

U.S. Department of Education
2020 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 Jarrett G Belden
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Murray Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 216 Sherman Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Murray State IA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 50174-0187

County Clarke

Telephone (641) 447-2517 Fax (641) 447-2313

Web site/URL https://www.murraycsd.org/ E-mail jbelden@murraycsd.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* Mr. Ken Kasper E-mail kkasper@murraycsd.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Murray Community School District Tel. (641) 447-2517

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 Ms. Staci Heaberlin
(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 2020 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 2014 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: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, or 2019.
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 (2019-2020) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 0 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 High schools
 - 1 K-12 schools
- 1 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)
 Suburban
 Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2019 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	9	18	27
K	11	8	19
1	11	6	17
2	11	7	18
3	10	11	21
4	8	15	23
5	11	9	20
6	9	15	24
7	13	8	21
8	9	11	20
9	13	11	24
10	10	9	19
11	13	12	25
12 or higher	8	9	17
Total Students	146	149	295

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 5 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 93 % 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 2018 - 2019 school year: 5%

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

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	7
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	7
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	14
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	287
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.05
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	5

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

Spanish

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 44 %

Total number students who qualify: 130

8. Students receiving special education services: 11 %

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>3</u> Autism | <u>3</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>0</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>3</u> Developmental Delay | <u>21</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>2</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>2</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	30
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	4
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.	1

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 10:1

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

Required Information	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	96%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	100%	91%	100%	100%	97%

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 2019.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	26
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	27%
Enrolled in a community college	46%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	3%
Found employment	11%
Joined the military or other public service	7%
Other	6%

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.

To provide a high quality education to all students with the help and involvement of parents, teachers, and the community.

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

Keeping Murray's mission statement in mind, we are accountable to the students first and foremost. After all, they are the reason that we (teachers, staff, administration, school board) are here in the first place. We are to provide them with a safe and rigorous learning environment. Therefore, we practice fire, tornado, and safety drills, to protect them from external hazards. We have handbook policies that protect them from bullying (cyber and otherwise), and the expectations we have to keep them focused and orderly. We are also accountable to the parents of those students and the community at large to keep the students learning, in order to become better individuals in the future.

Murray, with its population of 710, is located in south central Iowa and is one of two school districts in Clarke County. The school itself is over 100 years old and has rich traditions. Being a small farming community, Murray is steeped in a culture all its own. The community of Murray is largely that of a growing elderly population, with the school relying heavily on open enrollment for an influx of students. Murray is a PK-12 school with newer additions separating the elementary and the Jr/Sr high school. The school itself is the focus of the town, with many of the evenings dedicated to Murray athletics or school functions. Of the 295 students that attend Murray Schools, 138 are qualified for free or reduced lunches. Many of the students come from single parent households or households of one or more unemployed parents.

Murray's grading scale and curriculum are more rigorous than most schools around, this is to help prepare students for college as well as life outside of school. The community is very involved in the school programs, sporting events, and parent-teacher communication. The culture at Murray is very family oriented. New students and teachers alike are welcomed into the fold, and treated with respect. The student body is welcoming and friendly to new students with the occasional odd student still finding a place within the culture of the school. The culture at Murray Schools is an older culture which has evolved slowly over the past 100 years. Much of the veteran elementary staff has retired in the past few years and the culture is again evolving to suit the younger staff, but still at a snail's pace. As with most cultures it is hard to change "tradition" and move on to bigger and better ways of accomplishing the tasks at hand more efficiently. This is due to the fact the Murray schools are a very important part of the community and vice versa. The school and community of Murray is intertwined in a tight weave that most school districts strive for. Murray has in place, for students who qualify, a small college scholarship, this scholarship is not large, but as we all know some tuition help is better than none at all. This scholarship is used to help offset some of the costs associated with college, such as books, meals, or other such expenses. Murray's booster club promotes sports activities such as fall and spring sport's banquet and provides athletes with symbols of recognition such as varsity letters, praises and accolades that are earned on the field/court. Murray is also very adamant about their athletic standards and code of conduct both in the classroom and outside of school. All of the student organizations and clubs are also bound under these codes of conduct and have their own recognition system. This is not only true for the students but for the teachers. New this year, we have implemented a Murray Pride board that recognizes students and teachers for doing good things in the school. New teachers will get recognition at the beginning of the year when they are introduced to the staff. New teachers are encouraged to "bring what they know to the table." The administration is enthusiastic about teachers collaborating with each other or teachers showing each other how to improve and use new technology in professional development meetings. Teachers are also rewarded for their hard work with activities such as, pot-luck at some professional development meetings, a holiday party, wearing blue jeans on Fridays and days off after parent-teacher conferences.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas

The overarching philosophy that drives teaching and learning at the Murray Community School District is to provide a safe and orderly environment in which all students may work toward achievement of their full social, physical, emotional and cognitive potential through the cooperation of home, school and community. All teachers and staff members within the Murray Community School District recognize the importance of working with students from diverse backgrounds and abilities to ensure that all students meet their full potential. Student success is not merely measured by academic performance. Academic success and growth cannot be met without first securing the students' ability to meet their social, physical and emotional potential. Students at the Murray Community School district take the Iowa Youth Survey as well as the Conditions of Learning Survey. Once the district receives the results from these surveys, the entire staff meet to analyze the results. These are used to determine if our students are meeting their full social, physical and emotional potential. Social and emotional interventions and enrichment opportunities are put into place which are utilized across all subject areas. We believe that once our students know we care about them first and foremost, OUR kids will then feel safe and secure enough to pursue their fullest cognitive and academic potential. Murray utilizes the Iowa Core Academic Standards as our primary source for curricular alignment along with national and local standards to ensure college and career readiness. Our teachers across all subject areas work to create a strong foundation of core knowledge with college/career readiness skills which include time management, study skills, and taking personal responsibility for learning. Our students develop creativity as well as the ability to analyze and synthesize information along with the ability to use inductive and deductive reasoning to solve real-world problems.

1b. Reading/English language arts

We at Murray Community Schools believe that literacy is the foundation upon which all learning is built. We adopt instructional programs that are in full alignment with the Iowa Core Standards to ensure that the programs meet our academic expectations. However, it is important to note that textbooks and instructional programs are not the only source of classroom activities. The core of our Kindergarten through Fifth Grade literacy programs come from the Center for the Collaborative Classroom. Both the Being a Reader and Being a Writer programs take our students on a journey of self-examination and learning. These programs focus on student growth through the creation of a caring collaborative classroom community that allows all students to grow as independent learners. All of our teachers of Reading and English Language Arts believe in going beyond reading and recall and focus on the student making sense of what they are reading. This belief allows for the transfer of reading skills to content areas beyond the Reading and Language Arts Classroom. English Language Arts learning is approached in a similar fashion to Reading instruction. Through intentional and instructional classroom experiences, students develop a passion for writing. 21st Century Skills, social skills, and respect are taught alongside language skills and conventions. Through a structured approach led by whole class instruction, followed by small groups and ultimately transitioning to independent practice, students develop their own voice as a writer and learn to respect the voices of others.

At the Grade Six through Grade Twelve secondary level, the instructional materials may change but the overall philosophy does not change. Reading and English Language Arts instruction is balanced between structured teacher led instruction and a student's exploration of ideas through independent reading. At each level, Holt McDougal instructional programs are utilized for baseline Reading and English Language Arts instruction that is common to all students. As students explore key ideas and core concepts through this common instruction, they are also challenged to explore these ideas and concepts within their independent reading novels. By utilizing texts at an appropriate variety of levels and interests, students can explore core concepts experienced in the instructional programs in ways that build interest and passion. As students progress through the secondary level, teacher led instructional programs give way to entirely student-centered courses. Courses in Communications, Young Adult Literature, World Mythology, and English Literature are student guided as they choose their texts and explore key ideas the instructors present in their

own unique fashion. The focus on making meaning of the texts they encounter, which began early in the learning process, continues throughout the higher levels of learning. The development of their own unique voice as they explore their talents as communicators, both spoken and written, is continued and expanded through their high school years. Regardless of the grade level, Murray students are able to explore the written word in ways that allow students to explore ideas and develop their own understanding of how the multiple styles of written expression influences the ways others view the world.

1c. Mathematics

At the elementary level, our math instruction emphasizes developing critical thinking, analytical and problem-solving skills. This has been a key focus of our instruction. Just as we at Murray Community Schools believe that literacy is the foundation upon which all learning is built, we also focus on the multiple ways that mathematics instruction can foster inductive and deductive problem solving skills that will be transferred to all other content areas. The core of our Kindergarten through Fifth Grade Mathematics instructional program is the Bridges program from The Math Learning Center. This program allows for us to continue to reinforce our belief that learning is a collaborative and experiential endeavor. At all levels, we believe that learning occurs when people are allowed to explore concepts and make meaning of what they encounter. Elementary mathematics instruction utilizes multiple learning centers to provide students with a variety of experiences that promote the development of deep understanding of key mathematical concepts. Students develop key mathematical skills within the context of applying these skills to solve complex and unique problems. Students move from structured mathematical investigations to more self-guided investigation to develop not only the necessary mathematical skills needed to be successful, but also the mathematical conceptual understanding that is necessary for success at the higher levels of mathematics.

As students progress into Grades six through Grade Twelve, they begin a much more focused mathematics program. While maintaining a focus on student exploration and the development of conceptual understanding, students begin to see much more dynamic and detailed instruction. To ensure the college and career readiness of our graduating students, Alignment to the Iowa Core Standards serves as the foundation for many of our curricular decisions. Students are provided with multiple learning opportunities that balance the development of grade level basic skills with the more complex mathematical concepts. Teachers utilize a sequencing of direct instruction followed by guided practice and ending with independent practice. This approach allows for the gradual transition from teacher guided instruction to an environment where a student's thinking can be challenged and their own ideas explored. Through the use of frequent formative and summative assessments, teachers are able to provide students with concrete, real-life applications of the conceptual ideas of which the students are developing proficiency. Even with the transition from a traditional integrated approach in Grades Six through Eight to the domain specific nature of our high school courses, the instructional philosophy does not change. Our Algebra and Geometry students experience the same guided exploration of rich mathematical ideas. Once district requirements are met, students are able to choose between elective courses that promote and develop college readiness and courses that promote and develop career readiness. Students are provided with the opportunity to take Statistics, College Algebra, or Math for the Liberal Arts on our campus and receive college credit through a local community college. Our district-wide instructional approach that promotes the application of learned skills to solve real-world complex problems is what enables our students to perform at the highest levels.

1d. Science

The Iowa Core Standards are the foundation of the development of our Science Curriculum. In science, our teachers help students learn about the intricacies of the world through investigative learning and inquiry to arouse the curiosity of students. Building upon the literacy skills developed in the Reading/English Language Arts classroom and the problem solving skills developed in the Mathematics classroom, our students engage with and investigate phenomena found in the world around them. Across all the curricular areas, hands-on experiential learning is a key component to the development of our students. Kindergarten through Eighth Grade teachers use the Science Fusion program to carefully blend the development of scientific knowledge and skills with the experiences necessary to create rich scientific thinkers. Direct instruction is utilized to impart knowledge and develop skills. Teachers utilize inquiry based whole and small group lessons, lab activities, and independent investigations to allow students to experience science as

a method to build and develop conceptual understanding. In high school, we have chosen to not adopt any textbooks or instructional program. Science teachers develop their own instructional materials and design their own labs and activities. Scientific inquiry and applied analytical skills are emphasized. Students study physical science, biology, chemistry and earth physics. Science courses are designed to provide fundamental knowledge about organisms, geology, and the principles of chemistry and physics. As students are learning these rich scientific concepts, they also develop creativity as well as the ability to analyze and synthesize information along with the ability to use inductive and deductive reasoning to solve real-world problems.

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

The Iowa Core Standards are also the foundation of the development of our Social Studies Curriculum. In Social Studies, our teachers help students learn about the human and physical aspects world through intentionally designed inquiry that arouses the curiosity of our students. Building upon the literacy skills developed in the Reading/English Language Arts classroom and the problem solving skills developed in the Mathematics classroom, our students investigate the world around them. Social Studies plays a unique role in our district as an important piece in creating students who are prepared for life after school. The Iowa Core Standards allow for a creative and personalized instructional plan that allows for teachers to plan interest-driven learning tasks that promote student growth. Being a very rural district, it is through Social Studies that our students become knowledgeable about the world. Teachers at the lower grades develop instructional plans that focus on character and how to be good citizens within the classroom. This focus is gradually expanded from our classrooms, to our local community, to our state, to our nation, and ultimately to our role in the world as students progress through the elementary grades. When our students transition to the secondary, they are met with teachers who plan interest-based individualized learning. Teachers develop instructional plans in alignment with the Iowa Core Standards to ensure that all expected learning outcomes are met. Once entering the high school, students are met with a wide range of courses that are all designed to meet the expectations of the state while ensuring students leave the course understanding their role in society. We offer courses not just in history and geography, but also in street law and psychology. All courses are carefully developed to spur student creativity while at the same time develop within them the ability to see the world and how to best attack the problems they see in it.

1f. For secondary schools:

As a small rural school, Murray primarily utilizes its Career and Technical Education to prepare students for career readiness. Within the school building, Murray offers a Nursing pathway. Students who enter the Nursing pathway take courses that are designed to prepare them to enter nursing school. Students take courses to introduce them to the Health Occupations Field and will even become a Certified Nurse Assistant. This certification allows them to become a part of the healthcare field while still in school. Our Agricultural Department offers students knowledge and hands-on experiences that prepare students for higher education and a career in agriculture. In our Agricultural Mechanics course, students receive training and experience in welding and carpentry. These experiences allow for the students to gain the skills and knowledge in these industries. The transfer of these skills to certification is available at our local community college. Within our Agriculture program, we also offer students coursework in Natural Resources and Environment. This course offers our students the ability to become familiar with occupations within the Natural Resources field. Business and Technology pathways provide students experience in computer science and all aspects of business and marketing. Outside of our Career and Technical Education courses, our students have multiple opportunities to get a head start on college. Murray schools offer online courses through a local community college. These online courses are designed to build upon the education the students have already received at Murray Schools and give them a chance to earn some college credit prior to leaving high school. Our students also have the opportunity to take high level advanced placement courses. These courses are available in Language Arts and Social Studies. Within our math department, students can take college courses without even leaving the comfort of Murray Schools. Students can take College Algebra and College Statistics. All of these opportunities combine for a well rounded education that prepares students for both college and a career.

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

Our Pk program uses the Teaching Strategies GOLD as GOLD has a set scope and sequence that aligns with preschool through third grade expectations. This can be referenced on the Teaching Strategies GOLD website, under the standards and objectives area. It outlines the flow of development between all ages (preschool through third grade). The content areas covered by the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment system include: literacy, mathematics, language, social and emotional, fine motor, large motor, cognitive, science (and has the option of social studies and art studies). The preschool level of GOLD builds the foundation for all following grade levels. Literacy builds letter identification/sound knowledge that is used throughout elementary to read/write. Secondly it builds book knowledge (beginning/end of a sentence, where we start reading and what direction we go, upper/lower case letters, how text works, etc.) and also builds early writing/literacy skills taught- name, letters, numbers, therefore, once students are able to write letters- it builds up from there, first words, then sentences. For Math, GOLD builds initial understanding of numbers, counting, shapes, and patterns (as well as multiple other mathematical areas). For Language, GOLD ensures students are developing the appropriate language skills- both receptive and expressive- to be successful in communicating with a vast variety of audiences. Our PK gives the child multiple opportunities for socialization, both with adults and peers of the same age.

Preschool is the first exposure for most students to education based expectations and therefore teachers can be alert for any possible needs that could be met by the special education system. PK builds experience with problem solving skills, critical thinking, sorting, symbolizing, etc. and is an indicator of the impact of early education on school readiness and success in the primary grades.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Vocational instruction begins in the middle school with explorations that introduce our students to the various vocational subjects that become options as they progress through school. This introduction to these vocational courses allows students to explore these areas to determine interest by learning the foundational elements of each area. Vocational subjects such as Agriculture, Business, Nursing and Technology electives provide students with real world experiences and vocational skills that students will be able to utilize whether they enter the workforce or the college arena. Students in each of these areas also have the opportunity to join extracurricular clubs that promote networking at the regional, state and national level that can provide our students with connections and knowledge that enhances their ability to find success in the world of work, college or both.

Multiple years of Spanish as a foreign language exposes students to an important second language that can be a benefit to them in both college and the workplace. It also helps students develop an awareness of culture, global history and an awareness of differing customs, variety and diversity. As the world transitions to an increasingly interconnected space, the more knowledge our students have of the different cultures and customs, the more prepared our students are to take their place in this world whether it be in college or as they begin a career.

Physical education and health stress for students the value and importance of a healthy lifestyle to offset complications and illness. Students in our Physical Education and Health courses are expected to set personal goals in the areas of strength training and physical fitness. These courses help develop an understanding of personal safety and they encourage activity, teamwork, cooperation, following rules, trusting others, good citizenship and sportsmanship. Students participate in a variety of team-oriented activities as well as activities that can be pursued as part of an active, healthy lifestyle through adulthood. All of these skills are needed for a student to be successful beyond secondary school. Students will use these skills to successfully transition to either a college setting or a career. Our Health courses also address mental health, drug education, and some components of sex education. All seniors become certified in CPR and first aid as a state requirement for graduation.

Murray Art students acquire knowledge of the elements and principles of design, various styles of art, a broad range of artists, art history and vocabulary. Various art materials, media, tools and techniques are utilized to provide students with a broad and intensive art experience. Performing a wide variety of musical

compositions from a wide variety of periods and cultures gives our students an exposure to many different musical genres and styles. Students study rhythms and styles and express their creativity through original composition. Students are able to pursue their creative talents under the guidance of our instructors.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

Depending upon the grade level, teachers utilize a combination of the Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST), the Iowa State Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP), the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), as well as classroom based assessments to determine the academic standing of their students. Using these measures, teachers utilize a variety of teaching strategies to meet their students' needs. Students are placed into intervention groups, and it is within these groups that personalized learning is designed and takes place. In addition to these intervention groups, students receive differentiated instruction designed by teachers to offer support in the areas of weakness of each student within their classrooms. Differentiation is planned by careful examination of the data gained by classroom based assessment. Pre-unit assessment as well as planned periodic formative assessment. At the upper grades, students with identified areas of academic need are given additional time in the school day where they are placed in intervention courses to receive additional instruction. Within these additional learning opportunities, students receive specific direct instruction focused on meeting their individualized needs. Through frequent focused formative assessment and progress monitoring, teachers are able to adjust instruction to the ever changing needs of their students. Once students demonstrate growth that places them on level with their peers, based on all available data, students are removed from the additional instruction and provided with the opportunity to pursue other interests. Data based differentiation and intervention strategies are designed to ensure Murray Community School's philosophical goal to ensure that all students meet their full potential.

3b. Students performing above grade level

Teachers also utilize a combination of the Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST), the Iowa State Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP), the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), as well as classroom based assessments to determine which of their students are performing above grade level. Using these measures, teachers utilize a variety of teaching strategies to meet the needs of their students that are performing above grade level. These students are placed into enrichment groups, and it is within these groups that personalized learning is designed and takes place. In addition to these enrichment groups, students receive differentiated instruction designed by teachers to enhance the strengths of each student within their classrooms. Differentiation is planned by careful examination of the data gained by classroom based assessment. Extension opportunities are planned when the pre-unit assessment shows extensive student knowledge of a given topic. Talented and Gifted programs are also available to students who regularly and consistently perform above grade level. At the upper grades, students may be accelerated through courses in areas of academic success if the need is determined. Students receive specific direct instruction focused on advancing and progressing their knowledge and skills. Through frequent focused formative assessment and progress monitoring, teachers are able to adjust instruction to the ever changing needs of their students. Once students reach high school, they are able to take some advanced level courses. In addition to Advanced Placement courses, students are also able to take college courses both on campus and at our local community college. Data based differentiation and intervention strategies are designed to ensure Murray Community School's philosophical goal to ensure that all students meet their full potential.

3c. Special education

Depending upon the grade level, teachers and our AEA representative utilize a combination of the Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST), the Iowa State Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP), the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), as well as classroom based assessments to determine the academic standing of their students. Using these measures, teachers and our AEA representative utilize a variety of teaching strategies to determine if a student meets the qualifications to receive additional support outside the classroom. Students will be placed on an individualized education program (IEP) with the

recommendation of teachers, AEA representatives, parents, and doctors at that time. Personalized learning is then designed and takes place. In addition to being on an IEP and receiving special education services, students receive differentiated instruction designed by teachers to offer support in the areas of weakness of each student within their classrooms. Differentiation is planned by careful examination of the data gained by classroom based assessment. Pre-unit assessment as well as planned periodic formative assessment. At the upper grades, students with identified areas of academic need are given additional time in the school day where they are placed in intervention courses to receive additional instruction. Within these additional learning opportunities, students receive specific direct instruction focused on meeting their individualized needs. Through frequent focused formative assessment and progress monitoring, teachers are able to adjust instruction to the ever changing needs of their students. Once students demonstrate growth that places them on level with their peers, based on all available data, students are removed from the additional instruction and provided with the opportunity to pursue other interests. Data based differentiation and intervention strategies are designed to ensure Murray Community School's philosophical goal to ensure that all students meet their full potential.

3d. ELLs, if a special program or intervention is offered

3e. Other populations (e.g., migrant), if a special program or intervention is offered

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

It is Murray's belief that learning consists of classrooms that are comfortable, inviting and conducive to different learning styles and above all else feel and be safe for student well-being. We cannot prepare these students for future endeavors if they feel like they are being hindered by other students or even the teacher. We must strive for a positive learning culture and steer away from negativity, blame, and chaos. I believe that the goal of education is to provide all individuals with the knowledge that they need to become prosperous, well-rounded, civic-minded, forward-thinking, spiritually functioning members of society. Education must provide opportunities to all people to fill all roles in a forward functioning society, with all members contributing in a positive way. Education must be available to all individuals, regardless of socioeconomic status, disability, race, sexual orientation, religious or cultural beliefs. Education should be ever changing to meet the demands of the increasingly diverse populations impacting the United States. Murray schools engage our students through the rigor of the curriculum. As stated earlier Murray's grading scale and curriculum are more rigorous than most schools around, this is to help prep students for college and to also prepare for life outside of school. This year Murray has implemented a Murray Pride board where students are recognized for deeds done, but not necessarily in the classroom. Our Murray Pride Board, allows students and faculty recognize each other and it culminates in an assembly once a month where each student that has had their name on the board to come up and be recognized in front of the school, and one student from the elementary and one student from the MS/HS get randomly drawn as Student of the Month and get some prizes.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The Murray community is very involved in the school programs, sporting events, and parent-teacher communication. School and education should make up the groundwork of a positive functioning society. School is the place where future citizens learn how to get along with others, learn valuable job skills, and learn the unwritten rules of both positive and negative of how society functions. Students apply this knowledge and become the building blocks of a society. The better schools become through collaboration by teachers, parents, community members, and other professionals, the better a society can become.

Murray teachers have a responsibility to promote collaboration between parents the community and other professionals. This collaboration will bring all these groups together which provides a support for students. The more supports that a student has the better the student will become in school and eventually later in life. This collaboration should be maintained by effective communication and should want to be done by parents and community members and other professionals in the community. I believe that if more students had a support beyond the teacher to include parents and community members, students would be more engaged in school. Effective communication, not just by teachers but also by parents and community members, would make this support base possible. Through JMC, our website, and Facebook pages, The Murray community is kept in constant communication with the happenings both in the classroom and in other aspects of school life. We have posted videos of the collaboration between the Elementary school and the MS/HS, and each student and teacher are linked through our Murray family linking ceremony that happens every fall.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Our administration allows teachers the discretion and freedom they need to make the classroom their own, while at the same time using the learning targets and goals set for classroom instruction. This way the teacher can use a variety of classroom instructional techniques, even if they are not widely used in other classrooms. Murray's administration allows for other professionals to perform their expected duties or functions, with minimal supervision, shows respect for the others and allows others to show respect to the leader. Murray's teachers are allowed to express themselves without the fear of being told they are doing it wrong or being micro-managed by their leadership. In Murray's culture, teachers' productivity and overall morale skyrockets and students learn in a positive environment. In Murray, teachers are allowed to use the tools that they are given through their education and experience then they should be allowed to use those

tools to benefit students in the best way they can.

It has been Murray's administration's belief that allowing teachers to be themselves as a practice will expand the depth of knowledge that is imparted by the teacher. The teacher will feel free to use what learning tools they have in their educational tool box and not be afraid to take chances with new practices. I believe that students learn better in a comfortable environment, and if the teacher can make learning more exciting and engaging all the better for learning. Through this experience students remember what they learn because they are engaged and can fondly remember the experience of what took place in class.

4. School Leadership:

Murray's leadership educational philosophy is that, all students can and will grow if provided the best learning environment and teaching strategies. Establish, train, and support leaders within our staff. The Murray Community, Murray CSD School Board, Teacher Leadership Committee, and Staff are directly involved in the evolution of curriculum and teaching strategies. Through a variety of sources, the Murray community is updated on student data, and school vision and input is gathered.

Murray's leadership structure consists of a five member school board, superintendent, principal, teacher leadership committee, all staff, and stakeholders.

The Five Member School Board – develops and reviews board policies. The Superintendent – ensures all board policies, administrative rules, school partnerships, donations, grants, and school finances are focused on increasing student growth, both academically and socially/emotionally. He also find monies to increase staff to meet student needs, maintains family/ team atmosphere demonstrated with “Murray Family Links and also online learning offered to faculty to complete contracted days at their convenience after severe winter. The principal provides educational guidance while working toward building and district goals, and maintains family/ team atmosphere and to utilize staff to maximize student growth.

Teacher Leadership Committee – reviews and analyzes data to determine ongoing real-time needs for staff development and mentor new staff. It Provides instruction during staff development and support. after. During professional development, staff members analyze and disaggregate data by individual student growth by skills. Based on data, staff creates educational programming to meet individual student growth needs.

All school staff members – All staff are are leaders in their assigned areas, be it on the bus or in the cafeteria. Lastly, stakeholders – provide valuable data on the vision of our school and academic/ social-emotional needs.

Murray Community School District's primary focus is individual growth for all students. Over the past eleven years, data has driven the direction of school financial, staffing, and educational programming. As a small school, we can receive real-time input from staff to deepen administrative knowledge based on the State of Iowa Assessments along with local assessments. This has allowed for the transition to core subject online textbooks, restructuring Elementary Classroom to third through fifth subject area expert instructors, restructuring junior high to a 6-8 grade middle school, adding college math classes on campus, adding advanced placement classes, and updating curriculum and instructional strategies,. (including Google classroom.)

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Murray's culture is one of family. Family is in everything we do. Every student is considered our kid, every teacher is a brother or sister. We have stood by each other through the hard times and have rejoiced in the good times. Just before the holiday break, Murray has a school feast in which all students and faculty are invited to bring food for the feast. Throughout the feast, games are played, and there is a sense of family the whole day. This sense of family makes Murray the great place that it is. This family culture of the school affects every aspect of the lives that are touched by the school, whether we know it or not. Students, teachers, administrators, parents, and the community have a responsibility to form and encourage the current family culture to keep it positive and meaningful to each other. Our family culture is how we learn, and shapes what we will become and pass on to the next generation. Every school has a different cultural climate and different rewards, rituals, ceremonies and ways to be recognized, but they all play a part in the decision-making process. Murray's culture is all about being a family and makes staff more aware of the needs of students. Our teachers are more engaged with the students under their tutelage as far as their work, and home life. This helps all staff understand where these students come from and how the staff may better help them with their situations.