goal setting and tracking. In addition to this teacher to teacher approach, we also have teachers who have been working with a District provided ELA and/or Math coach. The coaches work with grade level groups to focus on instructional strategies and use of resources that are research-based to have the strongest impact on our students. These strategies are aligned to academic standards and our school improvement goals. Our ELA coach has focused on the Reading Essentials and our Math Coach has focused on number talks and increasing our students' mental fluency and understanding of number patterns and numeracy. Throughout the year, teachers and administrators are given opportunities for professional development provided through the district, our intermediate district and national trainers. This has included Next Generation Science professional development, Literacy Coach Training, State Technology Integration and The Leader in Me symposiums. Finally, at least once a year, administrators and staff come together for a book study. Our staff can participate in this at the school and/or District level. All these components and differentiation of professional development opportunities provide staff and administrators with the building of common language and practices that support our students, their achievement and our school improvement efforts.

4. School Leadership:

The best way to describe the leadership philosophy and structure at Amerman Elementary is an integrated team approach. The principal serves as the facilitator and coordinator of the teams of stakeholders ensuring that we are working in pursuit of our mission and vision for our school and our students. The teams that serve our school through their leadership include the following: Collegial Chair Team, School Improvement, MTSS Core Team, our PTA, Staff Lighthouse Team and Student Lighthouse Team. Our Collegial Chair team is made up of one teacher leader from each grade level and they work together to disseminate information to our teachers and give input for professional learning topics, resource allocations and staying current on areas of need and concern throughout the building. The Collegial Chairs also work with the grade level teams to ensure the regular review of student data and lead their Professional Learning Community throughout the year. The School Improvement team systematically reviews whole school data and makes recommendations for school improvement academic goals and strategies. They also plan and implement professional learning related to our academic goals. The MTSS Core team ensures that our school is aligned with District expectations for our academic and behavioral supports for students. This team ensures that our school is also aligned with State and Federal guidelines for special education. The MTSS team works with grade level teams, interventionists and support staff to ensure that our students are responding to supports, receiving the supports they need, and closing achievement gaps. The MTSS team also works with grade level teams to review data and provide supports at the classroom level. Our PTA and families are key stakeholders at Amerman and work with all the leadership teams mentioned to support and facilitate activities for families and students that align to our mission and vision. For example, they provide funding for supplemental online programs for all students such as Brainpop, Freckle and Reading A-Z. They work with Collegial Chairs to align guest speakers and assemblies to curriculum and instruction. They also support our students and staff with celebrations and special recognitions. Finally, our Lighthouse Teams work with the other teams to provide opportunities for student voice and choice throughout the building. The Staff Lighthouse Team provides guidance and professional development as needed to foster our positive culture and climate. There is some crossover on these teams with teacher

leaders serving on more than one team. This structure ensures that we are working together and in a unified direction to meet the academic and social-emotional needs of our students, our stakeholders and our school community.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

With many different initiatives and strategies that have taken place over the course of the last three to five years, the biggest key to our success has been identifying who we are as a school and working on our school culture and environment (socio-emotional). Many staff meetings were spent identifying what we valued as a staff and having honest conversations with each other. Through these conversations, we found common ground and built our new school improvement plan and professional learning opportunities around our values and the needs of our students. As each year progressed, we improved our school improvement process through the lens of teacher input, strengths of our building, areas of improvement, and ways to support each other. With this culture shift, more student ownership of learning has taken place which has led to increased student achievement. Our Leader in Me teams and systems also played an important role in our improvement with a main focus on school culture, creating a culture of student empowerment and aligning our systems to drive results in academics. The students and staff have more input and increased leadership capacity in many different facets of our school day and building. This is also evident in the appearance of the building. When you walk the halls, you can tell student thinking and the whole child is valued. With this positive culture in place, we will continue to achieve success.