

U.S. Department of Education
2020 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [X] Title I [] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

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

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

School Mailing Address 13321 State Highway 2
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Grayson State KY Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 41143-8640

County Carter

Telephone (606) 474-6696 Fax (606) 474-2044

Web site/URL https://cceswebpage.wixsite.com/cces E-mail jo.ashworth@carter.kyschools.us

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Ronnie Dotson E-mail ronnie.dotson@carter.kyschools.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Carter County Tel. (606) 474-6696

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. Bryan Greenhill
(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):
- 6 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 2 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 10 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. 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	7	8	15
K	16	13	29
1	9	10	19
2	6	7	13
3	6	8	14
4	11	6	17
5	11	12	23
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	66	64	130

*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
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 0 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 100 % White
 - 0 % 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: 15%

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

Various reasons exist for students transferring in and out of CCES and a few are: moving in or out of the area for employment purposes, students living with grandparents or other kinship, parent/s incarcerated, divorce, and economically disadvantaged, etc.

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	15
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	20
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	136
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.15
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	15

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

Spanish

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 66 %

Total number students who qualify: 86

8. Students receiving special education services: 13 %

17 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>0</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>3</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>6</u> Developmental Delay | <u>3</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>19</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>4</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 6

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	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	7
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 19:1

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	94%	93%	95%	95%	94%
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 school mission statement is "Creating a Community that Exemplifies Success." It is our mission to create in students an ambition to succeed and at high levels.

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

Carter City Elementary School is a rural school located in Northeastern Kentucky. Carter City was established in 2013 when Carter Elementary, which was built in the 1930s, closed its doors. The school serves 130 students from preschool to fifth grade, 66% of the population receives free and reduced lunch and 13% of students qualify for special education services. Ninety-eight percent of our students are Caucasian, while the other one percent are Hispanic. Our school is the hub of the community and is the center of most activities that take place in Carter City. Our community is mainly farming with no industry in the immediate area; we are located approximately 15 miles from the nearest town.

It is the mission of Carter City Elementary to "Create a Community that Exemplifies Success". We believe this mission will be accomplished by providing a safe, nurturing, and welcoming environment that focuses on delivering a high-quality education by providing each student the opportunity to develop and meet their educational goals. The staff and community at Carter City are committed to meeting the district's vision of being "The Standard of Excellence." Carter City has established a community of learners where opportunities are provided for teachers and students to continually learn. Teachers participate in professional learning communities (PLCs), district grade level learning academies, book studies, and lesson studies. As evidenced in our School's Improvement Plan, this vision shapes opportunities provided to our students and staff through programming opportunities, school-wide strategies and activities, and a needs-based approach to learning.

While teachers utilize a variety of texts and resources for literacy, the foundational literacy program at Carter City is Fountas and Pinnell. This program meets students at their independent level and challenges them to go further. Students also receive literacy support through Lexia, a program that provides students on-level instruction through a student friendly platform. Math instruction at Carter City Elementary is focused on the Kentucky Core Academic Standards and is grounded in the research of the four stages of problem solving including building, drawing, writing, and speaking. With an effect size of .61, this process allows for internalization of math concepts and problems. During science instruction, students are provided with inquiry learning structures that encourage questioning and discussion. Mystery Science is a main contributor in lesson design. The Kentucky Core Academic Standards for Social Studies are delivered through History Alive and teacher developed plans. Through both structures, students engage in lively discussions and interactions with their peers.

Students at Carter City are immersed in technology interactions. With a one-to-one ratio of students to devices, students have access to a world-class education. Teachers utilize platforms such as Google Classroom, NearPod, NewsELA, and Study Island, and Prodigy Math to ensure students are prepared for the careers beyond our boundaries. Students are asked to design technology based projects through collaboration with their peers and engage in classroom presentations and productions. Additionally, each week, the Library Media Specialist, provides coding instruction through code.org. This program allows students to engage in web and code design.

One initiative that our school is extremely proud of is our Lesson Study Process. This process provides time for teachers across grade levels to plan a lesson together. One teacher volunteers to teach the group-designed lesson and the other members observe the lesson in action. Lesson Studies have been instrumental in improving the instruction throughout our school and building a professional culture that is supportive, caring, and collegial.

While all staff members are focused on successful academic achievement for every child, the social and emotional well-being of our students take priority. Teachers have been immersed in professional learning focused on strategies for creating trauma-sensitive classrooms. Using the book, *Fostering Resilient Learners*, teachers have participated in a year-long book study facilitated by the school's guidance counselor. Using her expertise of counseling students with high Adverse Childhood Experiences, (ACEs), teachers have gained deepened insights on the correlation between ACEs and adult health. This learning has prompted the staff to create initiatives to heighten the support for all students including, home visits, advisory programs, and peer to peer support.

Carter City has been a proficient and distinguished performing school in our district for the past five years based on the Kentucky Performance Rating for Educational Progress (KPREP). Some of our highlights throughout this time include being designated as a distinguished school from 2016-2018. In 2019, we received a five star rating based on the state's new rating system. We were nominated by the Kentucky Commissioner of Education as one of five Kentucky schools to be sent to the Federal Department of Education for National Blue Ribbon School. Finally, Carter City has a history of performing well in reading and math and has met each of our school's accountability goals for the past five cycles.

Carter City Elementary has increased the percent of students scoring at or above proficiency by 29% in literacy and 27.8% in math throughout the past five years.

Each year we have maintained an overall classification of Proficiency or Distinguished based on state and district measures. In 2015 we were designated a State School of Proficiency. 2016 and 2017 we were designated a Distinguished School of Excellence based on state guidelines. In 2018, with the state assessment model in revisions, we did not receive a state designation but rather a district. During this interim assessment period, we were designated a Gold Level Distinguished School. Finally, 2019 brought about more changes with the state assessment guidelines, moving to star rating of one to five. During this year, we were designated a 5 Star School by the Kentucky Department of Education.

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

With an effect size of .59, the instructional delivery model at Carter City Elementary is Explicit Direct Instruction (EDI). This instructional model ensures that students receive instruction through the gradual release of responsibility approach that delivers new learning through manageable steps. Lessons begin with the teacher modeling the skills and concepts to be mastered. During this phase, students engage in making connections to current knowledge and developing an understanding of the purpose for the new learning. Next, a collaborative guided practice session is enacted with the teacher providing support as students engage in productive struggle with the skill or concept. Finally, the responsibility is released to the students during the independent phase. Another component included in the Explicit Direct Instruction model is the concept of active engagement. Through intentional and precise design, this phase of the process ensures that all students are cognitively engaged in interactive lessons that encourage student discussion, ensures equal time and equal turns, and ignites metacognitive processing.

All teachers utilize PACE (Purpose, Accountability, Congruency, Eyes on Text/Engagement), the Carter County Learning Intention Model. Beginning with Purpose, this model allows students to understand what and why they are learning. Accountability provides students with an understanding of how they will demonstrate their learning. Congruency ensures students understand the standard. Eyes on Text provides detail to what students will be reading and how they will engage in the reading. In math lessons, E becomes Engagement. This provides students with an understanding of the engagement structures that will be used for the lesson.

Additionally, the Carter County Curriculum Document that is inclusive of the Kentucky Academic Standards serves as the basis for instructional content. Students are assessed three times a year using a district created benchmark assessment for math and at the end of each unit using district-wide teacher created common assessments. In literacy students are formally assessed three times a year using the Fountas and Pinnell placement assessments. All standards are assessed according to unit timelines using district-wide teacher created common assessments to determine the effectiveness of instruction for every standard included in the Kentucky Academic Standards. District-wide teacher created Common assessments for science and Social Studies are also administered based on assessment map timelines. Assessments are analyzed and instruction is adjusted to meet student learning needs.

1b. Reading/English language arts

Teachers and staff at Carter City Elementary hold to the belief that all students will strive to reach expectations that are established for them. Therefore, Carter City Elementary maintains high and rigorous expectations for all students. While all students are exposed to a wide-range of instructional literacy strategies, Carter City Elementary implements a foundational set of strategies that are common across all grade levels. This common set of strategies is significant as students move from grade to grade. Research has validated the effects on student achievement when consistency within instruction is provided. Classrooms at Carter City are rich in print with word walls focused on Tier I, II, and III vocabulary words, anchor charts that are reflective of student learning processes, writing structures that are systemic, and comprehension strategies that guide student thinking. Student work is posted throughout the rooms, along with expectations for proficiency.

While EDI is used to deliver instruction across content and grade levels, the district's literacy framework of Before, During, and After provides a structured system for literacy instruction that is embedded in the EDI model. Before reading, teachers provide direction and Purpose for the lesson, allow students time to build on current schema, and conduct mini lessons to ensure understanding of the text and standards. During reading, students are guided to read with pencil in hand as they work to complete an Accountability piece for the lesson. Students engage in rich dialogue with partners and teams, close read text to glean underlying

themes and ideas, and monitor and record metacognition as they read. After Reading, students participate in a process to bring the lesson to a close by confirming conversations, reflecting on responses, revisiting the Purpose for the lesson to determine if the lesson structure was successful.

The vocabulary process used at Carter City Elementary is both systematic and systemic. Students are immersed in a scaffolded approach to vocabulary instruction. All teachers begin each vocabulary lesson with an introductory activity to acquaint students to new words. Teachers then guide students through strategies to ensure they develop a basic understanding of the vocabulary. Ultimately, students engage in higher level strategies that take them to a deeper understanding of the word.

1c. Mathematics

Fluency, accompanied with conceptualization in mathematics is the primary objective driving the design and delivery of the math program at Carter City Elementary. The mathematics curriculum focuses on Kentucky Core Academic Standards. The foundation for math instruction utilizes research-based practices. These practices provide sequential and cyclical lessons that encourage the delivery of math instruction through an engaging and problematic approach. Students explore central topics in depth through a series of investigations and are actively engaged in working with materials and with their peers to solve mathematical problems. The goal is to teach students mathematics, emphasizing mathematical reasoning and problem solving using alternative strategies to achieve proficiency. Additionally teachers provide math instruction that is engaging and requires students to explore, research, and interact to find solutions. Through the implementation of the EDI process, students are provided with the opportunity to experience understanding of the concept through productive struggle before and during the lesson. Teachers provide modeling to students at the beginning of the lesson to provide clarity to misconceptions, build background understanding, and scaffold the overall concept to meet all student needs. This process is followed by the guided practice phase with students participating in concept understanding through the support from peers and guidance from the teacher. Finally, students are ready for the independent phase. This phase allows students the opportunity to explore multiple ways for problem solving. The lesson is ended with a concluding section that provides time for students to communicate their findings with their peers. Summative assessments are administered three times per year. Students are assessed formatively on a daily basis to gauge progress and plan instruction. Response to Intervention is an integral part of math instruction. Teachers evaluate student assessments to determine at-risk students. At this point, teachers target identified students and design individual intervention plans to make certain the content is mastered. All students receive differentiated tiers of instruction to help them succeed. The mathematics curriculum also recognizes technology as a vital part of instruction. Students are living and learning in an age of technology. Therefore, using games to teach mathematical concepts supports students' need for engaging and interactive instruction. 21st Century skills are a foundational component of the intervention system. Students access computer-based programs via computers and SMART Board technology to become active learners. Curriculum maps and effective collaboration ensures that all math instruction and curriculum is seamless between grade levels.

1d. Science

The Next Generation Science Standards are the foundation for instructional content at Carter City Elementary. Just as in all subjects, the instructional delivery model of EDI is the process used for providing science content to all students. Teachers initiate modeling, guided practice, and independent structures as students are prompted to plan, design, and conduct experiments.

Science Lessons incorporate reading as an underlying foundation for understanding the content. In preparing for experimental applications students are immersed in reading research articles, science phenomena excerpts, and other relevant texts. During reading students are always presented with a structured purpose that will ensure transfer of learning as they move into the experimental phase of the lesson. During the experimental phase, students engage in activities that encourage exploration, inquiry, and collaboration as students work to understand scientific phenomena included in the standards. Students are required to develop and use models that represent their findings. Teachers serve as facilitators as students analyze the results of their experiments and create fully developed explanations of their findings. Students

are provided time to communicate findings to peers and to develop arguments based on claims, evidence, and reasoning.

Students receive instruction that is designed to be progressive among each grade level. Teachers utilize curriculum maps that provide guidance on content, resources and a timeline for instruction. Students are assessed informally on a daily basis through teacher designed activities and administered at the end of each unit. Teachers support one another during Professional Learning Communities to analyze assessment results and plan for next steps.

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

Currently, the Social Studies content at Carter City Elementary is derived from the Kentucky Core Content for Instruction. The content provides students with an overall understanding of historical happenings and effective citizenry. Concepts included within the discipline strands for instruction are civics, economics, geography, and history. Within the civics strand students learn about government, community, and their own personal impact on the world. The economics strand provides a focus on interpreting the impact of business and government on society. The study of geography at Carter City Elementary allows students to reach outside of their culture and community to gain a new perspective through diverse learning experiences. Finally, history provides students with a look at the past and the way past events have shaped our world.

Each strand is delivered through the systemic EDI model. Because research confirms that background knowledge has the greatest impact on students' understanding of new material, teachers devote time to collaborative brainstorming. Students engage in activities that lend themselves to retrieving information that they already know and helping them make connections to the new learning. As part of the modeling phase, teachers provide structured and scaffolded vocabulary lessons just as teachers in science and language arts. During this phase in Social Studies teachers explain the purpose for learning, how they will be learning the material and what they will be learning. During the guided practice phase students are immersed in instructional structures that allow for collaborative projects, inquiry based learning, and research driven assignments. Guided practice also provides times for students to explore reading high interest text and participate in cognitively engaging structures. Independent practice, the final phase, offers activities that allow the teacher insights into how the student progressed through assignment and what learning occurred.

Teachers follow curriculum maps that are bundled by units that include dates for instruction, instructional resources, and content vocabulary to support each unit. Students are assessed informally through daily assignments and progress made toward understanding the content. Common assessments based on unit content are also administered at the conclusion of each unit.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

The preschool program at Carter City Elementary has proven successful based on the Brigance Readiness Assessment administered upon entry to Kindergarten. During the 2018-19 school year 83.3% of students scored at the readiness level and during the 2019-20 school year 93.3% of students scored at the readiness level. Students attend preschool two-full days each week.

The preschool staff works diligently to begin the process of laying the foundations for future success. Teaching Strategies Gold and Creative Curriculum provides teachers with resources for assessment and content. Learning at the preschool level begins with the environment. Classrooms are arranged into centers that allow students to participate in dramatic play, art activities, reading, technology, block play, science, math, fine motor, and teacher directed activities. Students visit stations of their choice and are allowed to move freely among stations as availability is open. Students participate in sorting activities, exploratory lessons, musically enhanced lessons, print concepts, phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, conceptual math, and activities that encourage fine motor development. Teachers visit students at stations and engage in conversations with them weaving in rich vocabulary, questioning structures, and helping them to make

connections to print.

The preschool staff follows a curriculum map that is inclusive of the Kentucky Standards for Preschool. The curriculum map is divided into units and provides teachers with a time structure for each unit. Preschool students are assessed three times per year with the Brigance Assessment and Teaching Strategies Gold. The preschool adheres to all state and federal mandates and participates in the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale a minimum of once every three years.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Because of the size of our student population, Carter City Elementary employs itinerant teachers that serve our school in the areas of library/media, music, art, and character building and life skills through our Guidance Counselor one day per week. Teachers provide services for students in Kindergarten through grade five. All instruction delivered through the EDI process.

Students receive music education classes, covering the elements of music included in the Kentucky Core Academic Standards. Our music curriculum also focuses on music history, including composer study, music and dance. As part of the instruction, students learn about musical instruments, how to read and write music, and the elements of dance and drama. The teacher leads a Christmas program that is a community event and all grades perform. Our Social Studies teacher writes and leads the performance of a play called "Boston" where 4th & 5th grade students perform historical events that parallels our curriculum. The 5th grade class also conducts a Wax Museum of historical characters. Other performances include our Veterans Day program where all grades sing patriotic songs and honor our local Veterans. The Carter County District sponsors a Reading Fair where students perform individually or as a choral group that Carter City Elementary participates in each year.

In Art education students are taught two and three dimensional art, multiple media, art vocabulary, etc. Students have multiple opportunities to compete their projects at the Art Fair and different competitions throughout the district. Regular classroom teachers incorporate art throughout the different subjects they teach and projects that students create and exhibit based on rubrics. Dioramas are an example of a fifth grade project that incorporates art with Native Americans.

The Library Media Specialist (LMS) addresses a wide range of genres (fantasy, historical fiction science fiction biography, and poetry), current events, maps, and research. Additionally, the LMS provides instruction in computer coding skills.

The School Counselor teaches a curriculum that includes character building, life skills, and career skills. Topics such as mindfulness, calming strategies, and social/emotional learning are included.

Physical Education/Health and Nutrition are taught by the classroom teachers. Physical Education includes free play and a curriculum (SPARK) that is filled with games to provide physical activity that instill the importance of exercise, diet and nutrition. Different sports are taught to give students some background to games and the rules to play as developmentally appropriate. Brain breaks are taken in classrooms to give students time to re-energize through GoNoodle and other resources. Health education is generally covered through reading and language arts utilizing the EDI process.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

Carter City Elementary School has developed an intensive and focused Response to Intervention structure to support students who are not meeting grade level standards. The school implements a three-tiered approach to ensure all student needs are met. Tier I instruction is delivered in the general education classroom and is focused on grade level standards. Students are pre-assessed on upcoming unit standards. The Response to Intervention Team reviews assessments and students are placed into instructional groups. Students who are identified as "at risk" based on assessment results receive Tier II instruction. Tier II students are grouped

with other students who may be struggling with the same concept. Groups of five to six students meet with the teacher daily to help bridge the deficiency. Tier III is the next level of support and provides daily instruction to groups of one to three students who are identified as "intensive". Each tier is fluid, allowing students to move in or out of a group based on weekly progress. Additionally, students are assessed three times per year using benchmark assessments that gauge growth.

3b. Students performing above grade level

Students performing above grade level are provided with multiple venues to ensure growth. The Response to Intervention system described above is the same process and used to support high performing students. Upon the administration of a pre-assessment students are placed in groups to receive advanced instruction during the Response to Intervention class. This group of students will meet daily in small groups just as students exhibiting deficiencies. The difference is this group of students will be receiving advanced course work as related to content standards currently being addressed in the general education classroom. During this time, students are provided opportunities to look at concepts through a different lens, allowing them to progress to a deeper level of understanding. Students will be immersed in collaborative learning that is cognitively engaging. Instruction will be delivered through the EDI process but will focus on higher level concepts. Student progress is monitored weekly and adjustments are made as needed.

3c. Special education

The special education department at Carter City Elementary School includes two teachers who serve our special education population, one in reading and one in math. Students are serviced in small group settings and collaboratively within the regular education classrooms as addressed in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). The small group setting helps bridge deficiencies in grade level skills. To maintain consistency, all special education teachers deliver instruction through the EDI process. Students are serviced by an Occupational Therapist as noted in their IEPs. The Occupational Therapist conducts lessons with students once a week to improve fine motor skills. Students with IEPs for speech and language receive services from a certified Speech Therapist who provides support to identified students twice a week on sound production, fluency, sign language, receptive, and expressive language skills.

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

Our ELL students are provided services and support to reinforce core content, to aid in comprehension of material, and provide the individual accommodations needed to maximize student success. Our ELL teacher collaborates with the regular education teacher(s) ensuring our ELL population receives proper individualized accommodations throughout each and every academic year the student needs additional support based on WIDA standards and ACCESS test scores. Each ELL student has an Individual Program Services Plan based on their English language needs designed to help foster English language acquisition.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Our staff strives to help our students reach their highest potential in various ways. We commit ourselves to meeting our mission of "Creating a Community that Exemplifies Success". We begin this endeavor before the opening of school by establishing a school to home connection through hosting our Open House. This allows families and teachers an opportunity to meet on more casual terms, learn about each other, and develop positive relationships. Through this "meet and greet" reception parents come to understand that our students come first. Additionally, all teachers participate in a Summer Leadership Retreat to refresh and refine current practices and learn new research to support revised practices. As we develop our lessons, we strive to help students reach their highest academic potential by making sure that there is a specific purpose for everything we teach. Our school offers various services in conjunction with the community to support our students' well-being; including on site medical facilities where students can be seen by a medical provider at the school, Pathways counseling services, as well as speech and occupational therapy services. We also offer various activities for our students including a school basketball team and academic team, and work with the community to provide information about youth football and soccer leagues and other sports opportunities.

Carter City has worked to develop some programs that are unique to our school to encourage our community of learners as well as our outside community. We have a daily morning assembly, where students and teachers gather together to say the Pledge of Allegiance, sing a patriotic song, hear morning announcements, and celebrate student and staff achievements. We also host four Family Nights during the school year to maintain open communication with our parents. Our Family Nights provide activities for families to do at home to help students with learning. A highlight of our school year involves the entire community as we all gather at the school for a Community Christmas tree lighting where families get to visit and have cookies with Santa, listen to our school choir sing, and hear Christmas stories being read.

Our staff is made up of six full time classroom teachers and a principal. We also have one part-time Preschool teacher, two special needs teachers, and one interventionist. Other part-time staff include a guidance counselor once a week, and four itinerant teachers who serve students in speech, art, music, and media specialist. Our support staff consists of four full-time instructional assistants, Family Resource Coordinator that serves two schools in the district, a secretary/attendance clerk, two cafeteria workers, and two custodians. Our goal is to help all of our students achieve their maximum potential to become lifelong learners.

Carter City Elementary has the expectation of high-achievement as we "Create a Community that Exemplifies Success." We work diligently to make sure that none of our students are left behind, and do whatever is necessary to get the help they need to be successful. It is an honor to have been nominated to receive National Blue Ribbon status. The nomination is certainly a result of the efforts of all stakeholders: our community members, parents, administrators, teachers, and students.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Carter City Elementary has found many successful strategies to work with family and community members for student success and school improvement throughout the year. First we work closely with our PTO to plan activities to engage our students and community. Our PTO works to raise funds in order to provide educational opportunities for students such as field trips to visit state historical sites and museums, movies, theater productions, plays, etc., without our families having to pay. PTO also encourages our students attendance by offering awards for perfect and excellent attendance monthly and yearly. Each year, our students reach out to our community through holding a Veterans Day program and Christmas program. During the Veterans Day program, our students learn about the importance of our veterans and the sacrifices made by them to protect our country. The children enjoy making cards and telling the veterans "thank you" for all they have done because of their service. Our Christmas program brings together the arts for our students and allows them to entertain their families and community with a mixture of drama and music,

which always draws a large crowd. Our community reaches out during our Awards Day Recognitions Program at the end of the school year. The Olive Hill Masonic Lodge provides bicycles and a drawing is held to award three of our students for their attendance. Our Site Base Council involves two parent members and reaches out to our families throughout the year. The Carter County Extension Agency also works with students and families in our school by assisting fourth grade students with leaf collection projects. Our first graders participate in the LEAP program provided through the extension agency to learn about healthy living, and 4-H students in our intermediate grades work closely with the agency with their projects and speeches. The extension office also provides hands-on learning days in science and social studies to enhance student achievement.

We use various forms of media to keep our families and community informed of events being held at the school. School newsletters are sent home with students, as well as individual classroom newsletters and notes from the school as needed to inform our families. Teachers also use Classroom Dojo or Facebook pages to communicate with their students' families about events that happen in the classroom. The school also has a facebook page that allows communication about upcoming events and celebrations of success. We have found that by providing adequate communication and hosting events throughout the school year allows our community to invest in student learning and celebrate success!

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Teachers at Carter City Elementary live in an environment that maintains both professional and personal relationships. Teachers care about one another, not just in work related issues but in those areas outside of school. Teachers know one another, they know families, they are friends. Teachers celebrate each other's accomplishments. As teachers are recognized for achieving a Gold Level Teacher Leader status for high performance in professional learning initiatives, or being designated as Teacher of Year, other staff members come alongside them to celebrate accomplishments. Teachers efforts are frequently recognized during whole-school morning meetings, bulletin boards, social media, and school announcements. Leadership members will provide refreshments, lunch, and notes of appreciation to relay how valued teachers are. Teachers are leaders at Carter City and leadership is acknowledged through their input and design of the district-wide curriculum initiatives, development of common assessments, choice in professional learning, and facilitation of professional learning sessions.

Teachers at Carter City Elementary consider professional learning to be a priority and have participated in school and district book studies and reviews that focus on literacy and math strategies. During district academies teachers have studied books such as Creating Strategic Readers, Strategies That Work, Comprehension Connections, Word Nerds, Fostering Resilient Learners, The Reading Strategies Book, Guided Reading, and Razzle Dazzle Writing. Teachers at Carter City Elementary not only participate in district level professional development, they also provide workshops on specified topics. To expand on district level professional learning initiatives, the staff conducts school level workshops regularly to ensure strategies are implemented with fidelity. The professional studies have provided teachers with an insight on additional strategies that can be used to help both accelerated and struggling learners. By participating in book studies, teachers stay informed about current educational trends and research and gain a wealth of knowledge that will enhance teaching and learning within the classroom.

In addition to book studies, teachers have also participated in workshops on assessment administration to ensure fidelity of test administration. Additionally, because teachers recognize the importance of using assessment data to drive instruction, all staff participated in several workshops on instructional groupings and targeted instruction. Explicit instruction is at the forefront of all professional development sessions within the school. School and district administration have established high expectations for all teachers in the area of instructional planning. Therefore, teachers have received professional development on creating effective lesson plans to meet the diverse needs of all learners. Within recent years, professional development has centered upon high impact and research-based activities that enhance student learning and improve classroom teaching techniques. These structures have provided teachers with additional knowledge of engaging activities and differentiated instruction for students with various learning styles. Professional development also consists of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). This type of professional development activity has inspired the teachers and empowered them to make instructional improvements

within their classrooms. The Professional Learning Communities have become an excellent way for teachers to collaborate, learn new ideas, and share professional opinions. PLCs have also provided teachers with new ways of thinking and inspired them to become actively involved in new instructional methods that will benefit all students. Overall, the professional development plan at Carter City Elementary encourages continuous teacher improvement. By addressing specific student and teacher needs, Carter City Elementary has created a community of learners that seek opportunities for improvement.

4. School Leadership:

The rich legacy of commitment to high achievement for not only each student but our faculty members as well is evident throughout the school community. Carter City Elementary possesses a unique leadership philosophy that holds to the belief that it is imperative to build capacity within our school community. The school administrator recognizes that building capacity is the key to ensuring success. Therefore, many opportunities are provided for shared leadership through collaboration and teamwork while functioning as a strong cohesive force. The instructional leader builds capacity in various ways. For example, Carter City's Instructional Leadership Team provides each individual with the opportunity to engage in decision making focusing on school goals. This approach instills a sense of ownership among the faculty and provides a clearly driven focus on curricula, instruction, and assessment. The leadership team monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of instruction through the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan. Another example of the fostered leadership within the school community is the small groups of teachers who form Response to Intervention Teams at Carter City. Each teacher selects a team of highly qualified educators to develop evidence-based interventions. Teams determine effective researched based strategies thus providing each student with the best opportunity to succeed in school.

Carter City's School Based Decision Making Council is charged with the task of making policies and decisions that will enhance the achievement of students. Another critical aspect of leadership is building relationships among colleagues. Carter City Elementary builds relationships through Professional Learning Communities, mentorship, book studies, and faculty meetings. PLC's encourage teachers and administrators to continuously seek and share learning and then act on what they learn to enhance their effectiveness as professionals so that students benefit. Mentorships have proven to be an effective tool as teachers visit each other's classrooms and gain knowledge of how to implement new strategies/activities. Book Studies and faculty meetings are focal points that allow teachers to take lead roles as they broaden their pedagogical knowledge.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

While there are many factors that impact our academic success, there is one that overshadows the rest. The common language that is shared by the staff at Carter City Elementary is certainly a strategy worth highlighting. Our common language provides a consistent approach to instructional strategies, engagement structures, and academic interventions. All teachers and instructional assistants participate in professional learning opportunities focused on our common language to ensure systematic and systemic implementation of our schoolwide processes. The first component of our common language is instruction. All students, preschool through fifth grade, receive instruction that is consistently delivered through Explicit Direct Instruction (EDI). This allows students to be immersed in a process that they begin to understand and can ultimately explain themselves. As part of EDI, students engage in strategies that will remain consistent throughout their elementary academic career. While teachers utilize the same strategies during EDI, instructional modifications are developed as necessary. Students are provided with consistent reading strategies, vocabulary strategies, writing strategies, and math strategies that scaffold instruction to ensure success. The next component, engagement, is another process that is implemented with consistency. Students begin learning the basic structures of how to engage in conversations with other students, how to complete group assignments, and how to participate in basic engagement structures, as early as preschool. These structures follow students throughout their academic careers and allow for ease of transition as students progress to higher grades. Lastly, the intervention process is consistent throughout grade levels. Teachers utilize the same identification, placement, and exit criteria at all levels. This allows students to become familiar with a fluid process that is simply repeated at each grade level. Research has proven that student achievement increases when teachers share a common language.