

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 Dr. Sarah M Kemppainen Ed.D.
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

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

School Mailing Address 611 N. Front Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Marquette State MI Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 49855-3589

County MI

Telephone (906) 225-4210 Fax (906) 225-4312

Web site/URL https://graveraet.mapsnet.org/ E-mail skemppainen@mapsnet.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* Mr. William Saunders E-mail wsaunders@mapsnet.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Marquette Area Public School District Tel. (906) 225-4200

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. James Randall
(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):
- 4 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 2 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 7 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	20	23	43
1	24	29	53
2	18	25	43
3	25	24	49
4	23	27	50
5	28	25	53
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	138	153	291

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 5.3 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 3.4 % Asian
 - 3.8 % Black or African American
 - 0 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 87.5 % White
 - 0 % 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: 11%

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	18
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	14
(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	295
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.11
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	11

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

Ukrainian

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

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 39 %

Total number students who qualify: 113

8. Students receiving special education services: 9 %
25 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>6</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>4</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>5</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>10</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 7
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. 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.	14
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.	0
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	9

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 21:1

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%	97%	97%	94%	97%
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.

Our mission embodies continuous growth, motivation and learning, and challenges everyone to reach their full potential academically, physically, socially and emotionally, regardless of age.

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.

During the 2020-2021 school year, Graveraet Elementary School offered three options for method of instruction to our families (students), face-to-face (F2F) in-person instruction, 100% online learning, or a hybrid method of instruction with F2F and online days determined by the classroom teacher, the parent/guardians, and the building principal. These methods of instruction were offered for all our graded K-5 students and families. Our district encouraged families to commit to their choice for an entire semester; although as COVID numbers increased families requested changes in their method of instruction. We continue to offer said above and do our best to honor families' requests for changes despite the unforeseen challenges that presents. This school year is about doing what is right for students and families as we all try to figure out what is in everyone's best interest, staff included. We continue to respect everyone's emotions, fears, and concerns regarding COVID while upholding the method of instruction families want for their child's education.

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

Non-Resident families within our Marquette-Alger Regional Educational Service Agency (MARESA) are eligible for School of Choice (SOC) in the Marquette Area Public Schools (MAPS). Parents/guardians must complete the application form by the enrollment deadline dates indicating their preferences. MAPS guarantees families a spot as we have open enrollment for grades K-12 per our district SOC guidelines.

Students with siblings attending specific buildings are given preference over those who do not have siblings at same buildings as our goal is to not split families in making our decisions. Based on building numbers, demographics, and siblings, MAPS does its best to balance class sizes and place students accordingly. Elementary students are guaranteed a school, and once a student is awarded choice, MAPS strives to honor this request in years to come maintaining consistency. The Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of Protected Classes of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and transgender identity), disability, age (except as authorized by law), religion, military status, ancestry, or genetic information (collectively, "Protected Classes") in its educational programs or activities.

PART III - SUMMARY

A legacy of learning lasting well beyond a lifetime . . .

Graveraet Elementary School is the newest (old) elementary school building in the Marquette Area Public School District, with three additional elementary schools, a middle school, one high school, and one alternative high school comprising our district. Constructed in 1925 - 1927, Graveraet Elementary School [established 2014] joins the legacy of learning that connects us back to Louis G. Kaufman, banker, businessman, and builder, who was one of the original co-owner/financiers of the Empire State Building. Having gifted our district twenty-six thousand dollars back in 1916 for the purchase of land to construct this building, Mr. Kaufman requested the school be named in memory of his deceased mother, Juliet Graveraet Kaufman, which was named Graveraet High School. While our new, old building was established from this beautiful legacy, our seven-year-old Graveraet Elementary School has become a unique, special place for learning and growing all because of our students, staff, and families who make our school amazing.

Located on the east side of Marquette, Michigan, our attendance area parallels the shoreline of beautiful Lake Superior from points north to south, including the Lake Superior Village neighborhood north offering income-based town homes to families, to our historic east side neighborhood with homes dating back to 1867, to the Shiras Hills neighborhood in south Marquette. Our families (and students) range in their diversity of income, family structure, ethnicity, and non-school opportunities and experiences.

Building students well beyond our brick and mortar foundation, our entire staff is committed to educating the whole child, fostering relationships that ensure every child is healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged. Practices we know will provide them the foundation to become well rounded students and citizens as they grow academically, culturally, socially, emotionally, and physically. With over one-third of our population eligible for free and reduced meals, a priority program implemented in our first year was a weekend food pack program called JJ Packs. Upholding anonymity and dignity, while offering food to all who are hungry regardless of age, JJ Packs now serves all seven schools in our Marquette Area Public School district and exists solely on donations from our community members and businesses.

One of the first unique programs to emerge from our building leadership team was our positive behavior intervention support (PBIS) program. The program awards students STARS tickets for positive behaviors through weekly drawings and monthly all-school assemblies focusing on specific STARS behaviors celebrating and recognizing our students. COVID restrictions have suspended our assemblies; however, weekly drawings and recognizing our students publicly (and virtually), and awarding gift bags to all our STARS student winners provides positive recognition to these students.

Our building leadership team implemented a check-in, check-out program matching at-risk students with key staff members including teachers, aides, secretaries, custodians, and administrators. Meeting with students at the start and end of their day fosters positive relationships with students often setting the tone for a child's day.

A most successful strategy implemented by a team of teachers comes from their dedicated commitment to a two-year Statewide Autism Resources and Training (START) Project offered through our Marquette-Alger Regional Educational Service Agency (MARESA) three years ago. This evidence-based training provided technical assistance and resources to these teachers who became our START team experts for staff that serve all students with an emphasis on students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. This required a commitment from the building principal to provide substitute teachers as well as additional time for START team members to meet and plan for full staff implementation and professional development sessions provided to our entire building staff. This amazing START team also implemented a peer-to-peer program among our students.

Our most unique program we celebrate as a school family generated from one of our second-grade teachers who wanted to provide a school-wide literacy-based event reaching all students and families celebrating March is Reading month. One School, One Book (OSOB) was implemented five years ago. It has become

an epic event for our entire school community! Each year, all in the name of one book, we transform our three-story school hallways into scenes and chapters from the book, host trivia challenges, read sections of the book at home and in school each week from February through March, and engage in literacy-based instruction all relating to the book. Our staff also provide our kick-off and closing assembly celebrations to students, which have come close to Oscar awards for staff who bring the characters in the book to life. We involve our Marquette Noon Rotary Club, our Graveraet parent group, our local grocery store and bakery, our food service staff, our high school cheerleaders and middle school national honor students, and family volunteers. On Family Night our families bring students, relatives and friends return to school to celebrate our one book, often welcoming over 400 people! Our teachers and staff volunteer their time to run station games, OSOB trivia and book talks, the family photo book booth, and book invented games that make the night engaging and fun.

As educators, COVID has not changed what we do, it has only altered how we go about doing and delivering instruction and reaching our students. COVID has not changed who we are as educators and our belief in the potential of our students and our staff. COVID has presented us with challenges and unexplored opportunities to rise above this pandemic to become better for our students and ourselves. "How we can vs why we can not," continues to be a driving question for our staff in educating the whole child in the midst of this pandemic.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

Academic success for all students is an ongoing goal and priority at Graveraet Elementary School. Closing the achievement gap continues to be a greater challenge and high priority since March 2020. Depending on where or who may be affected by a close contact or positive COVID test, we have had to remain flexible and responsive while providing innovative, evidence-based instruction and effective learning supports to all our students F2F and virtually. Our "how we can vs why we cannot" mindset supports teacher innovation and creativity in working towards meeting grade level and Common Core standards. While our curriculum and standards have not changed, the pace and method of instruction, instructional strategies, learning activities, and ways assessments are being administered has changed dramatically.

In-person teacher-led direct instruction has changed to online video recordings available asynchronously. Teachers have created screening videos, interactive virtual class meetings, and electronic resources for students utilizing Bloomz, ZOOM, Seesaw, Google Classroom, Flipgrid, and Animoto Video Maker, with mindful consideration of age appropriate uses of technology and screen time. These digital tools and instructional strategies are used appropriately across all curricular areas including reading, English language arts (ELA), math, science, social studies, and in all of our fine arts, technology and social emotional learning (SEL) classes. Families with limited or no resources for online learning at home have been provided free internet access by our district, and all students have 1:1 technology devices. Surprising to our staff this year was a need to provide basic lessons in "how to use the technology," for some students (and parents) before the actual online lessons and learning could begin. Materials packets and textbooks are provided for all students online as needed. These have become vital resources for our students in grades K-2 online who are not yet tech savvy. Packets are delivered via the US Postal mail, by school personnel door-to-door, or picked up at the school by families.

The Marquette Area Public School district uses Michigan's Common Core State Standards (CCSS) as our outline for learning expectations for all grades K-12 students. Core curriculum resources used in all elementary schools includes: Journey's (ELA), Math Expressions, TCI Social Studies [which follows the common core Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) aligned units], Social Studies Alive, and Mystery Science [aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), including performance expectations, science and engineering practices, disciplinary core ideas, and crosscutting concepts]. These scientifically-based resources align with Michigan's CCSS and were selected by district core curriculum teams with teacher representation from all four elementary schools. Additional resources used at Graveraet Elementary include Heggerty's Phonemic Awareness in grades K-2, MobyMax for all graded K-5 curricular areas, including the arts and technology, the Michigan Literacy Progress Profile (MLPP) interventions in the lower elementary, Scholastic News, PBS KIDS educational programming, online Liberty Kids, and the History Channel to name a few.

Grade level teaching teams meet regularly to examine student data for the purpose of revising pacing guides based on formal and informal assessments, and to determine next steps and instructional strategies unique to each student's needs. When we are providing instruction online, research-based formal and informal assessments are conducted through NWEA, Think Central (Journeys and Math Expressions), ZOOM meetings and breakout rooms, Flipgrid student recordings, submitting work via Google Classroom, photo posts of student work to teacher Bloomz sites, or Seesaw.

Assessment data review teams meet regularly throughout the school year to examine formative and summative (as available) data. They also review demographic, achievement/outcome, behavioral, attendance, process, and perception data to gain a complete understanding of the whole child when determining learning targets, next steps and instructional approaches. We offer multiple layers of academic support for students, including Tier 1 interventions for all students. Some examples include differentiated instruction, small group instruction, flexible grouping, one-on-one help with the teacher or aide, and peer buddies. Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions available to students include targeted services, Title I support for reading and math, and special education services.

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

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

All students in grades K-5 receive weekly instruction in music-performing arts, visual arts, physical education and health, and technology, three times a week for 40 minute sessions, on a two week rotating schedule. Library is offered to all K-5 classes for 30 minutes each week. We are pleased to be in our second year of rolling out our social emotional learning (SEL) curriculum in our kindergarten and first grades. As we continue to grow our SEL program with each incoming kindergarten cohort, we are confident this will help us better meet the needs of the whole child. SEL meets three times weekly for 40 minutes a session. Health and nutrition classes are offered by our Marquette Alger Regional Educational Service Agency (MARESA) nutrition educator to our kindergarten, second and fourth grade classes. Based on available grant funding, this eight week program uses the physical education and nutrition expansion project (PEP) lessons. Each class receives five nutrition and physical activity lessons, including food tastings and FitBit activities and is provided all materials and access to the P.E.P. resource website. Our school counselor also offers Safe Touch lessons, 30 minutes in length, to all K-5 classes over a three month period each school year.

Our non-core teachers provide creative opportunities for our students to integrate essential skills while expressing themselves through the arts. These teachers provide foundational skills within their specialized areas that promote performing, participating, creating, and practicing skills necessary to participate and understand the benefits of lifelong appreciation for music, maintaining a healthy and safe lifestyle, using technology appropriately, and how to respect self and others.

Examples of unique lessons that support the acquisition of essential skills through the arts include students using their research, reading, and writing skills to create digital footprint posters on their Chromebooks,. Students use writing skills to create SEL posters displayed throughout our school. In music classes students are able to expand their reading skills by reading lyrics and notes as they sing and play instruments. Applying division skills in music class by dividing a whole note and rest into half, quarter, and sixteenth notes, and rests is another example of how our music teacher integrates math skills into her lessons. Celebrating Dr. Seuss in physical education through Seuss station games, that require reading and physical activity and learning how to take your own pulse, are some of the ways our physical education teacher connects reading and math skills to physical education. Learning how to measure and calculate food and appropriate portion sizes in nutrition classes are a few of the other creative opportunities our non-core staff use to support students' acquisition of essential skills and knowledge.

The challenges posed by COVID have also presented us with new opportunities for teaching and reaching our students online. Music, art, physical education, technology, and SEL instructional videos and lessons are now a part of a growing bank of asynchronous resources for student access anywhere, anytime.

Adaptations to performance-based classes challenged us to create new opportunities to engage and feature our students in end-of-the-year events and activities. Our end-of-the-year spring virtual talent show was uploaded to Flipgrid for asynchronous viewing allowing us to reach families, grandparents, and relatives, all who were quarantined. Our physical education teacher offered a virtual activities day for students and families on the last day of school in June 2020, with a rubric of activities to be completed at home and a challenge to record their favorite family activity and post it on Flipgrid. The family ice bucket dump activity was a favorite for all.

3. Academic Supports:

Graveraet Elementary meets the needs of our students at their levels of development through our multi-tier system of supports (MTSS) framework.

Teachers in our classrooms monitor student progress monthly for reading, and weekly for math to determine instructional needs. Progress monitoring through NWEA assessments also occurs each fall, winter, and spring, providing us with growth norms for each of our students over time. Our goal is to provide targeted support to our struggling students as early on or soon as we can in a child's development.

Students performing below grade level receive Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions as needed through Title I or Special Education services which allow us to customize our instruction to meeting their needs. Our resource room provides direct, explicit instruction along with modeling and visual supports to students, and much of the work done in math involves manipulatives. In math, more time is spent on basic skills with core concepts broken down for student understanding. Math fluency is a key area of focus with our upper elementary students, and our special education staff use weekly creative games, songs, and math recovery strategies to make learning fun. Assessments are broken down into shorter learning segments given to students after finishing new concepts. These quick assessments help guide our staff in knowing what the students have learned concretely and reveal to our staff what areas for growth and improvement.

Reading supports involve phonics and decoding skills through structured language approaches. Similar to math, our resource room staff break apart words to help students learn the different sounds letters make. Repetition is key and is achieved through fun activities using playdough, shaving cream writing, sand trays, word sorts, and songs! Assessments are given using Brigance, Corrective Reading (and Math) Concepts, and tailor-made teacher created informal assessments measuring concepts taught.

Above grade level students are provided project-based learning opportunities through the use of the Kahn Academy curriculum and our NWEA individual student profile report and learning continuum resources. Through customized, individual learning statements these reports help guide student inquiry and instruction that is challenging, academically engaging, raises the level of instruction and achievement, and contributes to our above grade level student's future success.

We offer a Native American Education program through Title VI to our elementary students who qualify. Native American students are provided information about their culture and heritage taught by Native American staff. One of the goals of this program is to promote cultural diversity through building bridges between community, staff, parents, and students assisting our Native American students in attaining academic success.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Graveraet provides a variety of ways to engage students. Among these are the Graveraet's PBIS support STARS ticket program for all students and our Marquette Education Foundation's First to Finish savings program that gives a piggy bank and ten pennies to students, and deposits \$50 into student bank accounts set up each year for every first-grader in our district. We also offer school events and assemblies, peer-to-peer and check-in, check-out programs, and silly dress up and crazy hair days. We celebrate students' achievements and good behavior by establishing classroom norms and codes of conduct that build good values and behaviors. We provide consistent discipline and corrective behavior options to our students and model the behavior we want to see in our students. Our staff works purposefully and strategically at providing our students engaging, motivating, and fun events that contribute to a positive school climate and culture while supporting their academic, social, and emotional growth.

We miss singing our school song together celebrating our PBIS STARS behaviors in the all school assemblies but have adapted. We are able to watch a video recording virtually of our first grades singing this song with our building principal accompanying them on her guitar. The lyrics to our school song capture the culture and climate of this school and read as follows: This school is your school, this school is my school, near Lake Superior, up on a hill. We are the Comets, with STARS behaviors, this school was made for you and me! S- safety first, T-stands for teamwork, A-lways respectful, R-esponsible too, S-we stay positive, our STARS behaviors, will make this a super STAR school!

This year our school climate committee provided engaging activities for both our online learners and our F2F students (and staff) through events, like kindness bingo, SEL posters hung throughout our building and in homes of our online learners, to sharing our F2F in building Halloween parade with our online learners through ZOOM, to ZOOM meetings with classmates on unique "dress up days" or special classroom recognition days.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Ongoing communication with our families has become the most important and successful strategy we use to engage parents and guardians in their child's education especially during COVID. Phone calls, emails, face-time, texting, ZOOM parent-teacher conferences and meetings, Bloomz messaging, Seesaw posts, and Google Classroom tools have proved to be invaluable in our efforts to connect, communicate, and engage with our parents. Annual events held by our school provide families with opportunities to feel welcomed and engaged and have continued this year with slight modifications. Our F2F music programs have become virtual class performances and talent shows. Our all-school interest fair has become a student led virtual video sharing event, and our One School, One Book epic event became an all-school Let's Read project featuring staff reading selected books via ZOOM for classes and families throughout the month of March. We continue to seek innovative, creative, and safe alternatives for our families and students that invite parent and guardian participation and communication.

We are fortunate to live in a community that is home to Northern Michigan University (NMU) with a School of Education, Leadership, and Public Service. Our collaborative partnership with NMU's School of Education allows their students to meet at Graveraet Elementary school for their elementary methods courses with opportunities for these education majors to observe and work directly with our students and teachers well before their student teaching experience. Early literacy and math skills are the primary focus of the work these university students provide through 1:1 and small group instruction to our students. This is a win-win partnership for all involved and has contributed to our student's success.

We also have strong partnerships with our Marquette City Police through a youth services officer who visits our school weekly; Pathways Wellness Recovery Action Planning (WRAP) services which develops and carries out plans for children and their families who have complex needs; and, the Marquette Alger Resolution Services (MARS) program that deals with student attendance concerns. Our local Lyons and

Rotary Clubs provide eye glasses, dictionaries, and financial support to our families on an as needed basis. Our Marquette County Health Department partnership provides annual vision and hearing screenings and a dental program to all our students. We also have established community partnerships with our Peter White Public Library, the Upper Peninsula Children's Museum, our Marquette Post Office, the Marquette Fire Department, the Marquette Maritime Museum, and the Marquette History Museum.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Teachers and staff meet individually with our building principal at the start of each school year providing their goals for professional growth and development. These goals are supported and encouraged by our principal through complete autonomy and choice in how teachers will work to achieve their goals. Whether district-level or school-based professional development, or through attending trainings out of district, funded by the principal's account, our teachers feel supported in their choices to grow and develop as professionals. Knowing that we were going to allow families choice in their method of instruction for their children this school year, our building principal arranged to have the instructional technology integration specialist from MARESA come and provide our teachers their own professional development prior to the start of school. This professional development focused on all the electronic resources our teachers were going to need to use or wanted to use including, Think Central (Journeys and Math Expressions), ZOOM meetings, Flipgrid student recordings, and how to use and help students use Google Classroom and Seesaw. This session gave our teachers a sense of relief, support, and confidence.

Three years ago, collectively a group of teachers, our building principal, and Title I teacher approached our teaching staff and asked if they would be interested committing to be involved in a Michigan Assessment Literacy collaborative workshop project between NMU's School of Education, NWEA, Oakland University, and the University of Michigan - Flint. This whole school, whole community, whole child collaborative challenged our teachers to dig deeply and holistically into data that better represented the whole child. These voluntary professional growth opportunities contribute to our professional culture at Graveraet, by providing meaning, fostering professional connections, setting collaborative professional goals as a staff, and providing social connections for our teachers.

Other day-to-day events that contribute to our professional culture evolve from our school climate committee, who intentionally work to provide "special days" and events each month where teachers and all staff feel valued and supported. This might be a note or treat in everyone's mailboxes, or something as involved as a recognition lunch for specific groups of staff, or even an anonymous random act of kindness. Last Christmas our cafeteria staff provided personalized buckets filled with gifts to every staff member in our building. We are never sure what our climate committee will do next, but we can always be sure it will contribute positively to our professional culture and create an environment where all of us feel valued, supported, and appreciated.

4. School Leadership:

Our principal is visible and accessible, in our classrooms and areas of our school which allow her to be an active participant in our schools teaching, learning, creative fun, and continuous improvement. She promotes a shared commitment to high expectations for herself, our staff, student achievement, and high standards of teaching and learning. Best described as a relational, collaborative facilitator, she engages all stakeholders in the development and implementation of our shared vision of learning. With a strong organizational mission and commitment to student achievement, she works with teachers and grade levels to develop strategies for change that will result in measurable growth for each student. She collaborates with teachers to establish rigorous, measurable goals for instruction that will help close achievement gaps. Her understanding of the district and school's mission and core beliefs, as well as board policies, underscore the decisions she makes regarding day-to-day building safety, professional development, and instructional program decisions.

Our principal oversees our school's leadership - school improvement team, whose membership has included classroom teachers, parents, and instructional program aides. Meetings throughout the school year have brought positive changes to our staff and students through school-wide programs, curricular resources, building initiatives, and school improvement surveys of staff, students, and parents to better our school. She

encourages teacher leaders to step forward serving our building as math and literacy experts, school safety and crisis team members, first responders, school-wide activity project leaders, and facilitators of innovative, productive initiatives that will improve student achievement. She continues to ask herself and our staff, "how we can't why we can't" when it comes to leadership, programs, and resources focused on student achievement.

Our principal leads the district elementary science committee with teacher representatives from all four elementary buildings in our district. Her leadership to this broad group of teachers was instrumental in helping this committee recommend the district purchase of the Mystery Science curriculum resources to all our elementary buildings this past fall (2020).

Working closely with our district administrators and building custodians, our principal has upheld our County Health and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID guidelines quarantining students, staff and/or classrooms when necessary. She completely supported our district superintendent's efforts to make the COVID vaccine available to all and any school employees, and the decision to move F2F instruction days to all school 100% online learning days, freeing up staff to go and receive their vaccinations. Ensuring a constant supply of masks and handwipes in every class and room in our building, along with requiring classroom teacher daily temperature checks of every student every morning, to encouraging continuous hand washing and mask wearing, our principal continues to provide us the safest environment for our F2F students and staff. She also insists on custodial fogging (safe mist) of our hallways and common areas in our building three times daily and continues to hold ZOOM staff meeting all this year to keep us socially distanced and safe.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Always respectful, responsible too. These lyrics to our PBIS shining STARS school song comprise how our school addresses the diverse need and backgrounds of our students, families, and staff. Our Graveraet staff share the collective responsibility of teaching all our students' cultural awareness and respectful differences in order to help them accept others in our diverse world. Within our school, our guidance counselor and SEL teacher provide lessons to our students that foster a sense of identity as individuals with connections to their cultural groups. Our teachers all play a big role in helping our student accept and understand others in the culturally responsive classrooms they uphold. The rest of our building staff have that same role in the non-classroom spaces children encounter every day in our building. Some remarkable culturally responsive learning opportunities we have provided our students include all K-5 art students participating in the Chinese Art Exchange where we send our Graveraet students artwork to China and we receive artwork from Chinese students. Through this art exchange our art teacher is able to bridge a cultural gap and create an awareness of global citizenship for all our students. Another example of providing our students, families, and staff with a cultural awareness learning opportunity was when our district brought in Mr. Marti Lowenberg, a holocaust survivor, who provided an all-school assembly teaching and sharing his experiences as a child living through the holocaust. Two years ago, our school was fortunate to have Shawn Cheshire, a blind Paralympic cyclist come and share her journey with us as she faced her biggest challenge, a rim-to-rim hike through the Grand Canyon.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Relationships, relationships, relationships, is the ONE practice that has been the most instrumental to our success in educating and supporting our students since school closures began for us on March 13, 2020. Although, well before COVID ever evolved, our staff upheld this socio-emotional skill as our most important practice in educating the whole child based on scientific research indicating a strong correlation between forming positive relationships with others, working in teams, and learning how to handle conflict, and student's cognitive development and well-being. We are proud of the school community we have created at Graveraet Elementary over the past seven years. Our students and staff make our school unique and special, and no curriculum or physical space (in school or virtually) could ever do what our dedicated staff does every day for our students, families, and each other. We have become a true school family of learners who believe in the powerful work of teaching, building, modeling, and maintaining relationships with students. When students know how much we care, they can begin to care about how much they know. We value the connections and relationships we have cultivated and developed with our students, staff, and families. We believe that our students' ability to establish relationships with others will be our legacy of learning that will matter most to their success in their lifetime. Graveraet shining STARS, that is what we are!