

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

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Raccoon Consolidated School District 1
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3601 State Route 161
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Centralia State IL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 62801-9621

County Marion

Telephone (618) 532-7329 Fax (618) 532-7336

Web site/URL https://www.raccoonschool.org/ E-mail mjohannes@raccoonschool.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* Mrs. Misty Johannes E-mail mjohannes@raccoonschool.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Raccoon Consolidated School District 1 Tel. (618) 532-7329

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

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson Mr. Jason Coffman
(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):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 1 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	4	4	8
K	9	10	19
1	6	12	18
2	6	9	15
3	10	4	14
4	8	12	20
5	8	13	21
6	17	7	24
7	12	17	29
8	15	9	24
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	95	97	192

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0.8 % Asian
 - 3.3 % Black or African American
 - 2.4 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 92.7 % White
 - 0.8 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2019 - 2020 school year: 17%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain:

Due to the job market and many industries closing, we have a high turnover.

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	16
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	16
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	32
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019	192
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.17
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	17

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

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
0 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 69 %

Total number students who qualify: 133

8. Students receiving special education services: 38 %

72 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>3</u> Autism | <u>2</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>13</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>10</u> Developmental Delay | <u>12</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>27</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>2</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. 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	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.	6
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	9
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	0

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 20:1

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

Required Information	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
Daily student attendance	96%	95%	95%	95%	96%
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 2020.

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

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

Yes No

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

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

The mission of Raccoon School, in partnership with our community, is to provide quality education in a safe and professional environment by utilizing all resources available to continually evaluate and improve.

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.

Raccoon School has been in-person the whole school year. Being a very rural district, most of our student population is based in. We did have to rework the bus routes in order to help our students stay safe on the bus. Many of our parents also chose to drop off/pick up their students instead of using our buses. In October 2020, we did have to close for a two-week quarantine due to two students in one classroom and a teacher being affected by Covid. There were a few families that chose remote learning instead of in-person learning in August 2020, but now in 4th quarter, all students are in-person.

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

Raccoon Grade School serves students Prekindergarten, all day kindergarten through 8th grade. Often times, students will start in the lower grades and graduate with many of those same peers in 8th grade. The tight knit community has recently added a Pre-kindergaren program though our Regional Office of Education. Many of our youngest students are enrolled in these two classrooms of 20 students each. This helps to provide stability for our families students, as well as begin the pride of our school at a young age. Many families have been in our school district for two or three generations. The students often grow up and bring their own families back to the school that they grew up in showing tradition an loyalty to RGS. Even our administrator attended Raccoon School from kindergarten through 8th grade. Her children and her own mother, uncles, and aunts attended, so her family is a third generation to attend Raccoon School. As students graduate RGS, many attend one of two high area high schools depending on where they live. This can be unsettling to the students who spent up to 9 years with the same peers, but often at Raccoon we say, "We aren't Centralia or Salem, we are just Raccoon."

This pride is evident in our daily interactions in our building. Teachers know families, students know each other, and pride overflows for our school. We work hard to build relationships through our community including family events during the school day including "Muffins with a Miss" and "Donuts with a Dude." We have seasonal hour long events that occur at least once every year, family reading nights, parent-teacher conferences including our book fair, Christmas and Spring Programs where our students perform all aspects of the show. Parent Teacher Organization events including our annual Fall Fest or Trunk or Treat. We at Raccoon. value education, as we set up screenings in the fall four our littlest students and incoming kindergartners. Technology is important to is. All classrooms have Smartboards/Clear Touch boards, chromebooks, and I-Pads. We are working on being one-on-one with technology. We have been using technology based district assessments for even our smallest learners, teaching them that technology has power. With that being said, we also find importance in the written word...the book. Our library has been in many locations around our building, but continues to important as we want books in our student hands. Reading is the focus of our building, as it is the cornerstone for all learning. We need reading in math to understand word problems; we need reading to understand the history of our beautiful country in our social studies textbooks; we need reading to help us learn all types of science concepts. This love of reading has helped Raccoon School close the gap.

"Growing relationships, minds, and community" in the heart of rural Illinois, is Raccoon Consolidated Grade School (RGS). With a school population of 250 students and 35 staff members, Raccoon Grade School is the center of our community. Nestled in the corn and bean fields of Marion County, Raccoon School is about a 10 minute drive to Centralia, Illinois and 10 minute drive to Salem, Illinois. It sits about a half of mile off the busy Interstate 57. Most of our students arrive each morning on one of our four buses. Students come from these rural areas including farms, oil fields, and lake settings to attend our school. RGS is the community; it is the voting polling place; the water company meeting place; the place that often has a sporting event most nights of the week and sometimes on the weekends...it unites the parents, students, and people of our area.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

At Raccoon Grade School, we facilitate growth mindset and knowledgeable instruction through use of research-based curriculum, effective planning and caring educators. We have low turnover in teaching staff from year to year, resulting in great understanding of curriculum and the ability to meet standards set forth for students at each level. District wide assessments and coordinated implementation allow for consistency in collection of data. Classroom staff, Response to Intervention staff, Title 1 and Special education staff are able to discuss and address needs brought about through assessments in monthly Problem Solving meetings. Grade level teams are able to coordinate instruction, discuss needs and analyze data on a weekly basis through cooperative plan times and team meetings.

Raccoon's literacy curriculum encompasses phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and writing. Through use of the Daily 5 framework in grades K-2, students become responsible for their own learning. Students are highly engaged in independent, and small group structured activities, while teachers are able to conference and conduct mini lessons meeting the diverse literacy needs of young readers and writers through the use of research based curriculum. Technology is utilized throughout instruction as assigned activities, chosen centers, assessments, instructional tools and product completion. As students progress through the school years, independence and responsibility are developed through the use of technology, direct instruction, independent research and application of skills. Students are responsible for developing, editing, collaborating and publishing work in various formats. Through the use of RTI (Response to Intervention) instruction, our students are exposed to a tiered needs approach to teaching. Based on individual student needs assessed through our cohesive district assessments, staff are able to provide students with what they need, in addition to what the curriculum scope states. During our current operating schedule and hybrid learning model, we have been successful in continuing with our online assessments utilizing i-Ready, and iXL at both school and home. Both programs also allow for growth and instruction of skills. Teachers have adapted to use of Google classroom and SeeSaw for online instruction for both students in the building and learning from home. Our junior high teachers coordinate curriculum needs with those of the high schools which our students will attend.

The mathematics curriculum at Raccoon Grade School includes skill-based and cumulative exposure of Common Core State Standards. Lessons are focused on application of learned skills, development of new skills and generalization of mathematical thinking. Staff are able to spiral lessons based on current district assessments, including STAR math and iXL. In the lower grades, where students need hands-on instruction and opportunity to learn through concrete examples, our teachers provide a center based approach. Students are responsible for completing work in both small groups and individually. Teachers are able to facilitate learning and teaching in small focus groups based on needs. As students progress in grade level, the instruction approaches change to more critical thinking and inquiry-based problem solving. Students utilize skills to solve problems based on their current assessment needs. Technology is utilized throughout the mathematics curriculum, as students are currently one to one with either iPads or Chromebooks. Teachers are utilizing both Google Classroom and SeeSaw for product completion, learning tools, instructional materials and publication of learning. Our junior high teachers coordinate curriculum needs with those of the high schools which our students will attend.

At Raccoon Grade School, our Science, Social studies and Cultural learning curriculum is interdisciplinary. Staff utilizes all curriculum to provide a cohesive, creative approach to teaching. Students are exposed to a view of the world outside of our classrooms through the use of technology, hands on activities, diverse discussions and creation of individual and group projects. Teachers encourage growth through thinking outside of the box and beyond oneself. Standards are addressed and assessed through use of technology and self-discovery. Our ability to utilize local resources outside of our building this year have been limited, however, our staff is adept at finding online resources to meet the needs of our students in these areas of discovery and learning. Online field trips, conversations with students from other schools, science experiments and art projects with adapted health procedures have provided our students with a bit of normalcy in their school day.

Beginning with our initial experiences with shutdown in March of 2020, our staff has adapted and refocused our curriculum to meet the needs of our diverse families. Technology has been provided to those that had none available. Staff delivered materials to students in need. Many conversations and office hours were spent talking students through lessons. During this school year, our staff, students and families have continued to grow relationships, minds and a sense of community. We have continued to utilize our available curriculum, online assessments, teacher knowledge and expertise to adapt all learning in a compact schedule full of added safety measures and limitations.

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

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

Raccoon School has an Early Childhood program and a Preschool program that has been funded by our Regional Office of Education. In our Early Childhood program, all core curriculum is addressed lining up with the Early Learning Standards, but also due to the nature of the class (all students having IEP's, there is some curriculum experiences at the kindergarten level). We work hard to not only teach the developmental skills our kids need to learn, but also try our best to help them get ready for kindergarten. We try to meet all the students' needs including their social, emotional, and academic needs helping them grow into our future Raccoon kindergartners. It is in these early years that we hope to instill the desire to learn and help them develop skills that will carry them into their future years at Raccoon School.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

This year our art teacher provides art/cultural studies two days a week for all grades. Art provides a creative outlet for kids. The students are taught basic art concepts and basic drawing and shading techniques. Some of the things they do include paper mache, linoleum painting, realistic drawings, craft construction, zentangles, pastel drawings, and bubble wrap paintings. Because cultural studies is included, they study music from different decades. Students perform at Christmas and spring concerts with music, singing, and dancing.

The PE program aims to develop students physical competence and knowledge of movement along with safety. We want students to participate in a wide range of activities to help them develop a healthy and active lifestyle as they get older. Every grade has PE and they focus on motor skill performance, applying concepts and strategies, engaging in physical activity, physical fitness, responsible behavior and sportsmanship, and benefits of physical activity. The main 5 components of physical fitness that we focus on are: cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, body composition, and flexibility. The earlier that physical fitness is stresses and started, the more likely a child will become a physically active adult.

Raccoon School has worked hard this year to improve our technology. We are moving close to being one-on-one. We have purchased many new I-Pads, chromebooks, laptops, and Clear Touch Boards. This has been huge in helping our students learn new platforms, such as Seesaw and Google (including both Google Classroom and Google Meets). Being rural, has been difficult for our families because internet is not always readily available. We have purchased hot spots to help our families who have internet difficulties, so our students can access the internet at home during quarantine times. We also added wi-fi access to the parking lot, so families could come get access if needed in the evenings or weekends.

3. Academic Supports:

At Raccoon School, we offer lessons that focus on all aspects of the learning including: visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and hands-on. Our kids work on computers, use paper and pencil, do experiments, and build models. They work in groups, as individuals, and outside our building taking in nature. We have a band teacher who provides lesson after school, so some students tap into music. Raccoon School is one of the only schools in the area to offer an art/music program

twice a week to our students. We work hard to differentiate learning for all students. Some students are above grade level. For those students, they are involved in enrichment activities, when other students are working on RTI. We have also piloted IXL this year, which is a computer based personalized instruction program. This has helped our students at higher levels learn past their grade level. This program has also helped those students below grade level, as they are learning skills to get them at grade level. As they learn the skills that they lack, they are becoming better students. We also have a school-wide title program that helps these students. The title teacher and title aide gives both in-class support and pull-out remediation trying to help our students learn the skills they lack to help them drawn up by parents, therapists, and teaching staff. Interventions and assessments are all put in writing for each student. We offer a wide range of special education services that include resource, cross categorical, speech and language, social work, occupational therapy, and physical therapy.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

In these times dealing with Covid-19, we have had to come up with some unique ways to reach, encourage, and motivate our students. In times of quarantine, many of our teachers met daily with students on Google Meets, while we were working remotely or if the student had been quarantined. Teachers, not only taught on these meets, but also checked in on the students and their families well-being. Teachers encouraged students to take pictures and share what they were doing at home. We had a virtual spirit weeks, parades, drive-by events, phone calls to home, and mailings of letters to our students. This year, we have been in school, so our students wear masks and are given mask breaks throughout the day. We try to participate in fun too. We recently had a Munchie Madness (to mimic March Madness) to vote on our favorite candy at RGS. The winning candy was passed out to the whole school. We celebrate special days and holidays in the school building with fun snacks, books, and activities. We try to bump elbows, smile with our eyes, and speak our praise to motivate our students. During this difficult time, we know that many of our students are experiencing life a little different. We have tried to think about all parts of our kids - not just the academics.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

This year bringing the community into the school has been difficult due to Covid-19 restrictions. Teachers and staff have worked hard at helping our families still feel a part of our school, even if they physically can't be as physically present as they once were. Our aides rode buses to take temperatures and would see our families daily. Our staff and superintendent work our pick-up procedure at the end of the day. Just seeing friendly faces and a wave can do wonders to helping our families still feel connected and supported. One of our longstanding traditions is the annual Christmas program. This year, we could not have it due to restrictions. Instead, our teachers and staff created a drive-thru Christmas event, in which different groups picked a song, decorated an area, and dressed up. At the end, each vehicle was given a small bag of books, snacks, and crafts. Our families missed having the Christmas program, but loved this new event. We have been giving bags of food to families through donations from both a local church and our school. Because of restrictions, spectators were not allowed at sporting events. The school live streamed it, so parents and families could watch the games from home. Just this spring, we have reinstated the AG in the Classroom program. Our students have enjoyed learning about how AG affects many parts of our life.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

At Raccoon, a culture of teacher support, respect, and appreciation is at the forefront to make the school a good place for teachers to work. It is important for staff to have input on their professional development needs, where meaningful in-services can provide valuable and useful information that can be used in their classroom. The end of last year and this current school year have offered challenges in every aspect, and everyone stepped up to do what they needed to do to ensure a quality learning experience for students. The school day was shortened this year to give teachers time to work with students who were either on remote or quarantined. It allowed teachers to talk to parents, to plan lessons, give extra online help to students, attend IEP meetings, and have team meetings to collaborate. Additional resources and technology items were purchased for teachers. They have new flat panels with cameras and a new laptop to use at home and school. Each teacher received 18 instructional lessons/activities that they could receive from Teachers Pay Teachers, so they would not have to purchase these items themselves. Teachers work together and strive to do the best for the students and their families. As teachers learn new strategies and platforms, they share what they have learned with their peers and help them incorporate those new ideas to their current classrooms. Teachers within grade levels have common plan time built into their schedules which allows for daily collaboration and sharing. This collaboration is also shared with the Response to Intervention staff, Title staff, special education staff, and paraprofessionals allowing for cohesion across all staff.

4. School Leadership:

There is one administrator at Raccoon School that serves as both the Superintendent and Principal. She currently wears many hats and like all jobs at the school since March 2020, you find that her role has had to shift. Our principal just doesn't deal with behavior or curriculum. You could find her helping with dismissal, supervising lunch detention, helping aides at recess, discussing behavior with students, passing out treats to students from her treasure chest, filling in when a staff member is gone, sitting on many committees, supervising sporting events, and making home visits. Then in her superintendent role, she is working on budgets, writing grants, and working on board agendas. At Raccoon, there is a collaborative leadership philosophy. Our administrator works with teachers and staff to address issues, discuss policies, and help the betterment of our school. Teachers are encouraged to work hard, develop meaningful lessons, and encourage families. There are discussions about curriculum, technology, and how to have meaningful relationships with our students and families. Our administrator has worked hard to keep us safe during Covid-19. She has enforced rules, set up guidelines and schedules for our cafeteria and playground, protocol for our buses, as well as for our students who are dropped off and picked up each day. She encourages our teachers and staff to be leaders, but also our junior high students to be a part of a student leadership club. Our administrator even has special fun events for staff, such as Thanksgiving BINGO, find the elf at Christmas time, delivers snacks and SONIC drinks on an appreciation cart, has games and provides prizes at in-services.

Every aspect was addressed. Dots were placed on the hallway floor for students to stand on, so they were 6 feet apart. Signs are posted in the hallway for social distancing. Hand sanitizer dispensers were placed throughout the building. Each grade was separated for lunch and recess. One grade in the cafeteria, one on the stage, and one either in their classroom or outside. At recess, the playground was roped off in three areas. Signs were rotated to show grades what play area they had each day. After each recess, the equipment was sprayed down by the maintenance director. Elkay bottle filling stations were installed on the water fountains and the Leadership Club bought everyone school water bottles. The water bottles stay at school and the aides run the bottles through the dish washer at the end of each day. The lockers and library area was not used this year. When space did not allow for separate desk space to be spaced the recommended six feet apart, clear partitions were built to allow for safety and line of sight. Aides rode the buses each morning to check temperatures before kids got on the bus. Staff went through one entrance when they arrive in the morning and take their temperatures and record and sign off on the health sheet. Students who are dropped off in the mornings have their temperature checked before entering the building and then go to the gym to sit in their designated grade area. This is why we were able to have in-person learning, because our administrator made our school a safe place to be.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Raccoon Grade School addresses the diverse needs and backgrounds of our students, families, and staff by recognizing the cultures and experiences within our building. The instructors allow for discussions about historical events and family traditions within teaching of curriculum and celebrations. Teachers incorporate the teaching of new perspectives through the use of research and talking with individuals who are directly involved. When celebrating holidays, our staff is mindful of all cultures and experiences.

Our current school community has experienced great changes this year due to current events. We continue to foster a community of respect within all parts of our building. Manners are encouraged in the lunch room, classroom, and on the playground. Teachers are involved in lessons connected to teaching empathy and fostering inclusion. Our staff took on special projects this year to encourage a feeling of kindness through our Adopt a Family program. Each month, several families received a delivery of materials encouraging family time, including supplies needed for a family meal, craft, game and/or experience. Throughout our school year, staff and families assist in community events. We donate our time and talents to fundraising outside of our school family. We see needs and fill them as we are able by sending postcards, letters, and care packages to students experiencing loss or illness.

Raccoon Grade School has also implemented the initiative to promote student growth and prepare them for the future by providing a one-to-one technological learning environment. The school has met this need by purchasing a Chromebook or Ipad for every student. This act by the school has provided a very valuable resource in order to personalize and differentiate every student's needs.

Raccoon Grade School is a very diverse building. Within this diversity, students are encouraged to interact throughout the day with students of varied abilities and age level. For example, our eighth grade students are encouraged throughout the year to be role models. They take on these leadership opportunities through activities such as reading with kindergarten students, assisting setting up school activities, and volunteering throughout the school building. The school also created a new club, The Student Leadership Club. This club is open to all students, grades sixth through eighth. The requirements are service, citizenship, and academics, therefore allows for diversity.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Raccoon Grade School chose a social-emotional strategy to achieve success during the school closures in February and March of 2020. Our school has always made it a priority to establish and maintain strong community relationships. The belief has always been to use these strong community relationships to increase academic success. As a faculty and staff, we feel having family involvement adds on to that success. The school also creates a trusting and safe environment for our students which fosters their academic learning and growth. Our bus drivers are the first to greet every student each day with a smile. Our faculty and staff then greets every student at their classroom doors with more smiles and special greetings of encouragement for the day.

For student success, it is essential to have meaningful relationships with parents and guardians. Raccoon Grade School fosters these relationships with open communication with families. Important information and announcements are posted for parents or sent home in newsletters. The school also hosts parent/teacher conferences and meets with parents as needed throughout the year. Teacher and family relationships extend outside of school hours. The school teams with our Parent Teacher Organization to build stronger relationships with students and their families. The school and PTO hosts and attends several annual extracurricular activities to encourage family involvement, such as the Dark and Stormy Night Reading Event, Trunk or Treat, Fall Fest with a Chili Dinner, and a silent and live auction with games for all ages. During our current shortened operating schedule and teaching model due to Covid, we have modified our family events using limited attendance and the outdoors. The school held parent teacher conferences through Google Meets, hosted an outdoor graduation ceremony for our eighth graders, participated in staff parades to family homes, delivered supplies and food, and changed events that previously could have been done in the building to outdoors and/or virtual events. As our mantra is to grow relationships, minds, and community, we feel providing for the socio-emotional well-being for all staff, students, and families is of utmost importance.