

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name E. W. Luther Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 718 Hawthorne Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City South Milwaukee State WI Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 53172-1734

County Milwaukee County

Telephone (414) 766-5326 Fax (414) 766-5327

Web site/URL http://luther.sdsm.k12.wi.us/ E-mail ewightman@sdsm.k12.wi.us

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Jeffrey Weiss E-mail jweiss@sdsm.k12.wi.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name School District of South Milwaukee Tel. (414) 766-5000

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. David Maass
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

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

Date _____

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

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

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

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2020 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2014 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, or 2019.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2019-2020) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 4 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 6 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	6	13	19
K	17	14	31
1	18	13	31
2	14	13	27
3	20	20	40
4	11	12	23
5	14	16	30
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	100	101	201

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0.9 % Asian
 - 5.2 % Black or African American
 - 19.5 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 73 % White
 - 1.4 % 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 <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	6
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	7
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	13
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	201
(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, Albanian, Hmong, Arabic

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

7 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 48 %

Total number students who qualify: 96

8. Students receiving special education services: 10 %
20 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>0</u> Autism | <u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>5</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>1</u> Developmental Delay | <u>4</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>7</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 7

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

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	10
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	8
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	5
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%	95%	95%	96%	95%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

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

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

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

Yes No

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

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

We, along with our community, commit to deliberate excellence for all learners by engaging and educating the whole person to succeed in a dynamic society.

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

E. W. Luther is one of four elementary schools in the School District of South Milwaukee in Wisconsin. While our district has approximately 3,000 students, we are the smallest of the four elementary schools in the district with a total student population of 201 learners. Of that population, 73% are White, 19.5% are Hispanic or Latino, 5.2% are Black or African American, 1.4% are two or more races and 0.9% are Asian. Four percent of our population are English Learners (ELL), and the languages spoken by our families (after English) include Albanian, Spanish, Hmong, and Arabic. Forty-eight percent of our students are eligible for free or reduced meals, and our population of students with disabilities is 9.5%. The city of South Milwaukee is a historically working-class and manufacturing suburb of Milwaukee. We are a neighborhood school with no need for busing, as all of our students live within a radius of less than one mile. Our families often walk to and from school in our neighborhood, which helps contribute to our strong sense of community.

We promote key strategies in our school to encourage and challenge all students to develop their full potential academically, emotionally, physically, socially, and culturally. We provide an environment that encompasses rigor, respect, pride, safety, celebration, relevance and relationships. Our students are provided a rigorous learning environment focused on the academic and emotional needs of each child. Academically, we provide equitable and accessible curriculum opportunities in the least restrictive environment for all students. We have common grade level expectations, scheduling, and learning intentions. In addition to rigorous academic expectations presented in a constructivist learning approach, we use a coaching structure that allows teachers to continue to refine and calibrate instructional opportunities for all students.

An environment of mutual respect between all members of our learning community is modeled and supported through our all-encompassing system of support for students' social and emotional needs. We honor students and staff who demonstrate pride in what they do. The staff works to create a safe place to work, learn, and have fun for all who join us in our day. We celebrate each child as an individual academically and emotionally. Through our intentional relationship building, we guide each child to become a productive member of society.

At E. W. Luther, we incorporate innovative techniques that set us apart and contribute to our unique character. We attend to the whole child through a multifaceted approach - from our breakfast program offered to all students regardless of demographics, to our universal character education curriculum, to support for students' emotional and behavioral needs through a trauma sensitive lens anchored in building relationships and a collaborative nature. We pride ourselves on the culture within our building and our data supports our students and staff feeling safe.

Another innovative technique that sets us apart and contributes to our unique character is our Constructivist approach to all we do. The growth mindset of the staff at E. W. Luther contributes to the school's remarkable climate and culture. When change is presented the staff embrace it, and when challenges come about, the staff rises to those challenges as a unified body. Teachers view all E. W. Luther students as their own, and celebrate one another's successes. A recent engagement survey administered to all staff reported 95% of respondents indicated the following: "I understand how my work directly contributes to the overall success of the District," "I am proud to work for this district," and "My colleagues are comfortable sharing their ideas about teaching practices." We feel these specific results are a direct reflection of the culture established at E. W. Luther, which is also modeled for students on a daily basis. We identify this as a technique that sets us apart from others.

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

Our priority before instruction begins is to build relationships with students to ensure they feel safe and respected in the learning environment, encouraging risk-taking throughout the learning process. Routines and procedures are explicitly taught and practiced by all students so quality learning and teaching can be carried out in a way where differing opinions and perspectives are respected. We encourage a growth mindset in all academic areas to foster a productive struggle.

Our curriculum and instruction is centered in a constructivist approach. Based on the needs we have identified in the K-5 curriculum, we have built a 4K program that prepares students for kindergarten and beyond. In each content area, the learning goal is clearly articulated and students actively engage in their own learning. We utilize a universal screener in reading and math to assure our curriculum and teaching practices are rigorous and competitive with national norms. All of our content areas include formative and summative assessments. We use these data to make curriculum or instructional practice changes to best meet the needs of our students while also closing their achievement gaps.

Interactive conversations are a significant component of our instructional practices. These discussions provide opportunities for students to be actively engaged and involved in their learning. We intentionally provide these opportunities within mathematics and literacy so that students have the opportunity to share their thinking and consider the reasoning of peers. These conversations force students to dive more deeply into their learning by having to explain their thinking, provide evidence, and ask questions.

We use a master schedule with common scheduling across grade levels to allow for planning and collaborative teaching opportunities. This provides time for a prioritized, strategic schedule that includes a dedicated intervention block. Pacing guides are used for each curriculum to ensure timely and organized progression of skills and content.

1b. Reading/English language arts

Our vision for literacy at E. W. Luther and in South Milwaukee is to promote and embrace competence, confidence and joy in reading, writing, listening, speaking, and thinking so that our community of learners successfully interacts with our ever-changing world. In recent years we revamped and refined our literacy curriculums at the elementary level. We now have aligned practices and materials, have increased rigor to meet state standard expectations, and have established dedicated time to address the needs of our striving learners outside of universal instruction.

Our literacy instructional framework is the workshop model, with Units of Study for Reading and Writing materials, which aligns to the English Language Arts Common Core Standards. Our Literacy Leadership Team, which is a diverse group of general and special education teachers (K-12), coaches and leadership, chose this research based, best practice model after much research and study, which included data collection through a pilot group.

A workshop session includes a whole group mini lesson, flexible small group instruction, and conferring with individuals and partnerships. Mini lessons provide opportunities for teachers to model new learning and for students to actively practice through conversation or writing about reading. Small group instructional content is based on data such as running records, screeners, student work and observation. During conferences, teachers look to see if students are transferring their learning, checking progress on goals, and assisting students in setting new goals. Word work begins with systematic, explicit, multisensory phonics instruction in kindergarten and continues through second grade. Word study in the intermediate grades is differentiated based on a student developmental spelling stage.

To meet the needs of our diverse learners and close gaps, an intervention block is part of daily classroom schedules. During this time individual needs are addressed in small groups, following a continuum of essential reading skills. All learners are included, from those in need of closing a gap to those in need of enrichment. A variety of research based interventions and online resources are used.

1c. Mathematics

We believe that each student enters school with mathematical ideas. It is our job to meet students where they are and advance them in their own individual learning goals. In mathematics, we have recently upgraded to a constructivist-based mathematics program (Investigations 3) that scaffolds student mathematical experiences, while increasing rigor. Each unit of study emphasizes two Standards for Mathematical Practice that are monitored throughout the unit. Student progress is monitored daily with checklists as students engage in contextual situations that require them to make sense of the mathematics and justify their reasoning with representations. These Standards of Mathematical Practice help students make sense of problems and persevere in solving them, attend to precision, use appropriate tools, model with mathematics, look for and make use of structure, reason abstractly and quantitatively, and look for regularity and repeated reasoning. Lastly, we were fortunate enough to have teachers participate in a collaborative relationship with the authors of Investigations 3 to study the Math Practice standards, and how they fit with the content standards. This allowed teachers to more fully understand how these Practice Standards were embedded within the daily mathematical tasks, as well as the process around how to measure growth within these sets of Math Practice Standards.

Not only have we increased the rigor of our math curriculum, we have also engaged in professional development to assure our teaching practices incorporate research based high-leverage practices. We studied the use of mathematical representations and incorporated them into our teaching practices. One specific representation that we have incorporated into our program is the use of the tape diagram. This representation has provided students a model that is useful throughout all areas of mathematics as well as with all number systems. Teachers at all grade levels see the benefit of this model to help students visualize mathematics.

Another high-leverage practice we have studied is from the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) book Principle to Action. Each classroom has a “star model” posted on the wall and is referred back to several times during lessons to remind students of why they need to show each step of their thinking. It is also used to help parents understand the need to explain and justify mathematics.

We take a collaborative approach to teaching mathematics. Students with disabilities are fully included within the universal curriculum and fully supported to continue to make gains towards closing gaps and meeting grade level expectations. Teachers regularly team with colleagues and district math coaches to analyze student work, study mathematical concepts, and discuss instructional strategies. Teachers have embraced the practice of using math talks to build mathematical thinking, fluency, and discourse. Students are given opportunities to construct viable arguments, justify their reasoning, and critique the reasoning of others. The current use of developing a shared understanding of the mathematics being taught for each unit through the use of an overarching learning goal has supported teachers to focus their instruction and guide student conversations.

1d. Science

We have worked hard to ensure that our students can solve problems, connect with the world around them, think deeply, engage with their learning, and make strong evidence-based decisions. Guided by the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and the 5E Model (Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, Evaluate) our students are learning the principles of science and engineering. Our curriculum covers lessons connected to Life Science, Earth Science, Physical Science, and/or Engineering. We use three-dimensional learning aspects which includes Scientific and Engineering Practices and Crosscutting Concepts. All lessons are designed to be taught in context, with a focus on a small number of Disciplinary Core Ideas to understand science.

All students engage in lessons that build their scientific thinking and understanding of real-world phenomena and problems. Students build sedimentary rocks as they study fossils and rock layers, use aquariums to learn about animal defenses, become pinball machine engineers by constructing their own pinball machines, and build weather instruments to explore weather phenomena. Students learn how materials respond to heating/cooling and how the properties of ingredients affect properties of mixtures to create a glue for use at their school. Students utilize online simulations to explore earth and sky patterns, while others engage in regularly scheduled Makerspace time.

We also provide opportunities for the world to be our classroom. Fifth graders engage outside of school by attending a multi-day overnight camp experience where they explore science through designing and building wind turbines, gathering and studying live aquatic organisms, dissecting bees, and designing and creating a solar oven and water heater. Third grade attends a community event with hands-on weather experiences with certified meteorologists. We are also fortunate to be within walking distance of a large park and many different ecosystems. We take advantage of these spaces for real-life experiences in our own “backyard.”

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

Our social studies instruction is based on the state standards, and focuses on geography, economics, history, behavioral science, and political science. These standards have moved from topic-based to more skills-based standards. These skills include analyzing, comparing, contrasting, categorizing, etc. Much of our instruction is integrated into literacy, and the literacy materials and framework support the social studies standards.

Students in all grades are engaged in inquiry and choice and are encouraged to choose topics for their opinion writing based on what they believe. The third graders are able to choose something that is important to them and follow the writing process to suggest a change in their school or community. Students in 5th grade become social advocates, researching and arguing current social issues in both essay and debate formats. Students present their work to other grade levels which helps all students develop skills as engaged and responsible citizens. Students are taught to develop a claim, ask questions, research to find answers, and explore new questions that arise from this research.

History and its impact on the world is taught in many grade levels. Our third graders explore history through the lives of important people as they read biographies. Fourth graders read and discuss historical fiction books and research different time periods, and also do extensive research and writing around the American Revolution. Fourth grade students also learn about Wisconsin history and culture. Students in 5th grade read and write about westward expansion and its impact on our country, while also engaging with history and geology through their yearly overnight outdoor learning experience. Students explore geological formations and identify the importance of the French Fur Trade.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

Our 4K program offers a comprehensive, whole-child approach that promotes learning foundational reading, mathematics, science, cognitive, and social skills, through discovery and developmentally appropriate guided explorations. Based on the needs we have identified in our formal K-5 curriculum, we have built a 4K program that incorporates key foundational skills that directly connect and prepare students for a jump start into Kindergarten and beyond. While our core program is Creative Curriculum for Preschool, we have augmented our programming based on gaps we have noted in incoming Kindergarten performance assessments and standardized test scores. We have added an alphabetics program, FUNdations, to teach letters, sounds, and writing pathways for fine motor development. We have added Second Step, a social emotional learning program to support a successful, inclusive, supportive learning environment. We have added a math learning progression rubric and counting collections activity to help students build foundational math concepts beyond just verbal counting. This is our first year offering such a comprehensive, strong program, and we are excited to see the results of our efforts in years to come.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Students participate in art education for 60 minutes once every 4 days. Students engage in activities that build technical and communication skills. Art education also teaches about creativity, establishing an understanding of aesthetics and the world around them, and welcoming individual thought and diversity.

In addition to art education, our students also receive general music 30 minutes every other day. Our curriculum provides a solid foundation in experiences that engage learners in a life-long relationship with music. Our curriculum focuses on music literacy, the cultural and historical impact of music, and music performance. Students create original compositions using traditional and non-traditional notation, learn about important musicians and composers from diverse backgrounds throughout history, and understand the collaboration, responsibility, and problem solving that goes into musical performance. Students also develop character through music education while gaining confidence and compassion. Fifth grade students have the opportunity of joining the strings program and attending small group lessons.

Our goal in physical education is to engage students in a well-planned sequential, standards based program that develops motor skills, knowledge, and behaviors for personal and social responsibility. Our teachers strive to develop physically literate students that have motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for purposeful engagement in physical activity for the development of the whole person throughout their lifespan. We provide physical activity to all children for thirty minutes every other day that teaches them the skills and knowledge needed to sustain a health-enhancing lifestyle. All students, regardless of their economic status, have the opportunity to fuel their brain through a nutritious breakfast.

We are promoting a culture of creativity, innovation, and collaborative problem-solving within our technology and library offerings. We have a technology integration model incorporating 1:1 Chromebooks for grades 3-5 and 2:1 for grades K-2 with focus on the SAMR model (Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, Redefinition). Annually, we participate in a data collection that assesses our use of student technology to reflect upon its use within the classroom.

All students have access to the use of Google Read/Write extensions, which are accessibility tools. Additionally, students participate in breakout box activities, Google Expedition, and opportunities to share metacognitive strategies on an online portfolio called Seesaw. Through our library and media opportunities, offered to students 60 minutes every four days, we support student skills practice in reading and allow for cross curriculum opportunities. Students have access to resources via print, electronic, or audio to best meet their learner needs. Additionally, students participate in centers during library time which allows time to explore maker activities, design thinking, STEAM activities, coding, and social emotional learning.

We are also very proud of our multi-faceted approach to meeting student emotional and behavioral needs. This encompasses a multi-tiered approach consisting of best practices from a trauma sensitive lens, a universal character education curriculum, and a school-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) model. Our school employs a full-time school social worker, has access to a social emotional learning coach, and partners with local health care agencies for school based mental health services.

Through PBIS, school-wide expectations are taught, reinforced, and celebrated. Our system reinforces Safety, Responsibility, and Respectfulness, which aligns with our Character Education program. Our expectations are posted throughout the school, as well as reinforced through assemblies and morning announcements. Students who exemplify the Luther Way are publicly acknowledged and receive tickets to apply to character incentives such as movie rewards and extra recess opportunities. We are proud to say our district was designated as a 2017 National District of Character by Character.org and are always looking for new ways to incorporate positive character traits into our daily work.

To promote college and career readiness, our fifth grade students participate in a career unit. The lessons and activities focus on career awareness and goal setting, as well as the students' strengths, interests, and learning styles. Students learn how to apply their strengths to their academics and future careers. Information gathered through these activities is then discussed during an individual planning

conference, to which parents are invited. During this time, middle school transition information is also discussed, which serves as a bridge from elementary to middle school.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

Through use of our universal screener, we reflect upon student growth and performance. We use this measure along with classroom data to identify students who may require differentiated instruction. We meet regularly during professional development as well as during student concern meetings to gather instructional ideas and intentionally plan to meet student needs. When looking at our state assessment data, we have student populations who have performance data more than ten percent below our school average. The needs of all students are addressed within our mission to pursue equitable opportunities for all students.

Our Hispanic/Latino students, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged student populations, who were identified as performing greater than 10% below the school average, have needs that are met within this structure as identified by closing the gap data. We utilize a Response to Intervention (RtI) model and offer differentiated and intervention support at all three tiers. At a tier one level, classroom teachers differentiate within the universal instruction through a workshop model for literacy. At the tier two level, we have a model of interventions in place within the regular education schedule and classroom teacher expectations. This WIN (What I Need) Time is offered at least 4 times per week. During this time, regular education teachers provide opportunities for intervention on identified skills. This intentionally scheduled intervention block also allows for tier three intervention opportunities for students requiring intense interventions outside of universal instruction time. In addition, this intervention structure also allows for specialized instruction to provide additional opportunities for students with disabilities and English Learners outside of universal instruction time periods. At all three tiers, we also attend to students' social and emotional needs by utilizing a trauma sensitive approach rooted in building relationships to foster resilient learners at all tiers and within all subgroups.

3b. Students performing above grade level

In addition to students who are performing below grade level expectations, we use our universal screener, classroom assessments and observations to identify students who are performing above grade level expectations. Focusing on meeting students' needs based on readiness, interest, and individual learning differences is a priority. E. W. Luther offers appropriate programming involving ongoing assessment of student needs, progress, and skill development. The Gifted and Talented philosophy is committed to developing, implementing, and monitoring programming and supports necessary to fully develop students' identified capabilities, needs, and potential in one or more of the areas of giftedness: specific academic, intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership.

E. W. Luther focuses on determining and programming for student needs that cannot be met in the regular classroom and provide opportunities to develop and extend those talents. Furthermore, E. W. Luther also recognizes that a social and emotional component is necessary to meet the needs of the whole child. The Gifted and Talented Coordinator works with the advanced learners to develop personal achievement goals as well as personal social and emotional goals. The educators understand that the GT population has unique and complex social and emotional needs that must be identified and worked through. It is through teaching these "soft skills," which develop strong communication skills, a hard working mindset, a friendly and positive rapport with others, and a willingness to learn. E. W. Luther is actively involved in area school districts through our local Gifted & Talented Collaborative network as well as a group called P.A.G.E. (Partners for the Advancement of Gifted Education) which offers many activities to enhance the myriad of areas of the gifted learner throughout the school year.

3c. Special education

Students who have been identified as having a disability according to the eligibility requirements put forth by the Department of Public Instruction, and require special education services due to their disability related

needs, remain a member of their regular education classroom community and universal academic experiences. Students are active participants with their peers in the universal curriculum and environment. Regular and special education teachers work collaboratively to ensure equitable access and participation in the universal curriculum as well as identifying areas of need for specialized instruction through grade level and diagnostic assessments. Students with disabilities are seen as a part of the classroom community. This is observable within the relationships they develop with peers. The structure of an intervention block dedicated to student needs that do not pull time away from the universal instruction model has also allowed students additional instructional opportunities for specialized instruction when requiring prerequisite skills or additional specialized instruction to have their needs met without sacrificing experiences in the regular education environment or curriculum. Our inclusive practices have fostered behavioral, academic and social skills development that allows students to make gains at closing the gap with their peers. When walking into our classrooms at E. W. Luther, you more than likely would not be able to spot the students in special education. This is because they would blend right in with their peers actively engaging in their learning, raising their hands with confidence to add to group discussions or share their thinking and accessing the universal curriculum with their peers.

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

We are dedicated to educating students who are English Learners (ELs). These EL students comprise an integral part of our student body. It is our mission to provide instruction and academic support in English to students for whom English is not their primary language. By supporting the students in their goals to read, write, speak and listen to English proficiently, we prepare students to be successful in the regular education classroom, the school community, and the larger community. Data from the ACCESS for ELLs assessment is used to determine students' exact competency in each of the four areas of listening, reading, speaking and writing. Working in collaboration, general education teachers design units and lessons to meet the needs of EL students using the framework of district benchmarks and World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) standards. Additional resource support for pre-teaching and post-teaching students helps to achieve these goals.

General education teachers, in cooperation with EL teachers, monitor student proficiency on grade level expectations and give feedback to students and families. Assessments are modified and accommodated to best meet student needs and reflect what students have learned. Academic language development within vocabulary-rich environments is provided to students within the general education classroom. For students who need more individualized instruction, language development and vocabulary instruction also occurs during the supplemental support services they receive.

Through job-embedded and additional professional development opportunities, school personnel receive training and coaching in culturally relevant strategies and approaches aligned with best practice for English Learners. Through culturally relevant practice, the school community recognizes the positive impact of individual cultures on student learning.

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

We have seen a significant increase in the number of students that have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) and are working to redefine our practices when it relates to using a trauma sensitive lens. We have engaged in professional learning focused on Trauma Sensitive Schools (TSS), including an understanding of prevalence, impact, and caregiver capacity while utilizing intentional practices to build relationships and support students' emotional regulation. We continue to use these practices to support students at the universal level, as well as for our students who show us that they need more support to be successful.

Our school social worker teaches the social emotional learning program, Second Step. The lessons promote school connectedness, a safe and respectful climate, and school success. The skills taught strengthen our student's ability to learn, have empathy, manage emotions, and solve problems. The classroom lessons are delivered in the classroom setting. Due to the curriculum being taught at all grades, we are able to have a common language all students and staff understand and use throughout the school. The lessons are taught

explicitly, practiced, and interwoven into other curriculum areas whenever possible.

Our universal character education curriculum is delivered through classroom meetings. This curriculum also includes school-wide assemblies in which students model and celebrate positive character traits. As a capstone experience, all 5th graders attend an overnight outdoor camp where students engage in social emotional learning through cooperative and individual learning activities. Our students enjoy a “Buddy Bench” on the playground as well as “Reading Buddies” that team a lower grade with a higher grade level. Both support our initiative to build positive relationships and healthy emotional lives.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Our school is known throughout our community for being very welcoming and open. This is articulated by parents, community members, and traveling staff. Our school exudes a calm, but dynamic presence. Staff members are devoted to providing successful days for all and it shows in the relationships we have worked so diligently to build. We put our students' academic, social, and emotional growth at the forefront of everything we do.

All staff participate in continuous training regarding Trauma Sensitive Schools (TSS). Our teachers have the tools and strategies to work with children from a multitude of backgrounds and experiences. They utilize a recipe composed of seven research-based ingredients to help foster resilience for students, regardless of their trauma experiences. This framework also works to support teacher mental health and recognizes the importance of self care.

We utilize a Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) model, which we call "The Luther Way". This inspires our students to be safe, respectful and responsible as they go about their days. Our September kick off sets everyone up for a successful year by modeling procedures and routines in all areas of our school. Students' positive choices are celebrated each month with an all-school celebration such as "sit anywhere at lunch" day, board game day, and all-school read-ins.

Our school district was recognized as a National District of Character in 2017 by Character.org. We continue to deliver our district's message about the importance of strong character through our work with our five district character traits - Respect, Kindness, Responsibility, Honesty, and Perseverance. Lessons, discussions, and read-alouds highlight each trait. Additionally, our bi-monthly assemblies allow students opportunities to share their ideas of what it means to possess strong character.

We utilize the Second Step curriculum to help address social and emotional needs. This focuses on skills for learning (listening, paying attention, self-talk), empathy, problem solving/conflict resolution and emotion management. Our pupil services staff member also spends time ensuring students are at school as often as possible with attendance monitoring, working with families and providing incentives for classrooms with the highest attendance percentages.

Our intermediate level students are given leadership opportunities which allows them to be role models for younger students. Students in grades 3-5 assist with the school store, the weekly book swap, and act as reading buddies. Fourth and fifth graders work as safety cadets before and after school and monitoring during the K-2 lunch.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

We engage our families with many opportunities. Our school communicates via flyers, email, or phone to inform parents of news, upcoming events, and district information. Teachers also use daily communication through social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram, Seesaw, etc.) to share pictures of classroom activities and inform parents of important information. Parents are also able to communicate with the teacher through these accounts. Some students have daily Check-in/Check-out sheets to help communicate their daily strengths and area of improvement. We have a school social media account that shares the positive day to day activities.

We have a strong partnership with local businesses across our community. Each year our student council organizes a food drive to donate items to the South Milwaukee Human Concerns. We also engage with families who need assistance with holiday support. Our kindergarten class takes a yearly field trip to the South Milwaukee Public Library. We have a Little Library on our playground that allows students to swap books among each other. Students in 3rd through 5th grade engage with veterans at the local V.F.W. Post on Veterans Day and present them with student-made thank you cards. Our local martial arts business

partners with our Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) to offer after-school classes that support our character education work. We also welcome field students and student teachers from local colleges. These college students are able to work with smaller groups of our students to best meet their needs. Our teachers are also able to provide expertise to field work students by sharing their knowledge.

Throughout the school year, E. W. Luther offers multiple events to showcase our students' success as well as opportunities to involve our families in their child's learning. This includes: District Literacy Night, Math Homework Sessions, Math Drop-In Days, conferences twice a year for all students, music concerts, art shows, spelling and geography bees, publishing parties, and narrative report cards.

We have an active PTO which holds many events such as dances, movie nights, and Scholastic book fairs. During the monthly meetings, our principal shares school information with families and offers to listen to parent concerns or ideas. This group sets up multiple fundraisers throughout the year to help raise money to benefit our students. These fundraisers include family nights out at local restaurants, a walk-a-thon, and a basket raffle.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

E. W. Luther is a school in the district that teachers want to be a part of. According to a recent district level employee engagement survey, 100% of staff said, "I am motivated to contribute more than is normally required to complete my work." The collaborative and collegial relationships among staff members are evident. At staff meetings, celebrations of one another and our collective efforts are common. Collaborative conversations are part of these staff meetings as well, and are also a regular practice during and outside of the school day. Teachers regularly meet with the Literacy, Mathematics, and Technology Integration coaches to analyze student work, self-reflect, study best practice, set goals and plan instruction. Teachers also open their doors to colleagues within the building and from across the district. Several times a year, Literacy and Math Walks involve co-teaching and observing one another in an "instructional lab" setting, with a reflection and debrief following. Our newest opportunity for collaboration involves teachers capturing a video of their instruction, and then reflecting on their practice with a colleague.

There are many other practices that cause teachers to feel valued and supported. One example is that the principal has intentional meetings with each staff member multiple times each year. During these meetings, teachers have a chance to share ideas and respond to thoughtful reflective questions provided by the principal. This experience allows staff to be and feel heard, to share ideas, and request support. Another example is that teachers have the opportunity to be part of a variety of leadership teams including: literacy, mathematics, technology integration, trauma sensitive practices, PBIS/Character Ed, Scheduling Committee, and PLCs.

New teachers to our school are supported within our mentoring program, which provides support throughout the entire school year. Six days per year, our staff participates in district led professional development. This ensures that all teachers in the district are on the same page, and have the most current, up-to-date information. Topics include: core curriculum areas, TSS, technology integration, and staff-selected personalized learning. Our school and district also supports professional development opportunities within a micro-credential format that allows for self-paced, personalized professional development that yields meaningful outcomes while also empowering teachers to take control of their own growth and advancement. We are fortunate to have had the highest percentage of teachers take advantage of this micro-credential opportunity in the district, which has yielded positive student outcomes.

4. School Leadership:

When respect is a central pillar to school culture, as it is at E. W. Luther, it permeates in all aspects of leadership. Every individual at our school is valuable, and this is seen in our shared leadership model. As a staff, we are self-defined as optimistic; we believe that all people have untapped potential for growth and development. It's not about the programs, it's about the people.

This leads to a dynamic environment where all staff members understand the importance of hard work with the ultimate goal of increased student achievement. In the fall of 2019, the school district issued an employee engagement survey. The results of this survey indicated that 95% of respondents stated positively, “My colleagues are comfortable sharing their ideas about teaching practices”. We feel this speaks to our overall positive culture of shared leadership, overall growth mindset, and an authentic sense of empowerment for all employees so that they know how their work contributes to the larger goals we set as a district.

Collaborative relationships between the principal and faculty are the norm, as well as between faculty members. All staff are given regularly scheduled opportunities to ask questions, share ideas, and inquire about building and district initiatives they might be unclear about. It is common for faculty meetings to feel more like a productive, solutions-based conversation amongst teachers and an open forum for ideas and questions. The principal believes this type of environment contributes to empowerment, authentic engagement, self-efficacy, and motivation.

School staff are pushed towards success by a principal who is both encouraging and enthusiastic, qualities that are vital for our overall mindset and motivation. We all share in the district’s intentional vision and understand our role in bringing that vision towards a reality. Through shared leadership we have trust and confidence in each other which directly contributes to not only our own personal success, but also the success of our students. We believe all voices are needed and important and have provided opportunities for them to be heard.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The philosophy that drives our growth and development as a school is a Constructivist approach to all that we do. We utilize this approach to guide our teaching practices, curriculum, and learning opportunities. As a staff, this is also our approach to our professional development, our professional learning community, and how we choose to grow as practitioners.

The most instrumental practice that contributes to our school's success is our intentional use of self-reflection to continually grow our professional practices in response to student need. Within our science, literacy, and math curricula, students are guided through goal setting, productive struggle, critical thinking, exploring, and active engagement in their own learning process. Our instruction is interactive, student-centered, discussion-based, and always centered on open-ended questions. We place strong emphasis on communication skills, as well as building on the assets and knowledge that we already have to construct new meaning and experiences; a strength-based model is at the center of all our work together.

We view our roles as educators through an asset-based and growth-mindset model. Through strategic use of grade level meetings, instructional coaches, and professional learning communities, we continually reflect on our strengths and opportunities for growth. Utilizing data for self reflection, we have worked diligently over the last few school years to redefine our high leverage instructional practices, curriculum materials, areas for student intervention/enrichment and school culture. Through our work for AdvancED accreditation and continued employee engagement surveys, we increased the rigor offered to students. Lastly, through our reflections on how to meet student needs, we learned we needed to grow within our capacity to provide a supportive, equitable environment for students who could have experienced trauma. This led us to an extensive, ongoing study on the essential elements of trauma sensitive schools, the creation of a social and emotional learning coach position, and a partnership with St. A's: a program for school-based mental health services. We use this lens when interacting with parents, when providing educational opportunities, when interacting with each other, and when attempting to understand student behavior.

Through our own self-reflection and student-centered culture, we continue to redefine our instructional practices so that we keep striving to do what is best for the whole child. Our work is never done. We are excited about what is on the horizon for us as we continue to grow and learn.