

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

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 1822 West 7Th Street  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Port Angeles State WA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 98363-5206

County Clallam County

Telephone (360) 452-6818 Fax (360) 452-6359

Web site/URL https://hamilton.portangelesschools.org/ E-mail gpringle@portangelesschools.org

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

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

Name of Superintendent\* Mr. Marty Brewer E-mail mbrewer@portangelesschools.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Port Angeles School District Tel. (360) 457-8575

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

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

Name of School Board  
President/Chairperson Dr. Sandy Long Ph.D.  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## **PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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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

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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):
- 5 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 1 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	34	30	64
1	38	24	62
2	34	25	59
3	30	31	61
4	26	26	52
5	22	30	52
6	29	26	55
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>	213	192	405

\*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):
- 5.7 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 1.5 % Asian
  - 2 % Black or African American
  - 10 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0.5 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 70 % White
  - 10.3 % 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: 12%

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.

<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	19
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	31
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	50
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	416
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.12
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	12

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

Punjabi, Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1 %

6 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 53 %

Total number students who qualify: 214

8. Students receiving special education services: 12 %  
50 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>5</u> Autism                  | <u>11</u> Multiple Disabilities                |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>6</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>14</u> Developmental Delay    | <u>0</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>9</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>9</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: 9
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.	19
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	7
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	11
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 22:1

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	97%	95%	94%	94%	94%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2019.

<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.

We will ensure that all students continuously and measurably increase their academic and citizenship skills.

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**

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Hamilton Elementary School is a neighborhood school with 409 students in Kindergarten through sixth grade. Hamilton is located in Port Angeles, Washington, a small coastal city nestled between Olympic National Park and the Strait of Juan de Fuca with a population of 20,000. Once a booming logging town, Port Angeles had to reinvent itself as the logging industry faded. Our community now has a thriving downtown, with many small businesses and restaurants.

Our community poverty level is 22%, significantly higher than the national average of 12%. Even though many in our community are struggling financially, the people of Port Angeles understand the need for quality education and a strong community. In February of this year, voters approved a levy to replace our aging middle school and install safety vestibules at each school.

Students enter school knowing that Hamilton is a place to learn. An adult can walk into any classroom and ask the students, “Why are you here?” The students will respond enthusiastically with “To learn!” Our students come from diverse home situations and experiences. Some students experience homelessness and poverty and many come from a place of trauma. What makes Hamilton unique is that regardless of where a particular student comes from or what that student has experienced, we not only believe that every student can learn, we also believe and have the expectation that they will learn. We feel a sense of urgency to help our students succeed and will not lower our standards due to a student’s past experiences. As a result, our students succeed.

A new student at Hamilton recently shared that the adults here care about him and his behavior. He said that he felt nobody cared about him at his old school when he jumped out of the window and ran away, and that they would just let him misbehave whenever he wanted. He said that he wouldn’t jump out of a window and run away at Hamilton because he knew he wouldn’t be allowed to do that. Since arriving at Hamilton, this student has not continued any serious behavioral problems. This story is typical of our success with students who arrive with challenging behaviors.

Hamilton has been awarded two Washington State awards and two national awards in the last six years. In 2015 Hamilton was awarded the OSPI Washington State Board of Education Washington Achievement Award and the Washington State ASCD Whole Child Award in 2017. In 2018 Hamilton earned the National Vision in Action ASCD Whole Child Award. Most recently, Hamilton received the National ESEA Distinguished School Award for exceptional student performance and academic growth.

According to Schooldigger.com, Hamilton is ranked a five star school and is in the top 10% of Washington state schools. Of those schools in the top 10%, Hamilton is the only school with a free and reduced lunch rate exceeding 50%. The next closest school is at 29.7% free and reduced lunch. The majority of schools in this group are under 20% and many under 5%.

When families relocate to Port Angeles, they often use Schooldigger.com to determine which in neighborhood they would like to purchase or rent a home. Many of these families intentionally move into the Hamilton boundary so that their children may attend our school. Each year the Hamilton principal receives phone calls from out-of-state parents who are planning to move to Port Angeles requesting information about Hamilton and how their children might be able to attend our school.

Hamilton families are supportive and love their neighborhood school. Many parents who have had negative school experiences of their own will share that they wish that they could have gone to a school like Hamilton. Parents feel comfortable coming to school and the families feel welcomed to attend school events. When parents are struggling or life seems too overwhelming, they know that they can come to us for support. A parent shared recently that at her daughters’ previous school she felt judged for her past choices, but at Hamilton she feels supported and because of that is able to do better for her daughters.

Along with all of the high expectations for behavior and learning, the one thing that really makes Hamilton stand out is that we understand the importance of fun and play. At Hamilton there is a sense of playfulness.

Often the playfulness is spontaneous, and because we understand how important laughter and fun are to being human, we are intentional about making sure we create a playful, joyful environment.

Because we have set the groundwork of our expectations for good behavior and students know those expectations from the very first day of school, we are able to laugh, have fun together and quickly regroup and return to the exciting job of learning. Visitors walking down our halls will hear staff laughing together, enjoying the company of their colleagues. They will hear the students laughing with their teachers and with each other. Because we have fun together the students and staff look forward to coming to school each day, not only for the value of education and the exciting lessons, but for the fun of learning together.

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

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

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

At Hamilton Elementary School we begin with the end goals in mind. We constantly remind ourselves when planning and analyzing data to consider the uniqueness of each student. Our goal for each one of our students is, “To Learn!” To accomplish the goal of every student being a learner and showing significant academic growth each year, we use the best curricula available, share a common commitment to high standards of teaching and learning, prioritize students’ social and emotional learning, and nurture a collaborative culture.

Consistent vertical and horizontal alignment of curricula, standards, and expectations allows students to benefit from familiar terms, academic routines and formats. We also believe that reflection and professional growth are important parts of teaching and learning. We begin each new school year by reviewing data, reflecting on successes, and considering how we can improve. We know and believe that every child can learn, so if we are falling short on that goal, we are honest about how we can make changes to improve learning. We never make excuses for children not learning or lower our standards due to circumstances. We take responsibility for creating positive classroom environments and for intentionally building relationships with the school and community that will ensure equity and make school a positive and safe place for all students. Because we believe every child can learn at Hamilton, they do. Reflection, group planning, and collaboration are not only a beginning of the year routine. We meet frequently as professional teams to reflect, plan and adjust. Teachers share ideas and resources with each other. Collaboration characterizes the culture of Hamilton.

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

Hamilton Elementary School implements the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt’s Reading series Journeys with fidelity, utilizing their knowledge of the reading processes of their students, and of the dynamic connections within the other language arts to create effective instruction so that all readers construct meaning and develop an enduring appreciation of reading. Our literacy instruction includes reading, writing, listening and speaking, viewing/ visual literacy, and literacy across the curriculum for a balanced approach that aligns with the Core Standards for English Language Arts. Through resources such as Step up to Writing, David Matteson, or Learning without Tears, we provide authentic and relevant instruction that prepares students to write for a variety of purposes and audiences. This includes the writing process, language acquisition, writing development, and ongoing assessment in an individual conference or workshop model. We celebrate student writing progress and success through monthly “Pencil of Power” awards during our assemblies. Other examples include embracing community reading and writing opportunities such as an essay contest for our local Daughters of the American Revolution Chapter, Read Across America Events, and the Clallam County Literacy Council/ United Way Bookworm reading contest. Additionally, we foster the love of reading through a book buddy program that pairs Kindergarten students with sixth grade students. Many of our support paraprofessionals and volunteers read with children and assist in classrooms during reading and writing instruction.

Overall, our teachers employ rich instructional resources and provide instruction that is tailored to the unique needs of our students in order to foster inquiry, facilitate learning, and build strategic, independent thinkers who understand the power of language. Independently and in collaboration, we maintain a continual process of steps: set high, worthwhile goals appropriate for each individual student; Implement instruction designed to attain those goals; Evaluate student learning through formative and summative assessment; Reflect on student learning and the effectiveness of the instructional design; Set new worthwhile goals. This continuum accomplishes student success in Reading and Language Arts.

## **1c. Mathematics**

In the Fall of 2018, Hamilton Elementary School adopted the Eureka Math Curriculum by Great Minds. Prior to implementation of this program, all teachers and para educators attended multiple trainings to gain the knowledge needed to instruct students effectively through this research-based curriculum. An average of sixty minutes per day is dedicated to the subject of mathematics for each student. During this time, students are led through a variety of fluency practices to revisit previous skills, then taught and allowed time to practice the daily objective, as well as given opportunity to apply this knowledge on a daily word application problem. Finally, a whole group debrief of the lesson allows students to make mathematical observations and consolidate learning.

Instructors continue to refine their teaching and ensure teaching practices continue to align with Common Core State Standards through reflective teamwork with peers, webinars, videos, and additional professional development opportunities. Summative assessments from Edulastic, end-of-module tests, and exit tickets are used to guide instruction for upcoming lessons. Khan Academy, Zearn, and Happy Numbers are a few online resources used to support student learning objectives.

Maintaining high academic math standards and utilizing focused mathematical practices has enabled Hamilton to see success in the area of math. In addition, many classrooms have push-in academic and learning support during math instruction time where identified individuals receive academic support in mathematics.

## **1d. Science**

Hamilton Elementary School has systematically implemented the Next Generation of Science Standards (NGSS) in the past four years. The performance expectations are a combination of Science and Engineering Practices, Disciplinary Core Ideas, and Crosscutting Concepts. Students are asked to construct scientific arguments that are based on evidence, data, or simple models. The science models are used as evidence to evaluate claims. The Port Angeles School District has adopted the Foss Science curriculum for hands-on science inquiry. STEM questions embedded in this curriculum have been edited to meet the NGSS.

Hamilton stresses the use of technology skills. Our students are introduced to coding and problem solving, introductory robotics, and the use of technology as a tool for research. We have also encouraged the use of technology as a platform for knowledge construction, collaboration and presentation.

At Hamilton we believe that science is an important part of developing the whole child. We stress science as an important core subject. The structure of our science content demonstrates a very even balance of the three domains of science: life science, earth and space science, and physical science. We believe that kids have a natural curiosity and science is the fuel to ignite their continual desire to learn.

The following comprise our K-6 science instructional modules. Kindergarten students learn about Weather and Climate, Animals 2x2, and Wood and Paper. First grade students study Air and Weather, Sound and Light, and New Life. Second graders study Insects, Balance and Motion, and Pebbles Sand and Silt. Third grade students investigate Structures of Life, Water, and Motion and Matter, and fourth grade students investigate Soils, Rocks and Landforms, Environments, and Energy. Fifth grade students study Chemistry, Living Systems, Earth and Sun. Fifth graders also take a state assessment in science with an average score that is 25% above the state average. In sixth grade, students study Geology, Engineering, and Global Warming

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

Hamilton Elementary School teachers teach the Washington State standards for social studies through a variety of activities and learning projects that provide integration among subjects. District curriculum includes Houghton Mifflin Harcourt textbooks for several grades. Other resources used to aid instruction include the Scholastic Let's Find Out magazine that provides nonfiction stories and hands-on activities for student participation.

Students in the primary grades are introduced to the idea of other states, what it means to be part of a country, and other relevant and current cultural and physical geography topics. The upper elementary students engage topics covering Washington State history and government, United States History, and Ancient Civilizations.

School-wide, students are learning what it means to be part of a community, how to show respect to others, how and why we say the pledge of allegiance, and what responsibilities they hold as citizens. Instruction includes primary source readings, small and whole group discussion of topics to compare and contrast the past and present, make connections between different cultures and government from the United States, and critically think about how the past impacts the present and future. Students are encouraged to think outside the box and ask questions that help them understand the world around them.

Students engage with social studies in hands-on learning opportunities that include performing plays and musicals on historical events, participating in mock trials, and creating their own civilizations. Learning opportunities outside of the classroom include grant-funded field trips to the state capitol in Olympia, Washington for a civics tour of the legislative, judicial, and executive buildings and opportunities for students to ask representatives questions. Guest speakers to classrooms to increase interest and engagement with cultural and civic community life. A variety of practices are used to monitor student learning of the standards, including writing assignments, projects, and assessments that evaluate understanding and mastery.

**1f. For secondary schools:**

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

**2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

In addition to challenging all of our students in core subjects, Hamilton believes in offering multiple environments in which all learners can succeed. Strong academic achievement and robust student growth isn't accomplished just in the core academic subjects. The well-rounded curriculum we provide includes music, physical education, library, computers, and character education. Specialist teachers enrich the lives of their students by collaborating across multiple disciplines, as well as supporting the work done in the classroom. These subject areas are essential components of our school day and our focus on educating the whole child.

Students in grades K-3 participate in general music classes once a week for 30 minutes. Students in grades 4-5 participate in either general music or orchestra twice a week for 40 minutes. Students in sixth grade participate 40 minutes every day in either general music, orchestra, or band. Hamilton's outstanding general music teacher provides students with many opportunities to explore song and movement. Students sing and play various rhythms, experience a wide variety instruments including recorders, marimbas, ukuleles, and boom whackers. All areas of music – band, orchestra, and general music - include evening performances several times a year. Additionally, every few years, music and P.E. join forces to produce all-school musicals.

Collaboration also occurs between the classroom teachers and the librarian. Students participate in scheduled library sessions once a week and at additional times during the week. The librarian makes the library a fun and enjoyable place by having monthly themes, storytelling, keeping our book collection up to date, and helping students to choose from over 17,000 books of different interests, genres, and reading abilities. The librarian also provides books for writing projects in the classrooms. Two computer labs and 8 Chromebook carts provide students with the technology needed to participate in online research, keyboarding skills, and assessments.

Collaboration between the school counselor and classroom teachers creates a network of opportunities and support for students to develop healthy relationships and mindsets. The school counselor provides classroom lessons on problem-solving strategies and conflict resolution at all grade levels using the Kelso's Choices

curriculum. Additionally, the Second Step curriculum is used at all grade levels to teach skills for learning, empathy, emotion management, and problem solving. This curriculum also addresses communication styles and bullying. Various topics including friendship, social skills, self-esteem, character education and behavior choices are taught using video resources and books.

Hamilton Elementary School supports and reinforces the health and well-being of each student, staff, and family member. As a dedicated Fuel Up to Play60 school since 2009, we integrate health, nutrition, and physical fitness/activity into the school's ongoing activities, professional development, curriculum, and instructional practices.

Hamilton has been identified as a Let's Move Active School Champion from 2014 to the present. Physical Education classes utilize Fitnessgram, Fitness for Life, and SPARK curricula to help students set realistic personal goals and monitor progress. Our highly recognized program and P.E. teacher help students to gain the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to lead healthy and active lifestyles. Students in kindergarten participate in P.E. once a week for 30 minutes, grades 1-3 twice a week for 30 minutes, and grades 4-6 twice a week for 40 minutes.

The physical education program includes opportunities for families to learn about nutrition and fitness together. Our Families in Training (F.I.T.) program teaches students and their families to eat healthy, be active, and encourages them to eat together as a family. Monthly contests/challenges such as F.I.T. and NFL Play60 Challenge encourage all family members to be healthy. Additional opportunities to learn about nutrition and fitness are provided through a school running club (Rainbow Runners), a Unicycle Club (Hot Wheels), a sixth grade intramural program, and a universal breakfast program for all students.

At random times during the day you can find students and staff dancing when the school intercom blasts "Everybody Dance Now" and classroom teachers can be observed providing additional physical activity through the use of Brain Boosters and online exercise such as Go Noodle and Cosmic Kids Yoga.

Hamilton staff, students, and families work together to achieve healthy lifestyles, whole child growth and development, and improved academics.

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

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

Hamilton Elementary School is responsive to the diverse needs of our students performing at all levels. We follow a highly structured Response to Intervention (RTI) process to identify, provide academic supports, and monitor progress beginning with school wide screening assessment, collaboration, and data-driven analysis. Our school philosophy, vision and whole child approach guides our intervention work with academic supports. In short, we teach students from where they are, and hold a strong belief that all of our students can and will learn.

Students who read below grade level engage in highly structured, effective instructional content, strategies, and practices in our Hawk Reading room. A technology-based support, ReadLive, is used to provide individual, leveled, skill-based reading and written response with immediate teacher feedback in a conference model for our third through sixth grade students identified as needing additional supports. Frequent collaboration between the intervention specialist and classroom teachers ensure that these supports supplement and enhance core classroom instruction and learning standards. The ReadLive program provides students with supports in the five core reading areas of Fluency, Comprehension, Vocabulary, Word Study, and Phonemic Awareness. In addition, students read expository, cross curricular content at their individual reading level as well communicate their comprehension orally and by writing a paragraph summary that accurately cites the expository text.

In addition to the data from Universal, a standardized screening assessment, our first and second grade-level teams and intervention specialist determine reading levels and monitor progress through multiple formative and summative assessments. These include the Developmental Reading Assessment, Fountas and Pinnell

Benchmark Assessment System (Running Records), and Acadience progress monitoring (a standardized foundational skill indicator). Students identified as below level, including Special Education, are provided small group or individual supplemental reading support by trained personnel under the guidance of the intervention specialist and in collaboration with classroom and special education teachers. Interventions are determined based on student need with emphasis on phonics skills and reading strategies. Data-driven decisions are made concerning student grouping, skill emphasis and instructional methods. The groups remain fluid and intentional: instructions for some groups may be a Fountas and Pinnell or Discovery Links guided reading lesson, while other groups focus on specific skills, in a direct instruction format.

At Hamilton, we believe early intervention is key in accelerating school success. Based on early screening and the Washington State Developmental Profile, the majority of our incoming Kindergarten students are at risk. As such, all Kindergarten students receive small group, leveled reading and writing supports in the Hawk Room. These groups are dynamic and change as students progress. Through ongoing collaboration and team planning, we use the small group components of our core reading curriculum, Journeys, tailoring interventions for our special populations, below and above level groups. In addition to leveled guided reading, phonemic awareness and phonics (sound-symbol), our Learning Without Tears hands-on small group handwriting mini-lessons further reinforces letter knowledge, fine motor skills, and writing.

As a result of these efforts, and with a 53% free and reduced population, Hamilton's ELA/Math Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) scores once again far exceeded state averages (ELA: 3rd +15, 4th +18, 5th +29, 6th +16 Math: 3rd +16, 4th +18, 5th +27, 6th +9 Science 5th +34), 47% of our student scored a 4 in ELA, 41% scored a 4 in Math, and 52% scored a 4 in Science. Finally, only 7.6% of Hamilton Students scored a 1 in ELA (State: 19.6%), only 7% scored a 1 in Math (State: 23%) and only 2% scored a level 1 in Science (State 24%). Additionally, Hamilton's Low Income students exceeded the state Low Income score averages in all three tested content areas (ELA +25.2%, Math +29.5%, Science +51.3%).

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

Qualified students performing above grade level have the option to engage in a highly-capable district-wide program. Teachers inform parents of the option for their child to participate in the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT). Students who qualify for the highly-capable program participate in group activities lead by a certified teacher. In addition to this program, teachers are supported in professional development activities to differentiate instruction for all learners, including an option to attend the national Confratute conference each summer.

Hamilton also utilizes cluster grouping to meet the needs of its student. With great care and in consideration to individual student needs, we use cluster grouping to systematically group high achieving students together in classrooms for the school year. Each teacher working in a cluster classroom has a range of students, like usual, but the number of high achieving students is condensed by clustering these students in a classroom with a teacher trained to adapt curriculum to meet their academic needs. Thus far, nearly 40% of Hamilton teachers have received highly-capable training by attending the National Confratute Conference at the University of Connecticut.

In conjunction with cluster grouping, we also utilizes a pull-out program to provide part-time accelerated or enhanced instruction outside the regular classroom supported by the district's highly-capable director. Special classes. It is a testament to the dedication and effectiveness of our staff that many of our students who qualify for the district's highly-capable program/classroom decide to stay at Hamilton.

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

Hamilton Elementary School works on the fundamental believe that all special education students are general education students, that all general education students are highly-capable students, thus all of our special education students are highly capable (which is why nearly 40% of our staff is highly-capable trained...with a goal of 100%). As such, our goal for those students who qualify for special education, as it is with all our students, is to meet their individual learning needs. For many of our special-education students their needs are meet using a push-in support model. Each grade-band at Hamilton has been

provided with additional para support. With each one of the paras receiving the PD that we provide for teachers. This additional para support is also provided to those students who needs may include pull-out services.

Hamilton Elementary School's RTI instrumental in our ability to identify our students who require additional accommodations, modifications, related services, or specialized education or placements. We have an active Student Assistance Team (SAT) that includes Special Education personnel, related service providers, our school counselor, building administrator, reading/intervention specialist, the general education teacher and parents. Our primary aged special education population remain in the least restrictive environment with same-aged peers to the greatest extent possible. This inclusion model provides in-class support from special education staff. Additional supports for students evidencing social-emotional needs or trauma are provided through our school counselor in collaboration with our county health department resources. As a result, Hamilton special education students significantly outperform their peers on SBA assessments (ELA 11% above state average, Math 16% above state average, Science 80% above state average).

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

Although only very small subgroup of students at Hamilton are English Language Learners, Hamilton intentionally supports these students through collaboration between a ELL teacher and classroom teachers to provide students with individualized supports. In the classroom, Hamilton teachers employ a variety of strategies to help empower our ELL students. Because both hearing and seeing the written word on a daily basis helps students develop a better understanding of the English language we choose texts that are diverse and represent multiple cultures, which creates opportunities for our students to make connections to the text. These texts and books contain illustrations, action-based story plots, and predictable, repetitive phrases. As with all students, we understand that it is important to use material that is both interesting and level appropriate so students stay engaged without feeling overwhelmed.

Hamilton teachers use literature circles so student can learn together by reading and discussing books in a group setting. By using guided collaboration among children we enable ELL students to assist and learn from one another. Students are taught to read slowly, and read the same story more than once.

We are all aware of the greater emphasis being placed on standardized testing. To further assist our ELL students, and to help prepare them for high-stakes testing, Hamilton uses multiple assessment practices to allow students to demonstrate what they know. Using a variety of assessments will allows us to determine if the student lacks content knowledge, literacy skills, cultural background, or language acquisition. We then use this information to better empower our student to be confident learners.

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

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

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

Students at Hamilton are highly engaged in the learning process. Our motto at Hamilton is, “Hawk Heroes help themselves and others to learn!” Hamilton is very intentional about the way students are challenged and engaged. The Hamilton Mission states, “We will ensure that all students continuously and measurably increase their academic and citizenship skills.” Growth is monitored in many ways and teachers use a range of methods to help students deepen their understanding of what they are learning, why they are learning it, and how they know they have achieved it.

Our focus on “rigor” in both the classroom and professional practice keeps us constantly reaching for the next level of student learning, and constantly discussing ways we can assist students to reach the next level of performance. Our culture of collaboration provides rigor and academic challenge by ensuring curriculum coherence, and uniformly high expectations for student work, grading practices, and instructional strategies.

Staff members focus on the “Washington State Eight” criteria and how to best utilize each criterion to increase student engagement and understanding. Using the Danielson Professional Practice Framework, every educator at Hamilton establishes three goals per year, two for academic growth, and one for professional growth. State Smarter Balanced Assessment, placement tests, math/writing proficiency levels, and end of topic tests monitor instruction to ensure that all Hamilton teachers meet state expectations for student learning. Progress is monitored in all content areas throughout the year.

Staff also work closely with students to help them monitor and direct their own progress. Students graph their growth in reading fluency and accuracy, mathematical fluency skills, and physical fitness levels. The students use that data to set personal goals. Our curriculum and instruction provide opportunities for all students to develop critical-thinking, problem solving, and technology proficiencies. The use of fitness trackers, classroom tablets, and Chromebooks support cross-curricular use of technology and research skills. Our curriculum instruction and assessment results demonstrate high expectations and high outcomes for each student regardless of race, gender, or family income.

School policies and a positive building climate help reinforce citizenship and civic behaviors. For example, fifth grade students participate in the recycling team and have helped to create rain gardens in the neighborhood. The PBIS program, Peace Pals on the playground, and a student leadership team provides students with an opportunity to be leaders and to have a voice in decision-making.

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

Hamilton cares about families. Parents and community members are instrumental in providing the additional support that makes learning motivating and rewarding. Many outreach programs are designed to support families and genuinely demonstrate that the staff cares. Hamilton is not just a school; we are a family.

Developing the whole child and creating successful learning opportunities happens when we build relationships with all involved. We involve families and community members in many ways, for example as guest speakers and classroom volunteers to help with student success. These valued team members feel welcomed and are happy to play a role in educating Hamilton students.

Hamilton coordinates many activities that promote and celebrate student success and family engagement. Dr. Seuss Literacy Night, Math Night, Night of the Notables, Family Fitness Nights, music concerts, and monthly award assemblies are a few examples of events that bring home and school together. Parents take pride in seeing their students perform and receive recognition.

Hamilton has an active Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). The PTO holds monthly meetings to plan and organize opportunities for parent volunteers. The PTO organizes multiple fundraisers to finance assemblies, field trips, and teacher requests. They also provide social events for families such as movie nights,

swimming and skating parties, and many more opportunities involving the community.

Hamilton has several community partners who share in the effort to increase student achievement and provide educational enrichment opportunities. For over ten years, the local Presbyterian church has adopted our school by providing volunteers who work with individuals and small groups, as well as providing weekly treats for the staff. Other community partnerships include the YMCA, Olympic Peninsula Rowing Association, Port Angeles Fire and Police Departments, Olympic National Park Rangers, Master Gardeners, and the local hospital.

Parents are kept informed through a variety of means, including the school newsletter, PTO communications, classroom newsletters, and the school website. All teachers communicate with parents on a weekly basis using Wednesday take-home folders. Folders include completed work, missing assignments, classroom newsletters, and a calendar of upcoming events. Two on-line resources help teachers and families to communicate with each other. Class Dojo is a web-based application that staff use to send pictures and messages. Parents can also monitor student grades and assignments using Skyward.

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

Hamilton Elementary School's motto, "Hawk Heroes, Help Themselves and Others to Learn," demonstrates the core of the school's heart and encapsulates why the school was a 2015 Washington Achievement Award Winner, was the recipient of the Washington ASCD Whole Child Award, was then the recipient of the 2018 Vision in Action: The National ASCD Whole Child Award, and was recognized as a 2019 National ESEA Distinguished School: Exceptional Student Performance and Academic Growth for Two or More Consecutive Years. We have two major expectations of our students: Do your best, treat others with kindness. As a result, we have seen our test scores climb from the 60th percentile to the 90th percentile while our discipline issues have dramatically decreased (20 major referrals a month to 4 referrals a month). Seventeen percent of our students do not reside in our attendance boundaries but have specifically requested to attend Hamilton because of our culture of respect, kindness and learning.

As was stated in another section, Hamilton is not just a school; we are a family. Developing the whole child and creating successful learning opportunities. We create successful learning opportunities through focused professional development within the guiding philosophy that it is people not programs (or systems) who have the greatest impact on student learning (empowerment). Professional development in some schools/districts have the same impact as ornaments on a Christmas tree. They are something pretty to look at, but how do they really impact the tree? At Hamilton, we focus on PD that will not only sustain the tree...but help it grow. Of course we participate in the PD of the district's adopted curriculum (Eureka Math etc.), but we also conduct our own needs assessments and then seek out the necessary PD to address areas of concern. Sometimes we utilize our own staff to conduct the PD, or we use experts within the district. Sometimes we seek PD from the outside (Closing the Attitude Gap by Baruti Kafele), but it is always focused on improving our skill set to increase student engagement and learning. When we engage students, students are inspired. Inspired students will excel. When students Excel, they gain confidence. When they gain confidence, they become empowered. When students are empowered, they lean. Hamilton Hawk Heroes Help Themselves and Others to Learn!

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

Leadership at Hamilton is shared among the principal, staff members, and learning teams. The principal is a humble man who leads by example. Whenever he gives reports to the school board or speaks to the public about Hamilton, he always gives credit to others - the teachers, the staff, the volunteers, the parents, and of course, the students. He habitually speaks of "we" when discussing the merits of our school because he values and acknowledges the collective effort of the entire staff. Each day finds the principal greeting students with fist bumps, reminding them of school expectations, reminding them of their potential, and celebrating daily successes in academics and personal goals. Students are eager to approach him to share their accomplishments. Over the last few years, Hamilton has won multiple prestigious awards, and the leadership of the principal has been a key factor in the culture of excellence and support that has become known as the "Hamilton Way."

At Hamilton, we speak of “passing the baton,” as high expectations and a high level of support pass not only from teacher to teacher from year to year, but on a daily basis from one staff member to another as a child moves through the school day. Everyone is included in leadership roles and all are vital members of our school team. Our custodial staff, bus drivers, and cooks all know the importance of the role they play in our school.

Hamilton’s principal also facilitates growth and encourages staff and others to develop leadership skills through participation in school decisions and committees. He believes in capitalizing on the strengths of each staff member, as well as sharing ideas, talents, and instructional practices that help our school continue to grow. Experienced teachers are valued and serve as a resource for others in the building, and newer teachers are valued for their skills, energy, and understanding of current practices. A Student Assistance Team (SAT) meets weekly to discuss the academic physical, and social needs of individual students. The team of classroom teachers, special education teachers, school counselors, administration, and parents work together to create a plan that will aid and challenge students to be their best and to see themselves and their leadership as vital to the success of our students.

We believe that shared leadership and teamwork develop a deeper commitment to our students. Our principal emphasizes that any decisions that we make or programs that we provide must be sustainable even if rare staff turnovers occur.

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

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Hamilton Elementary School's philosophy and vision is developed and reviewed each year by its staff. This collaborative approach creates a climate and culture that ensures our students' success. Our staff members take personal responsibility for supporting each other and our students toward empowerment and for maintaining an environment in which students are upheld to meet high expectations for learning, and for being safe, respectful, and responsible.

Collaboration is the one practice that is the most instrumental for our school's success. Collaboration begins with trust and communication, and leads to a high level of teacher efficacy.

Our teachers are members of our greater learning community who think systematically about their practice and learn from experience. Grade level teams meet on a weekly basis to team plan instruction and support each other in consistent learning objectives, skills, and content as well as strategies for differentiation. We analyze multiple data sources as well as our practices to inform our instructional decisions and address the individual needs of our students. We use our data to identify subgroups, provide academic, behavioral, or emotional supports, and monitor progress in a whole child approach. This level of focus supports our expectations for student learning. Additionally, collaboration on a vertical level allows teachers to gain critical knowledge of their students and the learning standards students will be expected to gain in subsequent years. It is through collaboration that our active SAT Team, RTI, and PBIS systems are instrumental in our ability to identify our students who require additional accommodations, modifications, related services, or specialized education or placements.

Through collaboration, teachers are supported in being responsible for managing and monitoring student learning. Children are actively involved in the learning process, to include the shared responsibility for our greater learning community. Collaboration extends to communication with families, volunteers, local agencies, and our community. When the whole is greater than the sum of the individual parts, it creates success for our students.