

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

Official School Name B.F. Morey Elementary School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1044 West Main Street  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Stroudsburg State PA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 18360-1420

County Monroe County

Telephone (570) 421-6371 Fax (570) 421-4985

Web site/URL http://morey.sburg.org E-mail cgehms@sburg.org

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

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

Name of Superintendent\* Dr. Cosmas Curry E-mail ccurry@sburg.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Stroudsburg Area School District Tel. (570) 421-1990

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 Mrs. Tameko Patterson  
(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):
- 4 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 7 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	24	17	41
1	30	21	51
2	21	21	42
3	29	27	56
4	29	29	58
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	133	115	248

\*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
  - 2 % Asian
  - 23 % Black or African American
  - 33 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 39 % White
  - 2 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2018 - 2019 school year: 24%

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

20 students transferred to/from another school district in PA (13 were from two neighboring school districts).

13 students moved to/from another state.

11 students transferred elementary schools within the Stroudsburg Area School District.

6 students attended home, cyber, or charter school.

5 students traveled between countries.

1 student transferred from a Catholic school.

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

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	34
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	22
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	56
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	229
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.24
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	24

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):  
Spanish, Russian, Urdu, Tagalog, Arabic, Thai, Turkish, Polish, Hindi

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 69 %  
 Total number students who qualify: 172

8. Students receiving special education services: 26 %

65 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>2</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>15</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>28</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>55</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>1</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: 12

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:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	12
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	11
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	5
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 21:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
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.

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

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

Yes  No

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

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

The Mission Statement at B.F. Morey Elementary is to create a caring environment for everyone to be challenged as a learner and a leader.

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**

---

B.F. Morey Elementary was named after Benjamin Franklin Morey, born January 19, 1848. After graduating from the State Normal School at Millersville in 1871, he came to Stroudsburg to take charge of the public schools until 1875. He was then elected Superintendent of Public Instruction for Monroe County. In 1877, he resigned to take charge of the town. In 1925, B.F. Morey Elementary was built in his honor. The school contained eight classrooms. An addition was placed on the school in 1962, expanding to a total of 25 classrooms. The building's student capacity is 352 students. Full-day kindergarten was first implemented during the 2005-2006 school year. Redistricting occurred during the 2015-2016 school year, which added third and fourth grades to the existing kindergarten through second grade structure. The school operates on a 6-day cycle for scheduling purposes. Ten of the school's staff members are shared with other buildings in the district. The school is located on Main Street in the Borough of Stroudsburg, Monroe County. Students who attend B.F. Morey Elementary reside in the Borough of Stroudsburg, Borough of Delaware Water Gap, Stroud Township, or Hamilton Township. Women's Resources and Pocono Area Transitional Housing (PATH) are located within the school's residential area, which results in enrolled students classified as homeless. There are several apartment complexes near the school that are governed by the Local Housing Authority. Because enrollment is based on location of residence, the number of students who qualify for free or reduced meals based on low socio-economic status is the highest among the four elementary schools in the Stroudsburg Area School District. Our school has averaged 60% eligibility for free or reduced meals over the last five years. A challenge that our school experiences annually is its high mobility rate (averaged 43% over the last four years). Many families move into the area from New York and New Jersey and commute there for employment. Less than 40% of our school's student population is Caucasian. Ten percent of the student population speaks a language other than English. Ten languages are represented in our school. Contributing to our school's success has been the identification and awareness of student groups that require additional supports to meet their diverse and individual needs in an effort to close any achievement gaps.

Many students that enroll at our school do not have preschool experience. In an effort to jump start incoming kindergarten students' academic and social experiences, a four-week, half-day summer program is offered. Students become familiar with school routines and participate in emergent literacy and numeracy activities to develop a comfort with coming to school, so they can begin to view themselves as learners.

A strategy our school has to develop students' full potential academically is the implementation of a before-school tutoring program. During the second semester of the school year, eligible third and fourth grade students can take advantage of this opportunity to improve their reading and math skills in a small group setting. This program is effective in preparing students to take the PSSAs (Pennsylvania System of School Assessment). Instruction occurs twice a week for an hour prior to the regular school day. This year, our school had 14 students participate.

Unique to our school are its efforts to connect with families through the Open Door Project and Welcome to Kindergarten home visits. The Open Door Project was created to provide parents an opportunity to discuss during a home visit how to help their child learn and be successful in daily school activities, rather than having to attend a meeting or event in the school setting. During its first year (2018-2019), the Principal, Guidance Counselor, and a rotation of other staff members visited the homes of ten students. A Confidentiality Agreement was signed outlining expectations as visitors in the home. The family was presented with educational tools and activities to support efforts with their child's learning at home, in addition to a basket of healthy food and a gas gift card. While the number of families who chose to participate was small, the impact it had on staff and families was huge! Families have become partners with the school in contributing to their child's success. The Open Door Project was submitted for consideration for an Excellence in Education Award presented by the Colonial Intermediate Unit 20. We received Honorable Mention.

As an extension of the Open Door Project, Welcome to Kindergarten home visits were initiated in 2019-2020. During the week prior to the students' first day of school, the Principal, Guidance Counselor, and Secretary visited every incoming kindergarten student's house to deliver a welcome card, fruit basket, and Class of 2032 t-shirt. Students and parents were surprised and excited about the visit. Our hope was to relieve any anxiety about their first day of school and make the families feel welcomed.

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

---

### **1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.**

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

The following describes an overarching philosophy and common approaches to teaching and learning that are applied across all subject areas. Utilizing Dr. Stephen Covey’s ideas behind the Backwards Design process, teachers design learning experiences and plan instruction with the end in mind. Desired results are identified from summative assessments which are tied to grade level standards. Standards act as a blueprint for both lesson planning and daily instructional practices. Skills are identified as introducing, developing, or mastery. This establishes curricular priorities which guides the amount of instructional time needed.

Teachers clearly communicate (both verbally and in student-friendly language) the lesson’s objective, also referred to as a Learning Target. A value statement is provided explaining why it’s important for students to learn a particular skill (relevance to the real-world). Students need to know what is expected, so they can achieve.

Teachers differentiate the content, process, or product of instruction to meet the needs of all learners. Activities incorporate Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic, and Tactile (VAKT) learning styles of students. Teachers facilitate higher-order thinking by using Webb’s Depth of Knowledge (DOK) model to develop strategic thinking and a deeper learning for students. Think-Pair-Share is used often with partners to enhance student learning and engagement.

Formative assessment data, such as progress monitoring, student self-assessments, and anecdotal notes, are analyzed to assist with Data-Based Decision Making (DBDM) that supports the “why” of instructional activities. Ongoing adaptations occur based on the data.

Students in third and fourth grade take the Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDT) online assessments three times a year to provide diagnostic information to guide instruction and remediation. Third and fourth grade students are assessed in reading, writing, and math, while fourth grade students also take a science assessment. Assessment results are shared with students and used for goal setting. Teachers celebrate growth in students’ scores.

### **1b.** Reading/English language arts

English Language Arts (ELA) instruction occurs daily for 120 non-consecutive minutes for all students. Different programs and curriculum resources are used for different grades for various amounts of time to address the Pennsylvania Academic Standards for reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Kindergarten and first grade students participate in a whole group phonemic awareness lesson for 10-15 minutes daily. Through explicit auditory and kinesthetic instruction, students practice phonological and phonemic awareness, letter naming, and language awareness skills. Students are assessed on their understanding of phonemic awareness in their writing and authentic reading.

Kindergarten through second grade utilizes a program that teaches phonics, high frequency words, reading fluency, vocabulary, comprehension strategies, handwriting, and spelling. Instruction occurs 30 minutes daily. Student manipulatives provide multisensory, interactive opportunities to engage students. A summative assessment is administered at the end of every Unit.

Kindergarten through second grade teachers conduct differentiated instruction through small Guided Reading groups and Literacy Centers for 40 minutes daily. Students practice reading fluently, accurately, and apply decoding skills and strategies to comprehend text when reading independently. Third and fourth grade students participate in close reading activities and complete Text Dependent Questions (TDQ) and Text Dependent Analyses (TDA) with short passages.

Independent Daily Reading (IDR) occurs in every classroom daily for a developmentally appropriate amount of time. All teachers engage students in daily interactive reading with trade books and novel studies. Students learn concepts of print, word learning strategies, retelling components of a story, various comprehension strategies, and vocabulary development.

Third and fourth grade students use a workbook focused on PSSA preparedness to strengthen their reading, writing, and language skills. Content focuses (one week per topic) on standards related to analyzing literature and informational texts, poetry, articles, drama, fiction, persuasive, historical, scientific and technical texts. Students also practice writing foundations, grammar, usage, mechanics, style, tone, and effect.

Kindergarten participates in Kid Writing. Students create a picture and use sound spelling to write a sentence about their picture. The teacher then models conventional spelling to help each student grow as a writer. Students share their work with the class.

First and second grade students learn about the writing process using different curricular programs. The following genres of writing are taught: personal narrative, informational, persuasive, expository non-fiction, and fiction.

Third and fourth grade teachers often create or select their own resources to teach grammar, vocabulary, and writing with the goal of students successfully transferring vocabulary into their speech, writing, and reading comprehension.

District writing rubrics that address Focus, Content, Organization, Style, and Conventions are used as guides for instruction and assessment purposes.

Direct instruction with cursive handwriting occurs in third and fourth grade in the beginning of the year, while guided and independent practice continue throughout the remainder of the year. Cursive handwriting is integrated in daily writing instruction.

The district is currently reviewing resources in preparation of a new ELA curriculum adoption for the 2020-2021 school year. This would eliminate the need for teacher-created materials and various district resources to effectively teach grade level standards.

### **1c. Mathematics**

Math instruction occurs daily for 60 consecutive minutes for all students. The curriculum is aligned to the Common Core State Standards and emphasizes a deeper learning, critical thinking, and conceptual understanding of math. Math connections are made to the real world. Content is taught with a concrete to pictorial to abstract approach. This rigorous curriculum teaches students multiple ways to solve problems and to focus on the process instead of the answer. Content is organized in several modules that focus on numbers, geometry, measurement, and fractions. A spiral review occurs from one grade level to the next before building skills related to each standard.

Kindergarten students use a variety of manipulatives to learn about numbers to 20, counting to 100, addition and subtraction to 10, measurement, describing shapes and space. Math skills are incorporated in daily calendar routines.

Students in first grade develop an understanding of whole number relationships and place value while adding and subtracting numbers to 100, order and compare length measurements, and compose and partition geometric shapes.

Second grade students learn to compare numbers to 1,000, build their fluency with addition and subtraction while exploring the foundations of multiplication and division, add and subtract length units, and problem solve with time, money, shapes, and fractions.

Students in third grade learn strategies for multiplication and division within 100, develop an understanding of unit fractions, structure of rectangular arrays and of area, describe and analyze two dimensional shapes, and solve word problems about geometry and measurement.

Fourth grade students practice fluency with multi-digit multiplication and division problems, develop an understanding of place value rounding, conversions with metric measurement, fraction equivalence, decimal fractions, and how geometric figures can be analyzed and classified based on their properties.

All students engage in fluency practices that help to build speed and accuracy with acquired skills. The focus is on increasing students' memory and recall. Fluency activities are conducted orally, with manipulatives, use a personal whiteboard, or with a handout and paper-and-pencil format. Teachers encourage a growth mindset by celebrating students' improvements.

Teachers are provided immediate and valuable feedback about students' understanding of the lesson's objective with the administration of an Exit Ticket. This formative assessment data is used to determine needs for support during future lessons. Summative assessments are administered both mid and end of each module.

Students in first through fourth grade use an online math program that is aligned with our core math program to provide independent practice on skills related to each lesson. The program accommodates learning differences, encourages curiosity and exploration, and builds a participatory math dialogue. Immediate feedback is provided to guide students' learning. Fourth grade teachers utilize a blended learning approach to teaching math by using this program during students' technology time, when not receiving direct instruction by the teacher. Face-to-face learning with the teacher is differentiated by instructing small groups based on their achievement levels and needs (ex. remediation, enrichment). This allows for some elements of student control over pace and path of learning.

#### **1d. Science**

Science instruction occurs five days of the 6-day cycle for 30 minutes for all students. Science and Social Studies instruction alternates (after the completion of a Unit of Study) throughout the school year.

The Science curriculum for kindergarten through fourth grade provides a hands-on approach to learning. Students work in small groups to observe, create hypotheses, experiment, discover, record, and discuss results. There are no formal assessments as part of the Science curriculum. Teachers use observational data and anecdotal notes to assess students' knowledge and understanding of the concepts taught.

Students in kindergarten interact with and care for common land and water animals. Opportunities for observation, communication, and comparison are provided. Students gain a better understanding of trees and plants. Kindergarten students also learn about the seasons of the year.

Students in first grade receive an introduction to earth sciences. They explore air and weather by using simple tools to observe and monitor change. Students experiment with solids and liquids to heighten their awareness of the physical world.

Second grade students learn about rocks as earth materials and natural resources, specifically pebbles, sand, and silt. Students observe and describe changes that occur as plants grow.

Students in third grade learn to identify and sort plants and animals based on observable properties. Students investigate structures of the organisms and learn how they function in growth and survival. Students explore properties of water, changes in water, interactions between water and other earth materials, and how humans use water.

Fourth grade students explore the natural and human-made worlds by observing and manipulating materials in focused settings using simple tools. The concepts of magnetism and electricity are introduced.

Since the science curriculum does not address all grade level standards, teachers supplement with various STEM activities designed to meet the STEM principals of design, test, and adapt.

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

Social studies instruction occurs five days of the 6-day cycle for 30 minutes for all students. Social Studies and Science instruction alternates (after the completion of a Unit of Study) throughout the school year. There are no formal assessments as part of the Social Studies curriculum. Teachers use observational data and anecdotal notes to assess students' knowledge and understanding of the concepts taught.

Students in kindergarten learn about school and classroom citizenship by focusing on rules, property, responsibility. Students also learn about holidays around the world and celebrations throughout the year.

First grade students learn about different occupations. Students learn about chronology, look at important historical events and figures, and identify character traits of effective leaders. Students participate in units of study focusing on dinosaurs and the continent of Africa.

Second grade students are introduced to basic map skills, landforms, and natural resources. Students study Native American tribes by region and their means of survival. During a unit on the underground, students study layers of the Earth and how earthquakes and volcanoes form. An in-depth study of rocks and soil occurs. Students gain knowledge about presidents when learning about Presidents' Day.

Students in third grade learn about the planet Earth, its hemispheres, oceans, continents, countries, states, cities, and towns. Students study the history of Monroe County. Students discover how to locate places on a map using cardinal directions. Students learn about climate, features of land and water, and natural resources. Students study why and how immigrants come to the United States and what life is like for an immigrant.

Fourth grade students study the geography of Pennsylvania with a specific focus on landforms, waterways, natural resources, climate, plant, and animal life. Teachers integrate social studies content when reading a historical fiction novel about George Washington and the Battle of Valley Forge.

**1f. For secondary schools:**

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

**2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

Art instruction is provided for all students one day in a 6-day cycle for 40 minutes. Students are exposed to a variety of integrated art experiences, approaches, media, and tools through nine units of study: Design, Drawing, Illustration, Painting, Crafts, Printmaking, Sculpture, Art Appreciation, and Art History. Art instruction helps learners develop the essential skills of creative problem-solving, collaboration, fine motor skills, building confidence, focus, and perseverance.

General and Vocal Music instruction is provided for all students two days in a 6-day cycle for 40 minutes daily. Students are expected to demonstrate age-level proficiency with the use of their singing voice and appropriate grade-level knowledge of steady beat, rhythm, melody, tempo, dynamics, form, and instruments. Music education aims to enhance students' recognition of relationships between music and the arts, and disciplines outside of the arts. Students are taught that music is a means of self-expression. The expectation is to make music an accessible part of every child's life and to instill a desire to continue music education.

Strings instruction is provided as an elective for fourth grade students one day in a 6-day cycle for 40 minutes daily. It is considered an Introduction to Orchestra. Fourth grade students learn the basic techniques of playing a string instrument (violin, viola, cello, string bass), music reading and writing, instrument care, and performance procedures. The Stroudsburg Area School District has the only strings program in Monroe

County. Students in grades 4-12 can participate. Our school has 26 fourth grade students participating, while there are 180 fourth grade students total in the district's string program.

Physical Education is provided for all students two days in a 6-day cycle for 40 minutes daily. Students are provided opportunities to participate in games, dance, and gymnastics. Students explore movements using locomotor patterns, engage in manipulative activities to strengthen hand-eye and foot-eye coordination, and develop body awareness through non-manipulative skills. Sportsmanship, leadership, cooperation, and creativity are promoted.

Health Education is provided for third and fourth students one day in a 6-day cycle for 40 minutes daily. Concepts and skills that are taught include the health triangle, personal, family, and community health, bully prevention, safety, nutrition, physical fitness, the prevention of tobacco, drug and alcohol use, and other communicable and chronic diseases. Discussions of health professionals and health-related careers are incorporated in lessons. Health education promotes responsible decision-making that leads to the development of a healthy lifestyle.

Information Literacy/Library instruction is provided for all students one day in a 6-day cycle for 40 minutes. The library experience allows each student to search for and select informational and recreational types of text, construct meaning, and acquire vocabulary, as well as perform research. Read alouds are supplemented with games or activities that address reading, writing, speaking, and listening standards and support an appreciation for literature.

All students participate two days in a 6-day cycle for 20 minutes in an individualized online learning program that teaches foundational technology skills and cyber safety to help students excel in a digital world. Activities are aligned to state and national standards, including ISTE (International Society for Technology in Education), CSTA (Computer Science Teachers Association), and the Common Core.

Career exploration opportunities are provided to all students with the school's annual What's It All About Day (WIAAD) event. Employees and volunteers from area businesses and organizations teach students about job opportunities in their field and related career choices. Each student writes a reflection about a chosen career, which is then included as evidence in their Career Portfolio as required by the Future Ready PA Index.

Social Emotional Learning instruction occurs with all students one day in a 6-day cycle for 30-40 minutes. Lesson Concepts for all grades consist of: Skills for Learning, Empathy, Emotion Management, and Problem Solving. The program promotes school success by teaching skills that strengthen students' ability to learn, school connectedness, and a safe and respectful school climate.

The Guidance Counselor implements a Bullying Prevention Unit of lessons with all classes. Lessons focus on class and school rules, recognizing, reporting, and refusing bullying, and bystander power and responsibility. With 2019-2020 being the first year utilizing this program, Summative Knowledge Assessment results showed 74% of the student population scoring 70% or higher.

### **3. Academic Supports:**

#### **3a. Students performing below grade level**

B.F. Morey Elementary utilizes a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to identify students experiencing academic difficulty and provide appropriate support services. Our master schedule has a dedicated Intervention/Enrichment (IE) period for each grade level to conduct pull-out support services. Small group instruction occurs with 4-6 students for three days in a 6-day cycle for 40 minutes. Remediation services are supplemental to the core curriculum.

A benchmark assessment is administered three times a year for all students in both reading and math. Select students are then given diagnostic assessments to determine a point of instruction based on their needs. Title Math and Title Reading teachers create intervention groups and provide explicit and systematic instruction

based on individual students' skill deficits and needs.

Title instruction is scaffolded in a Gradual Release of Responsibility model (GRR) as a way of mentoring students into becoming capable thinkers and learners. Teachers model the task (I do), lead students with guided practice and feedback (we do), and provide time for independent practice (you do).

Students eligible for Title support are considered Tier 2 and are progress monitored bi-weekly. Group membership is fluid based on successful demonstration of the skills taught. Other students are selected to receive targeted instructional support by homeroom teachers and are also progress monitored bi-weekly.

When the gap in a student's academic performance is far greater than other students receiving Tier 2 support, Tier 3 support is provided. Students receive intense one-on-one instruction with research-validated curriculum materials and programs that are matched to the students' needs. Progress monitoring occurs weekly.

Over the last four years, our school has averaged 37% of our student population receiving Title instruction. Our goal is to provide the necessary supports to lessen achievement gaps and reduce intervention time once students are performing on or near grade level.

### **3b. Students performing above grade level**

Homeroom teachers differentiate core instruction and provide a variety of challenging enrichment activities, such as logic games, STEM projects, and personal online learning activities, for students who are performing above grade level. Students performing above grade level are progress monitored in both ELA and math once a month to monitor their rates of improvement.

Our district conducts a universal gifted screening process for all second grade students. A student's performance with the screening tool, along with other sources of student performance data, assist in determining eligibility for gifted programming. Teachers can initiate referrals in any grade based upon an evaluation of a student's work product, knowledge of the student's academic background, and other factors that may indicate mentally gifted abilities in one or more core content areas. Students who qualify for gifted programming have a Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP) developed with specific goals and specially designed instruction to address their mentally gifted needs. Currently 7% of our student population receives gifted support.

Direct gifted support services for reading enrichment are provided three days in a 6-day cycle for 30 minutes. Self-selection of books for instruction is encouraged to incorporate interests and preferences. Projects and activities are conducted that require students to make predictions, connect with text, infer, analyze, and critique.

Direct gifted support services for math enrichment are provided three days in a 6-day cycle for 30 minutes. Projects and activities linked to a mathematics unit of study are conducted that require students to apply computation and math reasoning skills to solve problems.

Students with a GIEP receive project-based gifted enrichment one day in a 6-day cycle for 30 minutes. Students participate in service learning projects, such as making placemats for Meals on Wheels, making ornaments for a local Senior Living Center, and participating in an Earth Day cleanup around the school.

### **3c. Special education**

Learning Support is provided by two special education teachers. Caseloads are determined annually based on the number of students with an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) in each grade level. Teachers often loop to maintain relationships and ease the transition with instruction the following year. Currently, 16% of our student population receives supplemental or itinerant learning support.

them, our goal is to have students with IEPs educated within the regular education environment to the greatest extent possible. Learning support teachers address students' needs by first looking at their strengths and interests, then determine individualized supports and services required to maximize their educational experiences.

Students are taught the curriculum at their own level and pace that is driven by their IEP. Scheduling of learning support services is done on a one-for-one basis. With this model of scheduling, there may be more than one grade level being instructed in different content areas at the same time in a learning support classroom. Our school has five paraprofessional support staff to assist students academically or behaviorally in whole group, small group, or individually both in the special education and regular education environments.

Teachers may use flexible groupings that change based on the skill that is being taught. Instruction and assessments are differentiated. Modifications and accommodations are made to meet the individualized needs of learners.

An additional special education service provided to a significant part of our student body is Speech and Language Therapy. Currently, 22% of our student population receives itinerant speech and language support. Therapy is provided either one, two, or three days in a 6-day cycle either individually or in a small group of 2-5 students based on the goals and objectives in a student's IEP.

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

Our school reflects the diversity of our community. Currently, 9% of our student population are ELLs. An English Language Learner's (ELL's) educational program is based on individual language acquisition and academic needs. Program scheduling is flexible, because ELLs at lower proficiency levels may require more direct English language instruction than students at higher proficiency levels.

Instruction occurs in the classroom, with accommodations, as well as pull-out language acquisition instruction by an ESL (English Second Language) teacher. Second language instruction incorporates the domains of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. All modalities of cognition and learning styles help make instruction relevant and comprehensible. Staff are trained annually on the development of conversational fluency in the second language (BICS – Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills) and the use of language in decontextualized academic situations (CALP – Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency).

Our district utilizes the English Immersion Instructional Philosophy, which involves teaching at appropriate developmental and proficiency levels with little or no use of the student's native language. The ESL teacher utilizes the WIDA English Language Development Standards (ELDS) and the Can-Do Descriptors, which highlight what ELLs can do at various stages of language development, to plan instruction and assessments.

Our school utilizes a standards-based program that engages students with multicultural literature and National Geographic informational texts to increase content knowledge and make connections. Culturally responsive instruction is differentiated, and skills and strategies are scaffolded for multiple language proficiency and reading levels to move English learners to independence. Students learn to work cooperatively, while developing their self-esteem. Home/school connections are established with newsletters and activities to conduct with families.

Progress reports, which are translated in the family's native language, are sent home quarterly in conjunction with the students' report card. Students are assessed annually with the WIDA ACCESS to measure their progress and determine continuation in the ELL program.

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

## **PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE**

---

### **1. Engaging Students:**

Our school culture is one that supports all aspects of students' academic, social, and emotional growth. We strive to develop meaningful relationships with students and support their interests and leadership skills. When students feel connected to school, they are more motivated for academic success.

Staff has recently received training about poverty and trauma to develop an understanding and awareness of how it impacts students. Students demonstrate resiliency and a desire to learn. Teachers are conscious of barriers to learning and work hard to minimize or remove them. Students participate in mindfulness activities to help reduce stress and focus on positive thinking.

To encourage a positive environment where students feel connected and supported, the Principal has every teacher choose a student who does not receive direct instruction by them to serve as a mentor for that student in school. When teachers have events that parents are invited but do not attend, coverage is provided so the mentor teacher can attend.

As a school with a small student population, we take pride in knowing every student's name. Our staff goes out of their way to welcome families and show students they care. For example, the Custodian greets students during breakfast, the Secretary gives building tours to new students and their family, and the Security Officer engages with students when delivering items to classrooms.

Our school provides opportunities for students to serve as leaders among their peers. In coordination with AAA, students in fourth grade are selected to be members of the school's Hallway Patrol. Their job is to monitor the safety of students during arrival time.

Third and fourth grade students can serve as a Peer Tutor for kindergarten, first, and second grade students during homeroom time. They practice math facts, read stories, and build sound/letter correspondence and sight word vocabulary.

During the 2018-2019 school year, the Principal created a Student Advisory Board (SAB). Students in fourth grade are selected to meet with the Principal quarterly to suggest ideas to make improvements within the school.

To motivate students to improve their daily performance of routines and demonstrate positive behavior choices, a Tier 2 Check-In/Check-Out (CICO) system is in place. Students learn accountability and are rewarded for meeting personal goals.

Students have the opportunity to practice valuable reading and writing skills with our school's Wee Deliver post office program. Every Friday, special education students deliver mail to classrooms. The program teaches leadership skills, responsibility, and teamwork.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

Of great importance to our school is building trusting relationships with families. As a result, parents feel heard and are valued. Various opportunities are provided throughout the year for joint problem-solving focusing on student success.

The Principal initiated a Parent Involvement Committee in 2017-2018. Teachers and parents meet with the Principal quarterly to discuss strategies for student success and recommended areas for school improvement. The committee offers trainings to review curriculum programs and assessments, our School-Wide Positive Behavior Support program, Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtII) process, and Title services.

The Principal is continuously seeking creative ways to inform families about their child's school, what they

are learning, and why. In December 2019, a Spin to Win game was created with a prize wheel and trivia questions. The wheel was placed in the Main Office daily and was part of PTA events in the evening. This has been the most effective strategy to reach families that do not attend scheduled trainings.

A bi-annual Parent Involvement Survey is distributed to determine the effectiveness of family engagement activities. Parents also make suggestions for future planning.

Parents are included as members of the school's Leadership Team by reviewing our Comprehensive Plan and providing recommendations, in addition to providing input during Title Federal Program Monitoring interviews.

Our school has an active Parent Teacher Association (PTA), which funds educational programs and activities, like the Scholastic Book Fair, Read and Discover (RAD) days, and an anti-bullying assembly. The PTA was awarded a STEM + Families grant in 2017-2018. Materials were purchased for a Family STEM night designed to spark, inspire, and engage the minds of students and their families.

As a Parent Advocacy Project, a Community Book House was made by High School students from the county's Technical Institute, in coordination with students from the local university's Professional Development School (PDS). The Book House provides parents, students, and members of the community free resources that promote an enjoyment of reading.

Continuous communication occurs to keep parents informed of students' academic achievements or challenges. Report cards are sent home quarterly. Progress reports are provided quarterly for ELLs, learning support, speech and language, and gifted students. Parent-Teacher conferences are held every November. Benchmark screening results and suggested home activities are sent to parents three times a year. Meetings, phone calls, emails, and communication through technology programs like Google Classroom, Class Dojo, and the Remind app occur frequently.

### **3. Creating Professional Culture:**

Relationships among our staff are best compared to a close-knit family. Strong connections have been made over the years as our staff has worked together for an average of ten years. We have grown together both personally and professionally, which has developed trusting and supportive relationships. Together, the staff creates an environment that exudes love and appreciation for one another. Teachers lean on each other during hard times and are received with loving and open arms. Everyone feels valued and accepted as part of a team working for the greater good of students.

Our school has a Hospitality Committee for the purpose of celebrating special occasions (birthday, marriage, baby), supporting staff in times of need (loss of a family member, car accident, cancer), and creating activities that promote positive staff morale throughout the year. Example activities have included a "snowball fight" of positive quotes and "You've been penned" (write a compliment and gift a new pen). When staff feels appreciated, they are motivated.

Teachers compliment each other on good things they see in other classrooms. They collaborate often and share effective teaching strategies. If a teacher needs assistance learning a new program or aspect of technology, someone is always willing to help. The Principal has a Share Out Session as part of the monthly staff meeting. During this time, teachers take the lead and voice what they are proud of or how discovering something new has benefitted students. Staff motivate each other to do great things to help close the achievement gap and promote positive behaviors, social, and emotional well-being. When students demonstrate growth and achievement, staff are motivated.

Our school's professional development approach is a collaborative effort with three other elementary schools in the district. Act 80 days provide the only time for all teachers of a grade level to get together. Elementary Principals work closely with the Director of Elementary Education to create meaningful opportunities to examine instructional strategies with the curricula and various assessment data to make informed decisions. Presenters may be from an outside company or our affiliated Intermediate Unit, but

Elementary Principals also lead sessions, in addition to Department Chairs, Specialists, and select teachers. Professional development is considered a time to listen to each other, problem solve, and empower staff to be leaders. Our goal is always to get better at what we already do well, in addition to, acknowledging our shortfalls and making necessary changes.

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

The Principal has been in this leadership position for 12 years. She holds high expectations for all staff to demonstrate professionalism and strive for great achievements. District policies and building procedures are clearly communicated and enforced. Every year, the Principal communicates a theme for staff to keep in the forefront of everything they do. Example themes have included: 30 Seconds (build relationships with students), Got Grit? (growth mindset), Positive Pathways (demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviors), Overcomer, and Together We Can Achieve More. Themes have brought staff together for a common purpose and created discussion points to focus school resources on student achievement.

The Principal works closely with the Guidance Counselor to get ahold of the pulse in the building. The Guidance Counselor plays an impartial role when dealing with staff and the Principal. She strongly advocates for students and their families. In the Principal's absence the Guidance Counselor is the designee in charge. A defined leadership structure is in place for the Guidance Counselor to communicate with the other Elementary Principals, our building secretary and Security Officers to handle any situations that may arise. The Principal also has a close relationship with the Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtII) Teacher. This teacher holds periodic meetings with every teacher in the building to review academic progress of all students. She is very knowledgeable and well-informed, enabling her to assist staff and families with strategies to help students succeed. These staff are trusted leaders in the building that are child-centered in their approach to responding to teachers and parents.

The Principal has an open door policy making her accessible for concerns, questions, or suggestions. The Principal takes time to listen and learn about staff's strengths, interests, and areas to grow upon. She uses that knowledge to support each other and encourage leadership roles, such as committee involvement or approving staff as mentor teachers. She is a caring Principal who coaches teachers and provides meaningful feedback to refine or strengthen performance. This is accomplished through the formal observation process, walk throughs, review of Student Learning Objectives (SLO), and professional development opportunities.

Opportunities are provided at monthly grade level meetings to discuss curricula, assessments, or other concerns that affect student achievement. The Principal invites collaborative discussions as part of the decision-making process. When everyone feels involved, change is more sustainable. The Principal has been and continues to be a leader who paves the pathway for school success.

## **PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

---

The one practice that has been most instrumental to our school's success is the implementation of a School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) program. In 2015-2016, a SWPBS team was created to develop the following mission statement: To work together with staff, students, and parents to teach, encourage, and demonstrate positive behaviors in all areas of our school, so children can thrive in a structured, safe, and educational environment.

Each month the school focuses on learning a particular character trait: responsibility, caring, respect, trustworthiness, fairness, and citizenship. Positive behaviors promoting each trait are announced daily over the school's intercom. The music teacher teaches all students a song for each character trait. The songs are performed at the school's monthly Morning Meeting assembly. During the assembly, classes perform skits or present a project about a character trait. The Principal recognizes two students per homeroom as a Key Player – one who exemplifies good behaviors and serves as a positive role model for others.

Our school has identified four Keys to Success: Take care of self, Take care of others, Take care of teachers, and Take care of our school. These beliefs are applied in all school settings with specific behavior expectations. As part of our SWPBS program, students earn Key Cards for making good choices as it relates to the school's Keys to Success. Key Cards are collected and exchanged for prizes in the school's treasure chest or for rewards in the classroom. For 50 Key Cards or when selected as a Key Player for the month, students join the Principal's 100 Club. Membership earns students a special prize, such as borrowing the Principal's chair for a day, Bubble Gum Day, eat lunch with a friend in the Character Café, be a teacher assistant, play a favorite board game with the Principal, recess with the Principal, or eat lunch with a family member at school. A special Golden Key Card (worth 10 and issued only by the Principal) is given during a schoolwide 5-minute Blitz time and other recognition moments throughout the school.

Each element of our SWPBS program contributes to the overall success of our school. It truly supports our school's motto - MOREY: Means Outstanding Responsible Educated Youth.

The Stroudsburg Area School District has demonstrated long-time academic growth and excellence. Having never been nominated for a National Blue Ribbon School award, we are ecstatic about the opportunity afforded to B.F. Morey Elementary!