

**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) [ ] Title I [ ] Charter [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Ms. Mollie Meyer

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

Official School Name TCU Lonsdale PreK-6 Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1000 Idaho Street SW

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

Lonsdale MN 55046-5028  
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Rice

Telephone (507) 364-3024

Fax (507) 364-3902

Web site/URL https://www.tcu2905.us/page/4180

E-mail mmeyer@tcu2905.us

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

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

Name of Superintendent\*Dr. Teri tpreisler@tcu2905.us

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail tpreisler@tcu2905.us

District Name Tri-City United School District Tel. (507) 364-8100

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

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

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. Dale Buss

(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):
- 3 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 4 TOTAL

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

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
  - Suburban
  - Rural or small city/town
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2018 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	30	32	62
K	18	16	34
1	18	23	41
2	24	18	42
3	24	13	37
4	23	19	42
5	17	17	34
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>	154	138	292

\*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):
- 2 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 2 % Asian
  - 3 % Black or African American
  - 5 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 79 % White
  - 9 % 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: 8%

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	9
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	9
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	18
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	214
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.08
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	8

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1%  
4 Total number ELL

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 16%  
Total number students who qualify: 48

8. Students receiving special education services: 8 %  
23 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>6</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>3</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>1</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>5</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>6</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: 2
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.	12
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.	9
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%	93%	96%	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.

<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.

Lonsdale Elementary is a school that provides a nurturing, caring learning environment by creating a collaborative partnership between students, parents, staff, and community organizations. We will provide rigorous and relevant individualized learning opportunities that ensure ALL students reach their highest learning potential and are empowered as contributing citizens.

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 city of Lonsdale Minnesota is located roughly 45 miles Southeast of the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan area in Rice County. Lonsdale was founded in 1902 and began as a railroad town with a new railway being built from Farmington, MN to Mankato, MN. The initial population of 84 people has grown to become home to over 4,000 residents. Even today, Lonsdale has an entrepreneurial spirit with developments of business parks, the creation of trails and family-focused parks, and a solid infrastructure.

This rural and vibrant community is surrounded by rolling hills, wetlands, woodlands, and farmlands; all of which afford our students unique opportunities for learning. The school has access to its own nature center, walking paths, as well as access to local crops within walking distance of the school. The combination of current and future opportunities for employment, proximity to a metro area, and caring school focused on the personalized success of each student make Lonsdale a prime location for people to raise their family.

Tri-City United Lonsdale Elementary School proudly serves the community of Lonsdale and the surrounding area as part of the Tri-City United School District (TCU). TCU serves the communities of Lonsdale, Le Center, Montgomery, and the surrounding rural area. TCU Lonsdale PreK-4 Elementary was built in 2006 and in 2012 became a consolidated school district. During the 2017-18 school year, TCU Lonsdale was PreK-4. In 2018-19, the school expanded to become PreK-5. Next year (2019-20), we will expand to PreK-6.

Tri-City United Lonsdale currently serves 241 students and is projected to grow. Our student population is racially/ethnicity: 79% White, 4.1% Two or More Races, 3% Black or African American, 5% Hispanic or Latino; 10% receiving special education services, 1.7% qualifying for English Language Learner services; and 20.8% qualifying for free/reduced meal benefits.

TCU Lonsdale has a rich tradition of being united for success. This tradition lends itself to enhanced family engagement, sourcing innovating learning opportunities, and a mutual commitment to excellence. Our faculty works hand in hand with our dedicated parent-teacher organization. We also intentionally include family and community representation on various action teams and committees. Families, community members, and visitors to TCU Lonsdale frequently comment on feelings of being welcomed, appreciated, and accepted as contributors to our school community. One of our largest community events is the annual TCU Lonsdale Community Carnival. Folks are welcomed to participate in building relationships that create trust and rapport for our school community and beyond. Due to the generous donations of local businesses and families, the carnival also serves as a source of revenue. It helps to provide students with enhanced learning opportunities by funding resources for personalized learning, flexible learning spaces, outdoor education initiatives, makerspace development, as well as coding and robotics experiences. Additionally, our teachers seek out grants each year to help sustain and add additional resources related to personalized learning and innovative practices. Staff commitment to family engagement and sourcing innovative learning opportunities also serves as two examples of their mutual commitment to excellence. Moreover, TCU Lonsdale staff has a rich tradition of relational trust among each other, students, and families. With a servant leadership lens, our teachers collaborate and collectively own student success, upholding high standards for each other so all students, regardless of demographic factors, are guaranteed a high-quality and rigorous educational experience.

High standards of excellence and rigor are a top priority at TCU. Our staff has a fundamental belief in and practice of meeting the needs of the whole child. We focus on “Every Student, Every Day”. Faculty and staff take pride in a personalized approach to learning for each child. Educators engage in an ongoing dedication to standards-based instruction and reporting. Through continued review and evaluation of standards-based student work, our core curricula are continually refined to better meet the needs and rigor required for student learning. This review is applied to both core instructional practices as well as specialists (art, music, physical education, and technology), multilingual learner education, special education, intervention, and enrichment. Likewise, the social and emotional needs of students are a top priority; our core character development curriculum, Response to Intervention model and student support services positively impact social and emotional development. Our core character development curriculum focuses on

student leadership through the knowledge and application of Steven Covey's 7 Habits of Happy Kids which is infused in learning experiences. Our Response to Intervention team identifies specific, research-based interventions for students in need of additional support in this area. Student Support Services provide our students with social worker, nursing, and special education services as additional layers of support for our learners.

Whole-child supports reach the depth required to prepare our learners as contributing citizens due to our commitment to developing cultural competencies among students and staff. TCU Lonsdale engages in utilizing Courageous Conversation protocols to unpack racial bias and systemic inequities related to race. Staff leverages Teaching Tolerance and Building Anti-Racist White Educator (BAR-WE) resources to further learning around better student support for growth and development as culturally competent citizens.

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

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

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

Tri-City United Lonsdale Elementary educators ensure student learning for all structured around prioritized standards and strategies. In each content area, power benchmarks are chosen for their leverage, endurance and readiness for the next level of learning; these are established through a guaranteed and viable curriculum process. This process of prioritizing standards allows students time to reach depth of the standards and skills most crucial for student success at grade level and in life. An overall focus of gradual release of responsibility supports students to take ownership of their learning while teachers become their guides on the side.

To support student success in reading and English/language arts skills, educators use a balanced literacy approach. Students work on grade level concepts like main idea and story structure with leveled readers which match their current capabilities. This ensures that they are progressing in analysis while being appropriately challenged to progress in fluency. Read alouds demonstrate the skills students will need to practice to become competent and fluent readers. Guided reading experiences support student focus on skill development. Shared reading has students showing the skills that they've gained and develop their abilities to help each other learn. Interactive and shared writing activities provide structures for students to improve their physical approach to writing while testing and receiving feedback on their approach to writing through different genres while receiving feedback from the educator and other students. Word study builds student capabilities in reading and writing through identifying patterns found in word groups. Reading and writing workshops extend opportunities for learning and practicing their skills while gaining confidence to independently achieve the learning outcomes. Throughout this learning, formative assessments are used to identify the individual needs of students for weekly grouping in daily intervention. The assessments include standards-based common formative assessments, Guided Reading Level assessments, FAST progress monitoring and benchmarking, Phonological Awareness Skills Test, and the Quick Phonics Screener.

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

A Response to Intervention framework is built into the daily schedule in reading and math utilizing formative assessment data to ensure student competency in standard content. This is accentuated through a standards-based grading system connecting the competency shown through formative assessment, intervention outcomes, and summative assessment to verify student understanding of content.

Students achieve state standards in math through differentiated instruction and assessment. Go Math provides a spiraled structure for foundational skills and educators work to deepen student knowledge through personalization. Using a structure of guided math, students progress through skills in multiple modes; whole group instruction, small group collaboration, the use of technology to deepen skills, and hands-on experiences to attain mastery of grade level content. Critical essential concept strands covered include number and operations, algebra, geometry, and measurement. When students need more time to master a concept, they are supported through daily interventions to fill crucial gaps or reassessment of concepts. Students who are at grade level are enriched through activities deepening their understanding of mathematical concepts.

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

Science is focused around student inquiry, structuring student exploration of the world and learning the scientific method through experiments and activities which meet state standards and raise students' curiosity about how things around them work. The content strands addressed include life science, physical science, as well as earth and space science. Teachers have aligned grade level-generated curriculum and common assessments aligned to our standards while weaving in Project Lead the Way (PLTW). PLTW curriculum forms the core of STEM instruction and learning and connects students to project-based learning

experiences in designing, prototyping and creating. Content area writing is integrated through notebooks and student reports reflecting on their experience.

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

Social studies standards and student engagement in civic activities have been intentionally embedded within the language arts reading curriculum and project-based learning where students inquire, research and develop their own experiences and share their learning with the class. The district has supplemented our reading curriculum to include social studies enhancements and foster deeper content connections for students. These activities include biographical writing and reading, student government/voting activities, and other activities covering grade level expectations. Student progress is assessed through common formative assessments that have been generated by our teachers in PLCs.

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

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

Lonsdale Elementary preschool program provides an environment that promotes readiness skills teaching students the importance of self-help, social skills, health, safety, cognitive, motor, emotional and language development and preparing preschool students for full-day school experiences. Preschool educators work with Kindergarten educators to align outcomes and expectations leading to smoother transitions and communication to better support students.

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

K-4 students experience visual art, physical education, technology, and music on a five-day rotation. These specialist sections offer students opportunities to develop their skills, deepen their talents, and grow as learners and thinkers.

Visual Arts focus on the principals and elements of creating and appreciating art through a Teaching Artistic Behavior (TAB) structure. This supports students to experiment with artistic topics like line, shape, light, and medium among others to gain a deeper understanding of the way artistic principals and elements can be used to communicate different ideas. Students then learn to talk about their process in creation and experience each other's processes to give feedback as they develop an individual sense of interacting with and studying art.

Music focuses on the use of musical elements to interpret the world. We flex our reading muscles as we find similarities between reading a book and reading music notation. We introduce and reinforce math concepts by finding patterns, transferring those patterns to several mediums and kinesthetically applying those patterns through dance, movement, and playing instruments. Creation of personal music patterns transfers knowledge from study to the creation process to examine and express feelings. Learning to read notes and sing songs deepens student understanding that music is an essential part of our life experience and we learn how to use it to enrich that experience.

Technology has a strong focus on digital citizenship and using the internet safely while providing grade-level appropriate challenge. K-3 focuses on learning to use a computer to create and collaborate on documents and files as well as basic research skills. Fourth and fifth graders use the skills gained in previous years to complete assignments and learning tasks in the four core academic areas. Technology teachers work with classroom teachers to coordinate core content learning targets and activities which deepen student learning of core topics while practicing the skills used in technology. Students also have different programming challenges to complete with multiple types of robotic equipment (Spheros, Dash, Ozobot, etc). This focus on foundational skills supports students to better understand their interests and beginning to look at how technology is used and impacts the world around them.

Physical education represents two days of the five-day schedule and structures student growth in movement with fitness and overall health. Students learn to cooperate to achieve a goal through varied games and activities as well as learning resilience and goal setting with activity trackers, as they fine-tune gross and fine motor skills.

The Leader in Me is a character building program that was purchased in the 2017-18 school year. It uses Steven Covey's "Seven Habits of Happy Kids" to guide students through decision making and reflection on the impacts of their actions. This is a focus for all educators and students in the building as they work to develop student social skills as well as their academic competencies. TCU Lonsdale Staff has received 7 Habits training with a certified trainer to model and create a learning environment foundation of interdependence, proactive thinking, and responsibility.

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

Tri-City United Lonsdale Elementary uses a Response to Intervention (RTI) tiered intervention model to support student's individual academic and behavioral needs. Tier 1 focuses on regular classroom instruction and assessment, identifying which students understand and which have not yet reached the learning target. Tier 2 connects students to appropriate intervention through weekly district common assessment review to identify student accomplishment of learning targets. Students receive further instruction in reading and math through a daily What I Need (WIN) time targeting intervention when weekly assessment data reveals a gap in knowledge. This gap becomes the focus for intervention through reteaching and additional assessment. Tier 3 assesses the success of interventions every six weeks including district common assessments and Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST™) data to identify students who are not progressing in learning. Additional time and attention is given to students who are identified by this process to fill any gaps in learning. A referral to a special education assessment team might occur if multiple Tier 3 cycles prove ineffective and if the RTI team and family deems that appropriate.

While our ELL population is small, Tri-City United Lonsdale is committed to high levels of learning for all students including those who qualify for English Language Learner services. We accomplish this through inclusive and multilingual practices. Our TCU District ELL Coordinator provides weekly direct services and activities with students along with consultation and training for staff.

An achievement gap at Tri-City United Lonsdale Elementary exists between students who receive Free or Reduced Lunch assistance and those who do not. The structure of the day ensures adequate time for all students to begin their day with breakfast providing the energy required to learn. The Tri-City United Lonsdale Principal also monitors Free or Reduced student achievement and connects with teachers to structure additional attention for students who begin to fall behind. This might be an additional intervention time, or specific tutoring to fill knowledge gaps preventing the student from progressing in her/his learning.

Gifted and Talented services are provided to students whose Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) and FAST scores represent a need for additional challenge. This program extends student learning through a push in model for enrichment in Kindergarten through first grade and pull out project-based learning in second through fourth grade. Students are given a challenge to research, develop, prototype and present real-world solutions to their peers and an adult panel.

Tri-City United Lonsdale Elementary focuses educator attention to continuously improve student learning in multiple ways: students have access to rigorous curricular work, set and track academic goals, and are supported through evidence-based instructional and intervention practices to achieve academic success.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### 1. School Climate/Culture:

The focus of Tri-City United Lonsdale staff is to build relationships where students feel valued and respected so they are comfortable and know they are cared for. This focus is enhanced through planning with a Universal Design for Learning framework to create a model of personalized instruction and assessment for student achievement of learning targets based on Minnesota state standards. Data binders provide a list of student outcomes and individual conferencing allows educators and students to work together to identify areas of growth and to track that growth as the school year progresses. This motivates students to take an active role in their learning as they work to achieve their grade level objectives and provides clarity to the learning yet to be accomplished. Students and educators work to achieve these targets in flexible learning environments. A mix of desks, tables, floor chairs, wobble stools, and other furniture and location options engage students in choosing and reflecting on the ways in which they learn best. Students rotate through each area and coordinate with others to ensure everyone has an opportunity to learn. A character building focus “Leader in Me” uses seven habits from Steven Covey’s work in “The 7 Habits of Happy Kids” (2008) to structure personal social-emotional growth in students. These are also present in individual student data binders as teachers and students meet to track the student’s growth as a leader and set future goals.

Collaboration and collective commitments are ways in which teachers support each other throughout the school year. Teacher leaders from the building leadership team communicate and collaborate with the building principal to create structures to support educator needs. Educator student achievement goals focus on foundational learning for student success and guide educator growth and individual coaching and mentoring support. The induction program supports teachers in their first year with a mentor to help with operational needs. These practices support a community of practice where teachers support each other’s progress and work toward their collective commitments to student excellence.

### 2. Engaging Families and Community:

Tri-City United Public Schools embrace and celebrate our commitment to family and community engagement and partnerships. At TCU Lonsdale, we are proud to participate in shared learning opportunities with an array of local, state, national and global organizations. As we consider our partnerships, there are several organizations that support student and staff learning at our school. Local city officials, Lions Club, and American Legion members engage regularly in partnering with service and community learning opportunities. Events such as Veteran’s Day, Grandparents Day, Arbor Day, the Lonsdale 5K Crawl, and I Love to Read Month events all provide opportunities for us to learn and grow together. On a national level, we seek to support others through fundraising efforts for Jump Rope for Heart, Pennies for Patients, JDRF Walk, Special Olympics, and Santa Anonymous. Similarly, the TCU World Empowerment Team at Lonsdale extends our desire to learn through service to our global communities. Events such as shoe and book drives as well as participation in an H2O for Life partnership highlight TCU Lonsdale’s commitment to engagement beyond the walls of our school.

Tri-City United, and by extension TCU Lonsdale, also proudly engages as one of eight area school districts in the Minnesota Educators Partnership (MEP) with Minnesota State University at Mankato (MNSU, M). The reciprocal nature of this partnership affords teacher candidates at MNSU, M to develop their skills as pre-service educators while at the same time supports professional development and enhances learning opportunities for our staff and students at TCU Lonsdale. The inclusion of teacher candidates, under the direct supervision of MNSU, M faculty enhanced student learning through the inclusion of Project TEAM during the 2017-18 school year. Project TEAM provided 18 pre-service special education teachers the opportunity to learn about and practice implementation of one on one interventions in reading and math. All the while, eighteen students showed significant gains from the delivery of the interventions. The partnership is also affording our teachers the opportunity to learn and grow through on-going professional development in the area of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). As an MEP school, a team of researchers and experts in the field from MNSU, M have embedded their work into TCU Lonsdale and the outcomes of

their work have made a positive impact on the intentionality with which we provide personalized learning.

Additionally, family engagement related to student learning is important to the TCU community. Teachers engage with students and families through daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly forms of feedback and dialogue. Communication comes in many forms including phone calls, notes, emails, shared virtual spaces (See Saw, Google Docs, Homeroom), intervention plans, progress reports, and report cards.

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

Educator learning is personalized to develop effective learning opportunities for all learners in their classrooms. Job-embedded professional development structures provide time and opportunity for teachers to identify and share successful practices based on student assessment data during a weekly Collaborative Learning Team time. Yearlong instructional strategy portfolios are created by educators which focus around implementing evidence-based strategies as they learn about and implement strategies in the classroom. These are enhanced by focused observations and analysis of student work to measure the impact of these strategies. A self-assessment based on Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Effective Teaching suggests strategies for educator focus and aligns with administrative evaluations. As high leverage instructional strategies are implemented, two hour monthly early releases designed by an advisory council, representing educators and administrators, collaborate to design and implement educator learning experiences targeted to the continued improvement of curriculum implementation, student achievement, and school improvement. Monthly instructional coaching sessions focus on individual educator portfolios connecting intentional reflection to future planning. Yearly observations include scripting and coaching conversations supporting educator growth in targeted strategy incorporation. The district mentoring program provides continued support for three years of an educator's induction into the district from three focused observations in their first year, additional observation and supports in year two, to reflective and problem resolving conversations through year three. Each element of professional development builds the capacity of educators to become reflective practitioners of student learning.

Educators are also supported in growth through our Teacher Development and Evaluation system including a three-year summative evaluation cycle for continuing contract educators. This includes ongoing yearly administrator instructional rounds used to collect evidence of educators meeting proficiency in Danielson's four domains: Planning, Instruction, Environment, and Professionalism. Every three years a summative evaluation includes administrator evaluation results, student engagement assessed through educator goals and action plans, and longitudinal student achievement goals. Probationary educators who have not met continuing contract status receive feedback and support through three administrator evaluations which are cumulative in nature and support individualized educator growth.

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

At TCU Lonsdale, we refer to ourselves as Lonsdale Leaders. Staff and students are all committed to growing and developing as leaders. Our shared leadership model encourages equity of voice, creativity, innovation, collaboration and problem-solving. In the last two years, we have all engaged in growing as leaders through the study and application of Steven Covey's, "7 Habits of Happy Kids". We believe that through the development of the 7 Habits, we will prepare students and staff to thrive as 21st Century Learners and Leaders!

This philosophy structures our leadership team model. TCU Lonsdale does have a cabinet that is referred to as the Building Leadership Team (BLT). This team is comprised of the building principal and five staff members. Each of these staff members has an identified role on the BLT and also serves on one of the building's Action Teams. With their dual role, BLT members are able to serve as a liaison between the BLT and Action Teams to ensure the alignment of vision and communication. While on the Action Teams, the BLT members serve as members, affording another colleague the opportunity to lead a team. Additionally, several of our action teams are comprised of staff members, students, and parents with the purpose of shared decision making and action related to our building goals and district vision card.

of student achievement. Each year, the building leadership team evaluates Multiple Measures of Data to set the yearly goals, targets, and action plan for student success. The work of our BLT and Action Teams are aligned to the action plans identified on that yearly strategic plan. Our current Action Teams are the Lonsdale Leader Team, Response to Intervention Team, Student Leadership Team, and Community Outreach Team. The Lonsdale Leader Team's current focus is continued refinement of character development through Steven Covey's 7 Habits. The Response to Intervention Team's current focus is closing the achievement disparity between students who receive free or reduced lunch and those that do not. The Student Leadership Team is focused on empowering students to organize and carry out school events and service projects. Finally, our Community Outreach Team seeks out community members who are eager to share their leadership and skills with our students.

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

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Personalizing the student learning experience has been the most instrumental practice to the success of Tri-City United Lonsdale. Personalizing learning at Tri-City United recognizes that each student learns in different ways and at different paces. Planning and implementation of curriculum, the flexible seating environment of classrooms, and schedule structures ensure that each student learns and grows in academic competency as they progress through Lonsdale Elementary. To achieve this aim, educators prize knowing their students as individuals, understanding student needs for growth and learning, and meeting those needs in and out of the classroom. This growth has resulted in adopting best practices to achieve the highest quality of education possible for every student. Recently, Tri-City United Lonsdale educators have partnered with a nearby college of education to investigate and work with Universal Design for Learning. This structure provides frameworks in planning, instruction, and assessment to ensure the learning needs of all students. Focusing on teacher clarity, creating rubrics for students, as well as scaffolding to support student learning in the classroom creates the capacity to guide students.

With improved teacher clarity, expected outcomes are identified and the data binder system affords students the ability to track their own progress toward competency. Additionally, the data binder system has led to an increase in students' ability to self-report their expectations in meeting learning targets and see progress in real time. Teachers then use the data as one piece of evidence for weekly data meetings that drive intervention and extension for students tied to learning outcomes. Building relationships with students which center around their growth and achievement of learning targets creates a foundation for students to see themselves as learners and develop a growth mindset.

The success of Tri-City United Lonsdale rests in the firm belief that all students can learn at a high level and the dedication of educators to personalize the learning of students to achieve that goal.