

U.S. Department of Education
2021 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Lewis Central Senior High School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3504 Harry Langdon Boulevard
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Council Bluffs State IA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 51503-8639

County Pottawattamie County

Telephone (712) 366-8360 Fax (712) 366-8340

Web site/URL http://lchs.lewiscentral.org/ E-mail jbeyenhof@lewiscentral.org

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

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Eric Knost E-mail eric.knost@lewiscentral.org

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Lewis Central Community School District Tel. (712) 366-8248

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 Dorene Scheffel
(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, leave blank.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The electronic signature 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 2021 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 must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2015 and grades participating in statewide assessments must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2019.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 or 2020.
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 current school year (2020-2021) unless otherwise stated.

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

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 2 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 4 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not the district.)

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, 2020 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	131	129	260
10	116	100	216
11	135	110	245
12 or higher	99	120	219
Total Students	481	459	940

*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):
- 0.4 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0.7 % Asian
 - 1.8 % Black or African American
 - 10.3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 82.6 % White
 - 4.2 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2019 - 2020 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, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	11
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	42
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	53
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019	931
(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):

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 6 %
58 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 33 %

Total number students who qualify: 309

8. Students receiving special education services: 15 %

140 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. All students receiving special education services should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

<u>18</u> Autism	<u>7</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>32</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>82</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>30</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>2</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>12</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

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

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	4
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	27
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	33
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	10
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 34:1

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

Required Information	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
Daily student attendance	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
High school graduation rate	98%	96%	92%	93%	93%

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 2020.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	236
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	34%
Enrolled in a community college	41%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	8%
Found employment	9%
Joined the military or other public service	8%
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.

Lewis Central High School - A Community of Excellence!

16. Briefly describe how your school has been operating during the current 2020-2021 school year (e.g., open as usual, online only, a hybrid model, etc.)? If different grade levels in your building operate in different ways, include this. If the school began with one model and switched to another partially through the year, include this as well.

Strategically, prior to the 2020-21 school year, the administrative team collaborated to ensure the success of students in the upcoming school year. Through the spring 2020 pandemic quarantine of our whole school, we provided students with enrichment-based learning followed by competency-based testing to earn credit. Students who did not attain credit were then given the opportunity to participate in a learning recovery summer school. Testing data was used to create individualized learning plans for students based upon course standards and competencies. Two sessions of summer school were offered to students, an increase from our typical one session. Summer 2020 positioned our students to stay on track with their learning and graduation credits earned. This included roughly 1900 high school credits attempted and over 1600 earned through summer school.

In the 2020-21 school year, we have been operating primarily open as usual with 90-95% of our students in-person all year, and simultaneously providing remote learning options for students and families who have requested remote status. Mask wearing has been mandated district-wide, and this has led to low exposure and quarantine numbers. In doing so our actions aligned with local Public Health Department recommendations. Teachers have made use of Zoom, Google Classroom, Edgenuity, and packet work to support remote learning experiences.

Increased safety and health precautions and procedures have been put in place this year to protect the health of our students and staff. In collaboration with our Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) team, lessons were created and delivered through Titan Time advisement to ensure

proper procedures for our mitigation efforts. Our lunch schedule went from 2 to 4 lunches and included more school locations for distancing. Visual cues and reminders about masks wearing “Titans Wear Armour” and updated common area expectations for safety were posted throughout the school.

Administration worked with public health and nursing staff to create systems for school monitoring and quarantining of students. Health spaces were modified to accommodate general health concerns and separate covid symptom students and separate unwell students from healthy students, so that they could be seen by the nurse and picked up by families.

Administration continues to work with counseling staff to schedule and support temporary as well as long-term remote learning status and education of students during these unique times. Instructional coaches support teachers in remote instruction and modifying classroom spaces, and learning structures and routines incorporate the use of technology to support students. Instructional coaches have supported counselors in technology tools to monitor and respond to students and families when a student falls behind on online work. Administrators and counselors have increased communication through email, phone, Zoom, parent meetings, and even home visits when possible to intervene in timely and systematic ways to ensure student success. Additionally, our At-Risk Team has provided individualized attention and support to ensure students keep making progress on graduation credits earned.

Extensive cleaning procedures have been put in place in our building including the use of electrostatic sprayers and frequent cleaning of desks and common touch areas. Sanitizing stations were set up in all common spaces, entrances, and sanitizing materials given to teachers for classrooms.

Conferences were scheduled through PickATime and held virtually through the use of Zoom. Parents could request a phone call instead of a Zoom meeting. Communication and relationships have been at the heart of our success. Increased communication has occurred across our district with principal emails going out to students, families, and staff once weekly to include Covid numbers, how we have been supporting our community, and additional important messages related to our calendar of academics and activities. This increased communication has been well received and appreciated by our community. Leadership during this time has continued to uphold high expectations for learners and staff alike.

17. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

PART III - SUMMARY

LCHS believes that the three R's (Relationships, Resilience, and Results) are critical for success in school and in life. As a school, we use numerous student achievement indicators as Results to measure the impact of our actions and challenge our students to do the same with their own personal achievement data. With any lofty goal, we will most definitely be forced to work, think, and act out of our comfort zone, and it is in these times we all must demonstrate Resilience to persevere through adversity and achieve success. For some students, that means that they may need extra support. Lastly, we lead with and know that Relationships are the key to success for our students and staff alike.

"School Soup" is our school's recipe for student success. Ingredients came together slowly over the past nine years, but now we are reaping the benefits of a delicious stew. It is full of rich gravy and a wide variety of meat and vegetables. Each represents an area of diligent work on the part of the staff to bring about student learning and achievement. Our success starts with relationships, or the "gravy" that encapsulates all of the other ingredients. Into the gravy, we add voice or input, the "peas." This is vital to make sure our efforts are meeting the needs of all of our stakeholders, students, parents, and staff alike.

Lewis Central High School is located in Council Bluffs, Iowa, adjacent to the Omaha, Nebraska, metropolitan area and separated by the Missouri River. Council Bluffs has four school districts: two public school districts and two private school districts. Lewis Central is the second largest of the four districts, and in total there are five high schools and one alternative high school in the entire community. Lewis Central High School is the only high school in the Lewis Central School District and the third largest in the city. Our attendance area includes portions of the city of Council Bluffs and rural residents. Council Bluffs proper is a very blue-collar community with a significant population of students and families living in poverty, based on free and reduced lunch criteria.

Our student enrollment is slightly below 950, and we do not have an alternative high school. In a day and age in which many school districts and high schools have alternative schools for some of their most at-risk students, we have elected not to use such a model, but rather to emphasize our Multi-Tiered System of Supports as part of our Pyramid of Supports, which is driven by academic, attendance, and behavior student data. The key to our success is working hard to ensure that our core supports, those provided to all students, help provide students and staff with the skills to be successful in school measured by those three data indicators. To avoid having students falling through the cracks, we run three-week reports on academics, attendance, and behavior incidents. If a student surpasses the predetermined threshold for any two of the three categories, they are placed on our deuce list and assigned a point person to ensure that their interventions and supports are implemented from our Pyramid of Supports. If they surpass the threshold in all three categories, they are placed on the trifecta list, and like the deuce list, they have a point person. In addition, we create a Pyramid Plan for the student. The goal is to intervene as quickly as possible and provide the support and interventions to the student to get them back on track. For our most challenging students, we add mental health supports through group counseling, specialized individual counseling, and therapy support from our partnership with outside agencies. These supports have moved our graduation rate from 83.6% in 2011 to 96% in 2019 and 97.8% in 2020. This systems approach to improving graduation rates and student learning has also resulted in an 8-year average of 94% for our 4-year graduation rate.

In July of 2020 our School Board made the decision to require masks for all students and staff. This decision was one of the main mitigation efforts we put in place, along with social distancing and the usage of hand sanitizer and washing. The fact that we had almost 100% compliance with our face coverings was how we were able to limit our student exposure to COVID-19 to a very small population of our students and thus limit the number of students testing positive or having to quarantine. We are on a trimester scheduling model, and we have offered in-person and remote learning to all of our students. During our first trimester of school, we had just below 90% attend school in person, in the second trimester we had slightly more than 92% attend in person, and we are scheduled to have over 93% scheduled for in-person learning during the third trimester. We have never reached a threshold of positive cases of students or staff that caused us to move entirely to remote learning.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

Lewis Central Community School District adheres to a backwards design process that merges Concept Based Instruction (Dr. Lynn Erickson) and Understanding by Design (Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe) and uses state mandated content as well as local standards developed from state, national, and industry standards.

Standards are communicated to students through learning questions to provide a lever for formative assessment in the classroom. Learning questions are posted in all classrooms and students have access to and engage with these questions throughout their learning, including before, during, and after instruction.

The high school instructional vision starts with students at the center of the concept map and articulates the interconnectedness of standards and learning questions for clear targets and our instructional actions. The instructional vision is based on some of the work by Fisher and Fry's Gradual Release of Responsibility model and grounded in Hattie's work around high-effect size instructional practices such as student-teacher relationships, leading with clear targets, formative assessment, modeling with examples of strong work, and guided and independent practice. The vision emphasizes the use of student data to drive instructional planning.

The English class offerings for students include supplemental reading classes at levels that vary based on the needs of the students: Exploring Literature for students who are 2 to 4 years below grade level and Advancing Literacy for students who are two or fewer years below grade level. These classes involve progress monitoring and differentiation.

English 9, 10, and 11 are for the majority of our population. English 11 focuses on American literature, whereas English 9 and 10 include literature from around the world. All of these required classes have incorporated nonfiction as well, and the students' skills in both fiction and nonfiction are assessed with cold readings on Illuminate.

The English PLC uses the Illuminate platform to gather formative data on students' reading skills in particular. The focus over the past few years has been on inferencing skills. The teachers have incorporated guided instruction from the Gradual Release of Responsibility model to address needs of small groups and individuals.

Students in math classes might take Basic Math if they struggle with the content and are identified as requiring IEP services. However, if the students simply need extra time to learn and practice the content and skills, they will take Concepts courses that stretch the Algebra and Geometry content over three of our trimesters. Students will otherwise take Algebra and Geometry in the two-term courses. Like ELA, the math department offers dual-credit and advanced placement classes for high ability learners. Standards and assessments at all levels are common. What changes is the process of instruction.

The Math PLC uses Illustrative Math, which is grounded in student discovery through rich conversation. The instructional moves in Illustrative Math align with Gradual Release of Responsibility, which is the skeletal structure of our instructional vision.

Furthermore, the Math PLC has made much use of formative assessment and guided instruction. This happens primarily in the form of entrance and exit tickets, followed by grouping of students based on needs and differentiated instruction to address those needs.

All students are required to take Biology and Physical Science at LCHS, though they differ in the amount of time they take for learning the content and skills. For example, a student who needs more time might take Biology Concepts, which spreads the Biology curriculum over three terms rather than two. The standards and assessments are the same whether the class is two or three terms long. What differs is the time and perhaps the process of instruction, depending on the needs of the students.

In addition to Biology and Physical Science, students choose from many electives, including Chemistry, Physics, Ecology, Zoology, and Meteorology. All science classes follow Next Generation Science Standards, and some teachers are beginning to use storylines to instruct and assess those standards.

Students are required to take U.S. History, World History, and American Government. Electives in this core area include Economics, Psychology, and Sociology. Social studies classes use primary and secondary sources to support the instruction and assessment of the C3 Framework: College, Career, and Civic Life. The framework uses an inquiry-based learning approach, which relies heavily on open-ended questioning. In addition, the Social Studies PLC incorporates the use of rigorous nonfiction text, assessing the core standards by using cold readings through the Illuminate platform.

In the 2020-2021 school year, we have been in person all year with over 90% of our students in in-person learning and the remaining students participating in remote learning, primarily supported through LCHS Edgenuity-created courses. Quality core instruction and instructional practices have largely been unchanged. We continue to maintain high expectations and quality of learning experiences and our instructional vision, regardless of student location. Though the medium changed, our core instructional values remained the same. We differentiated instruction by changing process and time, but we kept the same high expectations for the products from all students, regardless of the medium.

PLCs use a comprehensive assessment model that includes common formative and summative assessments within departments and like courses to make unit-based and course-level decisions. Work also includes the use of pre-assessment. Technology tools and reports through platforms such as Illuminate allow us to identify student learning needs quickly and intervene in timely and systematic ways, and they allow us to collaborate with colleagues, including special population specialists. PLC learning and instructional actions are directly tied not only to student data but also to our instructional vision.

Professional learning is the “meat” of the School Soup because it happens outside of the “pot” of the classroom. As is often the case with meat, we brown it/prepare it in another pan and add it to our soup. Our “potatoes” are our instructional vision. This vision is our core universal instruction.

1a. For secondary schools (middle and/or high school grades):

We have a Fast Forward! initiative that has a goal of 95% or more of our graduates having plans to attend a 4-year college, 2-year college, vocational school, trade school, apprenticeship, or branch of military. To assist students with this, we utilize the Kuder Navigator software to explore and plan for future careers. This program uses student interests, strengths, and career investigations to assist them in course selection and planning for their Fast Forward! career goals and plans. School counselors and Titan Time (advisory period) teachers provide lessons and supports to help students prepare for and navigate the program. In addition to the lessons, students use their Navigator plans in course selection during the registration process.

Additionally, all students are required to complete either College Readiness or Workplace Readiness as part of their graduation requirements. College Readiness helps students to select a college, apply for scholarships, apply for financial aid, complete a college application, and prepare for college entrance examinations. Workplace Readiness helps prepare students for pursuing a degree at a community college, trade program, or through apprenticeship; for enlisting in the military; or for getting and keeping a job.

To advance students on their Fast Forward! path, we have a strong partnership with Iowa Western Community College (IWCC). While a large percentage (approximately 75%) of our students do plan to either attend a 4- or 2-year college, supporting students in the trades and Career and Technical Education programs has been a point of emphasis for our school and community. To assist with this we have mapped out over 12 career pathways and articulated course work for students to earn a diploma, certificate, and even an associate’s degree through IWCC, many of them before they graduate high school or shortly after. In addition we are partnering with Career EdVantage and Pottawattamie Promise to look at apprenticeships and scholarship opportunities.

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Within the area of life skills, students are required to complete Personal Finance, Parenting, and at least one course from our Technology and Engineering Department. The two credits from fine arts can be selected from the areas of music, art, drama and humanities, but they have to be from two different areas for a minimum of two credits.

We offer courses in the areas of art, business, family and consumer science, world languages, technology and engineering, language arts, mathematics, music, physical education, science, social studies, English language learners (ELL), and internships. In addition to the aforementioned departments, we also provide support for our students to access almost the entire IWCC course catalog through courses at LCHS, at IWCC, or remotely.

While we have several areas and departments worthy of providing additional descriptions of our course offerings, one of note is our Technology and Engineering Department (T.E.D.). This department offers several Project Lead The Way (PLTW) courses and has received national recognition from PLTW on numerous occasions, including multiple National PLTW Distinguished School Awards. Many of these were awarded based on the performance of our students on the PLTW end-of-course examinations. We offer well over 20 courses in this area with close to half of those being PLTW courses. In addition, we have a robust construction and woodworking program. Finally, we partner with our neighboring school, Iowa School for the Deaf, to offer welding to our students that can be extended through course articulations at IWCC, along with numerous other T.E.D. course pathways.

S.T.E.M. programs are not our only areas of excellence. In fact, we pride ourselves in thinking about S.T.E.A.M. We know that students involved in the arts excel in their learning and are provided avenues to not only pursue their passion, but also showcase talents in addition to traditional core content. Our instrumental and vocal music have received numerous awards, including several All-State performances and superior ratings at State competitions. Our 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional art programs, speech, and drama have also received numerous awards. LCHS Speech has brought home several banners from All-State performances. This support for the arts is also supported in our facilities with the construction of a \$17 million performing arts center.

In addition to college courses through IWCC, we also offer Advanced Placement courses in all of our core content areas through in-person courses and additional online AP courses. We have a coordinator who engages the AP teachers in true PLC work, and there has been an increased effort to improve recruitment and retention. As a result, there has been improvement in direct instruction and academic soft skills. In terms of scheduling, we have allowed students to substitute AP courses for other core classes required for graduation. This has allowed high achieving students to meet common core standards with a focus on college-preparatory writing and critical thinking skills.

3. Academic Supports:

While our school exceeds Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) standards for school achievement and supporting students, we are constantly focused on high achievement and student results. We proactively reached out to our Area Education Agency (AEA) to participate in a Self-Assessment of MTSS Implementation (SAMI) with our building leadership team to reflect on our strengths and areas for improvement. Through this process, we identified areas for improvement within our supplemental math and reading programs. As a result, increased programming, data gathering, student progress monitoring, and instructional support have been put into place. System changes have been made in our math and science offerings to eliminate pull-out courses that kept the bar low for students. We also engaged in a book study on No More Low Expectations for ELL

Students to support that population, and our historical data has improved in this area. Now all students are held accountable for high expectations and meeting state standards, while continuing to receive the extra support they need to meet those expectations.

Additionally, our school has participated with our district in an evaluation of our Talented and Gifted (TAG) program. We have already identified action steps to improve student outcomes and increase efforts to identify and serve underrepresented subgroups. Our high school High Ability Learners Team (HAL) also reviews data and supports student achievement by encouraging involvement in advanced coursework and supporting school wide differentiation.

Nine years ago, our intervention model for at-risk students underwent extensive program development to include a pro-active model to identify students with risk factors for drop-out and match those students with credit recovery, credit success, and academic and social and emotional supports, such as mentoring, counseling, and agency support. We have made the decision as a district and school to meet the range of our learner needs within our building and not to create an alternative school. Maintaining high expectations for school performance and believing that we will do whatever it takes to ensure student success, we have met student needs with school resources. This is another ingredient in our School Soup. “Celery” represents our schoolwide Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) in which we have a Pyramid of Supports with tiers of interventions and supports that we intrusively intervene with when students are having difficulty, based on data indicators such as academics, attendance, and behaviors.

Our At-Risk Team makes use of the Pyramid of Supports System and our Deuce-Trifecta data to monitor student attendance, behavior, and academics of students to intervene systematically when students rise in two (deuce) or three (trifecta) indicators. This team approach to using data allows us to move through a checklist of supports and match student needs to assistance quickly and effectively. Our At-Risk Team meets weekly to review student data and progress and address student needs. Our PBIS Tier I and II teams also meet monthly to act on building-wide and student individual data.

This year, our Level 3 Special Education teachers and school leaders have participated in an action planning process, which has led to improved course and curriculum development, including providing more literacy materials for students and supporting students with workplace and career skills.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Our high school follows the three R's of Relationships, Resilience, and Results to engage, motivate, and provide students with a positive environment. We lead with relationships. Our staff works hard to exhibit care and compassion, beginning with greeting all students at the door before each class. We also identify students who are at risk of dropping out or not graduating, and we partner them with teacher-mentors. In addition, the Titan Times (advisory) period is devoted in large part to social-emotional learning with lessons on coping, character and respect for others as well as more academically-focused lessons on managing time and knowing how to study. Furthermore, the staff has developed the habit of sending Good News postcards home to students. By the end of each school year, 100% of the students have received at least one card.

We have a deliberate and compassionate approach to addressing difficult situations with our students. First, we address the traumatic experience in small groups with teachers presenting a unified message. Second, we bring outside agencies in to help our guidance staff provide mental health services and grief counseling. Next, we bring the entire community together to help those who are greatly affected by the tragedy. When the situation concerns one student, we use a solution-based counseling approach that begins with a SODAS conversation: situation, options, disadvantages, advantages, and solution. All of these efforts support our goals of high engagement and increased resilience in students.

We pair social-emotional learning with academics, and so teachers use learning questions and social goals to create clear targets, which immediately engages students. Teachers continue to use those questions to formatively assess students and provide timely feedback, which gives teachers insight into student results and motivates students to continue their work. The administrative team uses walk-throughs to gauge student understanding of the questions and the place of those questions in their learning.

Finally, we continue to engage our remote students through frequent communication among teachers, students, and parents. There are supports for all three in the form of instructional coaches who are familiar with the online platform used for remote learning. Coaches assist teachers in enrolling students in the program, help students in getting started, troubleshoot technical issues, and contact parents to answer their questions.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Engaging families and the community starts by keeping families informed. The more informed they are, the more equipped they will be to help all students succeed by engaging them in conversations and support. This is followed by opportunities for two-way communication and gathering of input. To this end Lewis Central High School sends a weekly communication to parents and community members. In addition, up-to-date information and resources are shared on our school's website and other social media platforms, some of which are student-created. This communication has evolved with the addition of Covid-19 information and updates. However, parents still know of opportunities and support for their child, along with ways to provide input and acknowledgement of school celebrations.

We know that for students and families alike, school is a big part of their lives, and they will share information with those around them about their school. Therefore, it is important that they know all of the positive things that are happening, not only from a whole school aspect, but also on a personal level for their child. For the past four years each student has received at least one handwritten postcard from a teacher celebrating their success and strengths at school. We know if we only handed a note to the student, that celebration may not make it home, so we send it as a postcard. For some students this can be more challenging than others, but we believe working from a strengths-based approach positions us well to work through any possible challenges that may occur. Relationships are not only between the students and staff. Families are a big part of the relationships we build. In addition, we know we will need their support when times are tough and the student needs to show resilience in their learning and choices, for those are essential for results.

We also have a Parent Input Group and a Student Input Group. Make-up of parents and students invited to the groups parallels the demographics of our school population, based on indicators such as socio-economic status, race, Special Education, Talented and Gifted, involvement in athletics, fine arts, and much more. These groups provide input on current initiatives for growth and refinement, along with input on the planning and implementation of new programs. In addition, like our Building Leadership Team, they review various data sets to keep informed on our successes and opportunities to improve.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Creating a professional culture is done through the lens of setting high expectations around clear targets with the 3 Rs of Relationships, Resilience, and Results being at the heart of our work. Relationships are fostered through such things as staff writing of True Titan cards for a colleague, sharing of good news at staff meetings, reporting out Mission Moments, recognizing a Teacher/Staff of the Month, formal and informal teacher leaders presenting during professional learning, and administration routinely present in classrooms, completing walk-throughs.

The LC walk-through rubric design, which is directly linked to the instructional vision, is grounded in an instructional leadership philosophy of teacher development and supports teachers in a learning stance around student data. The rubric's interactive design provides strong examples of high effect size instructional practices through short video clips, linked resources and instructional playbooks, all making the shared instructional vision accessible for classroom implementation. Administration backs the walk-through rubric up with a letter that highlights teachers taking risks in their classroom and implementing practices with fidelity, ultimately producing increased student results.

Teachers at LCHS have a minimum of one contractual evaluation observation, but our building expectation is two. Teachers may opt to substitute one of those two observations for a full coaching cycle, which engages teachers and coaches in learning around a teacher-selected goal and student evidence. Collective walk-through data determines professional learning needs for our universal tier of instruction.

Obviously, the school, or “kitchen,” needs chefs to make the soup. This chef and cook metaphor represents that it takes many types of leaders in a school to have success. This starts with the principal as an instructional leader, the support of personalized coaching and improvement work by sous chefs like instructional coaches, building leadership team members, and much more. We know that a good chef tastes their food or assesses their work. School improvement is driven by formative student data, classroom instruction is driven by student data, MTSS is driven by student data, and even student self-assessment is driven by their own data relative to the learning targets established by the teachers' learning questions.

Throughout the pandemic we remained grounded in high expectations for all, and we stayed focused on high effect size practices, not in choosing platforms. Staff continued to meet as PLCs with the support of the instructional coaching team, and the administrative team stayed in constant communication with students, staff, and the community in regard to the ever-evolving situation.

4. School Leadership:

The administrative team has implemented a comprehensive evaluation model that leads with high expectations and clear targets. Our building-level administration is made up of one principal, two associate principals and an activities director. The shared instructional vision provides our learning community with a common language and grounds us in teacher collective efficacy. Implementation of the vision is supported through a continuous feedback loop with a walk-through rubric that is aligned to our instructional vision. The administrative team encourages a risk-taking environment that places all staff in a learning stance around student data. Additionally, the team encourages teachers to choose their own professional development focus, and that is led by formal and informal teacher-leaders.

To ensure success with this comprehensive approach, leadership is not found solely in the school's main administrative office. Rather, a whole building approach to learning and leadership is carefully crafted,

implemented, modeled, and supported by the administrative team using a strengths-based approach. Through our Teacher Leadership Program, we currently have 27% of our staff in a formal leadership role, such as district and building leadership team members, district and building level program champions, and instructional coaches. In addition to these formal leadership roles, LCHS also has many informal leadership teams such as our Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), our High Ability Learners Team (HAL), our At-Risk Team, our Supplemental Reading Team, Thriving Titans and our student and parent advisory committee.

All leaders and leadership teams use student achievement data to determine next steps in learning for both students and educators, ultimately requiring the entire school community to take a learning stance. This practice of looking closely at the data in order to inform decision-making is the “carrots” of the School Soup. For example, the building leadership team takes a comprehensive look at data from multiple sources to determine the focus of our building wide, or universal tier, professional learning. We look at conditions for learning student survey results, graduation rates, ACT scores, state-mandated test scores, subgroup results, referral data, attendance data, and so forth. We look through both the lens of proficiency and of growth. Most recently, our Building Leadership Team went through the SAMI reflective process facilitated by our AEA. The administrative team empowered teacher leaders to continue to achieve high expectations for student learning throughout the national pandemic. The core belief of the administration and teacher leaders is that we should get students back to school, keep students in school through mitigation efforts, and maintain high student engagement, no matter where learning takes place.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

In an effort to reach all students--and therefore be as equitable as possible--we use frequent formative assessment, pre-testing, and supporting individual learning needs of students. Alongside meeting individual needs, the staff has created common formative and summative assessments in like courses to ensure that students receive an equitable experience, no matter who the teacher is or where the student is in their learning.

Our cultural differences are less in terms of race and more in terms of socio-economic differences. Lewis Central has put several initiatives in place to address diversity in those terms. We have a Teammates chapter that pairs students who are at risk with adult mentors. The pairs meet at school once a week to talk, read, play card/board games, etc. in order to build a strong relationship and encourage connection and engagement. Another mentoring program is built through the PBIS Tier II group. Students who are in danger of dropping out or not graduating on time are paired with a teacher in the building for the primary purpose of encouraging the students to succeed in their classes. In addition, we have Thriving Titans, an initiative to see that all of our students and their families have basic needs met, such as food and clothing.

In order to build acceptance among all of our students and staff, there are Titan Time (advisory period) lessons on respecting diversity of all kinds. Also, every year sophomores are invited to a Respect Retreat, where they learn to demonstrate empathy for others and to prevent disrespect and intolerance wherever they see it. After the retreat, there are several Titan Time lessons that follow it up with conversation starters around character and integrity. These lessons and activities have borne fruit; the common comment among students new to Lewis Central is that our student body is very welcoming and accepting of others.

When an event takes place that might impact students and/or their families, our school counselors are always available to help them navigate the event. Additionally, school leaders communicate with the Lewis Central community and provide names and phone numbers of agencies that provide extra support. During the recent Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, many students joined the protest by wearing BLM on their masks and t-shirts. There is, of course, a delicate

balance of allowing students to express individual beliefs and not allowing distractions in the classroom. School leaders address that balance with individual students as the need arises.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Maintaining high expectations for students and teachers has been the single most important practice that has led to our increased student achievement. Our “Community of Excellence” continually focuses on the three R’s of Relationships, Resilience, and Results. By building relationships with students, we are able to keep expectations high and respond to learner needs, even when learning can be difficult. Additionally, we have been resilient in times of difficulty, such as the pandemic, by working in collaboration with each other in a student-centered culture. With a focus on results, we continually reflect on our instructional practices from our vision.

One such practice is the use of complex text, the “onion” we add to our School Soup. It adds depth of flavor to everything it touches. All teachers are expected to use text so as to help students learn to navigate text in their particular field of study. All Titan Times classes also read one period a week. We know that reading is the gatekeeper to all content areas, and that without reading skills, students will face many challenges.

Making use of student-centered instructional coaching, PLCs, leadership teams, counseling staff, community resources, and our Pyramid of Supports, we have found solutions to challenges. Collective efficacy, our shared belief that we can address any obstacle in our path, lies at the heart of our “Community of Excellence.” We have never wavered from our focus on student outcomes and the expectation that all students need to demonstrate proficiency or above.

What we have changed is our approach to helping students and teachers meet those high expectations. For example, we have applied some of our at-risk program principles to more students: providing students with more time and flexibility to reach expectations, differentiating learning paths for students by leveraging pre-assessment and compacting, and using technology, scaffolding, additional resources, and personnel to connect with and intervene to help students. We don’t see academics and social-emotional learning as an “or” situation; we see it as “and,” meaning that we prioritize both.

Instructional coaches and leadership teams have supported staff in meeting high expectations by supporting teachers to meet the needs of remote learners, utilize technology and assessment tools, and respond to data from their classrooms. In this support of teachers, there has been a balance between autonomy and dependence on high effect size instructional practices and our instructional vision. Our consistency that we have provided to students and teachers with high expectations and relationships has created a safe and predictable learning environment at LCHS.