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

[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

Name of Principal <u>Mr. Seth Kennard</u>
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name <u>Baker-Butler Elementary School</u>
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address <u>2740 Proffit Road</u>
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City <u>Charlottesville</u>   State <u>VA</u>   Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) <u>22911-5703</u>

County <u>Albemarle County</u>

Telephone <u>(434) 974-7777</u>   Fax <u>(434) 964-4684</u>

Web site/URL <u>https://bbes.k12albemarle.org/</u>   E-mail <u>skennard@k12albemarle.org</u>

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* <u>Dr. Matt Haas</u>   E-mail <u>mhaas@k12albemarle.org</u>
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name <u>Albemarle County Public Schools</u>   Tel. <u>(434) 296-5820</u>

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 <u>Mr. Jonno Alcaro</u>
(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   15 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   (per district designation):   6 Middle/Junior high schools
                                  4 High schools
                                  0 K-12 schools

                                  25 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)
   [X] Suburban
   [ ] Rural

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

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	9	4	13
K	50	61	111
1	65	51	116
2	64	52	116
3	51	54	105
4	53	45	98
5	63	57	120
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	355	324	679

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of   0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
    the school (if unknown, estimate): 7 % Asian
             9 % Black or African American
             15 % Hispanic or Latino
             0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
             61 % White
             8 % 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: 6%

    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 **to** the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	22
(2) Number of students who transferred **from** the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	16
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	38
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	622
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.06
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	6

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

    Spanish, Arabic, German, Bengali, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Dari, Farsi, Russian, Korean, Kirundi, Patois, Portuguese, Kannada, Tagalog, Bulgarian

    English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 11 %

                                         73 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 27 %

         Total number students who qualify: 182

8. Students receiving special education services: ___13___ %

    ___88___ 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.

__18__ Autism	__1__ Multiple Disabilities
__0__ Deafness	__0__ Orthopedic Impairment
__0__ Deaf-Blindness	__17__ Other Health Impaired
__14__ Developmental Delay	__15__ Specific Learning Disability
__5__ Emotional Disturbance	__16__ Speech or Language Impairment
__1__ Hearing Impairment	__0__ Traumatic Brain Injury
__1__ Intellectual Disability	__0__ Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: __1__

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

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	33
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	31
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	31
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   __20:1__

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

Required Information	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	95%	96%	96%	97%	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 X

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.

Baker-Butler's core purpose is to establish a community of learners and learning, relationships, relevance and rigor, one student at a time.

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

Baker-Butler Elementary School opened in 2002 in Albemarle County, VA on Proffit Road near the north fork of the Rivanna River. The school was named after two distinguished community leaders, James Robert Butler and John Edward Baker. Mr. James Butler was the first African American in Albemarle County to be elected to the County Board of Supervisors where he was a champion for establishing fair and equitable teacher salaries. He was a strong advocate for quality education in Albemarle County schools as well as for voter rights and voter registration. He worked tirelessly to ensure that the Supervisors would represent all members of the Albemarle community. Mr. James Butler also played a vital role in the establishment of the Charlottesville-Albemarle Technical Education Center. He was the first African American Executive Director of an Extension Service office in Virginia. Following a distinguished and decorated military career, Mr. John Baker began his service to the children and the Albemarle County community as an appointed at-large member of the School Board and as a member of the first elected School Board. Mr. John Baker also served as School Board Chairman where he focused on quality of instruction, effective teacher recruiting, and, professional development of strong teachers. He introduced a mentoring program for new teachers to ensure their efficient orientation and success in schools. The naming of Baker-Butler Elementary School after these two prominent Albemarle African-American citizens is an appropriate tribute to the heritage of the Proffit community.

At Baker-Butler Elementary School, our student body has grown to 675 students. Our diverse student population include: 27% Economically Disadvantaged, 14% English Learners, and 13% Students with Disabilities. Our attendance zone includes several suburban neighborhoods as well as more remote rural areas. Almost all our students ride the bus or get dropped off and picked up by car. Our students continue education at Sutherland Middle chool and will graduate from Albermarle High School. Our school has supportive parent involvement and an active Parent-Teacher Organization.

Baker-Butler Elementary School's mission is to build a strong community of students, teachers, parents, and community partners and to prepare our students to be lifelong learners. We strive to reach and challenge every student, every day. Our goal is for all our students to be designers, thinkers and leaders who can be flexible and creative problem solvers. We support our students across all traditional academic subjects, as well as in the arts, music, and physical fitness.

We use the Responsive Classroom Approach to create engaging academics, a positive community, and effective developmentally appropriate classroom management. We build school spirit and community through special spirit days and community outreach programs mostly led by our Student Council. Our music program brings us together regularly for grade level concerts and special performances.

Our teams work as Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) following the Plan-Do-Study-Act learning framework to ensure all students are learning and teachers are growing in their ability to differentiate and make learning rigorous and relevant. Over the last five years, we have created a small intervention team that provides reading and math intervention to students that are not meeting benchmarks. We have formalized our multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs. The goal is to ensure that every student reaches their potential and teachers have a clear process to ask for feedback and support when a student is struggling with academics and/or behavior.

At Baker-Butler, we want our students to use creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship daily in their lives in order for them to be successful as lifelong learners. There are several ways we develop our students' skills in the 5 Cs. We have focused on working on Project Based (Problem, Project, Passion) Learning and Design Thinking (DT). Design Thinking is people-centered problem solving, and it provides a framework for students not only to develop the 4Cs but also to develop empathy for others. At Baker-Butler we are working to infuse Project Based and DT throughout the school in order to provide more authentic and engaging learning activities for all our students. While there are several DT frameworks, we have chosen to use DEEPdt (Discover, Empathize, Experiment, Produce). As we have learned more about Design Thinking over the past few years, we have received a lot of support from several groups and individuals, most notably Mary Cantwell of Mount Vernon Presbyterian School and the Mount Vernon Institute for Innovation (MVIFI) in Atlanta, Georgia, and Elgin Cleckley & Jennie Chiu from the University of Virginia. We use design thinking methodology to help us develop strategies to reach all of our students academically, socially, and emotionally.

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

Baker-Butler's philosophical approach is to strive to ensure that its students will be designers, thinkers, and leaders who are well prepared to succeed, both inside and outside of school. Our students will not just learn the required standards and curricula, but they will be well prepared to use this knowledge in authentic and meaningful ways. They will use their knowledge to design experiences for others, to think deeply about what they learn, and they will emerge as leaders in using the design thinking framework to solve complex human-centered problems.

We differentiate instruction daily to meet our diverse students' needs, using a multi-tiered approach of providing support to students who are struggling. Teachers make instructional decisions in PLC teams based on formative and summative assessments. We teach content within context, meaning that we help students to discover the real-life connections between their curricula and the world around them. Teachers not only develop interdisciplinary lessons that unite the curricula from Math, Reading, Science, and Social Studies, but they also work in interdisciplinary teams with their colleagues from Art, Music, and Physical Education to develop opportunities for students to make connections within and outside of their classroom.

In addition to the academic curricula, teachers also work to infuse the components of Social-Emotional Learning throughout the day. The Responsive Classroom approach provides a consistent foundation for our teachers to develop students' social and emotional learning in a developmentally appropriate and engaging manner. In addition to Responsive Classroom, our students also develop a deep sense of empathy that they learn through the design thinking framework. These two approaches provide opportunities for our students to learn these necessary skills that are as vital to success as the academic skills they learn in their academic classes.

1b. Reading/English language arts

At Baker-Butler our goal is for our students to become literate and to communicate effectively both in school and in their community. Starting in Kindergarten and progressing until they finish Fifth Grade, our students work to develop both their oral and written skills. Our students progress along the developmental stages of reading with a goal of becoming independent readers of a variety of texts.

During our daily 90 minute Reading/Language Arts block, we strive to help our students become strong readers and writers by teaching them routines that promote authentic daily independent practice. Our students work in small reading groups where they received guided reading instruction. based on their current needs. Our teachers use frequent formative assessments, such as Phonemic Awareness Literacy Study (PALS), to inform their instruction and to ensure that these small reading groups are flexible and fluid, as students can move in and out of reading groups to meet their individual needs.

When students struggle to progress in reading, we work closely with our Response to Intervention (RTI) team to provide additional support. These supports may include Tier 2 or Tier 3 small group remediation in addition to the initial Tier 1 core instruction. We hold frequent RTI meetings with the students' families to ensure that we develop school-home partnerships and that we work collaboratively with their families. When students show mastery, we work with our Gifted Resource Teacher to provide additional ways to challenge them in Reading/Language Arts. Some of these activities may include thematic book studies and studying Greek and Roman roots, stems, and prefixes.

1c. Mathematics

Our goal for all our students is for them to develop rigorous mathematical knowledge and skills. As students move from Kindergarten to Fifth Grade, we work to ensure that they are competent in number

sense, measurement, computation, estimation, geometry, and other mathematical skills. Most importantly, our ultimate goal is for our students to understand that they can be successful in math through their work in school.

Our teachers use small and large group instruction during their daily 60-minute Math blocks. Our activities are designed to provide opportunities for students to deepen their understanding in mathematical problem solving, mathematical reasoning, mathematical communication, and mathematical connections. Our teachers naturally spiral backwards as they cover their curricula in order to help students make connections with their prior knowledge. We use technology such as iPads and research-proven mathematical applications to help students understand mathematical concepts instead of simply memorizing algorithms.

Teachers monitor and assess student progress through a balance of common grade-level formative assessments, entrance and exit tickets, observation, and rubrics applied to independent projects. When our students struggle in meeting grade level standards, we use the Response to Intervention approach, similar to what we do for Reading/Language Arts, to provide additional support. We provide additional remediation and intervention services in Math at the Tier 2 and Tier 3 levels. In addition, when students master grade level Math standards we use our Gifted Resource Teacher to help differentiate the curricula through activities such as logic puzzles.

1d. Science

At Baker-Butler our students study Science in engaging and interactive ways beginning in Kindergarten through Fifth Grade. We work to provide opportunities for our students to be able to see themselves as scientists who are ready to use their skills to examine the world around them.

Our students work on several Science strands throughout their time at Baker-Butler, including the scientific method, force and energy, matter, life systems, and Earth patterns and systems. We use interactive and hands on activities not only to make learning more interesting, but also to ensure that students can "do" science themselves. Our students make hypotheses, develop and conduct experiments, analyze their data, and then present their findings and conclusions in a variety of forms; some of these forms may include pictures or written expression. Our teachers use an interdisciplinary approach by combining science vocabulary terms into their Language Arts activities, and use writing activities to help students present their science conclusions. Student progress is monitored through common grade level formative assessments, rubrics applied to projects and presentations, and classroom observations.

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

During their time at Baker-Butler our students progress in social studies from learning about their local community to examining Virginia's history. Our goal is for our students to understand their local community, their state, and their history in ways that are both relevant and engaging. We help our students understand that people make choices, and that those choices have impacts both on history and the larger world in which they live.

Our students learn social science skills such as reading maps, analyzing geographical data, and sequencing events in the past. They learn to compare and contrast ancient civilizations while learning how to determine the influences of ancient civilizations on the world around them in terms of technology and architecture. Our students study the geography and history of Virginia, and they become aware of the impact of the various regions of Virginia on people's lives, including where they lived, what they ate, and what they did for work. Throughout their time at Baker-Butler our students learn that they are part of communities at various levels, from their family to their local community, and expanding to their state, country, and world. Student progress is monitored through common grade level formative assessments, rubrics applied to projects and presentations, and classroom observations.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

Baker-Butler proudly serves a small number of preschool students through an Albemarle County Center-Based Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) program. Typically, the ECSE program provides specialized instruction for up to 8 students with disabilities as well as up to four typically developing students who participate as "reverse inclusion" class members. The students in the ECSE program are served in a classroom at Baker-Butler, and they progress on to Kindergarten as members of the school community. While we differentiate some experiences for the ECSE class based on their developmental needs, we integrate them into our school community through school-wide events and provide arts, music, library, and PE time to them weekly.

The preschool teacher, who is licensed in Early Childhood Special Education, provides differentiated and specialized instruction based on students' IEP and other developmental needs. Our ECSE class is located next to our Kindergarten classrooms, and our teachers collaborate to ensure that our ECSE program aligns with our primary grades' academic standards and experiences. In addition, our teacher collaborates with our related special education services including Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Speech Language Therapists. Our academic data, including annual IEP goals and other assessments such as PALS, confirm that our students who move from our ECSE into our Kindergarten classrooms are ready and successful in school.

2.   Other Curriculum Areas:

Students at Baker-Butler are afforded a variety of instructional opportunities outside of the general education classroom. Each week, students attend 45-minute classes taught by certified specialists in the area of visual arts, library-media, and vocal music. Students receive social-emotional and character building lessons from a school counselor every two weeks for 30 minutes. Additionally, students receive daily physical education instruction for 30 minutes. Our school is also staffed with a part-time technology resource teacher, who co-plans and co-teaches lessons with classroom teachers in an effort to build teacher capacity with effective and appropriate technology integration.

Each specialist teacher develops lessons that are targeted to the Standards of Learning for their subject area and complement the current curricular goals of the grade level they are serving. In Physical Education, this may involve a modified game of tag (addressing gross motor standards), with the application of science vocabulary and concepts from the fifth grade plant and animal cell standards. The physical education teachers work closely to adapt and scaffold lessons to ensure that all students, regardless of ability level and specialized needs, can access the lesson and participate appropriately.

The visual art lessons are generally focused on an artform, with significant time spent learning about famous artists who employ a specific approach. Students then complete multi-week projects applying the studied approaches and principles of the medium. Artwork is displayed around the school with explanatory passages sharing about the famous artists and about the student approaches to their individual unique creations.

All students receive weekly lessons from our school library-media specialist. The lessons are focused on state standards and aligned to the topics being discussed in their grade level. For example, in second grade, this may include the study of a famous African American inventor. While the librarian focuses on the components of a biography, she also selects materials that support the classroom teacher's objectives regarding social studies standards. This aligned approach drives up student engagement, allowing them to make meaningful connections across school settings and content areas.

Students receive general music instruction weekly in various musical forms and musicians. Students practice applying different vocal and instrumental musical techniques. Concerts are held for community members for each grade level, and musical selections are chosen that reflect the diversity and historical context of our school, county, state and nation.

The school counselor's lessons are targeted based on state standards and our school's dedication to the Responsive Classroom framework. Students are given opportunities to practice various social emotional

responses to situations, and special attention is given to current events inside and outside of the school that may require specific objectives.

Finally, our school's Technology Resource Teacher serves students both directly and indirectly. She works closely with teachers to identify objectives and lessons that could be enhanced through the effective integration of various technological tools. Lessons are co-planned and co-delivered with the classroom teacher, and post-lesson reflections and held to review student data and feedback. Through this model, students have an opportunity to get instruction from an expert with instructional technology, and witness their own teacher as a learner at the same time.

3. **Academic Supports**:

3a. Students performing below grade level

Over the last few years, we have worked to ensure that all students in all membership groups are meeting their potential and exceeding. This has happened in several ways. We have made sure that teachers know their students academically, socially, and emotionally. At each turn of the quarter, teachers engage in exercises of reflection about their students' performance in reading and math. In fourth and fifth grade, teachers also reflect on students' science performance. Teachers analyze student assessment data to review how individual students in our various membership groups are performing. This process helps us determine which students are responding to instruction and which students need reteaching and extension opportunities.

At Baker-Butler, we have continually refined our Response to Intervention (RTI) process to ensure no student falls through the cracks. As part of the refinement, we formalized processes for teachers and improved our record keeping. Student Support Team meetings are scheduled quickly after a teacher or parent makes a request for support. During the meetings, we try to better understand a student's academic journey as well as learn about any precipitating factors that might be impacting their learning. The meeting is spent discussing Tier One practices, brainstorming new ideas, determining interventions, and identifying how progress will be assessed. One of our Intervention teachers serves as our School-based Intervention Team chair, so there is a "go to person" to schedule meetings, invite various stakeholders, take notes at the meeting, and follow up with check-ins at designated times. This RTI process allows us to deliver high-yield tiered support to students and determine which students have a disability and qualify for Special Education services.

For our students performing below grade level, we have worked to provide opportunities for reteaching within the classroom as well as provide remediation in reading and math to the neediest students through our Intervention team's support. We have worked to make Tier One and Tier Two support fluid and responsive by looking at data after each unit of study or every 6-8 weeks of data collection. For students receiving reading intervention, we are using Fountas and Pinnell's Leveled Literacy System (LLI), Systematic Instruction in Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words (SIPPS), and Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) materials. For those receiving math intervention, we focus on building up number sense, conceptual math thinking, and problem-solving skills. We do not use one specific math intervention program, rather we pull activities from resources with research-based practices.

3b. Students performing above grade level

Baker-Butler is proud of the high-quality teaching that happens in classrooms. As a result, many of our students meet and exceed learning expectations regularly and teachers look for ways to extend learning and create authentic learning experiences for our students. We have found that our focus on Project Based (project, problem, passion) learning and Design Thinking challenges are a natural way to engage our students that are performing above grade level. Our goal is to go deeper with learning, make real-world connections, and develop life-long learning competencies.

We reimagined our Gifted Resource teacher position into a Gifted and Talent Development teacher position with a focus on partnering with teachers and teams to create regular opportunities for extension and

enrichment for our students. Our Gifted and Talent Development teacher, along with our Instructional Coaches, meet with PLCs to brainstorm and create these opportunities on the front-end of units of study. As a result, students have opportunities to research, design, create, make, and collaborate on self-directed projects related to their core curriculum learning.

Just as we do for our students performing below grade level, we use our assessments to help determine instructional levels for our above grade level students. This data allows us to match books to readers that are at a student's instructional level, even if the level is above grade level. We then create small groups where students can discuss books, expand their vocabulary, and deepen their comprehension. In math, we have moved toward administering pre-assessments at the start of a unit. This allows us to know which students have mastered the content and are ready for extension and other challenging work. Only in a small number of cases in the last few years have we moved students up a grade level. There have been a few times that moving a grade level was the right decision for a student based on a host of factors. We look for ways to deepen learning within grade level curriculum and help grow students' understanding horizontally. In math, this is often about deepening a student's problem-solving and critical thinking skills.

3c. Special education

At Baker-Butler we embrace all types of learners and we proudly offer every specialized Special Education program our division has created. This year, we have 1.75 General Special Education Resource teachers, 2 Autism-based teachers (A-Base), 1 Behavior-based teacher (B-Base), 2 Modified Curriculum teachers (C-Base), and 1 Early Childhood Special Education Preschool teacher, and 1.5 Speech and Language pathologist. We not only serve students in the Baker-Butler attendance zone, we also serve students from neighboring schools that do not have the specialized programs a student may need. At Baker-Butler we also serve as the base school for itinerant related services providers like Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy.

As our specialized programs have grown, we have prioritized administrative support to the Special Education team to ensure that our most fragile and/or complex learners' needs are met, and the teachers have the support and resources they need to be successful.

Like our grade level teams, our Special Education team meets regularly as a Professional Learning Community (PLC) to discuss students, study specialized instructional practices, brainstorm ideas, and make needed changes and modifications to individualized learning plans. We have seen individual teachers within the Special Education team grow tremendously due to this PLC work.

It is our goal to create an inclusive school where all types of learners are interacting with peers and accessing learning. We strive to have our Special Education teachers push-in and co-teach with classroom teachers. We are doing this very well with our Autism-Based, Behavior-Based, and Modified Curriculum-Based programs, but we still have room to grow with our General Resource positions. Our General Resource Special Education teachers have larger caseloads and often must deliver their services in a pull-out setting. That said, it remains our goal to continue to create more opportunities for co-teaching in the future.

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

Fourteen percent of our students are English Learners (EL). Each year, our population of EL students has grown, and we have moved from having one EL teacher to 1.75 EL teachers. In addition to providing direct services to students that focus on developing listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, the EL teachers have forged partnerships with classroom teachers. These partnerships have led to coaching/mentoring opportunities and collaborative co-teaching. With 675 students, we have strategically clustered EL students to 2-3 classrooms per grade level so that EL teachers are able to form collaborative partnerships with classroom teachers.

We are passionate about ensuring that all our students engage in higher-level thinking and problem-solving opportunities and have created learning opportunities to ensure EL students have equity. Our EL teachers share our passion and have sought out grant opportunities that have resulted in the creation of a sizable

hydroponics farming operation within our school, which has been a springboard for several Project Based Learning and Design Thinking challenges for our EL students as well as our students receiving Special Education support.

We have also looked for ways to ensure EL students have equal opportunities to the after-school clubs that our Parent Teacher Organization sponsors. Our EL teachers have created clubs with the interests of EL students in mind and they have been our most well-attended clubs to date. We have a Breakout Box Club and a Soccer Club. Both clubs encourage family participation and we have seen more great learning partnerships between home and school forged as a result.

Our EL teachers also provide language support to families coaching them to learn effective ways to communicate with teachers and the school. Often, this communication is through text messaging using Google or SeeSaw apps. We also have a full-time Office Associate who is fluent in Spanish answering phones and supporting visitors. Having her as the first face or voice our visitors see/hear has made many of our Spanish-speaking families feel welcomed and understood.

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

Over the last few years, we have studied John Hattie's work to ensure we are using high-yield research-based best practices with students, specifically in reading and math. Hattie talks about collective efficacy being one of the highest effect sizes and significantly impacts student learning. Therefore, at Baker-Butler we have worked to achieve collective efficacy in our instruction, assessments, PLC work, Project-Based Learning and Design Thinking work, and in our RTI process.

Several of our teachers are working to become certified in Culturally Responsive Teaching practices and have undergone a deep study of cultural teaching and brain research as well as a journey of personal reflection and growth.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

The instructional philosophy at Baker-Butler places an emphasis on student-driven Project-Based Learning through the Design Thinking lens. Students are given problems of practice that are real-life scenarios, in which they must find a solution that involves empathy or understanding the needs and perspective of others. Students' social and emotional growth are also supported using a school-wide Responsive Classroom approach. This involves students meeting each morning as a class, having opportunities to practice restorative conversations when needed, and focus on teaching and practicing behaviors that create a joyful and collaborative classroom environment.

Project-Based Learning is built on the idea that, given a framework and appropriate instruction, students apply their learning through the creation of a product or solution based on a real-life need. For example, our fourth graders design ways to improve outdoor recess, third graders design supports for students moving into a new classroom, second graders design ways to comfort preschoolers who miss their families.

Teachers apply a rubric that has been previously reviewed with the students to assess student mastery of the instructional objectives. Oftentimes, students self-assess their own learning accurately at the completion of a project. This approach to learning involves collaborative work between groups of students and allows our instructional staff to support student social and emotional skill-building as students learn to work together effectively. Our community has found that by providing students with relevant and authentic opportunities for skill application, our student engagement and motivation have remained very high.

Responsive Classroom is based upon the belief that students must learn and practice social-emotional competencies, just as they would learn a new academic concept when they arrive at school. Morning meetings focus on these competencies, which include cooperation, assertiveness, responsibility, empathy, and self-control. Teachers provide opportunities for exposure, understanding and application focused on these areas. In events where students are unable to access the skills practiced in each area, such as a disagreement at recess, a restorative conversation is held with the students in which repair can be made.

The entire school is aligned with its work with Responsive Classroom, providing an atmosphere where student expectations and staff responses to incidents are consistent and predictable. School counselors support this work through classroom meetings based on teacher feedback and patterns

in discipline data, and more targeted support groups are created for students requiring additional support and practice in one of these areas.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Based on the level of personalization required to support student success, our school has been successful in utilizing various communication platforms and approaches. Overall learning objectives and student progress towards meeting them are communicated regularly through a variety of means. This includes the application of systematic standards-based progress reporting. Targeted intervention planning teams, involving multiple stakeholders, is used to address more intensive student learning needs. Finally, by establishing community partnerships, our school has been fortunate to provide our students with additional supplemental instructional opportunities throughout each school year.

Parents and family members of our students receive consistent communication about Tier 1 instructional strategies and curricular topics being addressed. Families are kept apprised on what is being taught and how the material will be assessed through online portfolios, digital and print newsletters, and at-home discussion guides.

Student progress towards meeting the standards of assessment for each area is reported formally each nine-weeks through a standards-based progress report. Prior to this report, teachers communicate progress and

assignments through a daily agenda, and grades are also available through an online grading system. Frequent use of pre and post assessments in the classroom not only provides teachers with information needed for instructional planning, but also provides families with ongoing progress indicators for their child.

If students require additional supports to meet standards, a School-Based Intervention Team (SBIT) meeting is held to review their progress. This team includes multiple members of our school community: student's parent, teacher, school counselor, special education teachers, psychologist, and administrators. At these meetings, the student's progress is reviewed and strategies for instructional approaches, intervention services (if necessary) are reviewed, and a progress monitoring system (including defined timelines for success) are established. These teams reconvene as necessary, and are utilized to provide enhanced enrichment support where necessary.

Parent and family involvement are central to this process. Our school's relationship with our families and community goes well-beyond student academic progress. We work closely with our community partners, such as the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), to host exciting events for our community to participate in such as a Fall Festival, Valentine's Day Dance, School Carnival and Bike Rodeo. At these events, our school staff works side by side with our parents and community volunteers to create a fun and exciting opportunity for our students to spend positive time with one another. Parents are also welcomed as school volunteers and can often be counted on to assist during classroom projects and field trips, as well as being able to serve as guest experts about different areas of study in each class.

Finally, our school has been successful in leveraging our proximity to the University of Virginia (UVA). Each semester, many students receive a mentor from UVA to support them in their social and academic development. Oftentimes, these mentorships span beyond the original timeline, and are an integral part of our success in building a child's agency as they meet goals along their academy journey.

3. **Creating Professional Culture:**

To best serve their students, Baker-Butler teachers strive to be constant learners. The professional development approach utilized at the school is built upon the idea that our school must be both responsive to the current needs of our students, while actively preparing for the changing conditions and necessary instructional approaches to ensure student success in the future. Each year, professional development is designed to refine and adjust prior years' work, allowing for a cycle of continuous improvement and thoughtful reflection as the staff increases its collective efficacy.

The bulk of our professional development focus over the past several years at Baker-Butler has revolved around the concept of Project-Based Learning, and the use of Design Thinking as a framework for solving real-life problems. Through the principal and assistant principal, partnered with teacher leaders, sessions have been developed around the key components and supporting theoretical framework for this work. Monthly staff meetings are focused entirely on instruction and provide teams the opportunity to reflect on the focus from previous sessions while deepening staff knowledge and planning for future lessons.

As practice, application and collaboration increases team members' efficacy and confidence around these new approaches, teachers are also given opportunities to share their successes with the instructional staff by assisting administrators in the development and delivering of future PD modules. By allowing teachers to teach other teachers, the staff has been able to become more collaborative with their work and more open to new ideas and honest discussions around pedagogy.

Beyond the focus on Project-Based Learning, the staff has heavily leaned on internal expertise to establish the Professional Learning Community (PLC) model at each grade level with fidelity. Teams have elected leaders to serve as chairpersons during PLC meetings and have attended professional development on the different roles within a PLC, such as assessment authoring, data analysis, team-building, tiered interventions, and enrichment. Like the format with the Project-Based Learning professional development, most of this work relies on grade-levels sharing their progress and successes, with scheduled opportunities for teachers to visit and observe their colleagues in action.

Our teachers are dedicated professionals committed to their students. A shared school-wide value, all our professional development focus at the school follows these teacher-driven formats. We rely heavily on internal expertise, the cycle of continuous improvement, and the notion that we are stronger when we work together to solve our biggest challenges.

4. **School Leadership:**

Baker-Butler Elementary is led by administrators who utilize a distributive leadership approach, believing that the school can tap the experiences, insights and talents of its staff to internally address many of its challenges. The school employs an elected representative leadership team for larger decision making and strategic planning, and has subcommittees for work focused on Project-Based Learning, literacy, mathematics and building culture. Through an established and practice approach to setting short and long-term goals, as well as solving more emergent challenges, the staff can thoughtfully and consistently monitor progress towards student achievement goals while addressing unexpected needs and opportunities.

The school leadership team represents all members of the staff, including grade level teachers, specialists, teaching aides and administrative staff. The school improvement plan for each school year is authored by this representative group, and progress towards each action step is monitored and evaluated by members of this team. When larger building-wide decisions about communication, community needs or operations need to be made, this team is tasked with gathering input from their representative stakeholders. Most final determinations are based on consensus, ensuring all staff members voices are heard and valued. This has increased staff ownership and buy-in with many of the more difficult challenges that have had to be overcome.

In addition to having representation and input in strategic planning and decision-making, school leadership has also placed a clear value on the Professional Learning Committee (PLC) process to ensure a focus on student achievement. This has involved specific training by school leaders for each grade level team on the PLC process, and regular team PLC meetings to review student assessment results, remediation/enrichment plans, progress monitoring, and sharing of best-instructional process. School leaders attend PLC meetings along with instructional coaches to assist in instructional planning and support.

Finally, the school leadership team ensures that community stakeholders who are not necessarily school employees are able to actively participate and contribute to the overall mission of the school. Through community-based events, principal coffees, PTO meetings and being physically present and accessible each day at arrival and dismissal of the school; the school leadership can share and gather feedback, ideas and reflections from the school community. Community surveys and student surveys are regularly utilized to gather input and feedback about the school's progress in educating its membership.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Over the past six years, Baker-Butler has experienced large changes in its demographics while at the same time we have made significant academic gains and reduced achievement gaps amongst our various membership groups.

While we have had success in our work with several groups of students, at Baker-Butler, we believe that our greatest gains as a school were the result of focusing on students as individuals. Our teachers established and maintained deep relationships with their students and their families. We analyzed formative assessments at the individual student level (instead of just at the grade level), and we developed individualized plans for remediation, enrichment, and encouragement.

We know there may be several practices that have influenced our students' achievements; however, we believe that we made these gains because we deepened our collective efficacy and committed to focus on the individual student. Over the last few years, we studied John Hattie's work to ensure we were using high-yield, research-based best practices with students, specifically in reading and math. The strategy of achieving collective efficacy is one of Hattie's highest yield strategies on student learning, therefore, at Baker-Butler we have worked to achieve collective efficacy in our instruction, assessments, PLC work, Project-Based Learning and Design Thinking work, and in our RTI process. In addition, over the last few years, several of our teachers have become invested in Culturally Responsive Teaching practices and have undergone a deep study of cultural teaching and brain research as well as a journey of personal reflection and growth.

We have made our academic gains by focusing on school-level factors, including aligning pacing guides, unpacking standards, and ensuring a master schedule dedicated to students' opportunity to learn. Even as we have become a relatively large school, we have never lost our focus on each individual student and on the importance of our collective efficacy to reach every student, every day.