

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

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

School Mailing Address 2075 Saint Johns Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Highland Park State IL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 60035-2416

County Lake County

Telephone (847) 322-7587 Fax (224) 765-3508

Web site/URL https://www.nssd112.org/Page/17 E-mail mgrable@nssd112.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* Dr. Michael Lubelfeld E-mail mlubelfeld@nssd112.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name North Shore School District 112 Tel. (224) 765-3001

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. Bennett Lasko
(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):
- 7 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 9 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. 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	0	0	0
K	26	40	66
1	33	46	79
2	35	39	74
3	35	33	68
4	32	27	59
5	49	40	89
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	210	225	435

*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):
- 0.3 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 3.1 % Asian
 - 1.6 % Black or African American
 - 13 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0.3 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 76.5 % White
 - 5.2 % 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: 2%

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

Not Applicable

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	5
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	5
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	10
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	426
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.02
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

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

Spanish, Russian, Japanese, Polish, Lithuanian, Amharic

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 10 %
45 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 13 %

Total number students who qualify: 55

8. Students receiving special education services: 16 %

70 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>4</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>10</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>14</u> Developmental Delay | <u>8</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>4</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>19</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>2</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>6</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>2</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to 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.	21
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	15
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	5
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 21:1

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	95%	95%	95%	95%	99%
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 2019.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

Our mission is to nurture every child to become an inspired learner in an environment that fosters innovation, respect, engagement and intellectual inquiry.

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

Indian Trail Elementary School in Highland Park, Illinois, is a kindergarten through fifth grade school nestled in an affluent residential neighborhood, close to the downtown area, where roughly half of our 439 students ride the school bus to school each day. Our student population is more diverse than other schools in our district in that 10 percent of our students come from low-income backgrounds. The community takes great pride in helping each other and is very generous with resources to support all of our Indian Trail families. On Fridays, our community outreach program, Blessings in a Backpack, provides fresh bread and food, to be distributed to our low-income students to ensure they have food for the weekend. The Highland Park community values education, understands its worth, and has always supported our school in everything we do.

In 2018, Indian Trail merged with a neighboring elementary school in our district due to both schools experiencing declining enrollment. It was important to us that we come together and identify as one school. The staff from both schools worked alongside each other to create a transition plan that supported students, families, and staff. We prioritized building positive relationships amongst staff through team building activities and devoted time for professional development sessions that allowed teams to build a shared understanding of professional learning communities and curriculum planning. This ensured staff had time to develop relationships with one another. We also provided numerous opportunities for students to forge friendships even before we began the next school year. Classes across schools were paired up to be pen pals so they could write letters and Skype with the whole class. We created experiences for grade level visits and students to meet their pen pals. We hosted a spring open house for our new incoming families to meet our current families, and student ambassadors provided guided tours around the school building. All of this intentional work brought the schools together as one school community. The parent comment, “Why didn’t we do this sooner?!” was great validation of our work considering our district community was very upset about the closing of schools initially and the process took over two years.

Indian Trail’s commitment to provide students with opportunities to be a contributing members of a global community has become part of our school culture, as the entire school community is involved in a range of projects impacting those in need. The Highland Park community’s generosity can be seen in our greenhouse and garden, which sits adjacent to the school building, and was anonymously donated by an Indian Trail family. It is an awe-inspiring gift that allows teachers to expand beyond the classroom and provides students with incredible hands-on and leadership experiences. The idea behind the greenhouse was to create a space for students and adults to learn and have experience planting seeds, nurturing and caring for plants and seeing how our food comes to life. For many of our students, they did not know what happens before all of our food reaches the grocery store or our table. Our goal is to empower our student and staff community to think about choices that have a positive influence on our personal health, family, community, and environment, while creating a more vibrant learning environment. Our Green Growers club grows a variety of crops throughout the year. They plant seeds in the springtime and they harvest and donate these fruits and vegetables weekly to our local food pantry. In the fall, students donate about 25-50 pounds of food a week to those in need. Students who have been part of our Green Growers club have an opportunity to lead alongside our parent volunteers and facilitate learning during our lunch/recess period. This is an open time where students pop into the greenhouse and garden to help water the plants, weed the garden and learn more about plants from our student leaders. In addition to our food donations, our school helps senior citizens with Valentine’s, those with allergies with a pumpkin project, the environment with zero waste lunch and much more. The Indian Trail student council provides students with an opportunity to plan school-wide events that revolve around making the world a better place through the WE School Foundation. Parent volunteers carve out time during the lunch period for service project learning that engages students in monthly activities that support local organizations. The volunteers meet with students to find out what organizations students are interested and passionate about so students can organize the service project.

Indian Trail school has been and will continue to be a special place for students, staff and the community. We are committed to offering students a world class education that believes in the education of the whole child in order to be a contributing member of society.

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

Over the past few years, Indian Trail has focused on implementing a guaranteed and viable curriculum (GVC), specifically in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Guaranteed means that we identify and emphasize the most important skills and concepts in each grade level so that the students are adequately prepared for the next year and beyond. Viable means that we provide enough time for students to master these skills and concepts, instead of simply dragging students through the standards and hoping that it sticks. Our GVC not only allows for students to have common experiences, regardless of which teacher they have, but also affords teachers the guidance to support and extend on the most crucial skills and concepts with the individual students who need it. Teachers focus on lesson planning that requires them to have a common understanding of the learning as well as common assessments that check for understanding and drive the instruction.

Our curriculum is paired with research-based instructional strategies to maximize student learning. Using Marzano's New Art and Science of Teaching to develop a district framework, Indian Trail has committed to common instructional elements that have been proven to increase student achievement in our lessons. Teachers are able to utilize a multitude of instructional strategies based on the needs of their students, content area, and instructional goal of the lesson. Establishing a common framework also encourages collaboration amongst teaching teams to intentionally plan using research-based strategies. The common language makes this collaborative effort even more efficient and can help increase collective teacher efficacy, ultimately leading to a profoundly positive impact on our students. Our teams constantly engage in a cycle of learning by analyzing data, setting goals, and learning individually and collaboratively, as well as implementing and adjusting practices to meet the needs of all learners. This process allows teachers to try new teaching practices and discover what's working and what isn't. We find this model best meets the needs of our students and supports teachers professional growth and development.

1b. Reading/English language arts

At Indian Trail School we believe in an integrated and well-balanced approach to reading and writing instruction that is aligned with the Illinois Learning Standards in English language arts. Our goal is to guide our students to becoming lifelong readers. The implementation of this balanced literacy approach allows our students to see reading and writing modeled, share in the reading and writing with the teacher, practice independently, and be actively engaged in word study. During the 2018-2019 school year, our district adopted and implemented a new K-5 English language arts curricular resource to provide guidance for teachers and support our integrated approach to literacy instruction. We follow the gradual release model where we are able to model what good readers and writers do, share in authentic experiences with the students as they practice the skills, and then release them to implement the skills independently so that they may become successful. The use of authentic texts is at the core of our instruction, which includes both informational text and literary text, so that students can develop skills and comprehension in both genres. Similarly, students learn to write narrative, opinion, and explanatory pieces with increasing complexity and rigor as they move to the next grade level. Foundational skills lessons, such as phonics, phonemic awareness, and word analysis are also included at each grade level to solidify the crucial patterns and basics of reading and writing.

We know that in order for our students to be successful, they must be taught in a way that is mindful of their readiness, their interests, and their learning style. Our teachers are able to differentiate learning during guided reading, literacy stations, word study, independent reading and writing. This allows the teacher to meet students where they are. Our teachers plan for the needs of their students using a backwards design approach to each unit. Grade level teams meet to plan what they want students to know by the end of each unit. They ask, what do we want students to know? How do we know students have learned it? Our teachers use assessment in order to know if students have mastered grade level expectations and move them forward

through the year. By utilizing the formative assessments contained in lessons, as well as the performance based assessments at the end of each unit, teachers can make informed decisions on how to group students, what text is most appropriate, and what skills students need extra time and support in developing in order to meet grade level expectations. Small group instruction uses texts and different levels in order to scaffold this development. Speaking and listening standards are also met primarily through this small group instruction. Some performance based assessments also provide the opportunity for meaningful technology integration where students are able to create and record themselves sharing their writing, further emphasizing speaking and listening skills while promoting digital literacy.

We believe it is our responsibility that our students are able to read fluently and for meaning when they leave Indian Trail School.

1c. Mathematics

During the 2017-2018 school year, our district adopted and implemented a new K-5 math curricular resource called Bridges in Mathematics. This resource provided teachers a coherent sequence of instruction aligned to the Illinois Learning Standards in Mathematics, as well as high quality resources to use in meeting the needs of all learners. Teachers were able to successfully utilize the various components of the program to help students build positive mathematical mindsets. Using a variety of representations, students use pictures, manipulatives, written symbols, real-world situations, and oral and written language to express mathematical thinking. Our core math instruction is more than just solving problems to find the correct answer. We believe it is necessary to build number sense and conceptual understanding. Our students need to think flexibly and apply problem-solving skills across mathematical content. In addition, our students are expected to explain their thinking using precise mathematical vocabulary, the strategies they used and why they used them, and be able to critique the solution strategies of others.

The mathematical instruction at Indian Trail keeps a balance between developing procedural fluency (math facts and algorithms) and conceptual understanding in all students. Students begin with concrete experiences using a variety of manipulatives that can include unifix cubes, pattern blocks, geoboards, card decks, and base ten pieces to literally build representations of mathematical thinking. They then move to a more symbolic method of showing ideas by drawing pictures and diagrams. Finally, students are able to move to more abstract applications of mathematics to make mathematical arguments.

Throughout the units of instruction, there is a heavy emphasis on learning strategies and the Standards of Mathematical Practices. Students are taught several strategies and encouraged to employ those that are most successful for them at that time. Teachers help to facilitate the development and confidence around more efficient strategies and help students to see the connections between various methods of solving a problem. By using Problem Strings, teachers guide students through a series of related math problems in order to identify a pattern or generalize the application of a specific strategy. Teachers also use Math Forums, where students individually choose how to solve a problem and represent their thinking, and eventually share their ideas in a class discussion.

Students are also required to share their thinking through dialogue with their peers. Number Corner occurs each day, which is a whole-class time that utilizes the calendar to facilitate engaging discussions around mathematics. Students identify and predict the patterns on cards that are revealed during each day, as well as engage in activities focused on collecting and analyzing data. Students are able to use math vocabulary and share their thoughts, ideas, and questions during this daily “math talk”. Workplaces are another component included in math lessons that afford students the opportunity to practice their math using short games that are usually played in partners. During workplaces, teachers can observe and collect data on students, work with small groups to support or enrich their learning, and provide differentiated experiences based on individual student performance on the pre-assessment or checkpoints throughout the unit.

1d. Science

Science is primarily taught through an inquiry approach aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Our lessons are built on an instructional philosophy that centers on students learning science

through hands-on exploration and inquiry. Instead of students reading about science and learning individual, decontextualized factoids, students learn science by doing science. Through the use of hands-on activities and experiments, students are able to investigate scientific phenomena in order to make predictions, create hypotheses, and ask questions about what additional information they need. This concrete experience serves as a strong foundation for developing vocabulary and clarifying scientific concepts through discussions, analysis of informational text, and further investigative experiences. Students are called upon to generate evidence to support their ideas, just as real scientists are.

Our greenhouse and garden is a central focus of our science units. It allows teachers to expand beyond the classroom and provide students with hands-on experiences. The idea behind the greenhouse was to create a space for students and adults to learn and have experience planting seeds, nurturing and caring for our plants and seeing how our food comes to life. Whether you read a newspaper article about our greenhouse or follow the tweets of Indian Trail staff members, you will see our students digging, planting broccoli and snap peas and eating veggies such as freckle lettuce and radishes. This amazing space also allows for science and math integration. Teachers have created math measurement units that allow students to measure the planting beds and soil in order to decide what and where plants can be placed throughout the planting box. Teachers offer a variety of assessment opportunities, which include asking questions, observing students engaged in a variety of learning activities and processes, and examining student work in progress. Teachers are able to adjust instruction and experiences in the moment during assessment observations.

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

Similar to science, social studies is driven by the questions and inquiry of students. In alignment with the Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science, we have the goal of producing students who are civically engaged, socially responsible, culturally aware, and financially literate. To accomplish this goal, teachers at Indian Trail provide classroom experiences that allow students to investigate and apply what they learn in the areas of history, geography, and civics. Throughout each unit, teachers guide students toward applying newly constructed concepts to the real world. Whether it is comparing present day to the past, analyzing different cultures, or taking a stance on either side of a social issue, students are asked to make strong connections to their personal lives.

At Indian Trail School, lessons are created to promote civic competence as it helps students to learn to work collaboratively and make decisions in a way that benefits the group as a whole. Primary source documents are analyzed in all grade levels, and current events discussions are linked to historical events. Throughout the grade levels, our teachers plan lessons and units of study that integrate Language Arts and social studies standards through non-fiction reading, writing, and technology use. In a first grade unit, teachers will expand students' knowledge of different types of community workers through various text selections and discuss how these workers contribute to the good of the community by producing goods and services. Our student council leaders focus on school wide civic minded contributions such as our WE Walk for Water Campaign. Our students study and learn about the need for communities to access clean water to better society. Our students host an all school walkathon to raise funds to assist needy communities. Civic mindedness and inquiry based learning provide a great foundation for our students to make a difference in our world.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

At Indian Trail School responsive teaching is the hallmark of the teachers of music, physical education, art and library. The teachers of these subject areas listen to students' interests and plan activities that hook their learners. We know our students thrive in these different subject areas and for many students it is truly the highlight of their school day. These teachers never lose sight of the fact that they are teaching children in their subject area and not just teaching their subject. This is an important distinction as it changes the way teachers interact and work with all the students in grades K-5.

The Indian Trail students thrive in our visual and performing arts program, which fosters critical thinking, risk taking and collaboration. Students in grades K-5 attend art class once a week for an hour to broaden their exposure to famous works of art and provide them with opportunities to create and design their own masterpieces. Students create and design using paint, clay, paper, technology and numerous other media. Lessons emphasize gaining knowledge of the elements and principles of art while celebrating creative, individual talents. Walking through the hallways of Indian Trail, you will see students' artwork on display with students and visitors stopping to admire the work. Each year, the Highland Park Art Center features our district schools student artwork on display throughout the month of February. The students' work is truly inspirational.

All of our Indian Trail students participate in music class twice a week. Our music program includes singing, listening, note reading, playing instruments, and movement. Musical performances are provided at each grade level and focus on important musical aspects. Our kindergarten students host a picnic style concert as a culmination of their school year work. Parents, Grandparents, and relatives pack a picnic lunch and meet in the school courtyard to listen to our youngest students sing, recite poetry and tell the audience what they want to be when they grow up. Our oldest students' musical performance is student driven, with students choosing the theme, music, writing the script, and choreographing the dances. It is one of the highlights of their school year. Our current Indian Trail school spirit song was revised by a group of students who rewrote the lyrics, revised the music, and taught all of the students and staff the song during an all school assembly. Each year, our 4th and 5th grade students participate in the Reach, Teach, Play concert at Ravinia Festival that engages our students in musical song and dance.

Our physical education classes meet every day and teach the importance of regular physical activity, teamwork and life-long fitness. Our courses over the year focus on movement, physical fitness, team building, and health. The health curriculum, embedded in physical education, focuses on nutrition while teaching students skills to increase physical, mental and social health. Another part of our physical education program is celebrating disability awareness week. We partner with an organization that provides insights about disabilities to increase acceptance, understanding and inclusion by demystifying disabilities and highlighting abilities. Students engage in wheelchair sports by learning how to play games such as basketball in a wheelchair. A culmination of physical education is Field Day, which is an annual tradition at Indian Trail that celebrates games and sportsmanship. Our 5th grade students are the field day facilitators and lead all the activities and promote school spirit.

The Indian Trail library is located at the center of the school and students are welcome to stop in whenever they have questions, need reading suggestions or resources for doing inquiry projects in their classroom. In addition, students attend library class once a week. It is also our technology hub. Our technology has greatly expanded in the last four years. This was necessary in order to meet the goal of providing an essential foundation for the integration of innovative technology into a safe learning environment, while empowering staff and students to thrive in a global community. In order to support a technology-rich environment to promote academic achievement and excellence, our students in grades 3-5 have a chromebook and students in grades K-2 have an iPad. Technology is integrated into the curriculum at every grade level and is used to strengthen and support authentic, engaged learning for all of our students.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

The educational needs of our students drive the decisions that we make. Our collective staff agreement is that we do whatever it takes to ensure that students are successful and performing at grade level. We work as a cohesive team to ensure that all students are able to meet grade-level expectations while working independently in their classroom. There are three action steps that are critical to our success. During our School Leadership Team meeting at the beginning of the year we analyze data and develop our school-wide instructional plan. Our grade level data day meetings identify students who are struggling, areas of focus and a specific plan. This support plan includes our third action step which is the implementation of our Student Success Block (SSB). Students are carefully placed in reading or math supports and grouped based on need. Students receive specific and targeted instruction with our reading development teachers five days a week.

Here is an example of what our intervention system looks like. A new student enrolled at Indian Trail in third grade. The student came in reading significantly below grade level. She immediately received intentional and targeted instruction in the area of reading during her SSB block in a one to one setting. The first step was getting to know the student, her interests, and encouraging her to take ownership of her learning. Goals were set by the student and teacher and progress was monitored regularly. The lessons were based on skill deficits but tied to her interests. The classroom teacher followed up with aligned reading in the classroom to support her reading. There were progress updates and learning was communicated to her parents on an ongoing basis. This student is a more confident and fluent reader, and is able to access grade level curriculum independently. There are many other students like her that we have tailored instruction for which has helped close their achievement gap. Working together, staff, students, and family closes the gap for our students.

3b. Students performing above grade level

At Indian Trail, our primary focus is providing academics to students with all ability levels. This includes students that are performing above grade level. Our Advanced Learning Opportunities Teacher (ALO) is specifically dedicated to meeting the needs of our advanced learners. This teacher is an integral member of our team, always ensuring that our programming and lessons support students that need additional challenges.

At each grade level, kindergarten through fifth grade, teachers use current data to target specific above-level student needs. Students ready for extension are pulled for thirty minutes each day to work with other like-ability students on higher level, rigorous challenges. For example, in second grade we are currently working on poetry. In addition to learning about and writing various types of poetry (quatrains, couplets, Clerihews, etc.) students are also learning about various types of literary devices, like alliteration, assonance, consonance, and hyperbole. These data-driven, flexible groups meet daily in order to ensure the continued growth of our high ability learners.

Another important focus at Indian Trail is that of collaboration. Our grade level teams are made up of all levels of support teachers, including our ALO Teacher. These teaching teams meet weekly, allowing the ALO teacher to provide support to the general education teachers (for example, creating a spreadsheet with extension lessons for all standards in both reading and math) to ensure all needs are met during the general school day.

Our ALO Teacher also provides whole class enrichment opportunities weekly to every student in 4th and 5th grade. The goal of these lessons are to provide opportunities for all students to become critical and analytical thinkers in a safe environment in order to foster a growth mindset.

3c. Special education

Indian Trail has an inclusive model for special education services, which includes a well balanced support system of co-teaching and push in and pull out services. Our goal for providing the best delivery of instruction for each student begins by identifying specific needs, targeted planning, and continual data collection to ensure student growth. Our common plan time is divided between the related service team, grade level teams, and co-taught teams. These meetings are imperative for meeting individual student needs and provide continual dialogue to ensure students are closing the gap.

Our co-teaching model builds a classroom community where both the general education and special education teachers are there to support all students. This co-taught team allows both teachers to work closely together using their expertise to create lessons that are accessible and enriching for all learners. To support the implementation of this model, the district values and provides continued professional development for both the general education and special education partnership.

Our model for push in and pull out services is data driven, purposeful, and individualized for each student. The related service team, including the special education teacher, social worker, speech pathologist,

psychologist, and building administrator work together to identify and determine services that will meet individualized education plan goals. Indian Trail's special education team places the relationships they build with teachers, students, families and private providers as top priority. Our special education students have both school and home support and partner together to make sure that each educational plan meets the specific needs of each learner. The school and home partnership is seamless and there is mutual respect and open communication where everyone's input is valued. One very special aspect of Indian Trail is our ability to revisit, reflect, and strategize in order to move forward and ensure this success for all special education students. We strongly believe that all students can learn and provide inclusive opportunities for special education students. This belief is what makes us successful in closing the gap for special education students.

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

All of our ELL instructional intervention is data driven to ensure teaching is intentional and targeted. We look at each child individually and determine his or her specific language and academic needs. Based on their need, we make a learning plan for students and group students either individually or in a small group setting. There is a myriad of support that is available to ELL students ranging from a co-taught classroom, ELL services in their native language, and reading support from a reading specialist. Students can have one of these services or all of these services intertwined throughout their school day. We carefully plan each child's schedule. We design the right blend of push in and pull out instructional support throughout their day to meet the students' needs. Teams work together to develop goals and plan targeted instruction for each individual student. The team checks in with each other to continually change and adjust instruction so that students are working at a comfortable yet rigorous pace.

Our ultimate goal when working with ELL students is to build vocabulary, background knowledge, comprehension, and understanding. Frontloading key vocabulary and concepts is imperative but many times in the moment teaching, chunking, and scaffolding takes place. Some of our ELL students do not have the real life experiences to make connections to many of the academic discussions that are occurring in the classroom. It is essential teachers work together to plan and align grade level curriculum to ELL services. Our ELL students are supported throughout the day in many different settings where they receive pre teaching and reteaching to build schema. Scaffolded approaches are used daily by all specialists to ensure consistency in making our students' learning meaningful. The results of this targeted and intentional instruction has made the greatest impact on the learning of our ELL students.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

At Indian Trail School, we strive to create an environment that fosters innovation, engagement and intellectual inquiry. It is very important to us that students are engaged in school life. In addition to academics, we want them to feel a part of our school. One way we achieve this is by providing students with a myriad of enrichment club opportunities that meet during students' lunch time and after school, giving each student an opportunity to engage in learning outside the classroom while connecting with peers from different grade levels. The majority of these clubs are driven by and created around student voice and interests and taught by staff, parent volunteers and high school students. Our lunch time STEAM program started out meeting once a week and quickly grew in popularity where we now offer the program three times a week with the help of parent volunteers and a staff member. Many of these students continue their work in our Robotics Club that competes in our yearly district competition hosted at the middle school. Our enrichment clubs range from learning sign language, to traveling around the world in our Passport Club, playing little tiger sports to competing in chess tournaments. We have had a record enrollment with over 280 students participating yearly.

We provide multiple opportunities for our students to be leaders throughout our school building. We find that students in leadership roles make a positive contribution to our school environment. The younger students look up to these student leaders and see them as their friend and someone to go to when they need help. Our Junior Coaches Program is a student leadership initiative that we implemented. It has increased positive peer relationships and decreased behavioral issues and peer conflict, especially at recess. Our students apply to be junior coaches and when selected, they are part of a leadership program where they will participate in fun leadership activities, games and team building. In turn, these junior coaches lead and facilitate activities during recess that support students as they learn to make friends, solve problems, and build confidence in themselves. With our diverse student community, an inclusive playground is an integral part of students' social and emotional success. At recess, all students have real choices in how they play. They feel empowered to play on their own or to start activities with other students. Our junior coaches are natural leaders on the playground and make an impactful difference for all students.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

We believe at Indian Trail that educating children is a collaborative effort that is enhanced greatly when the community, parents, and teachers partner to ensure student success. Our goal is to create conditions where these partnerships thrive. One of our successful partnerships is with the 112 Education Foundation. The Foundation's goal is to enrich and enhance our educational opportunities. They have done this by funding some of our innovative programs such as the robotics program where students spend several weeks learning to build and program robots as well as preparing for a district wide competition. The Foundation has also brought in many authors to visit and work with our students and enabled our students and their families to learn and enjoy classical music through their partnership with Ravinia Festival. We are grateful for their partnership and for funding of our initiatives.

The Indian Trail Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) plays a large role in students' school experiences. Our parents work tirelessly planning, organizing, and volunteering their time to give back to the Indian Trail school community. Each year as they review their budget, the PTO ensures funding is available for families in need supporting them with back to school supplies, morning snacks, providing food for the weekend with our Blessings In A Backpack program, winter clothing as well as free ticket admission to our annual Pancake Breakfast to name just a few events. The PTO partners with our students to create service projects that support our local non-profit organizations. For example our students partner with Project Linus to make blankets for babies in the children's hospital. The PTO has partnered with our organic gardeners to learn and volunteer to care for the greenhouse and garden. Some of our volunteers have included grandparents and neighbors who want to be involved in working with children and want to share their love of gardening.

We have a strong mentoring program through Kids Hope USA, a national non-profit organization which

facilitates mentoring relationships with at-risk children through a church-school partnership. We have been so fortunate to partner with a local community church who recruit and train volunteers from their congregation. We work as a staff to identify students who are in need of extra support and attention. Their mentors meet with our students once a week, usually during the lunch time hour. Relationship building activities serve as a top priority, with time spent on academics and fun activities. Sometimes you will see the mentors joining in during recess to play games with their mentee's friends. Research has shown that this school-based mentoring program has a positive impact on student achievement. We see its impact everyday in our mentee's better attendance, engagement, and positive behavior.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Indian Trail School provides embedded and ongoing professional development for teachers and administrators. Opportunities are provided in district and outside of the district through conferences and workshops. Collaboration between the Department of Teaching and Learning and building leaders is an integral component of the professional development plan. This past year saw the close collaboration with our district curriculum department and team of teacher leaders working alongside each other to learn more about research-based instructional strategies to maximize student learning. We used the work of Marzano's New Art and Science of Teaching to develop our district framework. In turn, our teacher leaders provided staff development training to our teachers. These staff trainings involved professional readings to build shared knowledge, model strategy activities and even recorded teachers implementing strategies in their classroom. This instructional framework brought such positive energy to our staff and classrooms.

Our school district administers the online Humanex assessment survey twice a year to all district employees. This 88 question survey is confidential and anonymous. It assesses four areas within our school organization: You, Team, Supervisor, and the Whole Organization. The results are shared with our School Leadership Team (SLT) who look at data trends and themes. We identify areas for celebration and areas for growth. Our SLT presents to staff the information and results during a staff meeting. The staff breaks out in teams, with an SLT member facilitating each group. The groups brainstorm ideas on how to reach our goals and determine how we will monitor the goals. One of our identified goals was peer observations in order to learn from our colleagues. The SLT chose three peer observation days in the school year and set up 60 minute rotations for peer observation, which included time for teachers to debrief. Teachers completed a survey that asked them if they were comfortable having peers observe them and if so, what subject were they most comfortable having teachers observe in their classroom. We also asked if they wanted to observe others and if so, in what class. The SLT members gathered the survey results and created a schedule for the teachers to be released to observe a peer with time to debrief. This created a safe and positive environment for teachers to learn from each other and see all the wonderful things happening in each other's classrooms. We noticed more teachers talking about instruction and we saw an increase in teachers taking back ideas and trying new instructional strategies.

4. School Leadership:

At Indian Trail School we believe that shared leadership is essential to student success and achievement. We believe that all staff members are responsible for the learning of all the students. We know that problem solving is done best when addressed by teams where building level leaders and teachers collaborate and learn by trusting each other, taking risks, and often learning from strategic mistakes.

Indian Trail building level leadership has an inclusive, team-oriented approach and has created avenues for staff to provide input on policies and decisions involving the school. The principal leads and facilitates the School Leadership Team, building committee and staff meetings. The principal participates in grade-level team meetings, models life-long learning for students, and has demonstrated a clear commitment to student growth and achievement.

Our Problem Solving Team (PST) meets monthly to monitor and adjust the school-wide intervention program by examining student achievement. The team analyzes the students achievement and growth data throughout the school year, as well as percentages of children receiving instruction through Tier I, II and III support. This group is comprised of specialists, general education teachers, and the principal and assistant

principal. The goal of this group is to monitor the success of the intervention strategies to ensure our students are closing the achievement gap.

The School Leadership Team serves as leaders, representing each grade level and specialty within the school. Membership on this team takes place on a two year rotational basis, giving all staff members equal opportunities to serve as school leaders. This team collaborates monthly, to set the course for the direction of the school year and monitor the school improvement plan. The focus is to develop school-wide instructional practices that align with the school improvement plan and the work of teacher teams for the purpose of the success and growth of all students. The team uses data to determine areas for student growth, evaluate school programs and services, and create professional development plans that correlate to strategies meeting the needs of all students.

Additionally, our teacher-mentor program connects new staff members with experienced teachers. Our new teacher induction model is another example of shared leadership. Veteran teachers are matched with first and in some cases, second year teachers to support their professional growth and development toward making a positive impact on student growth. Additionally, our instructional coach facilitates teacher coaching based on students' needs. Our new teachers are more successful with meeting student needs and academic growth because of this collaboration.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

There are so many factors that play into Indian Trail's success, though none play a more significant role than the students, their families and educators. It is these people and their unwavering commitment to our inclusive practices that has made all the difference in closing the achievement gap. Every day, children come to school ready for an incredible day of learning.

Indian Trail has prioritized inclusive practices as a focus over the last four years. Our core beliefs at Indian Trail are shared amongst staff, students, and families that believe when all students, regardless of need, are learning together then everyone benefits. To start with, Indian Trail's mission and vision centers around a belief that all students have the ability to learn and that all students deserve access to receive core instruction. We removed the silos so that teachers can provide support to all students. You will not find a teacher or any staff member working alone. Instead, teachers plan lessons together, co-teach classes and work alongside each other. Our co-teaching model allows for co-planning and co-serving students.

Once we embarked upon our co-teaching journey, we needed to make some big changes around staff learning together, building positive and collaborative relationships that fostered trust and understanding while facilitating collaboration around student data and instructional practices. We also needed to change the structure around how we built our master school schedule. This was critical in order to provide co-teachers time to lesson plan and discuss student needs.

Our success in co-teaching is due to the priority we placed on professional development for teachers around co-teaching, co-planning and inclusive practices. Our general education and special educators collaborate together to plan for full inclusive experiences. It is the co-planning with both teachers that is crucial to the strategic co-service of the students. The co-service takes place in the general education classroom. It is most beneficial to students because the teachers have clearly defined their roles and how their work is aligned. They maximize the time they are servicing students, which includes whole group instruction and targeted small group work. Our inclusive schedule is driven by student needs. It prioritizes all students, including students with disabilities, in the general education setting. Our results support our work and families whose students have been in co-teaching classes request a co-teaching class the following school year.

Overall, our inclusive model has allowed us to co-teach, co-plan and co-service our students while creating a positive culture of continuous improvement for all at Indian Trail School. We have been able to celebrate the success of lasting relationships with students, staff and families. These are the people who have made inclusion such a success.