

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 [X] Magnet[X] Choice

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

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

School Mailing Address 32401 Pembroke Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Livonia State MI Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 48152-1313

County Wayne

Telephone (734) 744-2795 Fax (734) 744-2797

Web site/URL https://www.livoniapublicschools.org/Page/55 E-mail lboka@livoniapublicschools.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.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent* Mrs. Andrea Oquist E-mail aoquist@livoniapublicschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Livonia Public Schools School District Tel. (734) 744-2500

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.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Mark Johnson
(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.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

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):
- 15 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 3 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 3 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 21 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	0	0	0
1	12	9	21
2	16	16	32
3	26	30	56
4	27	23	50
5	41	36	77
6	25	28	53
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	147	142	289

*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):
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 20 % Asian
 - 5 % Black or African American
 - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 70 % White
 - 1 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2018 - 2019 school year: 1%

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

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

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	1
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	2
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	3
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	293
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.01
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	1

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

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 3 %
9 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 9 %

Total number students who qualify: 27

8. Students receiving special education services: 2 %

5 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>0</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>0</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>5</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 8

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.	13
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	8
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	1
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 23:1

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

Required Information	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	96%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 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.

All staff, students, and families of Webster Elementary School are dedicated to ensuring a safe and nurturing learning environment that facilitates personal growth and meaningful interactions for all. Students will leave our school empowered to think clearly, care deeply, and act wisely.

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

The Alternative Classrooms for the Academically Talented (ACAT) program is a magnet program offered by Livonia Public Schools. The goal of the ACAT program is to meet the unique academic and social emotional needs of academically talented and gifted students. The ACAT program asks students to demonstrate an advanced level of achievement in math and or reading. This is done through standardized testing as well as other measures like one on one formative assessment and individualized assessments. In addition to a students achievement, ability testing is used to identify students with advanced reasoning and problem solving skills. The final component in identifying students for the ACAT program involves a parent and teacher inventory. Families and current classroom teachers are given an opportunity to share information about individual student's personality characteristics, interests and other pertinent information. A committee of stakeholders meets to review all the information collected and make decisions about students to join the program.

PART III - SUMMARY

Webster Elementary is a special place. Our school is home to a program offered by Livonia Public Schools known as ACAT - Alternative Classrooms for the Academically Talented for students in grades first through sixth that have met our entrance criteria. Our students have been identified through nationally normed achievement and aptitude tests. Our Webster Wildcats join us from any of our school district's 13 elementary schools and from surrounding communities as part of our out of district selection when seats are available. At our school students are able to move at a faster pace and instruction is provided in a way that allows students to explore content at a deeper level. Our students have the ability to achieve at high levels, have a passion for reading, are typically advanced mathematically and have a natural curiosity that lifts their learning and the learning of their peers.

We begin each day at Webster by reciting our oath. Our oath was written by a student and is reflective of our school's culture. It begins with "I will be the best I can be as I start this new day. I will think clearly. I will take responsibility for my actions." The beginning of our oath indicates our commitment to bringing our best selves - both socially and academically each day. We are a school community that celebrates diversity, fosters innovation and encourages personal growth. Our students have many opportunities to explore things they are passionate about. Their voice is important in the classroom and in our school.

The next part of our oath captures our commitment to showing high levels of character. Our oath reads "I will act wisely. By caring for myself, my school, and the world around me." We are committed to having respectful interactions with each other at all times- staff to staff, staff to student and student to student. One way we help our students to develop to their fullest potential is by nurturing their social and emotional development. We do this by focusing on a specific character element each month. During this focus, students share connections to this character element during the morning announcements. Teachers find ways to integrate the character elements into their instruction. At the end of each month, staff can nominate a student(s) that have displayed the characteristics of the character element. These students are recognized school wide by the principal with an award, a narrative about why they were nominated for their families and their picture is displayed in a special showcase. We also focus on the importance of having a growth mindset and exhibiting perseverance in all they do. These are important as our students can be known to exhibit perfectionist tendencies, anxiety and other social and emotional challenges that are common among gifted learners.

Our Webster community is diverse. This diversity leads us to our next part of our oath, "I will care deeply. I will honor & respect friends, teachers, and family." In addition to our ACAT program, our school houses two special education programs for unique learners - students with ASD and students with moderate cognitive impairments. Our ACAT students care deeply about our students in these programs through understanding and supporting their unique needs through friendship, modeling and advocacy. They honor and respect their needs throughout the school day and beyond. Our parents are diverse in their culture, professional experiences and world travel, and share their strengths and innovative ideas with our school. We have an active PTA that helps develop family engagement ideas that meet the needs of our families. Together we offer many family oriented events that help us grow our community connections.

Our oath concludes with this - "I'm proud to be a Webster Wildcat!" The Webster staff and students are truly proud of who we are. We are a school community that is committed to facilitating learning opportunities for our students that help them to thrive both socially and academically so they can be career, college and culture ready.

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

Webster Elementary school follows the Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards. Lessons across the grade levels and content areas have an integrated focus with clearly articulated learning outcomes for students. Elements of our curriculum are accelerated to meet the needs of our gifted students which allows for in-depth knowledge development at their advanced levels. Students own their learning through student-directed inquiry and through a gradual release of learning. The integration of technology supports their learning as well.

1b. Reading/English language arts

Livonia Public Schools utilizes a variety of approaches to teach ELA standards. We use Michigan Associations of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) units which were written by experienced curriculum writers, piloted in classrooms and review by local and Intermediate School District staff across the state. We are also committed to training teachers in the General Education Leadership Network (GLEN) Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy. We apply these instructional practices to current units we are teaching as well as in our Reading Workshop approach which allows for differentiation as well as opportunities to practice skills.

As a school we accelerate our English Language Arts curriculum for students as they are proficient with grade level content. Instruction in reading focuses on discussions and creates a forum where students can engage in discourse that promotes higher level thinking and reflection. To ensure that no content is missed in advancing learning in our multi-age classrooms, our teachers work collaboratively to create curriculum maps that incorporate all priority standards that our district has defined for their grade levels. We utilize an integrated approach when possible that allows students to read to find answers and then use this evidence-based thinking in their writing. We have been using the Document-based Question (DBQ) Project with our students for the last two years.

Our ELA curriculum focuses on its application across all subject areas which allows our students to solve problems, share their positions, think critically and creatively while using evidence to support their thinking. A Writing Workshop model is utilized to teach skills. Routinely students are responding in writing to an essential question they are given. This focus question helps students read purposefully and think deeply about the text before they respond to the question. We utilize Scholastic Information in Action – Reading, Writing and Researching with Informational Text as well as Scholastic Guided Reading Short Reads Non-Fiction. Our upper grades utilize Engage NY for units of student and utilize the nonfiction short reads. Book clubs are used routinely in all grades.

Our students' ability to read and write effectively can be seen in their performance on the ELA portion of the state test. Last year 98% of our third graders, 100% of our fourth graders, 95% of our fifth graders and 97% our sixth graders passed the ELA portion of the state test.

1c. Mathematics

Our teachers use the Everyday Mathematics (EDM) curriculum . In addition, for students in sixth grade that show mastery of the EDM grade level standards, The University of Chicago School Mathematics Project Transition Mathematics curriculum is utilized. This option allows these students to solidify the arithmetic they already know and prepares them for algebra and geometry. Students are ability placed for math which is taught at a common time in grade level teams. Our teachers also use other resources to extend and dive deeper into content. Many hands-on manipulatives are used at all levels. We focus on problem solving within each math class. All Students are taught four important steps in problem solving which include understanding the problem, creating a plan, executing the plan and finally, examining solutions. Students

are challenged to apply the math they are learning in real-world situations, be able to explain their thinking and show evidence of how they came to their solutions. At the highest levels of mathematical thinking students are asked to critique the work of peers offering individual input and asking questions. We strive for each of our students to understand the relevance of the concept as it applies to the real world.

We are very proud of the high level of proficiency our students show consistently on the state test in mathematics. Last year 100% of third and fourth grade students were proficient, including 98% of third and 91% of fourth grades scoring in the advanced range. Our fifth and sixth grade students had 98% of students scoring in the advanced or proficient range.

1d. Science

Webster Elementary has always had a strong focus on Science. Our science curriculum is based on the Next Generation Science Standards. As a district we are using integrated modules to deliver instruction which allows students to perform explorations and investigations as a means of discovery. Students read and interpret expository text from the "real world" to shape their learning. It is important that our students are moving from knowledge to application of their knowledge. Students are given multiple opportunities to show what they have learned by applying this knowledge to a project based activity.

Each year all grades participate in our annual science fair. Students can choose to enter their project as an exhibition or to be judged. All Science Fair and exhibition projects utilize the Scientific Method and include some type of display, and perhaps a model. Each of our judges have a science background and a deep interest in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) which they share with our students.

Historically our students have consistently performed well on the state test they take in fifth grade. As this test has undergone many adjustments, our students participate in any pilots offered. Their performance on last year's test cannot be reported as the scores were not released.

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

The curriculum is based on the Social Studies Content Expectations for the State of Michigan which includes our state's history to our nation's history while exploring our civic rights and responsibilities. The content standards focus on history, geography, civics and government, economics, public discourse and decision making, and citizenship involvement. Integrated units of study are developed by teachers ensuring that each unit has a central idea and opportunities for inquiry. Student investigations allow them to construct their own knowledge by providing opportunities to explore rights and responsibilities through activities and creating products. For example, after studying a topic, students take the social issue and create varied products to present their view such as performing debates, creating videos and presentations to share their perspectives.

Our school takes pride in being culturally diverse. We explore and experience other cultures so that our students become better able to understand other people's points of view, ways of life and contributions to the world. We extend learning experiences through field trips, clubs, cultural activities such as food festivals and opportunities to hear speakers which helps our students grow their understanding of living in a global society. We have a Green Club that engages in many student-led service projects. Examples of these service projects include a recycling project created for the entire school, a can food drive for the holidays and fun spirit activities for the school to enjoy. Our students are always creating opportunities to give back to their school and community.

While we recognize that we have room to grow in this area, we are proud of our students' performance on the test in Social Studies compared to other students in our state. Our performance showed 58% of our fifth grade students were proficient or advanced on the state test last year.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Students at Webster participate in art, music, physical education, and library/media each week. Students in grades first through fourth participate in one 45 minute class per week in each area. Students in grades five and six have an additional physical education class a week. Fifth grade students also attend an Information Technology class while sixth grade students select a choir or instrumental music option which they attend twice a week.

Our Visual Arts curriculum focuses on the Elements of Art; line, shape, color, texture, value, space and form to understand how artists create various types of art. The students use these elements, observation skills, and personal experiences to generate ideas for their own art making. Our units of study also align with the district's curriculum and state and national standards for Art Education. Art projects are displayed annually at a building level STEAM Fair we have each spring and a Fine Arts Festival, a district celebration.

In our music classes our Music teachers work collaboratively with classroom teachers and other special area teachers to infuse units of study into their lessons. To prepare for performance based musical activities in the older grades, our first and second grades follow a "Sound Before Sight" musical literacy format in which they learn to aural then visually decode rhythmic and melodic material in varying meters and tonalities. Before entering third grade, students are able to dictate familiar, unfamiliar, and self-created material in standard music notation. In third and fourth grade students work to develop instrumental skills through the use of recorder and ukulele. They also begin to create small compositions, experience music through movement and explore the form of music and how it relates to other subjects. In fifth grade the four main units of study include Music of Today, Composers, Instrument Families, and Jazz. In sixth grade they either study vocal or instrumental music. They learn a varied repertoire of music of increasing complexity. Music literacy is at the forefront of their learning.

In physical education, students are presented with an emphasis on physical fitness where they work to further develop gross and fine motor as well as coordination skills. In these activities, students focus on developing cooperation, problem solving, and sportsmanship. Our physical education teacher has worked to incorporate the elements from our community with character program as a means of reinforcing the social-emotional development of our students. Students are supported proactively by working on cooperation in games that are played frequently during recess. This helps the students to all have a common understanding of how a game works and how students can be respectful and responsible while playing.

In the library media center the curriculum focuses on an appreciation for literature, research skills and technology skills. Award-winning literature and a love of reading is promoted to all classes in a variety of ways including through book talks, read-alouds and book displays. Students have opportunities to explore STEAM stations after participating in the daily lesson and checking out books. Students in fifth grade attend an Information Technology class each week. This class exposes students to a variety of technology applications. Read-aloud discussions often tie in the Livonia character traits. Research projects for classes are taught in collaboration with the classroom teachers so that the content of the project supports the classroom curriculum. Specific research skills, such as how to do MLA citations are also often taught in collaboration with the classroom teachers in order to support class projects. Students are also taught a variety of technology programs and skills which allow them to share and present their learning in new and exciting ways.

We are really proud of our Community with Character focus which is a district initiative but tailored for our school to meet the unique needs and strengths of our learning community. We focus on eight monthly character elements throughout the year - Respect, Responsibility, Grit, Mindfulness, Empathy, Integrity, Reflection, and Confidence. Throughout the month students share information about and connections to the element during our morning announcements. At the end of each month, students exhibiting this character element are nominated for recognition by staff. These students receive a certificate and their pictures are displayed in our showcase.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

At Webster we administer the iReady assessment three times per year. This assessment measures reading and math achievement. This gives us baseline information about our students. In our building we look for students who are performing below the 80th percentile. If a student is performing below the 80th percentile we work as a team to discuss the student's specific needs. The initial discussion is between the principal, the teacher and our program facilitator. The team explores the iReady data specifically looking at student performance in each strand and comparing this data to classroom observations. If it appears that the student needs additional support, a plan for intervention is developed. This plan may include some of the following interventions: small group instruction, pull out instruction from the facilitator or elementary support teacher and/or mini lesson designed to reteach a concept that the student is missing. It can also include a behavior plan, learning contract or specific learning goals that are generated by the student and the teacher to support a student's social and emotional growth. Finally a student that is not responding to these interventions may be referred to our achievement team: school psychologist, social worker, classroom teacher, and building principal. When appropriate other team members are a part of the discussion: parents, occupational therapist, and speech and language pathologist. This team works closely together to develop a plan for this student that includes more intensive intervention and often additional investigation into what may not be working for this student.

3b. Students performing above grade level

Our students are often performing at high levels in state and nationally normed tests therefore it is our responsibility to determine what each individual child needs to continue to grow. We use iReady data to focus on our students who show high achievement, but low growth. Some of our students in this category need intervention in a specific area of math or are struggling with taking their reading comprehension to the next level. Classroom instruction is designed to meet the needs of these students. Sometimes this means that a teacher is designing a challenge group for students in math or is providing direct instruction around skills from a previous grade level that a student has not mastered.

Webster teachers meet in Professional Learning Communities to discuss instructional strategies, interventions, and to review student work samples and assessment data. An instructional coach is available to teachers to help with this work. This time is used to discuss instructional strategies that are working, to share successes and to brainstorm ways that they can differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all of their learners. Each year we choose a few research-based strategies that we will study together as a staff. Recently we focused on becoming experts in formative assessment and began reviewing student work using a collaborative assessment protocol. These best practices ensure that teachers know where their students are as learners and then also help teams create a shared understanding of learning outcomes.

3c. Special education

Our students that receive special education support in our program are students that have been identified as having a speech and language impairment. These students are serviced by a Teacher of Speech and Language as determined in their Individualized Educational Plan.

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

Our ELL students receive direct or consultative support from ELL teachers. The support need is determined on an individual basis and is the result of an individual assessment given to students each year.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

At Webster Elementary we motivate students to engage in our school in a multitude of ways. One of the ways that we engage students is by involving them in every aspect of their school. We believe that our students should be engaged in authentic ways. Our daily morning announcements are led by student teams. The teams meet each week to plan and prepare the script for the week. At Webster we feel strongly that our students need to see themselves in our school.

We celebrate student behavior by highlighting students that exhibit one of the character elements. Any staff member or volunteer can nominate a student. These students are recognized through social media and their picture is displayed in our showcase. This showcase gives students recognition for displaying the character traits that we are all working to develop.

Our weekly enrichment schedule allows students to participate in a variety of activities that appeal to them instead of going to recess. Teachers, parents and volunteers offer enrichment choices such as chess club, sewing, art & crafts, yoga, Math Olympiad, origami, foreign languages, Geo bee and game club to name a few. Students select which enrichment choice they want to attend that day or they can choose to go to recess.

Teachers and staff at Webster Elementary feel valued and supported by building administration, our families, and the community. Our PTA supports teachers with a generous allotment for classroom supplies to enhance student learning and in addition provides appreciation celebrations throughout the year. The principal regularly provides support to teachers through conversations, planning time, program meetings and small celebrations. Teachers are seen as the glue that holds the school together and the principal works to support what they need to provide high quality instruction for students. When students and teachers feel valued and engaged the entire school culture becomes one where anything can be accomplished and high achievement and student growth occurs under these conditions.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The school community at Webster is unique in that our families come from neighborhoods all over our district and beyond. Due to the fact that we are not a traditional neighborhood school we make intentional efforts to communicate in a variety of ways with families and strive to create opportunities for our families to come together. Visitors to our school often say that there is a family feel when you enter the office and travel through our hallways. At Webster we pride ourselves on creating a welcoming environment where everyone feels valued.

Our parent community is extremely supportive of our school. Each summer in preparation for welcoming new students and families, there are established “meet and greet” opportunities for our students so they can start the school year with at least one connection with another peer. These summer play dates are often held on our school playground and at local parks.

Every family is given a hand print when they join our PTA. Each family then decorates their handprint with ways they are involved with our school or things they love about our school. These handprints are displayed throughout our hallways attached to the student’s picture. This is an example of how we are all a team and together we are better.

Webster has many special events that nurture our desire to create a strong community. Some of these events include music concerts performed by students, Family Game Night, and our STEAM Fair. Our STEAM fair invites all of our after school clubs - Chess Club, Stop Motion Animation, Nuts about Science and Code Club into our school to set up stations for students and families to participate in. These offerings allow our families and students to learn and grow together through these high interest areas for our students.

Our parents are invited to support our classrooms in a variety of ways. Parents are mystery readers, they share their specialized skills during enrichment offerings, they volunteer to present our Masterworks art

program, and they work collaboratively with staff to plan events that will support the growth of our students. Without these valuable relationships our school would not thrive as it does now.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Teachers at Webster Elementary school participate in five full days or 30 hours of Professional Development a year. Professional development opportunities are often developed at the district level and differentiated by the home school based on the needs of the students and staff. Our professional development this year has focused on creating professional learning communities that use data driven dialogue.

This new learning about Professional Learning Communities is helping our grade level teams come together and have discussions about students' data specifically using iReady assessment results as a starting point. This also created the conditions for us to have more thorough data discussions as a school with cross grade level teams focusing on our vocabulary, writing instruction and M-STEP (Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress) data. Digging into our school data more consistently has helped us to have intentional conversations about student growth and instructional practices. These conversations lead to greater student achievement because we are reflecting on our teaching frequently and adjusting our instruction based on data and grade level discussions.

At a building level we continue to explore Project based learning opportunities for our students. Our district purchased PBL kits that focused on Reading, Writing and Researching with Informational Text for our school to try. Having this as a focus of our professional development has helped teachers to look at current projects with a different lens. Teachers are improving current projects by integrating instruction and adding features that may have been missing. Overall, we have seen more authentic project based learning opportunities for our students and this is related to the fact that teachers had time to learn more about PBL and to apply their new understanding to what they were already doing. As a building, we are committed to providing students with at least one PBL opportunity per trimester as we continue to grow in this area.

It is through our professional development that we continue to grow as a school and have the opportunity to explore instructional practices that are best for our gifted learners.

4. School Leadership:

At Webster Elementary there is a sense of shared school leadership that is centered on the belief that we all have strengths to contribute. Throughout the school's structure there are committees that involve all staff members in the development of ideas that will support the social and academic growth of our students.

Our principal's role is that of guidance and leadership. She serves as the main facilitator and helps us to stay focused on the vision we have for our school. The principal honors the unique experience and knowledge that each teacher brings to the classroom and strives to support teachers each day. The principal is always studying best practices so that she can be a resource for teachers. She believes that teachers can do their best work if she removes barriers in their way, provides time for them to collaborate and encourages them to continue to grow in the profession. She models these expectations by sharing informational articles and videos in her communications with staff. She invites staff to participate in professional development opportunities and regularly shares her personal reflections on books she is reading and new learning. The principal also highlights best practices so that staff members who are leading in a particular area can be a resource to others so that all students can benefit.

Teacher leadership is encouraged in all areas. The principal regularly invites teachers to be a part of committees and decision making ventures and will support innovative ideas and risk taking if it means that we might find a better way to engage and instruct our students. The district also supports teacher leadership and several teachers represent our school on content area committees. Students and parents are also key leaders in our school. The ideas from both of these groups are embraced by our school leadership. Many of the successful events and improvements we have made to our school over the past few years have started with ideas from parents and students. Our leadership strives to create structures where ideas are connected with resources and where support is given so ideas can flourish.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Teachers at Webster Elementary use formative assessment with students to determine what learning standards our students already know. The teachers use this information to eliminate learning standards that have already been mastered by students. Narrowing the focus gives our teachers a chance to differentiate for our learners in a meaningful way. Teachers can adjust the pacing of the lesson, go deeper with the content and extend/enrich the learning experience. This is helpful to our students because it keeps them engaged at a high level and often creates time for students to explore things they are passionate about. Often when students are demonstrating that they are secure with content standards teachers give them opportunities to explore topics that are of interest to them through Genius Hour, Passion Projects and Makerspace activities. Experiences like these appeal to our learners as they regularly like to explore topics in depth.

Curriculum Compacting is a technique for differentiating instruction that allows teachers to make adjustments to curriculum for students who have already mastered the material to be learned, replacing content students know with new content, enrichment options, or other activities. Because many talented students receive little differentiation of instruction from their peers, they spend a great deal of time in school doing work that they have already mastered. Curriculum Compacting allows these students to avoid having to relearn material they already know, which research has shown can lead to frustration, boredom and ultimately, underachievement.

Over the years our grade level teams have noticed patterns in areas of the curriculum that students can move quickly through and areas that need more exploration. Because of this consistent data, teachers have spent time prioritizing and blending standards from a variety of grade levels. Often our students are getting exposed to standards in two or more grade levels in one unit of study. To illustrate this point you can look at the iReady data of our third grade students. By using formative assessment to know where our students are at, compacting the curriculum, blending learning outcomes from third and fourth grade standards and extending lessons, over 80% of our third graders have met or exceeded their projected score in ELA and Math by the second testing window.