

***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. Dan Arvidson-Hicks  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

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

School Mailing Address 6200 East 3rd Street  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Superior State WI Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 54880-4390

County Douglas County

Telephone (715) 398-7672 Fax (715) 398-3131

Web site/URL http://superiorlses.ss13.sharpschool.com/ E-mail dan.hicks@superior.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.

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

Name of Superintendent\* Mrs. Amy Starzecki E-mail amy.starzecki@superior.k12.wi.us  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Superior School District Tel. (715) 394-8710

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

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

Name of School Board  
President/Chairperson Mr. Len Albrecht  
(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):
- 6 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 8 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	7	2	9
K	14	13	27
1	12	19	31
2	16	11	27
3	16	17	33
4	12	14	26
5	17	18	35
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	94	94	188

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 1.1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 0.6 % Asian
  - 1.1 % Black or African American
  - 3.9 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 83.2 % White
  - 10.1 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2018 - 2019 school year: 4%

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	3
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	5
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	8
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	179
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.04
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	4

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

Vietnamese

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

1 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 43 %

Total number students who qualify: 81

8. Students receiving special education services: 19 %

35 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>1</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>1</u> Other Health Impaired                 |
| <u>6</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>13</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>14</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: 1

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

	<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.	11
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	4
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	4
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

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 17:1

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	91%	89%	89%	91%	93%
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.

Lake Superior Elementary will ensure all students have the knowledge and skills for living, learning, and working successfully. All means all... every student, every day.

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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Lake Superior Elementary School is the smallest of six elementary schools in the School District of Superior. The school, located on the eastern edge of Superior, Wisconsin, enrolls 188 PreK-5th graders. Families live in both the countryside and the eastern city limits. We serve an economically diverse student body, though most families are working class and of modest income levels. There are several students, across all grade levels, who face various transitional concerns due to family activities related to drugs or substance abuse. While the community is majority white, our students of color are slowly increasing with several different ethnicities represented in our student body. We do have a high ratio of special education students at our school and students with multiple risk factors for their future academic success. For example, 44% of our incoming 4K students were already identified for special education services – prior to enrollment.

Lake Superior Elementary School has embraced our mission and vision – to ensure high levels of learning for all students. Staff are committed to continuous improvement of our instruction and programs through ongoing learning and professional collaboration to address student needs.

Lake Superior Elementary is implementing Multi-Level Systems of Support to meet and support academic and social emotional learning of all students. All students have been taught the Zones of Regulation in classrooms and through guidance lessons. Helping students identify the zone they are in supports their self-regulation and learning. In addition, teachers and staff are implementing restorative practices in all settings of the school through use of affective statements, restorative questions and using proactive circles. We believe in meeting student social and emotional needs in order to develop student academic needs. Training in these methods has been accomplished through our shared leadership structure. We utilize teacher leaders in our building to train all staff on social emotional learning as well as academics.

Lake Superior Elementary utilizes professional collaboration to improve instruction and student results. Collaborative grade level teams review student data on grade level common assessments and students are identified for needing more time to support mastery of essential learning or to extend and enrich learning. The school master schedule has built in time to provide teachers with time and resources to provide teacher-led interventions for students in small groups and one-on-one support. One result of the school's shared leadership in grades K-2 is a focus on providing a systematic early literacy learning, enhancing small group instruction with high quality practices, to ensure kids get what they need and can read. In grades 3-5, their collaborative focus has been on improving their "Boost" time. This provides math supports, again based on common assessments and student work, to create flexible groups for students to learn specific skills identified by the team. In grades 4 and 5 teachers work together and share students across grade levels during "Boost." These have been intensive supports that teachers have sustained in collaborative professional learning groups that are supported by building and district leadership.

In addition to a shared leadership structure, we have a culture of teacher leaders using their strengths to build innovation in our programs and serve student needs. Our mentor program matches fifteen students who have experienced homelessness, divorce, parent addictions and/or domestic violence with a caring adult from the community. Mentorship provides weekly support and builds student resiliency and well-being through relationships. Other examples include creation of a college scholarship for students who attended Lake Superior as an elementary student, literacy opportunities for students in the summer at three trailer courts, and partnership with the National Estuarine Research Reserve to connect students to local environmental learning. All of these programs and partnerships were developed by teacher leaders.

We have additional positive partnerships with local businesses and a community that wants to support the school. What makes these partnerships unique is that local businesses are proactive and come to us to donate or ask about needs. One business owner is coming to our school regularly to mentor 4th grade students. The community is aware that some families struggle economically and provide resources such as coats and boots, school supplies, snacks and field trip money. Our community has a history of generosity.

We believe, as leaders at Lake Superior Elementary School, the strength of the school is the foundation of a deeply caring relational community that is committed to building better academic results for students, regardless of barriers or background.

## **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

The overall approach to our curriculum and instruction model throughout our district, which includes Lake Superior Elementary School, is to provide a guaranteed and viable Core curriculum at each grade level. This includes a strong focus on tier 1 instruction based on state standards in each content area. We have adopted resources in literacy (reading and writing), math, science and social studies. Our resources in math and literacy include assessment components that provide teachers with formative and summative measures. Our teachers use this student data to inform adjustments to instruction. A critical piece of the student success in our school is the Professional Learning Communities (PLC) structure. Each grade level team engages in on-going collaboration to discuss the critical elements of essential standards, create common formative assessments (CFAs), and analyze data to meet student needs.

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

Our district adopted Benchmark Literacy as a core reading resource in the 2016-17 year, and we are proud of our process of involving all elementary teachers who desired to be a part of it. We reviewed research, analyzed various forms of student achievement data, conducted a staff survey, reflected on our values, and created a rubric to help us determine what tool would be the best fit for our students in Superior. Our instruction focuses on modeling metacognitive reading strategies such as character analysis, compare and contrast, whole group read alouds, mentor texts, mini-lessons that provide explicit instruction on the reading strategies, and a reading workshop small group time for 60 minutes each day provides the backbone of our reading instruction. Phonics (grades K-2) and word work (grades 3-5) are supplemental core components to meet the language standards for grades K-5. Woven into all of these components are formative and summative assessment tools and practices where teachers gain an understanding of what students know and how to support them on the learning continuum to become proficient readers. Our students are given opportunities to demonstrate their learning and usage of the metacognitive strategies and language applications both in print and electronically through the CSA and other imbedded Benchmark assessments.

To provide and support high-quality writing instruction, our district adopted Units of Study for Writing in 2014-2015. These units of study at each grade level provide a structure of mini-lessons, writing workshop approach, and conferencing structure so the focus can be on the writing process and growing our students as writers, beyond simply creating writing “products.” There are both science and social studies content connections throughout the units of writing, which also allow students to experience research in a variety of ways. Within the workshop model, teachers use conferencing to assess student learning and growth throughout the process.

#### **1c.** Mathematics

Our district adopted Math Expressions as the primary instructional math resource in 2010 and have continued to update that resource with each new available version over the last 10 years. We teach from this resource with fidelity and fidelity observations from the principal and Director of Curriculum & Instruction provide a system of monitoring the fidelity. We have recently re-emphasized the importance of all five components of the Math Expressions resource: Student Leaders, Helping Community, Building Concepts, Quick Practice/Daily Routines, and Math Talk. Teachers allow students to be leaders within a classroom learning community in which collaboration is encouraged and valued. The spiraling of skills through Quick Practice (K-2) and Daily Routines (3-5) is a non-negotiable component to student retention of math skills that students apply when they are engaged in in-depth problem solving. Math Talk is modeled and practiced in classrooms all year long at each grade level. Each grade level does formative assessment checks and quick quizzes are done at grades 2-5. Unit assessments serve as summative assessment checks so grade level teams can determine which concepts must be spiraled through during upcoming units.

## **1d. Science**

In the spring of 2019, several teachers at Lake Superior piloted Mystery Science as a primary elementary science resource. All classrooms began implementing this tool in the fall of 2019. This resource was selected to help teachers bring science inquiries to life for students in grades K-5. In preparation for implementing this resource, teams of grade level teachers explored the new science standards, which included unpacking the Storylines from the Next Generation Science Standards. We created a scope and sequence of units and established a school year timeline for each grade level. The primary focus for our science instruction is on inquiry and students exploring phenomena that is highlighted in the Wisconsin Science Standards. An integral part of science curriculum and instruction is students responding to their learning in writing. Our Units of Study writing brings in a science focus through lab report writing and exploring concepts such as forces and motion. We use this writing as an assessment tool in addition to those specific assessment tools built into our Mystery Science resource.

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

Our elementary teachers are in the process of unpacking the new social studies standards. During the summer of 2019, a team of teachers came together to start determining a scope and sequence. That scope and sequence will be completed in the summer of 2020 for implementation in the fall of 2020. We were excited to see and begin implementing a strong focus on the inquiry arc, civic engagement and environmental literacy. While these can be integrated into other core areas, focusing on explicit instruction of these themes is a great place for us to start. We have two core social studies resources, Wisconsin (Our State, Our History) and The Wisconsin Journey that we use at grade 4. While we will be in transition to a new scope and sequence in the fall of 2020, our grades K-2 currently focus on self, family, and community. We expand to our city and county at grade 3. Fourth grade focuses on state and fifth grade expands to our country. Students learn about the social strands (e.g. history, geography, political science) through the context of self at grade K extending to country at grade 5. Teachers use PLC created assessment tools to measure student growth on the specific grade level strands.

## **1f. For secondary schools:**

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

Lake Superior Elementary does not administer a 4K program, but the school partners with the Superior Community Preschool program to provide a play-based approach to learning with the goal that every Pre-K student is ready for school success. The curriculum focuses on social, emotional, language, motor, early numeracy & early literacy skills. Developmentally appropriate practices recognized by the National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC) are standard practices in the program. Curriculum and assessment is aligned to the Wisconsin Model of Early Learning Standards (WMELS) and the Kindergarten Common Core in Literacy and Math. Nearly all of Lake Superior Elementary incoming Kindergarten students in the past decade (around 97 percent) attend 4K at our school or community based programs. We work collaboratively with our early childhood special educators (ECSE) to provide the best support for our students with disabilities within the classroom. All students' learning needs are assessed and every student transitions with a plan to ensure success in school beyond their preschool year.

## **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

**Arts:** All Lake Superior Elementary students receive visual arts for once a week, 30 minutes for primary and 60 minutes for grades 3-5. For performing art, all students receive 60 minutes of music and meet with a teacher twice a week. Our visual arts curriculum, which is aligned to Wisconsin State Standards, also includes students using teamwork and collaboration to accomplish larger projects together. All grade levels include reflection on various works of art, including from a variety of cultures.

**Physical education/health/nutrition:** All Lake Superior Elementary students receive physical education three times per week for 30 minutes each time. Our physical education programming and curriculum has a focus on K-2 with locomotor/non locomotor movements to build multiple developmental skills like skipping,

hopping, running, dribbling and catching to name a few. Programming for grades 3-5 focuses on Life Long activities and small-sided games to apply the developmental skills built in primary instruction. Our physical education program is based on the current Wisconsin State Standards. The standards provide a framework for the development of realistic and achievable expectations for the student performance at every level and help students develop the knowledge and skills to select and participate in physical activity safely and competently. In addition, specific grades receive lessons on nutrition from UW-Superior Extension office. The topics focus on making healthy eating choices and planning for and creating nutritious snacks and meals.

Technology/library/media: All students at Lake Superior Elementary receive instruction and practice in ITL (Wisconsin Standards for Information and Technology Literacy). A scope and sequence of experiences and skills created by the district Future Ready team is carried out in collaboration between the Teacher Librarian Media Specialist and classroom teachers at each school in our district. Students in all grade levels learn to leverage technology to meet their learning goals, at times using resources to hone skills (such as keyboarding, beginning in Grade 3) and, more often, to locate and evaluate information and to create artifacts to demonstrate learning. They use Google apps for education, among other online resources, both independently and collaboratively. Students at all grade levels participate in activities to strengthen their knowledge and practices regarding online safety. During this school year, teachers at Lake Superior have participated in professional development focused on Empowered Learning and Digital Citizenship and work to embed these ideals into their classroom lessons.

Other: Social Emotional Learning: All Lake Superior Elementary students receive Tier 1 core instruction on Social Emotional Standards from the school counselor and follow-up connection from the classroom teacher. A research-based curriculum, Second Step, is delivered school wide that is guaranteed and viable. This curriculum focuses on four units which emphasize skills for learning, empathy, emotional management and problem solving. Students receive two additional Second Step researched based units which emphasize personal safety and bullying prevention. Human Growth & Development lessons are delivered by the counselors along with classroom teachers in 4th & 5th grades. Additionally, the 4th & 5th grades receive some career exploration lessons. These tools are implemented throughout the school district at all grades K-5.

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

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

Once all students have had access to essential grade-level curriculum delivered using best instructional practices in our classrooms, we use our Professional Learning Community process to identify students who have not yet demonstrated mastery of the essentials. Teachers, using Common Formative Assessments (CFAs) identify which students need targeted support on the specific skills, leading to mastery of the essentials. Our students are able to access Tier 2 supports through small flexible groupings based on the specific skills identified through the CFA and ongoing Progress Monitoring. Our master schedule is created to provide teaching assistants during reading and math to support classroom work while teachers provide intensive interventions in small groups or one-on-one. Lake Superior Elementary students are connected to the Universal Curriculum at all times, in addition to receiving interventions.

The core of our academic supports is in our PLC process where students are identified as needing more time and support. In addition to a strong core of universal instruction, these students receive intensive support either through small flexible groups based on skills needed or individualized instruction, in order to accomplish appropriate standards. Common Formative assessments are given across grade levels and progress monitoring allows groups to be fluid, moving in and out of skills groups based on the mastery of the standards. Our master schedule is created to provide teaching assistants during reading and math to support classroom work while teachers provide intensive interventions in small groups or one-on-one.

The school uses universal benchmark screening to identify students performing below grade level and identified as at-risk. In addition to being supported through classroom interventions, these students are progressed monitored using the screening platform to view growth and determine if our interventions have

been effective. If students are not demonstrating growth, adjustments are made to the intervention(s) and monitoring continues.

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

The Lake Superior PLC process identifies students who have mastered essential learning target(s) and do not need more time or support. Our “Boost” time, or RTI time, is for both intervention and extension. In math, students performing above grade level are extending their skills or growing their conceptual knowledge utilizing problems and processes with more depth of knowledge. This work is done in small groups and designed by teachers. In reading and writing, instructional conferencing time is built into the daily schedule and curriculum so that teachers can provide feedback and activities that extend skills, grow student practices or increase conceptual understanding. In the primary grades, small group instruction in reading extends learning through the level of the text, the instructional interaction with the teacher and the level of language arts activities. The master schedule provides assistants during reading and math at all levels to allow teachers to work in small groups and one on one for both extensions and interventions.

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

We have approximately 22% of our students identified for special education services. All special education students receive the entire core universal curricula. In addition to what we provide for students performing below grade level, special education students receive individually designed instruction and interventions around their needs. What is unique at our school is our collaborative teaming structure. This structure is critical within the school community so that we are able to live out our vision of “all means all” where each student receives support based upon their specific needs at that time.

Collaboration between special education teachers, general education teachers and instructional coaches has been extremely important for our school to provide supports and interventions for special education students in order to close the achievement gap. For a concrete example of our collaboration around analyzing student data, developing a focus on priority standards and constructing tailored plans for instruction and interventions within the classroom, see section VI. In early 2018, staff recognized that students identified for special education services also had a disproportionate percentage scoring below basic on our reading and math state assessments in the past. Grade level teams with special educators and coaches developed plans to improve student results through job embedded conversations around student data, instructional strategies and needed interventions. Through this hard work and commitment to improving student results, we significantly closed the achievement gap for special education students at Lake Superior Elementary School.

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

### **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:**

Lake Superior is a community school that deeply values the engagement of students and families in the school and community learning experiences. Curriculum has regular instructional times for students to talk, reflect on their learning, collaborate with peers to solve problems and self-assess their learning performance. Students are also regularly engaged to present and celebrate their work with other students and adults. Throughout the year, our fourth and fifth grade classes apply their learning in reading, science and social studies to create presentations and hands-on activities for primary students. This has become an important community building time that all students look forward to, energizing our learning community and producing high quality work. A few examples of topics for these presentations are - Read Across America Day, the History of Gingerbread and Environmental Stewardship.

In monthly assemblies, grade levels K-5 participate in a group presentation sharing a contribution to our school or broader communities. Presentations range from pictures and stories about a beach sweep in fifth grade to second grade students describing an important character trait through the history and story of John Henry. These assemblies support community engagement and celebrate student efforts to apply work, respect and belonging in classrooms and school.

The school also utilizes technology to build upon instructional outcomes, extend learning and student practice as well as engage students in sharing their work. The school has access to the district technology integration coach along with a future ready teacher to develop ideas leveraging technology to empower and engage student learning. An upper grade teacher enhances engagement by using a digital platform to share student work through videos, pictures or text to a limited online audience. The postings are both representative of daily practice as well as a demonstration of end of unit learning. Families post comments back to the teacher and students to acknowledge the work and learning. Students are eager to post their work and receive comments. A primary teacher uses Ipads to reinforce letters and letter writing in an independent and active reading rotation for small groups. The school is not one to one, but students are engaged as teachers leverage technology for learning outcomes.

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

The third through fifth grade classes have a long history of community partnerships for learning and community engagement with unique local partners. The Water Resource Specialist for the City of Superior Environmental Services Division has engaged student learning throughout the academic year on our critical Lake Superior Watershed for protection and conservation. One outcome of this learning was student participation in the Superior Coastal Cleanup. This local event is also part of a global project called The International Coastal Cleanup. Another example of engaging the community to support student learning is Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe leaders teaching students about culture, stewardship, and the Ojibwe people. Last year, species of native trees were planted in a nearby public park where there is also a burial ground.

Lake Superior Elementary engages families and the community through special events, celebrations of learning, meaningful volunteer experiences and regular communications from classrooms, main office and the Parent Teacher Organization. Examples of special events are the Family Literacy Night, Family Pumpkin Night, Scholarship Breakfast and Fundraiser, and family dances and picnics. Teachers provide volunteer opportunities to participate in classroom learning. Volunteers join students in classrooms regularly. Including a monthly Book Café, science stations, school store, guest science experts or weekly guest readers. High school students and high school classes are also community partners for Lake Superior Elementary, as AP Government and AP Biology classes have worked with elementary students to extend learning in social studies and science.

The school and PTO communicate with families through mostly digital platforms, the school website and Facebook page. The PTO partnership with the main office helps to keep parents informed of all the positive day to day interactions that create the Lake Superior community. In addition, the main office sends out a bi-weekly newsletter that highlights school events and other school information for families.

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

Lake Superior Elementary staff meetings, PLC meetings, and other meetings are student and goal focused. Teachers have embraced the district vision that “all means all.” Lake Superior Staff is small, cohesive and hard working with a focus on ensuring all students get what they need to learn at high levels.

The school has a shared leadership structure and culture in our district and building. Every shared leadership team meeting develops our professional culture by reviewing and focusing on our collective norms. The norms create a positive environment for interacting with each other and build a professional environment that creates openness to new ideas and practices while also valuing the input of all staff members.

Lake Superior utilize the Wisconsin Professional Development Model to develop the capacity of teachers and administrators. Shared leadership meetings follow the model. Each meeting has a component of learning about a theory dealing with strategies, perspectives or practices that will create an impact for instruction and student achievement. Teacher leaders model and demonstrate how the theory can be put into action. This demonstration is then practiced by teachers and incorporated into instruction and classroom work. The school administrator engages in the same learning. Teachers then review the impact of their practices on students’ results to determine the effectiveness of practices and to determine next steps in the professional work. This professional development structure has enabled a strong professional culture in our building; a culture that builds effectiveness in instructional practices.

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

Shared leadership defines our school leadership. We have a shared leadership structure and culture in our district and building. Shared leadership is a collaborative process that engages stakeholders in the creation of the major academic and cultural goals for our building to continuously improve. The leadership team, composed of several teachers, an instructional coach and the principal, annually analyze multiple types of data to develop a school improvement plan with a focus on a few significant measurable goals for the school. Feedback on the goal is sought from families and staff and then finalized in an action plan for the year.

Shared leadership is not only a structure, but also a perspective that recognizes leadership of all staff. Lake Superior Elementary is focused on building relationships as the strong foundation of the school. From the principal to the assistants, students are met, greeted and supported throughout the day. Every team member is valued and respected and all building staff are teachers and caregivers for all students. While the school has developed programs and training addressing social-emotional needs through restorative practices and the zones of regulation, Lake Superior also has a long history of being a caring and welcoming place for every student. All staff are leaders and leadership is recognized through developing positive relationships with all students.

In addition to a shared leadership structure, we utilize a professional learning community (PLC) model that focuses on professional collaboration to focus on the four main questions of a PLC (What do we want all students to learn? How will we know if they learn it? How will we respond when some students do not learn? How will we extend the learning for students who are proficient?). Grade level teams’ actions to ensure learning for all requires unpacking standards to determine grade level essential learning, developing common formative assessments, analyzing the assessments to make instructional decisions, building in more time and support for students and developing learning extensions. For further details and examples about this process at work in 2018-19, see part VI – strategy for academic success. PLC collaboration, with district instructional coach support, was the focused strategy used for meeting all students’ academic needs and closing the achievement gap. Building leadership at Lake Superior is focused on doing the right work and continually sustaining the collective commitment to the PLC process through encouraging conversations, working with teams through an inquiry cycle, learning together, aligning resources, and regularly sharing the vision.

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

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Research continually reinforces the power of job-embedded coaching and feedback as a professional development practice that yields high returns. Our instructional coaches work to empower teachers to reflect on their practice, set student performance goals, and provide teachers the support and coaching they need to modify their practice to reach their goals and ultimately increase student performance.

During the 2018-2019 school year, a third grade teacher was looping to fourth grade with her students. During the students' third grade year, their academic data indicated student math performance was declining against the standard. On the year-end state assessment, only 29% of her students scored proficient or advanced. Seeking better results, she partnered with a district instructional coach in the area of math during the 2018-2019 school year.

Collaboratively with the coach, she reworked the third grade schedule to ensure she had additional instructional time for reteaching, acceleration, and enrichment to support her students toward standard achievement. They used ongoing formative data to create student groups and students seamlessly flowed from one group to another based on timely data.

The instructional coach worked with the teacher in the classroom modeling lessons and giving feedback. Part of their action plan was to co-teach at least two lessons during every math unit - they focused on teacher language and student engagement.

Unit by unit they unpacked the Common Core Standards to identify what was essential for students to master versus what was "nice to know." While working, they identified that some students, especially special education students, had gaps in their understanding due to missing core instruction in previous years. With support from the instructional coach and special education teacher, the teacher shifted her instruction to include all students in core instruction. They realized that in addition to grade level core instruction, some students needed to have explicit instruction on essentials from previous grade level standards. The instructional coach, special education teacher, and regular education teacher routinely met to ensure students were working and learning both at grade level and filling gaps from previous years' standards.

As a result of the coaching this teacher received, she ensured all students were in her class for core instruction, she created structures to support additional math instructional time, and she opened her classroom to invite feedback from the coach to refine her instructional practices. On the 2018-19 year-end state assessment, the number of students scoring proficient or advanced increased to 54%. Job-embedded instructional coaching is a practice that was instrumental to our school closing the achievement gap.