

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 Mrs. Janet Peterson
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

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

School Mailing Address 4910 N 177th Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Omaha State NE Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 68116-3175

County Douglas County

Telephone (402) 289-9078 Fax (402) 289-4181

Web site/URL https://www.elkhornweb.org/sagewood/ E-mail jpeterson@epsne.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. Bary Habrock E-mail bhabrock@epsne.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Elkhorn Public School District Tel. (402) 289-2579

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 Mrs. Amy Parks
(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):
- 12 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 4 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 3 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 19 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	37	44	81
1	55	44	99
2	41	38	79
3	44	37	81
4	35	37	72
5	39	40	79
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	251	240	491

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 13 % Asian
 - 4 % Black or African American
 - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 80 % 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: 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	13
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	15
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	28
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019	482
(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):
Nepali, Sudanese, Hindi, Spanish, Japanese, Chinese, French, Russian, Pashto, Korean, and Serbian

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 7 %
33 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 22 %

Total number students who qualify: 108

8. Students receiving special education services: 15 %

76 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>13</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>9</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>6</u> Developmental Delay	<u>15</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>5</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>24</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>2</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>1</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: 8

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.	25
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	10
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	14
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 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	98%	97%	98%	96%	98%
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.

To build a nurturing/inclusive environment, fostering individual growth by providing students with challenging/diverse learning, achieving academic success, and thriving as responsible citizens.

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.

Elkhorn Public Schools has been operating with all students in school beginning on the first day of school in August. Students are expected to sanitize frequently and wear masks throughout the day with social distancing in place. remote learning has been offered as an option and Sagewood has 16 students out of 491 that are doing so. After Thanksgiving, winter, and spring break, there was an all-district remote week where all students learned remotely to quarantine after travel and/or larger family gatherings. This has shown to be a very effective and successful way to keep all students in school throughout the year.

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

Sagewood Elementary is nestled in the heart of an ever-growing, diverse neighborhood that was once open fields of farmland less than a decade ago. The history of Elkhorn began over 150 years ago when Elkhorn, or at that time also known as Elkhorn Station, officially became founded in 1867 shortly after Nebraska became a state. The Union Pacific Railroad prompted the growth of Elkhorn which caused Elkhorn Station to become a permanent town and Elkhorn Public Schools was established in the mid to late 1800s. Fast forward to the present, Elkhorn Public Schools marks the district's 34th consecutive year of growth. Elkhorn Public Schools and the community are collectively committed to serving the future generation to be productive members of society. As Elkhorn has welcomed new families at a rapid rate, the district continues to make adjustments to adequately serve a greater population of students. The growth of the community has caused Elkhorn Public Schools to open eleven elementary buildings, five middle schools, and three high schools. In 2013, Sagewood Elementary opened its doors and welcomed 269 students. Through the years, Sagewood has grown to nearly 500 students and has been a school that has consistently been exposed to more challenging demographics compared to the rest of the district. Relative to other buildings, Sagewood educates a higher number of ELL students and middle to lower class families. Diverse demographics have been a strength of Sagewood because teachers are exposed to a variety of students and are gaining more experiences to meet the needs of all learners. The staff does not see Sagewood demographics as an obstacle but an opportunity to grow our most vulnerable learners at the highest level. In order to get all students to the next level of learning, Sagewood focuses on implementing Professional Learning Communities (PLC) by creating a 30-minute guaranteed time for authentic collaboration among grade level members, interventionists, and Special Education staff. The drive for each PLC weekly meeting is student-focused, data-driven, and all individuals contribute to the collaboration and betterment of the school. At all grade levels, teachers are developing individual goals with each student in the areas of MAP Math and Reading by using the Learning Continuum. Focused collaborative conversation centered on data, have developed a greater level of collective efficacy where all staff takes part in developing and delivering data-based instruction. As a result, all grade levels have a 30-minute Intervention and Enrichment (I&E) block to address student needs and maximize instructional time. Sagewood uses this block as an opportunity to layer instruction. This instruction is viewed as "in addition to" grade-level curriculum and not as "in replacement of." For example, during I & E interventionists provide instruction in a small group setting outside of the classroom. The programming aligns with the general education curriculum, however, the instruction is scaffolded to provide differentiation. The interventionists also work on the automaticity of skills such as reading fluency, sight word recognition, and math fact fluency.

After analyzing data, the staff also identified an area of need for professional growth. Therefore, the staff engaged in a book study on questioning by Fisher and Frey called, TDQ, Text-Dependent Questioning. Pathways to Close and Critical Reading to increase understanding of using text-dependent questions as scaffolds during close reading. In addition to achieving academic success, the staff also noticed a need to increase resiliency and develop a growth mindset among Sagewood students. We have found that we could let obstacles, challenges, and excuses interfere with success or we could face these obstacles head-on. The staff has increased their use of growth mindset language and began implementing student goal setting to help students work through their frustration and push on to the next level of learning by reflection, the analysis of data, and deeper level questioning. As Sagewood continues to see an influx of students from a variety of demographic backgrounds, the school community continually strives to meet the diverse needs of our students.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

Sagewood Elementary is a kindergarten through fifth-grade school. All grade levels cover the same five core curricular areas, which are reading, writing, math, science, and social studies. Each content area, at each grade level, has a pacing guide that is examined each year to ensure that all state standards are addressed. Within the building, each grade level meets weekly to discuss how the material is presented to the students. Teachers consider any special circumstances within each room at this time. Strategizing with other teachers has proved to be especially important this year because the teachers are following the district's hybrid model. Remote students and in-person students are being taught simultaneously. Remote students participate in instruction using Zoom during reading, writing, and math instruction. Social studies and science content is taught asynchronously. Remote students are assigned work through Google Classroom in all five core areas. Assessment is completed in many ways at Sagewood Elementary. In the area of reading, we use the curriculum from Pearson, Wonders. Students take weekly online tests focusing on the question-of-the-week, vocabulary, grammar, text-dependent analysis, questioning, and comprehension. In the sixth week, the topic test covers all of the skills for the unit. Each day there is a quick check and exit ticket so that the teacher can determine which students understand the material and which students need additional re-teaching the next day. In math, students are from enVision. Students use math talk on a daily basis and explain how and why they receive the answer. Weekly quizzes are given and unit tests applied to show understanding of the concepts. The writing curriculum has been developed by our district writing committee and personal narratives and research developed at each level. Final drafts are scored blindly by district grade levels using a rubric. FOSS is a hands-on curriculum that is used for science at all grade levels. Investigations are taught and implemented in small groups. Assessments are completed in an investigation format. Along with quizzes and tests in all subject areas District Common Assessments (DCAs) are given throughout the year.

Although the 2020-2021 school year has provided the challenge of ensuring all students receive the same level of instruction regardless of where they are receiving instruction, the model for presenting instruction has not changed. Teachers use a gradual release model while presenting content to the students. The first phase of this model is focused instruction where the teacher assumes the majority of the responsibility. This is typically done with the whole class and explicit learning goals are expressed at the beginning of each lesson. The next phase of instruction is guided instruction where the teacher scaffolds students' developing skill or knowledge through questioning, prompting, cueing, and additional modeling centered on the learning objective. A key feature of guided instruction is the use of formative assessment. The data gained during this phase will guide the next phase of instruction which is collaborative learning. This phase allows students to consolidate their thinking and participate in meaningful discourse. Again, Formative assessments are used during this phase to reveal partial understandings and misconceptions as well as confirm what they already know about the learning goal. The final phase is independent learning. This is the ultimate goal of instruction and allows students the opportunity to demonstrate their learning with minimal error, difficulty, or confusion.

The gradual release model also includes three components that are purposeful and are an explicit part of every lesson. The first of these components is learning activation. This is a brief activity used to focus the students' attention on the lesson's learning goals. The second component is the learning goals are not only displayed within the classroom but are addressed at the start of each lesson. These goals are written in student-friendly language and are clear statements of what the students should be able to do at the conclusion of the lesson. The third component is closure which allows students to reflect on their own learning. The closure also provides the teacher with information about where to start the next lesson.

While the gradual release approach is followed for every lesson it is important to note that formative assessment is not only used throughout the lesson to help guide the pace of instruction but also to identify both struggling and excelling students. Once these students have been identified teachers will implement effective instructional strategies to help all students reach the learning goal. The learning goal remains the same for all students but some aspects of instruction might be altered to fit the needs of each learner. For example, for a struggling learner, the amount of time spent on a concept would be increased, the level of support provided might involve the student being pulled into a smaller group of students, and more targeted

teaching strategies would be provided. For the excelling learner, the pace of instruction would be increased, and the depth and complexity of the learning goal would be adjusted.

While formative assessments are used within instruction and check understanding centered on each students' knowledge of the learning goal, the summative assessments also play a crucial part in guiding instruction. All summative assessments are aligned with the curriculum and inform the teacher of each student's understanding and/or misconception on all instructional standards. Teachers are able to use this data to guide instruction before state assessments. Time is spent on concepts that each student needs. This does require the teacher to group students according to need and work with smaller groups if necessary. Teachers can also utilize any support available to them at this time. Some examples of the types of support used are technology-based support, problem-based learning, collaborative groups, and explicit instruction provided to smaller groups of students.

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:

Sagewood Elementary implements the arts, physical education, Spanish, music, and media on a weekly basis. Art is taught to each grade level (K-5) for one hour each week. The lessons are based on standards/objectives in the area of art techniques, art history, and artists. Physical education focuses on gross motor skills, types of sports, and the importance of healthy lifestyles and lifelong physical activity options. Music teaches about genres, instruments, and the use of musical terminology/reading of musical pieces. Music and P.E. take place for 30 minutes twice a week. Media occurs once a week for Grades K-5 and helps students to understand keyboarding, learn how to do research successfully, and apply technology appropriately and safely on Chromebooks and iPad. Spanish is offered once a week in person with a Spanish associate for Grade 1-5. Every building has a guidance counselor who teaches social, emotional, and problem-solving lessons once every other week. Extra-curricular activities include computer club, Robotics, Destination Imagination, Student Council, and Battle of the Books.

All curriculum areas have met in person since the beginning of the 2020-21 school year. Covid-19 has forced the teachers to make adjustments. The specials teachers needed to use the classroom seating arrangement when in music, P.E., media, and art. In the area of music, instrumental activities only took place the first semester and singing was added the second semester with masks. There will be no musicals scheduled this year.

In each of the curricular areas, teachers meet in PLCs at the building and the district level. SMART goals are developed at the beginning of the year and if mastered by semester, are reviewed and recreated to create a rigorous and higher level of learning mentality for all students. District common assessments have been developed for these curricular areas by teacher committees throughout the district. All teachers use a pacing guide and teach all expected curriculum with fidelity. Formative and summative assessments allow for these teachers to become aware of the students who need additional supports and the students who can move forward in their learning.

3. Academic Supports:

When thinking through academic supports, Sagewood aligns their work with The DuFour Professional Learning Community research. Engaging in collaborative professional conversations centered on student learning is crucial to developing actionable steps to accelerate learning. As a full-inclusion building and a school that educates learners of diverse backgrounds, Sagewood staff is dedicated to developing plans to provide instruction that does not allow students to fall through

the cracks. Incorporating a 30-minute instructional block dedicated to meet the needs of struggling and high-achieving learners has been a critical component to student achievement. PLC meetings are designed to analyze data and determine necessary grouping and teaching points for each individual student. During this time, students who are carefully identified, will receive additional intervention and specialized instruction from our Reading Specialist and/or Title 1 Math Interventionist. As students receive intensified direct instruction, their progress is monitored closely to ensure growth is being made. Sagewood also has additional academic supports that address the needs of our English Language Learners. Students who qualify for the ELL program receive intensive academic instruction from our district's certified ELL educator along with further individual support from our ELL teacher assistants. In addition to delivering tiered instruction to our struggling learners, Sagewood staff works equally as hard to meet the needs of our high-achieving students. Our rigorous curriculum naturally forces our students to think at a higher level when given Tier 1 instruction. However, the I&E block also provides an additional opportunity for our high-achieving students to complete higher-level activities. Sagewood also strives to meet the academic needs of our high-achieving students through the High Ability Learner Education (HALE) program. HALE is described as "expanded learning experiences for students who are capable of studying in-depth matters of an academic and creative nature." Students are considered for the HALE program by using a three-phase process in the following order: Screening, data analysis, and identification through standardized district assessments. Beyond specialized instruction, HALE provides an opportunity for students to extend their knowledge by creating projects and attending competitions.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

In an effort to engage all students, the staff at Sagewood creates an environment that supports all students' academic, social and emotional growth. The creation of what Sagewood will look and feel like begins before the first day of school. Teachers work together with all support staff and administration to set clear expectations for academics as well as behavior. Once the students arrive relationships are prioritized and students become versed in what is expected of them as well as what they can expect from the staff. Sagewood realized that not all children will come to school with the requisite social and behavior skills necessary to be successful in school. In an effort to minimize behaviors and create an environment that would allow all students to succeed a positive behavior and intervention support (PBIS) system was implemented. This system is universal to all grade levels and provides support strategies and learning opportunities to help develop and strengthen behavioral and social skills in order to decrease problem behavior before it happens. Behavior lessons were created for all aspects of the day and are taught the first week of school to all students. Each Tuesday during the school year, teachers follow a Tune-Up Tuesday schedule where one lesson is revisited. All staff carry reward tickets that are given to students who demonstrate positive, prosocial behaviors. When tickets are given, specific praise is also provided to the students. Immediate reinforcement is key to this program's success. These tickets are used for whole school rewards as well as rewards within the classroom.

Sagewood teachers set high expectations for all students. They look at each student as an individual and make a plan to get them to the next level, no matter what that level may be. All teachers use current student data to determine what a student may be lacking or in many cases what they need to support a high level of learning. Sagewood uses a growth mindset with all students to help get them past their frustration and push on to the next level of learning by reflection, the analysis of data, and deeper level questioning. Teachers discuss these strategies during weekly PLC meetings. Collaboration is key in creating an environment that is student-focused. The focus for students is on the "yet" and being comfortable with the phrase, "I have not reached my goal yet or I have not learned how to do that yet." At Sagewood we are intentional about helping students take steps to reach their goals. It is a change in mindset from, "I can't" to "I can, I will and most importantly here's how."

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Sagewood Elementary has a strong family and community support system. In past years (2013-2020), parents were an integral part of the school setting. We have a strong PTO and a team of parents and community members that work with Sagewood to discuss and share opinions on positives/negatives for our school improvement plan. They also have the option of completing a school climate survey at the end of each year so that we can make improvements to our instruction, communication, safety, and overall building functions. If a child has difficulties academically or behaviorally, we invite them to be a part of the Student Assistance Team meetings to help them understand what strategies will be used to encourage student success for their child. We encourage parents to be a part of our school through volunteering in classrooms and helping with school events. These events include Pastries with Parents where students and their parents can eat and enjoy reading together. Our Title I teacher and other teachers have a Family Math Night every year where families can come and learn math strategies while playing math games together. Our parents also enjoy the musicals that the music teacher schedules for each of the six grade levels. She allows families to come to the dress rehearsal or evening program depending on what works best with their schedules. The PTO puts on a Fun Run that the parents can join along with the inclusion of a Track and Field Day and Fun Day that the families can come and watch.

Within the classroom setting, teachers invite families to Reader's Theaters, Reader's Cafe, 1st grade patriotic Penny Museums, and the 5th grade Wax Museum over historical figures. This allows families to witness firsthand what their children are learning about within the classroom setting. It also allows them to be a part of helping their children to prepare at home for these special events. Parent/Teacher conferences are held twice a year and attended at a high percentage rate, whether in person or this year via zoom. For first

semester conferences, we have always had 100% attendance since our opening in 2013. Our second-semester conference has been in the 98%-100% range each year.

Community partnerships are very important to Sagewood Elementary and are used consistently to support our students and families. Students enjoy the opportunity to have a Teammates mentor and work with this mentor once a week. We choose the students who need this support the most. The Elkhorn Public Schools Foundation donates to special events to encourage family and community involvement such as One Book, One School. Womenade is a partnership that helps to provide necessities for our families who can not afford backpacks, supplies, and/or clothing for their children.

Covid-19 has played a determining role in our participation of parents within the school setting. Parents and community members are not allowed within the building. We continue to share information through weekly email blasts, newsletters, phone calls, and zoom meetings.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Sagewood promotes and encourages an environment where teachers feel supported and valued for their ideas and input. We have a school improvement team with 8 members of the certified staff. They help to determine the areas of strength and weakness for our building each year. An action plan is created using our data, goals, instructional strategies/activities, and the outcomes of assessment. The team shares the action plan with the entire staff and asks for commentary and suggestions. This is discussed on monthly in-service days and PLCs for current practice and ideas to implement for intervention and enrichment. Teachers are also invited to be a part of the PBiS implementation for positive behavioral practices throughout the building. Data team meetings include all certified staff to determine which students need specific skill intervention during I/E each day and which students would benefit from after-school reaching programs.

When the Elkhorn Public Schools District first closed down, every building of teachers met with the entire grade level team for two days. This allowed the teachers to develop plans for the areas of reading, math and writing for the months of March, April, and May. The pacing guide was set and the plans were followed 5 days a week remotely. Special Education teachers, Title I, and the Reading Specialist met remotely with small groups in the afternoons.

Once we started the 2020-21 school year, teachers felt a sense of relief that we were starting in person and on the first day of school. Desks/tables were socially distanced, masks are worn by all, and limited groupings and recess rotations developed. Teachers appreciated that the administrative team created the protocols and that these procedures didn't have to be their responsibilities.

Professional development is always an expectation however, PLCs and meetings for staff development were completed via zoom. This can create difficulties for communication but the administration still expects for all to be a part of the conversation and participate throughout the process. This is not to say that this year has been easy. Our teachers, especially, have been asked to teach in person but also fold in remote learners and learn to activate their learning and include them in classroom lessons. Supplies were handed out by-monthly for the remote learners and had to be organized accordingly. Everyone has been stretched to an ultimate level and numerous additional hours placed upon all certified staff.

The additional supports provided by the district have been two masks for students, teachers, teacher assistants, and the administration as well as face shields and table shields for small group learning activities. Extra sanitizing stations and bottle water filters installed. The additional custodial staff was also hired to help sanitize and spray throughout the day.

Elkhorn Public Schools had a hybrid model but never moved in that direction. The Elkhorn Public School worked with the Superintendent to change the school year's dates once the school year began. After Thanksgiving, winter, and spring break, a buffer week was implanted for remote learning for all. This allowed families to have their students learn from home and stay safe and healthy.

4. School Leadership:

Our philosophy at Sagewood Elementary is to build strong relationships with both adults and students in order to create an environment for students to feel safe and to take risks within the classroom environment. Genuine relationships between the teachers and students promote the ability for students to take their learning to a deeper level and ultimately allow classroom conversations to occur and encourage the ability to explain their responses through text-dependent analysis and collaboration.

The principal and instructional facilitator do two formal observations for the non-tenured teachers in the areas of reading, writing, and/or math. These occur for a 60-90 minute time frame. Once completed, a post-observation conference occurs with the positives and negatives of the lesson and reflective questions about instruction. This conversation promotes an understanding of the concepts taught and what supported the learning goal and objectives. Reflection is an important part of the conversation. One formal observation occurs for teachers that are tenured and obtain 4 years or greater within the Elkhorn Public School District.

The principal and instructional facilitator understand that conversations must occur so that all teachers are performing at the expectation placed upon them by Sagewood and the Elkhorn Public Schools. If the instructional strategies do not meet the level of performance, the administration has genuine, open conversations that promote support for the teachers who need suggestions/techniques that raise the level of instruction for our students.

Sagewood also has a full-time school counselor who plays a valuable role in providing curriculum and supporting the social-emotional needs of our students and families. Even though we have several assigned leadership roles, other members of the Sagewood staff carry critical leadership responsibilities that positively impact student learning. The School Improvement Team meets monthly and consists of the building principal, a member from each grade level, a Special Education teacher, and an interventionist to continually utilizing Sagewood's Data Dashboard to analyze trends and develop school-wide goals for continuous school improvement. Our Student Assistance Team (SAT) is a valuable resource for grade-level teachers to approach and brainstorm solutions to address student concerns. The SAT team, who is led by the school counselor, Instructional Facilitator, and a grade-level teacher, believes in being proactive and preventative so we can close the achievement gap in a timely manner. Our PBIS leadership team consists of the various grade level teachers, school counselor, and a Special Education teacher to lead the building in setting and holding all stakeholders accountable to the clear, concise expectations at Sagewood. The building principal firmly believes teacher empowerment and autonomy are pivotal to the success at Sagewood. Therefore, PLC meetings are a time for all staff members to be teacher leaders and participate in collaborative opportunities that are student-centered and solution-driven so we can collectively teach to the whole child.

Informally, walk-throughs are done on a weekly basis to get a realistic view of what is occurring during unplanned visits. The focus is student engagement and the use of the Elkhorn Instructional Model which includes the learning goal, learning activation, gradual release (direct instruction, collaborative instruction, and independent practice), formative assessment, and closure. The administration looks for the pieces of the model and shares comments from the ten-minute visits. It is also common to ask the students what they are learning about in their own words.

The protocols that we have in place for student learning are Professional Learning Communities that occur weekly for teachers for 40 minutes once a week beyond the common plan time. These PLCs focus on assessments, behavior supports, data to drive instruction, and intervention/enrichment activities. I/E times occur daily for 30 minutes with fluid groups of students. After school interventions are by invitation for students needing additional re-teaching in the areas of reading and math for 30 minutes four times a week.

COVID-19 has created a challenge for the 2020-21 school year. Meetings are via Zoom as well as PLCs and data team meetings. Although this seems less personal, the administration and certified staff have still been professional and focused on student learning. All want what is best for our students and recognize that the students are fragile and need all of the adults to be their advocates. The entire Sagewood team has been cognizant of the safety precautions and has followed them completely. Small groups need to be kept to three to a group and for 15 minutes at a time. Collaboration between students could not be varied but instead, kept to the partner sitting directly next to them. We continue to adapt to the DCHD protocols and follow NBRS 2021

these guidelines and the guidelines set forth by the Elkhorn Public Schools upper administration and Elkhorn School Board.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

In the increasingly diverse and multicultural society in which we live, the educators at Sagewood take the responsibility seriously and understand the importance of incorporating culturally responsive instruction in the classroom. The most powerful step those at Sagewood take to foster inclusion and awareness centered on multicultural education is they openly discuss all issues during weekly PLC meetings as well as team planning sessions. Sometimes these discussions can be difficult but Sagewood has a strong belief in collaborative teaching that translates into all curricular areas.

Some examples of ways the teachers ensure equity, cultural awareness, and respect for all is they continually examine any and all teaching material. Teachers look for bias and make sure a wide range of voices are represented in the material they present to the students. Sagewood teachers treat all students as unique individuals who have the potential to teach one another about various topics. Students are not only allowed to discuss differences they are encouraged to do so. The teachers realize that when diversity is not promoted the students will not feel included and therefore will not be willing to participate in classroom discussions. Teaching students to consider different perspectives also teaches students how to interact with each other, and equips them with lifelong skills.

Our teachers are acutely aware of the importance of being understanding cultural differences. The makeup of our building is more diverse than any other elementary building in Elkhorn. Before Covid-19, the staff did a book study on how we speak to children and how we connect to each child as an individual. The book, "What We Say and How We Say It Matter" by Mike Anderson has helped the staff to understand the cultural differences of our students, their families, and the Sagewood community as a whole. This helps the students feel safe and willing to take ownership of their learning.

Fifth grade students participate in research writing by choosing a famous person from around the world who has made a difference. The students develop papers on these important men and women and invite their parents to watch presentations on them. The second graders complete posters on special celebrations around the world. Students learn about special cultural events and posters are created with all of the details about each event and the country that celebrates it. Once completed, the students dress as a child from that particular country and share with the students from the five other grade levels. At the end of the presentation, students taste food from the country that they have learned about in the final part of the social studies unit.

Sagewood teachers and staff also look at individual student needs and really get to know each student and each students' family. While the current school year looks a little different, teachers and staff are still making an effort to connect with all families. Sometimes this involves a phone call but often a Zoom meeting is scheduled so all parties can feel more comfortable and connected. Teachers also utilize a language line that connects families and teachers with translators to help with any language barriers. The teachers at Sagewood are quick to recognize when a student may need more than is typically provided during a school day. Sagewood has partnered with community food banks to ensure we are sending home food for any student who is food insecure. If a need for clothing or eyeglasses is needed the teachers have the ability to reach out to the foundation and ask for assistance. In short, the staff at Sagewood is hyper-aware of the needs of all students who walk through the doors of the school.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

While Sagewood does employ multiple strategies to ensure success for all students, the one practice that sets Sagewood apart is how we use data to inform all of our decisions. All students regardless of where they are at have the same high-level expectation of learning. The use of data enables teachers to be both compassionate and rigorous. Data not only can guide instruction within a classroom, but it also helps teachers place appropriate rigorous demands on students. Compiling and gathering data is necessary when looking to find where the next steps should be for each student but what really has moved the needle of success within Sagewood is the insights that emerge when the teachers engage in conversations centered on the data. All planning begins with three fundamental questions; What do we want the students to learn? How do we know if they are learning? What do we do if they aren't learning? And finally, What do we do if they already have mastered the material? Each week time is scheduled for these conversations to happen. Each grade level meets weekly with any special educators, title teachers, and administration to discuss these questions. During these weekly meetings, teams will discuss how to get all students to the next level. If accommodations are necessary, teachers ensure they empower the students to access more challenging content and higher-level thinking and that they do not remove learning opportunities. Teachers also discuss how and when to remove any scaffolds that have been put in place as students approach independent learning. At Sagewood, scaffolds will never anchor students to independence.

At Sagewood we administer the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) test three times a year. MAP uses the RIT (Rasch Unit) scale to measure and compare academic growth. This RIT scale extends equally across all grade levels making it possible to compare a student's score at various points of their year or their time at Sagewood. Teachers use this data to set individual goals for students and tailor lessons for students depending on their RIT band. MAP provides learning statements for each local and state standard making it possible for teachers to narrow in on the exact skills students need to practice and the skills they will be challenged by.

To ensure that we use data to guide all instruction and not just before high-stakes testing, teachers set specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-based (SMART) goals that we revisit each month. During these meetings, teachers record student's progress and develop a plan to get students closer to these goals. All plans are recorded which helps keep both the teacher and students accountable.