

***U.S. Department of Education***  
***2022 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program***

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

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

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

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

School Mailing Address 2716 Northlake Road  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Alexander State AR Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 72002-8862

County Saline

Telephone (501) 847-5675 Fax (501) 847-5677

Web site/URL https://www.bryantschools.org/o/spes E-mail rsherrill@bryantschools.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. Karen Walters E-mail dwalters@bryantschools.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Bryant Public School District Tel. (501) 847-5600

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 Ms. Kim Billingsley  
(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**

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The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 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 2016 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 or 2021.
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. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s nomination and/or rescind a school’s award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

12. 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.

**The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.**

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the current school year (2021-2022) unless otherwise stated.

**DISTRICT** (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools. For charter schools: If a charter school is part of the public school system, information should be provided for the public school district. If a charter school is considered its own district or part of a charter district, the information provided should reflect that.)

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

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools. **Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not for 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 in the school as of October 1, 2021 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	53	38	91
1	39	36	75
2	48	48	96
3	40	34	74
4	55	50	105
5	53	30	83
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	288	236	524

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

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 2.4 % Asian
  - 10.1 % Black or African American
  - 8.4 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 75 % White
  - 4.1 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

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

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2020 - 2021 school year: 7%

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

NA

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	13
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	21
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	34
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	520
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.07
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

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

Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Kannada Badaga

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

34 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 28 %

Total number students who qualify: 145

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 15 %  
81 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 with an IEP or 504 should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <u>14</u> Autism                  | <u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                 | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness           | <u>14</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay      | <u>18</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance    | <u>31</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment       | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>10</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: 11
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.

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	22
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	8
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	9
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 24:1

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

<b>Required Information</b>	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	94%	93%	93%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2021.

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

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

Yes  No

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

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

Springhill Elementary School creates leaders who take responsibility for their own academic and behavioral success.

16. Provide a URL link to or text of the school’s nondiscrimination policy.

No student in the Bryant School District shall, on the grounds of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability be excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity sponsored by the District. The District has a limited open forum granting equal access to youth groups such as the Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts, etc.

Inquiries on non-discrimination may be directed to the Bryant School District Human Resources Office, which may be reached at 501-847-5600. Inquiries regarding issues related to Title IX shall be directed to the Bryant School District Director of Accountability, who may be reached at (501) 847-5600. Inquiries related to Section 504 shall be directed to the Bryant School District 504 Coordinator at (501) 847-5660. The address for each office listed above is:

200 N.W. 4th Street Bryant, AR 72022

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, to the Title IX Coordinator in person or by using the mailing address, telephone number, or email address provided above. A report may be made at any time, including during non-business hours, and may be on the individual’s own behalf or on behalf of another individual who is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment.

For further information on notice of non-discrimination or to file a complaint, visit <http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/CFAPPS/OCR/contactus.cfm>; for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.

Legal References: A.C.A. § 6-10-130 A.C.A. § 6-18-514 28 C.F.R. § 35.106 34 C.F.R. § 100.6 34 C.F.R. §

104.8 34 C.F.R. § 106.8 34 C.F.R. § 106.9 34 C.F.R. § 108.9 34 C.F.R. § 110.25

Date Adopted: December 15, 2014

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



## **PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW**

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Located in Saline County in the heart of central Arkansas, Springhill Elementary is one of eight elementary schools in the Bryant Public School system, and one of 450 schools worldwide recognized as a Leader in Me (LIM) Lighthouse School. We practice Stephen Covey’s Seven Habits of Highly Effective People on a daily basis in our classrooms, on the playground, and in our homes and community. For us, creating leaders who take responsibility for their own academic and behavioral success is more than just words on a poster. Everything we do is a reflection of this mission!

Our journey with LIM began in 2014 after noticing several years of academic complacency and a mediocre work ethic in our students. We started with a faculty book study, we then visited a Lighthouse School in Northwest Arkansas, and we ultimately determined to implement the LIM model in our school. All planning and decision-making in our building stems from being a LIM school. Since becoming a Lighthouse School, Springhill has consistently been in the top 5% of the state’s elementary schools for academic achievement. We believe this is due to the expectations we have for all students. We also know the culture of our building has changed dramatically these past few years. Not only do we notice the difference, but other district employees have commented that the change in our building has been nothing short of transformational. Our feedback from other districts in central Arkansas has also been encouraging as several schools have sent teams to observe our process.

Our mindset shift has been the ultimate difference-maker for our students and staff. Where we once believed leadership was for the few, we now understand everyone can be a leader. Where we once thought only some are gifted, we now believe everyone has genius. Where we once thought change came from the state or the district level, we now know that change starts with us. As educators, we have come to embrace that our job is to develop the whole person, not just the academic side of students, and we have accepted the challenge to empower all of our students to lead their own learning.

Once we shifted our paradigms and began to “see” things differently, we knew the next step involved us “doing” things differently. Now, we teach leadership principles through ongoing learning for staff, students, and families. We also create a leadership culture through environmental change, shared leadership opportunities for all students, and various leadership events throughout the year. Finally, we align our academic systems through schoolwide goals, team goals, class goals, individual student goals, and staff goals. And of course, we chart our growth through scoreboards because how else do you know if you are winning?!

These seemingly small shifts have made a significant impact on the culture and climate of our building and on student performance. Since starting this process, the district has been rezoned twice resulting in significant shifts in our demographics. However, regardless of our population, the continued implementation of the Seven Habits has continued to create tremendous academic and behavioral changes in all students. We have also been amazed by the changes in the mindsets of faculty and staff. Upon reflection, we realize not only the growth we have made but also the greater potential for growth that lies ahead for our entire community of learners.

As we continue the expectation that all students will lead at Springhill, we continue to search for ways to communicate this work to our families and community. Prior to the pandemic, one way we shared our message was having our students lead monthly family breakfasts. During these meals, students taught the habits to their families through skits, videos, songs, and direct instruction. Since the pandemic, we have searched for alternate ways to reach out to families with our leadership message. One innovative approach is through Monthly Habit Challenges. Students are given assignments that can only be done at home or in their community, and parents are either directly involved or document the challenge’s successful completion. We then share the products from our challenges with our school and community through our SPES Morning News Program and social media platforms. While we will definitely resume our monthly breakfasts next year, we will also continue to implement activities like our monthly challenges. Several of our changes have become too popular to neglect just because COVID restrictions are being lifted!

The changes we made eight years ago now define us, and we are blessed to live in a community and work for a district that has openly embraced these changes as well. Our families are learning with their students, who are learning alongside us. We are all in this together! And we know the past eight years are just the tip of the iceberg. We can't wait to see what's in store for our school family in the future.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.**

#### **1a. Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas:**

Springhill Elementary School uses Arkansas state standards to create a curriculum that builds upon previous learning, both throughout the school year and from previous years. Teachers use explicit instruction in all subject areas, moving from whole group modeling to small group practice and finally individual practice and assessment. Our school uses a standards-based report card to report mastery of essential standards to parents using a 3, 2, or 1 rubric. This allows us to focus on student mastery of each skill. We differentiate instruction through the use of small groups and individualized technology. We also ensure, through our master schedule design, that literacy and math blocks for each grade level are uninterrupted by additional services that may be offered to students with specific needs. Our high-quality curriculum is research-based and aligned with both formative and summative assessments that are used regularly to diagnose and identify student needs and plan instruction tailored to meet the individual needs of the students. Teachers engage in Professional Learning Communities to analyze student data to drive daily instruction. Some examples of formative assessments we use include the NWEA MAP test, state-required screeners, progress monitoring, district common quarterly assessments and rubrics, and curriculum assessments. Our overarching philosophy is to help every student realize their full potential and to improve the lives of our students and families. This is reflected in our mission statement: “To create leaders who take responsibility for their own academic and behavioral success.”

#### **1b. Reading/English language arts curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:**

We teach to the Arkansas English Language Arts standards using a researched-based curriculum that aligns with an assessment system. This provides data for data-based decision making for all students in all grades. Each curriculum piece we use is approved by the Arkansas Department of Education, and all curriculum supports the Science of Reading. Our literacy instruction includes the five essential components of reading: phonological awareness, phonics, comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary, and writing, as outlined in the Reading Initiative for Student Excellence (R.I.S.E.) Academy training developed by the Arkansas Department of Education.

Comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, and writing are addressed with Amplify’s Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA). We use various instructional techniques, including whole group reading and questions, read-alouds, partner work, and individual practice. Daily lessons integrate word work, vocabulary practice, and language skills. Units are built from kindergarten through fifth grade, and teachers regularly scaffold instruction. CKLA is grounded in the Science of Reading, combining rich, diverse content knowledge in history, science, literature, and the arts. Phonics and Phonological Awareness are addressed through district approved resources and curricula including Heggerty Phonemic Awareness: The Skills That They Need to Help Them Succeed!; Equipped for Reading Success, Kilpatrick; Wilson Foundations in kindergarten through third grades; and 95% Group Vocabulary Surge: Unleashing the Power of Word Parts, Level B in fourth and fifth grades.

Additionally, we utilize Empowering Writers for reading and writing which follows the gradual release of responsibility. Students are taught the same graphic organizers for the three main genres of writing which become increasingly complex each year.

We use a 4-tier intervention system called Response To Intervention (RTI) which integrates assessment and intervention. Groups are flexible so students can move in and out based on their needs. Students in tier 1 receive whole-class instruction with core curricula mentioned above and the online literacy program, Lexia. Through this program, individual learning paths are created based on their reading skills. When students are struggling, teachers use explicit lessons from Lexia in small groups or individually to help students’ mastery. We also have a morning tutoring program for students who continue to struggle.

Each day we dedicate 40 minutes (W.I.N. time: What I Need) for Tier 2 instruction. Students move to different classrooms based on their individual literacy needs and work on reading fluency, phonics, phonological awareness, and comprehension skills. These placements are based on analysis of student data on state summative assessments, formative assessments, and progress monitoring.

Our literacy specialist uses Sonday to provide interventions for students with dyslexia markers, and paraprofessionals use 95% Phonological, 95% Phonics, and 95% Comprehension to provide interventions to students in Tier 3 who are not showing growth in Tier 2. Fourth and fifth-grade teachers use Just Words for Tier 3 intervention. Students failing to make progress in Tier 3 may be referred for special education testing.

The Unique Learning System is used for students with exceptional needs, which aligns to the state's extended standards by differentiating content that helps students learn according to ability level, meet expectations, and demonstrate their knowledge. Our special education teachers also use Wilson Reading System's program.

### **1c. Mathematics curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:**

We implement instruction teaching the Arkansas Mathematics standards. Our core math curriculum for K-5 is Eureka. Math skills build throughout units, as well as throughout grade levels. In a standard lesson, students begin with a fluency activity to practice previous concepts while preparing students for the day's lesson. This is followed by a daily word problem which requires students to apply their learning from previous lessons. We use components of Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) to explore these word problems. The teacher chooses a few students to share their thinking with the class, and the class compares strategies used by their classmates to determine which are most efficient. The lesson progresses to explicit instruction in the current skill. The teacher models and leads a whole-class discussion using problems and examples that progress from scaffolded to rigorous. The students then move to small groups, partners, or independent practice, depending on the difficulty of the skill or the progression of the unit. Finally, students complete an exit ticket independently to show their mastery of the content presented that day.

Our online learning platform for math in grades 1-4 is Zearn. This program is directly aligned to the Eureka curriculum, and students get extra independent practice with the day's lesson. In kindergarten, students use Khan Academy Kids to reinforce math skills.

Math small group interventions are generally completed while students are working on online lessons. Teachers use data from the exit ticket, common quarterly assessments, and curriculum assessments to pull flexible small groups to work on skills. Additionally, teachers can assign Zearn lessons from previous grade levels that are aligned with current skills to help remediate students. Paraprofessionals use research-based intervention programs for Tier 3 interventions. These include Whole Number Foundations and Do the Math.

### **1d. Science curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:**

We follow the Arkansas Science standards, which are based on the Next Generation Science Standards. We use a variety of resources for science instruction, which allows a varied approach to science instruction and integration throughout our curriculum. The majority of science instruction is integrated into our literacy instruction. We delve deep into scientific topics using literacy strategies such as close-reads, read-alouds, and discussions. We use content assessments to determine whether students have mastered the information or need further instruction.

We also use Mystery Science, an online science curriculum. This program includes short videos, hands-on experiments, and demonstrations tied directly to Next Generation Science Standards. The media helps engage students in the topics. Another science resource is the Picture Perfect Science guides. Our school has aligned these lessons from kindergarten to 5th grade to match the Arkansas standards. Through this resource, we introduce a scientific topic with a picture book. We then extend learning through the use of experiments and simulations.

Our state assessment, the ACT Aspire, requires 3rd-5th grade students to read and analyze scientific charts and graphs. To prepare for this, teachers regularly incorporate graphs and lead class discussions with questions such as: What is the topic of this chart or graph? What are observations you can make about this graph, such as patterns or trends? What predictions can you make based on this graph?

Students explore concepts while following the Scientific Method and the Engineering Design Process throughout the year. As a culminating activity, kindergarten through second-grade classes apply these procedures to create a science fair project. Third through fifth-grade students create individual projects to explore a topic of their choice and demonstrate their knowledge of scientific procedures.

### **1e. Social studies/history/civic learning curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:**

We use the Arkansas Social Studies standards as well as our reading curriculum as the basis for social studies instruction. Similar to science instruction, we integrate social studies instruction with reading as much as possible. We use the same reading techniques of close reads, read-alouds, and class discussions to analyze text. We also pull in media sources such as pictures, speeches, and video clips.

Our social studies skills are divided into four general categories: civics/government, economics, geography, and history. Our instructional techniques often differ depending on the category being taught. For example, when teaching geography, teachers make extensive use of printed and digital maps. Examining different types of maps, such as population maps, physical maps, and political maps can allow students to make generalizations about why people choose to live where they do. On the other hand, when teaching economics and history, teachers often use simulations to teach concepts. For example, when teaching about early economics, students can act out trading with each other. The civics/government category allows students an opportunity to research positions and people in power in our local and national government.

Of the utmost importance in social studies instruction is the use of historical primary and secondary sources. Students are taught to analyze these sources and consider the perspective of the author and the historical context. Lessons about perspective and point of view help students learn that historical events can be considered from multiple viewpoints. Students learn about the advantages and disadvantages of first-person, eyewitness accounts versus newspaper articles, etc.

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

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

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

Springhill provides PE, Music, Art, Library Media, and STEM classes each week for 40 minutes to all grade levels. Each course supports essential academic and social-emotional skills by connecting to academic skills as well as providing creative outlets to promote higher order thinking.

Our music program emphasizes diversity, creativity and music literacy through singing, movement, and playing a variety of instruments including Orff instruments, World Music Drumming, and recorder. Students learn to work with one another to create musical performances as well as learn about music to provide a well-rounded adult who can be creative in all areas as well as an informed consumer of art.

Springhill's library media program plays an integral role in educating children for the future. Students learn to find, analyze, evaluate, interpret, and communicate information and ideas through books and technology— skills they will need as adults to live and work in an information-based society.

Our art program focuses on introducing students to a variety of media, artists, cultures, and careers in art. Students learn to express themselves through artwork as well as how to evaluate and interpret art by past and current artists. Students learn to work in small groups or individually on long-term projects that will help them in future areas of their life.

The Physical Education program at Springhill encompasses a well-rounded PE, Health, and Nutrition curriculum, including motor skills, movement patterns, concepts, principles, strategies and tactics related to movement and performance. Curriculum also addresses social/emotional needs and the value of challenging health-enhancing physical activity throughout their lifetime. Students learn about bodily systems, healthy vs. unhealthy behaviors related to relationships, understanding physical and psychological consequences of drug use, along with avoidance strategies. Our students apply concepts of how food choices impact their overall health and investigate how eating disorders affect and damage their bodies.

The STEM lab fosters creativity through collaboration as students explore concepts within Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. Students explore topics from electricity to weather to plant life cycles. Students also have the opportunity to build and create art each time they are in the STEM lab.

Our Gifted and Talented (GT) program provides enrichment to students who are identified as needing instruction beyond what is provided in a regular classroom. Students may first be tested at the end of 2nd grade and begin GT instruction in 3rd grade. Students may also be referred for testing in grades three through five. Identified gifted students in 3rd through 5th grade participate in district and regional chess competitions each fall while 4th and 5th grade identified students also participate in district and regional Quiz Bowl competitions.

After-school programs include Robotics and Archery. Robotics students are selected from applications to meet from September until February where they learn life skills of reading and interpreting rules, research, and engineering. The competitive archery program meets from October until February. Students learn to work together as a team as well as improve their individual skills.

### **3. Academic Supports**

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

The mission statement of Springhill Elementary is to create Life-Long Leaders. This is not just for students for whom learning comes easy, but for all students: those who excel, those who struggle, those who are English language learners, and highly mobile students. We believe that solid academic support is vital to accomplishing the mission of creating these Life-Long Learners.

One thing we do at Springhill which sets us apart from other schools is our “WIN” time (What I Need Time). During this time the whole school comes together to address exactly what each student needs. If a student needs accelerated instruction, this is the time. If a student needs to work on math fluency, this is the time to practice. If they need a literacy skill addressed in a small group, now is the time. Every staff member, from the school resource officer to the office secretaries, is working toward students’ individual needs at this time. A solid academic foundation starts with Tier 1 instruction. Since students need a solid foundation for learning, as they move through Tier 1 instruction, we watch for those who need further support and explicit instruction. These students are identified through a variety of data, then brought into the professional learning community (PLC). The data used includes both state and local assessments. Every student, kindergarten through second grade, is given a dyslexia screening three times a year to identify those in need of further dyslexia evaluation or other specific interventions. These screenings pinpoint the weak areas which help to place students in a targeted small group instruction within their classrooms.

When students are brought to the PLC, the team looks at the information and considers where the student is weak, then discusses available and appropriate resources for that student, including changing supports during WIN time. Students are placed into small groups with paraprofessionals for intense instruction using district-approved interventions in weak areas in addition to receiving all levels of support.

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

In our school, students performing above grade level are offered enrichment opportunities within the classroom. Teachers differentiate the core curricula to accelerate learning and provide extended learning for acceleration. Literature circles, independent research projects, and Khan Academy are several programs that are widely available to students performing above grade level.

As COVID restrictions were rescinded this year, we opened our grades to flexible grouping based on student needs. For instance, our four classes of second graders are able to move to different teachers' classrooms for their phonics lessons based on their level of achievement and the level of support they need. We also moved Kindergarten students to first grade for their phonics instruction for the same reason. We anticipate opening this up even more next year, particularly during our WIN (What I Need) time so all students get exactly what they need regardless of grade level.

We offer gifted services to identified students in grades 3-5. They receive 150 minutes of enrichment from a certified Gifted and Talented teacher each week. Students receive instruction in etymology, logic/deductive thinking skills, research, affective needs, and creativity, among other areas. Units are taught based on students' needs and interests. The Gifted and Talented teacher also works with classroom teachers to provide acceleration in math through Khan Academy.

All K-2 students receive 30 minutes of enrichment from the Gifted and Talented teacher per month. Teachers provide an additional 30-minute lesson each week that is planned by the GT teacher. Whole group enrichment is focused on logic/deductive thinking skills and creativity. The GT teacher also provides enrichment/acceleration work for the teacher to provide students in the classroom when it is requested.

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

When students receive all tiers of instruction and significant interventions, yet still perform below grade level, a referral is made for special education. After a rigorous testing process, a team decision based on testing results, and IDEA, students are placed in special education services. Once placed, the team decides the least restrictive environment with the goal of keeping students in general education classrooms as much as possible with modifications and accommodations allowing them to fully participate. When further individualized instruction is necessary, students receive instruction in a resource setting. Resource teachers work with classroom teachers to discuss each students' needs and ensure pulling students from the classroom will not affect core instruction. The team creates IEP goals to move the student toward grade-level skills.

Students' needs in the self-contained Community-Based Instruction (CBI) classroom are addressed through a modified curriculum, Unique N2Y. The system provides monthly thematic units that introduce students to age-appropriate topics with a range of modifications. Our CBI teacher advocates for students' rights to be involved in their school and have access to education. Students also spend time in general education classrooms. They attend art, music, P.E., STEM, and Library with their general education peers. They participate in classroom morning meetings, allowing them to learn and practice social language and interaction skills. Students' individualized learning goals are monitored and their progress is reported every four and a half weeks. Families send their students to Springhill knowing that the CBI teacher teaches everything from toilet training and appropriate behavior to comprehension skills and letter/number recognition.

Our Speech-Language Therapists ensure speech services fit with classroom schedules. They focus on skills relevant to the grade-level curriculum. Each month, a week is set aside for therapists to push into classrooms and work with students or provide support to the whole group.

### **3d. English Language Learners, if a special program or intervention is offered:**

At Springhill, we provide daily English language development lessons to our low-level English learners. Our curriculum, Systematic ELD, is aligned to core content standards as well as ELP standards. In addition,

all of our English learners receive embedded, sheltered support from their classroom teacher. Classroom assignments and assessments are modified appropriately and scaffolded for individual student needs. Our curriculum is designed to close the achievement gap because it builds strong oral language skills which transfer to their literacy development. All of our English learners have access to Imagine Learning which is a literacy intervention normed for English learners. Through our daily ELD and specific interventions, we are working to close the achievement gap for our English learner subgroup.

**3e. Other populations (e.g., migrant, homeless), if a special program or intervention is offered:**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Springhill teachers stepped up to the challenge of virtual learning by providing daily instruction via Zoom. Before this happened, however, we had to ensure all students had access to a computer and wifi. We were able to check out devices including mobile hotspots to all students who had a need, so no child was unaccounted for. We also maintained the multitude of services provided to qualified learners by way of Zoom as well. Even our students who receive dyslexia services, counseling services, speech services, and special education services continued to receive their minutes in an attempt to reduce the loss of learning through the spring of 2020.

When we returned to school in the fall, parents were given a choice of onsite or virtual learning. The number of our parents choosing to send their students to school was so large, that the district asked only one of our teachers to teach virtually. We supported this teacher by including her in virtual teacher PLCs and onsite grade level PLCs so she received the appropriate support to ensure student success.



## **PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE**

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### **1. Engaging Students:**

Engaging students comes in many forms, from ensuring students have materials, to lightening the atmosphere with celebrations. For the past two years, students have been in and out of classrooms due to virtual learning, COVID, or quarantine. We ensured students had all materials needed to be successful by supplying hotspots and computers to those in need. We taught all students to access Google Classroom for lessons and assignments so they could continue learning at home instead of missing important academic skills.

As a Leader In Me Lighthouse School, we integrate Capturing Kids Hearts with LIM by including Morning Meetings, Celebrating Good Things, Affirmations, and Social Contracts. We “Celebrate Good Things” through The Eagle Excellence program in which students and teachers recognize each other for modeling the Eight Habits. During morning meetings, students share personal stories about their “wins,” which create connections among students. This integration has positively affected attendance, academic performance, discipline referrals, and the overall school culture.

Schoolwide, we acknowledge meeting our Wildly Important Goals (W.I.Gs) in a Quarterly Celebration. Students set academic and behavior goals each quarter and track their progress. At the end of the quarter, teachers recognize students who met their goals and select Habit Heroes (students who best demonstrate leadership) from their classes.

Our students have many talents and love showing them off. Before COVID, students participated in a live talent show. Due to COVID restrictions, the event became virtual. Students continue to share their talents by recording themselves with the app, FlipGrid. The final result allows for a wider variety of unique talents shared in the classroom and as part of Leadership Day.

To motivate students to excel during testing, a Test Pep Committee coordinates pep rallies including music, cheerleader tunnels, games, and motivational speeches from administrators. Students leave motivated to do their best and meet their goals.

We observe several theme weeks, encouraging common bonds between students, faculty, and staff. Our counselor coordinates the Great Kindness Challenge, a national campaign to help make our schools, communities, and world a more compassionate place. Our media specialist plans school-wide activities to celebrate Dr. Seuss Week in conjunction with Read Across America Week to engage students in reading. Our music specialist coordinates March Music Madness to celebrate Music in Our Schools Month and Women’s History month with an interactive online bracket for students to learn about two female musicians each day, then vote with google forms.

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

Faculty, families, and community all play an integral part in student success. Our building culture includes both giving and service to others, and we feel extremely fortunate since these are the exact things modeled for our students by our stakeholders. At Springhill, we share a common understanding that together, we can ensure students’ basic needs are provided for, and we can guarantee every student will have the necessary tools to achieve their potential.

When it comes to some of those basic needs, Springhill partners with several community organizations. Midtowne Church provides weekly food backpacks for students, the Junior Auxiliary provides school snacks, and medical, dental, and vision services are offered through the Hornet Health Clinic. In addition, Springhill’s Heroes for Hunger program partners with families and community organizations and provides holiday meals and snacks for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Spring Breaks. We also partner with our local Rotary Club to provide clothing for students through The Kid’s Closet. In addition, our school nurse connects with the Burlsworth Foundation to provide students with glasses and hearing aids.

Prior to COVID, we had community members with specific expertise share their knowledge with our students. We had gardeners, artists, musicians, firefighters, police officers, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, and numerous others as guest teachers. Also in previous years, all teachers sponsored clubs for our kids. Through these we had guests who were able to teach skills from Star Wars Origami to gardening. We also had an annual career day which showcased numerous careers and educational opportunities available to students once they completed high school. These are all things we did pre-COVID, and we have already added these things back to our calendar for 2022-2023.

As a Leader in Me school, we use leadership skills to help our students take responsibility for their own academic and behavioral successes. We host a student-led Leadership Day every spring in which students showcase the leadership skills and talents they have developed throughout the year. Families, community members, area businesses, and past teachers and principals are invited to see first-hand the accomplishments of our students. Due to the challenges brought on by COVID-19, we had to pivot to involving our families virtually through monthly family challenges and leadership videos that showcase leadership in our school, homes, and community. We anticipate a return to onsite Leadership Day in 2022-2023.

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

Despite research regarding Professional Learning Communities and their impact, many schools continue to build educational structures around the notion that teachers should be allowed to shut their doors to teach and be left alone. However, working collaboratively is one of the best ways to promote teacher efficacy, which has one of the best returns in terms of student growth. Through the PLC process, teachers build confidence in their abilities to improve student learning. While we have a set time each week for a formal PLC meeting, this community is really about day-to-day learning from each other and growing together, and this in turn creates a culture where academic and behavioral excellence are expectations for all.

Springhill faculty members are familiar with the acronym, "LEADER," as a way of communicating with students, parents, and each other. This communication model ensures everyone feels heard and feels valued. LEADER stands for Listen, Empathize, Affirm, Direct, Enlist, and Refer, and while only pieces may be used depending on the situation, it is a powerful tool to show support and build trusting relationships. It lays the foundation on which we build the professional culture of our school.

Going virtual during the spring of 2020 did not affect us and how our PLCs performed. More than ever, we depended on each other, and we learned from each other. Although many of our tech issues while pivoting to virtual were mitigated because of our proactive approach to technology training, we still needed each other as we were finding our footing in delivery of quality instruction during the pandemic. We met constantly and shared what was working as well as ideas to improve delivery. We were very intentional about meeting together virtually to check on each other. We listened to each other's concerns and fears, provided ideas for improved self-care, and encouraged each other to Sharpen the Saw (Habit #7) so we were not trying to give to our students and to our families from an empty tank.

Now that we have been back under the same roof for over a year, we continue to support, strengthen, and challenge each other through these communities. We recognize much of our waking lives are spent in the same building with the same adults year after year, so creating a work family is important. We collaborate, and because we do, our students benefit both academically and socially-emotionally.

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

Over the past twelve years, Springhill has shifted from an autocratic leadership style to one that is more democratic. Leadership is built upon trust, openness, and individual investment, and includes the knowledge we all bring strengths to the table and are stronger when we are involved in our own progress. This style allows for numerous opportunities for coaching, which enables us to grow professionally.

For instance, we look at our academic data throughout the year, especially in our August professional development meetings. We determine up to three areas to improve, then we identify the change we want to

see, and set our building goals. Next, we openly share ideas, identifying potential challenges we may encounter. Then we identify two to three lead measures that will assist us in achieving our goal. (Our lead measures are behaviors or things we do daily or weekly ensuring our goals are met.) Finally, we create a cadence of accountability with a scoreboard to measure progress.

While this is an example of our process done with our whole team, we also follow this process through our Lighthouse Team which consists of a coordinator, building representatives, and both building administrators. The work occurring in these meetings is shared with faculty and staff, who provide thoughts, ideas, concerns, etc. before moving forward. While building-wide goals are determined whole-group, the Lighthouse Team is more involved with moving our school forward in our Leader in Me journey.

We also have action teams each year, and everyone participates on at least one team. Some teams include parents while other teams work closely with some of our student teams, but all are focused on particular functions or events at the school. Some of this year's teams include the Cultural Action Team, Celebration Action Team, Family Involvement Team, and Heroes for Hunger Action Team. All our teams are instrumental in creating school culture, and everyone has the responsibility to make sure the goals they set are accomplished.

All student academic and/or behavioral concerns are discussed in our formal, weekly-held PLC meetings. While we discuss curriculum issues, assessment data, instruction and pacing concerns, and more, the idea is again that we are approaching our problems, concerns, and direction democratically, and by collaborating this way, we feel we all have a voice.

## **5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:**

Springhill Elementary School is the embodiment of inclusion. Our students are from a wide variety of socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds and our school community celebrates diversity by giving students ample opportunity to use their voice to lead and take ownership of their learning. The faculty, PTO, and students provide a multitude of different supports to help our families with socioeconomic difficulties, including a toy drive, food boxes for holidays, and regular supplies of food and clothes. Our goal is for all students, staff, and visitors to feel welcome, valued, loved, and trusted.

Our school takes to heart information gained from our annual district Climate Survey in which parents, students, and staff evaluate our school on the physical, emotional, and academic climate that we provide. We analyze the results of this survey as a school community and collaboratively create a solution to any issues that arise. Our students and families take ownership of our innovations and know they are an integral component of our school community.

We celebrate the diversity of our school population by including children from a variety of backgrounds with varying abilities to ensure understanding which leads to compassion and making connections. We help students develop their strengths and see that children with special needs have strengths too. We also focus on progress, no matter how small. We build one-on-one relationships with our students as much as possible by greeting them at the door, asking about their interests, and using genuine praise. We firmly believe James Comer's statement that "No significant learning occurs without a significant relationship," and we strive daily through our actions to connect with every student.

With this in mind, we created a Diversity and Inclusion Committee to educate, celebrate, and spread awareness of different cultures and disabilities. In August, the committee plans a calendar to highlight different groups and coordinate student engagement activities. The team created elaborate presentations for Hispanic Heritage Month, Black History Month, Women's History Month, Asian and Pacific Islander Month, and a variety of Christmas and winter celebrations around the world. Down Syndrome Awareness was included in the month of October where the team created feature videos highlighting several students with Down Syndrome and their families. For Autism Awareness month, we will be drawing attention to the contributions some of our friends with Autism are currently making to our school.

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

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One of our proudest accomplishments is being recognized as a Leader in Me Lighthouse School. Through our work with LIM, we have produced confident and respectful students who have minimal discipline issues and excel academically. Never before has this been more important than during COVID because we are showing students that “having hope” is really all about setting, working towards, and achieving both personal and academic goals.

We began this process with professional development focused on our faculty and staff, our paradigms, and the need to change the way we see ourselves and our students. It was the most powerful PD we have experienced! We shifted from an old way of seeing ourselves and our students to believing everyone can be a leader, everyone has genius, change starts with me, educators empower students to lead their own learning, and to focus on the development of the whole person. These paradigm shifts matter! We stopped seeing our kids by their labels and started seeing them by their amazing potential. We stopped looking for change to come from outside our school and started to realize change begins inside our building and inside each of us. We realized how crucial it is for us to help each student find his or her voice. We went from being rated as a B school to being recognized as an A school. Then, we went from being an A school to being recognized as being in the top 5% of elementary schools achievement in our state.

Saying that LIM is a program is not really true. Instead, the Leader in Me is what we believe about ourselves, the students, and education. It is about both adult and student ownership. It is about students being so confident that they are now involved in leading change in our building. It is about students from kindergarten to the fifth grade being so aware of their own needs as well as their own growth that parent-teacher conferences are now student-led conferences. It is about kids actually training their parents in the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People and showing them practical ways to practice the habits daily. Without hesitation, we recognize this as our greatest source of pride. These practices now define who we are and who we are becoming.