

U.S. Department of Education
2022 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 Ms Rachel Newcomb
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

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

School Mailing Address 22265 South 80th Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Frankfort State IL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 60423-9786

County Will County

Telephone (815) 469-2309 Fax (815) 464-2043

Web site/URL
https://www.fsd157c.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=1896067&type=d&pREC_ID=2083643 E-mail rnewcomb@fsd157c.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. Doug Wernet E-mail dwnernet@fsd157c.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Frankfort Community Consolidated School District 157C Tel. (815) 469-5922

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. Edith Lutz
(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 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

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):
- 2 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 3 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	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	150	125	275
4	157	152	309
5	138	137	275
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	445	414	859

*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
 - 3 % Asian
 - 7 % Black or African American
 - 8 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 76 % White
 - 6 % 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: 8%

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, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	28
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	41
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	69
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	839
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.08
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	8

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

Vietnamese, Spanish, Arabic, Greek, Polish, French, Urdu, Kannada, Mandarin, Igbo

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 3 %
25 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 6 %

Total number students who qualify: 55

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 9 %
75 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>7</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>14</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>3</u> Developmental Delay | <u>21</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>6</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>17</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>5</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	3
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	36
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	18
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	16
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	7

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.

Required Information	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	96%	97%	96%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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

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

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 prepare all students to be confident, life-long learners and productive citizens by challenging them to reach their fullest potential and by providing a quality educational environment in partnership with family and community.

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

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tBcx99j4c1XUr6ld_CH3PeQ9NC9bbY0I/view?usp=sharing

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

Chelsea School is located in Frankfort, Illinois, a thriving, upper middle class suburban community located approximately 40 miles southwest of Chicago. The Chelsea School community is a strong and passionate one. All stakeholders are committed to ensuring the success of our students. We define this success in terms of academic growth, social-emotional wellbeing, and the cultivation of an environment where all students feel seen, safe, and confident. With this commitment comes a powerful partnership between the school and our families.

Our families are united in the belief that an exceptional educational experience is a top priority for our children. Often, students who grow up in our school system return to the community to raise their own children, citing the positive experiences they had as a learner as a major factor in their decision. This holds true for many of our staff members as well, who both live and work in the district. The families of Chelsea are involved in the education of their children on every level. This involvement takes many forms, including volunteering in the classroom, communicating regularly with teachers, participating in Board of Education meetings, or simply supporting students with homework. Our district has several booster groups which many parents join, including our Family School Partnership, Education Foundation, and boosters for athletics, chorus, band, and orchestra. These groups have provided our school with athletic equipment, flexible seating, pedal desks, robots for STEM class, author visits, field trips, assemblies, and much more.

Chelsea connects with the greater Frankfort community through many philanthropic projects, such as our annual “Stack the Stock” event where we collect canned foods for the local food pantry. We also work with the Frankfort Lions Club on an annual drive to benefit homeless shelters, collecting items such as socks and toiletries. Chelsea also has a long-standing tradition of participating in the Kids’ Heart Challenge with the American Heart Association. This year alone, Chelsea students raised over \$29,000 for this remarkable organization.

Chelsea has a unique position in the educational continuum of our district. Though we are the second school our learners attend on their educational journey, we are the beginning of many exciting things. We begin the transition from developmental to academic learning, the earning of letter grades, and of greater student independence and responsibility. Chelsea marks the start of students developing their identities as learners and understanding the best strategies for them to utilize. Our Chelsea Tigers begin to understand how to capitalize on their strengths and tackle their challenges, all while employing a growth mindset.

Chelsea teachers choose to be a part of our team because of their deep love for learning, and their respect for the importance of this stage in a young learner’s life. They are deeply invested in collaboration with the families of their students and demonstrate this through frequent communication delivered in multiple ways. An elementary school with almost 900 students can feel overwhelming; yet it is the connections teachers form with students and their families that create an environment where all learners can thrive.

Our teachers have high expectations for every learner. It is our goal to give each student the tools they need to reach their full potential and maximize their growth. We do this by aligning our curriculum with the Illinois Learning Standards and differentiating our instruction to provide varying levels of support and enrichment.

In addition to classroom differentiation, we offer advanced ELA (English Language Arts) programming in third through fifth grade, and advanced math programming in fifth grade. We also offer support to our students through a continuum of Special Education services and a robust MTSS (Multi-tiered System of Support) program where students may receive intervention services for reading, writing, math, and social-emotional needs.

Our students diversify their learning experiences during our Encore courses, offered quarterly: art, music, Spanish, and STEM. Each class provides unique opportunities for student collaboration, problem solving, and self-expression. Students have PE class daily, where they strengthen their bodies, learn about physical health, and do activities ranging from volleyball to line dancing to cricket.

We also offer students the opportunity to connect through common interests outside of school with our after-school clubs. These clubs allow our learners to pursue their passions and forge relationships with other like-minded students. Our club offerings include intramurals, coding, Spanish, art, podcasting, chorus, Student Council, running, and board games.

One aspect of the Chelsea experience of which we are particularly proud is the way we value social-emotional learning (SEL). We restructured our weekly instructional schedule to provide a specific time for social-emotional learning and community building, called Tiger Time. Tiger Time occurs at the same time on Friday morning for every class in our school, and all teachers and paraprofessionals in the entire school participate. During Tiger Time, students experience lessons from the program Second Step, as well as opportunities for team building and collaborative problem solving. Not only is Tiger Time important for SEL, it emphasizes the concept that we are a school community who values and respects each other. Students strengthen their relationships with peers and staff through this valuable time.

In addition, our school uses a behavior matrix to support students in making choices that reflect Chelsea's core expectations: respect, responsibility, and caring. Our matrix is revised periodically with student and staff input. At the beginning of every school year, students enter into a social contract with their classmates and commit to trying their best to meet the expectations our matrix describes. Students are incentivized through our use of Tiger Tickets. These tickets earn them the opportunity to win Chelsea experiences, such as lunch with the principal, extra recess, computer, or art time, and privileges like being an office helper, library helper, or the announcer for the day. We also highlight one character trait each month, and award Student of the Month recognition to students in every grade level who have exemplified that specific trait.

We are proud of the way that Chelsea responded to the pandemic. In the summer of 2020, Chelsea staff mobilized to form a Pandemic Response Team. This team created a comprehensive mitigation plan for the building, enabling us to return to in-person instruction by mid-October of 2020. Prior to our return, teachers prepared for remote learning by learning Microsoft Teams in just one week. In the same week, they revised lesson plans, uploaded resources, and communicated with families to facilitate a smooth start to the school year. Since October of 2020, Chelsea has remained in-person, while still providing remote learning for students who are excluded from school. Though there have been many challenges related to mitigations and in-person learning, Chelsea staff have ensured there has been minimal, if any, interruption of learning.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

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

The core curriculum at Chelsea Intermediate consists of four academic areas: English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies. Teachers spend approximately 165 minutes in ELA, 90 minutes in math, and 40 minutes in science and social studies instruction each day. Each core area has a unique curriculum that is aligned to the Illinois State Learning standards.

The standards are the foundation of our instructional planning and curricular development. We begin our planning process with the end in mind. In this case, that means beginning unit planning with a focus on the summative assessment. By identifying the summative expectations for students, aligned to standards, teachers can identify the progression of skills students will need to demonstrate at the conclusion of instruction. This results in instructional planning of lessons that are explicitly connected to one or more learning standards, and that build on each other in a progression of increased complexity and learner independence.

The vast majority of the core curriculum and assessments have been created by Chelsea teachers. It is our belief that the individuals most qualified to plan instruction, select resources, and design assessments for our students are the people who interact with our students and make learning come to life. By designing our own standards-based curriculum, we can develop lessons that are engaging and meaningful to our students, while keeping the need for differentiation in mind. This also enables us to treat both our curriculum and assessments as living documents, continuously reviewing and refining as needed.

All curricular areas are enhanced with the latest technology applications used throughout the student's day. Every Chelsea student is assigned a laptop that they are personally responsible for throughout the year. The district employs two instructional technology integration specialists that plan alongside teachers to further enhance lessons using the SAMR model as a guide. In addition, Chelsea teachers have four content area instructional coaches to assist them in planning lessons that are engaging and differentiated to meet all student needs. Chelsea teachers meet with the instructional coaches four times a month to review common summative assessment results, make curricular changes, and plan for instruction. Individual teachers collaborate with instructional coaches to review formative data and develop differentiated lessons that are tailored to the needs of specific students.

Support for all students, whether achieving above or below grade level, begins in the classroom. It is our belief that small group instruction, coupled with specific accommodations to meet individual needs, effectively supports many students with varied needs. When classroom interventions prove insufficient, interventions outside of the classroom are provided through the MTSS process and/or advanced ELA and math programming.

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

In ELA, the curriculum and assessments are entirely designed and written by Chelsea teachers utilizing the Understanding by Design (UbD) backwards design model and aligned to the PARCC model content frameworks. Our curriculum and assessments are living documents, and ones we are continually reviewing and revising. Each quarter, teachers administer Outcome Assessments, one based on the literature standards taught in the quarter, and one aligned to the informational reading standards. These assessments are reviewed by grade level teams at the beginning of each quarter for two reasons. The first is to ensure that the assessment itself is clear, coherent, and accessible to our students. The second is to focus instruction for the quarter. When we begin with the end in mind, grade level teams can build their instruction knowing the performance expectations for their students at the conclusion of the quarter. In addition, teachers meet at various points throughout the school year and during the summer to redesign activities that align to

curricular targets in engaging and meaningful ways.

Grade level teams have identified a minimum of one novel to be used as an anchor text throughout each quarter that meets the demands of the standards being taught. These texts span multiple genres and progressively increase in rigor throughout the school year. In addition, teachers often select short pieces of text in both literature as well as non-fiction that support the anchor text and standards being taught. A wide selection of leveled novels is available for differentiation of instruction and the provision of choice in student reading. Common formative and summative assessments are utilized so that grade level teams can collaborate in assessment analysis and reflection, as well as future instructional planning.

Chelsea instructional staff regularly practice the gradual release of responsibility and provide a range of cooperative learning activities for their students, including team problem solving and book club discussion groups. Small group instruction is an essential component of the Chelsea literacy block, whether it be in the form of guided reading or skill-based groups.

Writing instruction is an integral part of the ELA block as well. In addition to direct instruction in both writer's craft and grammar, students are provided with daily opportunities to write in response to reading. Students also work their way through the writing process to develop and publish pieces in a variety of genres, running the gamut from informational reports to fictional narratives.

Students also participate in word study through Structured Word Inquiry (SWI). SWI expands students' vocabulary while reinforcing spelling and grammar concepts through exploration of etymology and the specific elements that make up the words we use every day. Students create matrices and build word sums which enable them to see the way that bases and affixes are connected, and how words have evolved and assimilated over time.

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

Our math curriculum is aligned to the Illinois State Learning standards. All teachers utilize the Eureka math program from Great Minds as the foundation of their mathematics instruction. As a part of our instruction, students regularly utilize technology, reinforcing currently taught concepts on the website Zearn, and both computation and fact fluency on Reflex Math. All instruction and assessment emphasizes application of concepts and relevance to real life situations. Though our faculty shares the same foundation for our instruction, all instructors are given the autonomy to meet the needs of their students with many supplemental resources, including various programs and online applications.

Teachers utilize daily formative skills checks to determine if their students are meeting learning targets and what, if any, additional instruction is needed. Small group instruction is utilized regularly as a tool for both remediation and enrichment. Teachers use their formative assessment data to group students and plan instruction to clarify misconceptions and strengthen developing skills. Project based learning is often utilized as an enrichment strategy, where students apply math concepts to real life situations, such as using their knowledge of perimeter and area to design a zoo for their community.

Teachers utilize two summative assessments per math module (or unit), called the mid-module and end -of-module assessments. The mid-module assesses skills and concepts taught in the first half of the module, demonstrating a summation of learning but still offering both student and teacher an opportunity to correct misconceptions prior to the end-of-module assessment, which measures student understanding and application of all concepts taught in the module.

In addition to core instruction, an advanced mathematics course is offered in grade five. Students qualifying for advanced mathematics work through grade level standards with greater depth, and at an accelerated pace. By the final quarter of fifth grade, they are exploring sixth grade standards.

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

At Chelsea, students are exposed to science instruction every day. Our science curriculum allows students to engage in discovery and exploration through a phenomenon or problem-based model. Teachers created, and now utilize, a wide variety of activities aligned to the Illinois State Learning Standards in science. Students participate in many experiments and hands-on problem-solving activities, both as individuals and as members of a team. The resource most frequently used by Chelsea teachers as a supplement to their instruction is the website Mystery Science. This site provides videos and additional hands-on activities for students to explore both individually and collaboratively. Whether it be through Mystery Science or any number of additional sources, Chelsea teachers tie science learning to current events or topics of interest, demonstrating relevance of concepts to our students, whenever possible.

All learning in science is supported by content area reading and writing experiences that occur in both science and ELA. Students perform research tasks and synthesize information, presenting that learning in a variety of ways, such as PowerPoint presentations, models, and self-published books. Students also practice their comprehension and critical thinking skills by exploring short texts related to science topics from sources such as NewsELA, Scholastic News, and ReadWorks.

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

Chelsea students have daily exposure to social studies instruction. Chelsea teachers created our curriculum and assessments in alignment with the Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science, using a chronological timeline and an emphasis on inquiry-based learning. Our social studies curriculum offers students the opportunity to explore the history of the world and United States with a consistent focus on civic mindedness, citizenship, and inclusivity.

Social studies inquiry is connected to learning in ELA whenever possible and is bolstered by reading informational text as well as literature. Each social studies unit includes specific shared reading experiences, both fictional and informational, that provide a rich, human perspective to historical events.

1f. For secondary schools:

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

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

In addition to the four core subjects each year, all students take a nine week exploratory class in each one of our Encore courses: STEM, Spanish, art, and music. All classes are developed with the goal of increasing students' cooperative learning skills, as well as their ability to communicate in a variety of ways. Encore teachers work as a team to plan cross-curricular units. They also vertically articulate with K-2 and 6-8 teachers across the district to offer a continuous sequence of skills. Our Encore teachers are responsible for writing their own curriculum and assessments that align to the learning standards for their area.

Physical education (PE)/health classes meet throughout the entire school year for thirty minutes daily. PE/health classes expose every student to a variety of team and individual sports, learning necessary skills, basic rules, and scorekeeping as well as critical thinking and strategy. Not only do students learn about a wide variety of sports, but classes also foster good sportsmanship and productive teamwork. Throughout each physical activity, instructors create opportunities for students to learn about how to cultivate healthy habits for mind, body, and spirit.

STEM is a part of our Encore classes, where students meet for thirty minutes daily during one quarter of the school year. The STEM curriculum changes yearly to meet the ever-changing demands of technology, engineering, coding, and digital citizenship. This class is fast paced and hands-on. Students are free to explore many types of STEM activities and work at a self-guided pace. One highlight is the maker space

showcase. Students identify a problem, build a prototype device that offers a solution, and present it to their classmates.

Our second Encore offering, meeting daily for one quarter, is Spanish. Spanish class focuses on conversational Spanish as well as Spanish culture. Third grade is the introduction to Spanish, and each subsequent year builds on that foundation. As early as grade three, students have the opportunity to speak, read, and write in Spanish, and are instructed in both Spanish and English. Games, music, and lots of visuals enrich and support our learners during this course. Spanish is offered every year after grade three until graduation from District 157C.

Art class is our third Encore offering. In art, students learn about history and the life and works of artists around the world, as well as specific techniques and skills that inform their development as visual artists. Art classes are engaging and hands on with a high production of pieces in a wide variety of mediums. Students are encouraged to express themselves through the visual arts.

Our final Encore class is music. This course reaches beyond general music to include music production, history, and music technology. Music is a hands-on exploratory class where all students are encouraged to express themselves through the art of music. Students learn to read music and are given an opportunity to play various instruments. All students learn to play the recorder during their time at Chelsea.

In addition to Encore rotations, the students at Chelsea school can also go to the library at any given time throughout the day. Teachers take their entire class to the library for digital citizenship lessons, book talks (often in partnership with our public library), and book checkout.

One of the highlights of our community is the band and orchestra program that is offered to fifth grade students at Chelsea school. Students who are interested in band or orchestra sign up for their instrument of choice at the end of their fourth grade year. Throughout fifth grade, band/orchestra members meet before school twice a week to practice with the full band or orchestra and participate in sectional lessons once a week during their Encore class. Chelsea is fortunate to have a director and assistant director for both band and orchestra who lead the students and prepare them for multiple performances throughout the school year.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Students performing below grade level are identified and supported through our MTSS (Multi Tiered Systems of Support) process. Instructional teams hold monthly meetings for the purpose of discussing students of concern. At this meeting, teachers review data, offer each other suggestions or solutions, and document all concerns on a grade level problem solving spreadsheet. The first level of support for any student performing below grade level is the classroom teacher, and our instructors support a wide variety of needs through differentiated instruction.

After meeting with their grade level team, teachers meet with the intervention team and administration every six to eight weeks to discuss these students of concern, review data, discuss classroom intervention strategies, and determine if additional support by interventionists is warranted. In addition, the progress of students already receiving intervention is reviewed, and the team comes to consensus on whether those students need to continue interventions or return to the core. These meetings are called GLPSA (Grade Level Problem Solving with Administration).

In addition to GLPSA, teams meet three times per year to review data from our benchmark assessment, called FastBridge. FastBridge is online, adaptive, and measures targets in reading and math. It allows teachers to see how their students compare to other students in our district and across the nation. Teachers participate in data days after each benchmarking period to analyze results and review supplementary data to identify students who may need additional enrichment or support. These data days, along with grade level problem solving and GLPSA, make up our MTSS process.

When students qualify for intervention outside of the classroom, they may qualify at either Tier 2 or Tier 3. Tier 2 intervention in both ELA and math consists of instruction with a small group of 3-5 students. The focus of the group is supporting the students in meeting the grade level standards currently being taught in the classroom. Tier 2 groups meet for thirty minutes, 3-4 times per week. Tier 3 intervention consists of instruction with 1-2 students, focused on specific learning deficits in ELA or math. Tier 3 groups meet for thirty minutes, 5 days per week. Students are progress monitored on a biweekly basis and that data, along with classroom assessments, is discussed at GLPSA.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Students performing above grade level are supported primarily by differentiated instruction in the classroom. This differentiation may take the form of small group instruction where concepts are explored in greater depth, or book club discussions where students have the opportunity to read additional, higher level texts and discuss them with peers. Project based learning is utilized, particularly in math, where students can apply and extend what they have learned in a unit. Technological applications such as Prodigy, Khan Academy, and Freckle are also used to offer additional challenge or practice.

In third, fourth, and fifth grade, advanced programming is offered to students in ELA. Students must qualify for advanced programming with their performance on the Illinois Assessment of Readiness and/or Fastbridge benchmarking and quarterly Outcome Assessments. Advanced ELA instruction offers a faster pace and greater depth of instruction, along with an increased volume of both reading and writing. Advanced math programming is offered in fifth grade, utilizing similar criteria for qualification. Advanced math offers a faster pace of instruction along with greater depth, and addresses both fifth and sixth grade learning standards.

3c. Special education:

Special education begins with evaluation and determination of eligibility. At Chelsea, we pride ourselves on conducting thorough and thoughtful evaluations of our students. Regardless of the focus of the evaluation, multiple assessments are utilized to collect a wide variety of data points. We do not rely solely on standardized assessment, or even one single assessment, to inform our decision. Our educational teams strive to provide as much information as possible from many different sources: classroom observations, standardized tests, and both curriculum based and norm referenced assessments are utilized.

When a student is found eligible, our team has everything they need to develop specific, meaningful goals in alignment with the Illinois State Learning Standards. SMART goals and objectives established in a student's IEP drive instruction.

At Chelsea, we offer a continuum of services through special education, ranging from least to most restrictive. We offer resource level support for up to sixty minutes per day. These services are provided in both general and special education settings, or in a combination of both. Chelsea has cotaught classrooms at every grade level and offers specialized instruction in ELA and math. Specialized instruction is generally provided for students who are working two to four years below grade level. There is a second level of specialized instruction for students with even more significant needs, where students are taught a combination of academic and life skills.

All special education teachers are members of a general education grade level team and collaborate to ensure that all instruction is focused on the standards while being delivered with materials and instructional strategies that meet students at their current ability level. Case managers support general education teachers in making accommodations and modifying materials to meet the needs of individual students.

When a student with an IEP is not making anticipated progress, the entire educational team comes together to reflect on the student's performance and determine what, if any, additional supports the student requires to achieve success. Parents are essential members of the team and are invited to participate in all meetings.

Monthly case manager meetings are also a part of Chelsea culture. These meetings allow case managers to

connect with their students' educational teams, share data, problem solve, and confirm that all components of the IEP are being followed with fidelity. Special education staff meet with our district's Director of Special Services monthly, and often meet additionally as a building team.

In addition to our special education teachers, Chelsea is fortunate to have a strong team of related service providers to support our students. We have a school psychologist, an occupational therapist, a physical therapist, two speech and language pathologists, and three social workers who work in cooperation with our teachers to meet all student needs.

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

English Language Learners (ELL) are supported at Chelsea by specific ELL teachers whose sole purpose is to assist our English Language Learners in performing to their fullest potential. ELL teachers provide support within the general education classroom, assisting with understanding of core instruction. If needed, they also meet with students in a small group or individual setting outside of the classroom for additional instruction. ELL teachers often provide additional support for our language learners during assessments. They provide accommodations such as a separate testing environment, extended time, and chunking of dense texts and lengthy assessments, as well as clarification of challenging vocabulary.

ELL teachers collaborate with general education teachers to plan instruction, determine when support is most needed during the school day, and to discuss potential accommodations or scaffolds that may need to be established. ELL teachers often collaborate with teachers on parent communication, particularly for academic conferences.

All ELL students may qualify for academic or SEL intervention through the MTSS process as needed. ELL teachers are a part of the MTSS team and may participate in grade level problem solving, GLPSA, and data day meetings.

ELL students who do not respond to academic interventions may be evaluated for special education eligibility. The ELL teacher is an integral part of the educational team and contributes valuable input in the process of determining eligibility for special education services. At Chelsea, ELL services and special education are not mutually exclusive. Students may receive both services if the educational team deems that doing so is in their best interest as a learner.

ELL staff throughout the district collaborate to host an annual event for all ELL families. This is a wonderful opportunity for families to socialize, connect and communicate with each other, as well as the district's ELL team. This event is typically very well attended and a lot of fun. Dinner is served, and parents are invited to participate in a wide variety of activities with their children.

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

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

The team of educators at Chelsea have developed a positive and engaging environment by providing a wide variety of opportunities for students to choose the ways in which they both construct and demonstrate their understanding as they learn new concepts. This can be as simple as offering the option to work independently or collaboratively on the completion of a task or allowing students to determine how they will demonstrate learning. This could take many forms, including a written narrative, a slideshow, a video, or song. The use of technology engages and motivates our students both during and outside of the school day as well. Our after-school clubs allow our students to dive into topics of interest including technology, athletics, and the arts.

We motivate our students by promoting a growth mindset and demonstrating appreciation for every student. Our mission for every learner is to see them grow, knowing growth looks different and occurs in varying increments for each individual. Building administration has facilitated lessons on growth mindset for all students throughout the school year, modeling the process of trial, error, and celebration of progress. Celebrations are key to motivation. Our staff consistently finds opportunities to recognize the accomplishments of our learners through formal programs such as Student of the Month, and informal ways like displaying student work throughout the building and giving students shout outs on the morning announcements.

During remote learning, interactivity was the word to live by. Chelsea sent home a weekly newsletter that included opportunities for students to connect with the Chelsea community. Staff made videos with read alouds, jokes, riddles, and rounds of “Two Truths and a Lie.” Students won chances to have (virtual) lunch with the principals if they were the first to respond to riddles or questions correctly. We regularly issued challenges to engage students’ bodies and minds, such as Lego building, scavenger hunts, and athletic competitions. Finally, we asked students to send in photos of them learning at home to be published in our newsletter. At the classroom level, our teachers worked tirelessly to find ways in which their learners could interact with them, and each other, beyond a whole group conversation – virtual breakout rooms, online chats, and giving students the chance to present as the teacher all kept our students engaged in learning.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Collaboration with Chelsea families is most successful when we come together for a common purpose. This purpose could range from offering an extra set of hands in a single classroom to running a seasonal party to volunteering at a hot lunch or book fair fundraiser. One compelling purpose for family collaboration is to celebrate what our students are learning. We do this with annual STEAM and literacy nights where families can participate in themed activities together as well as performances by our band, orchestra, and chorus.

In addition, there are multiple parent organizations who support our schools. Our Family School Partnership hosts events for district families and provides funds that enable us to have assemblies, field trips, and supplies for events such as Field Day. Our Education Foundation encourages instructional creativity and innovation by granting resources to teachers by request. Our athletic, band, and chorus boosters offer support by providing requested materials and resources as well. Building administration meets regularly with these organizations for discussion and planning.

We often collaborate with community organizations to support Chelsea students and families. In partnership with the Lions and Kiwanis Clubs, we gift holiday meals to our families in need. Thanks to the 157C Education Foundation, every August we provide backpacks and school supplies to students who qualify for free and reduced lunch. We also partner with the Lions Club on an annual basis to collect items for local shelters, and with the Frankfort Food Pantry to donate canned goods. We have routinely collected Halloween candy from our families and, with the help of a local dentist, donated that candy to our troops. The Frankfort Police Department partners with our school to facilitate safety drills and our fifth grade DARE program. We also have a strong partnership with the Frankfort Public Library. A youth librarian

visits Chelsea for book talks twice a year, highlighting new selections that may interest our young readers, as well as library programs that are available to them. The librarian also cofacilitates Lunch Bunch Book Club with building administration and coordinates our Bluestem Bash, which is a celebration of students who read all twenty books on the Association of Illinois School Library Educators' annual list.

Chelsea parents are also part of District projects, such as the annual review of the 157C Parent/Student Handbook and development of our District Strategic Plan. At the building level, parents are strongly encouraged to communicate with faculty and administration with any questions, concerns, or suggestions they might have. This input is not only valuable but necessary to our success.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Our approach in creating a professional culture comes from a place of collaboration and mutual respect. At Chelsea, we value the voices of our teachers and attempt to amplify them by involving our faculty in planning and problem solving.

Our Professional Development Planning Team includes Chelsea teachers, administration, and district instructional coaches. This team meets to share teacher feedback from completed professional development as well as input regarding future needs. The team determines the direction of PD as well as timing and execution of upcoming sessions. Each grade level team participates in four PD sessions per month, and one of these is dedicated to "Grade Level Guided PD." For this session, teams create their own agendas based on the needs of their grade level or department. Instructional coaches and administrators attend these meetings as participants, and teams maintain meeting minutes in a shared drive for all to access. Teachers are also given an opportunity to lead PD, and participants choose which sessions to attend based on their needs and interests.

Our teams are also instrumental in problem solving throughout the school year. A prime example of this is our MTSS process. Every six to eight weeks, instructional teams meet with our interventionists and administrators to collaborate on support for students of concern and to share data regarding the progress of students receiving intervention services. All attendees are encouraged to offer their input and ask clarifying questions. The goal is for each teacher and student to be fully supported by every member of our team.

Problem solving also occurs on an operational level. When our dismissal procedure was not working effectively, administration collaborated with bus supervisors to determine how best to streamline our process. Lunch and recess supervisors worked as a team to establish procedures for hot lunch days and expectations for indoor recess.

During remote learning, two major supports were provided to all Chelsea teachers. The first was additional training. Teachers were trained by our instructional coaches on the use of Microsoft Teams as a meeting platform. They were also given support on how to revise lessons and materials to be more conducive to virtual learning.

The second support was a simple, but effective, one. We provided our teachers with time. Prior to the start of the 2020 school year, we allotted time for teachers to work within their grade level teams or departments to practice using Microsoft Teams and direct their own learning. As questions arose and needs were expressed, administration and instructional coaches worked to meet them. Supports were requested for the modification of lessons, facilitation of virtual small group instruction, and implementation of instructional differentiation.

Even after our students returned to in-person instruction, we continued to provide teachers with time for self-directed learning. Rather than develop detailed agendas for PD sessions or Institute Days, we allowed our teachers to do exactly what they needed to do to ensure the success of their students. This garnered positive feedback from teachers and resulted in great growth from our learners.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership at Chelsea consists of a Principal, Assistant Principal, and Dean of Students. Each member of the administrative team has specific responsibilities, but all members support each other in fulfilling those responsibilities as needed. It is a cohesive team with the shared philosophy of putting kids first. Decisions are made through the lens of how they affect our learners and what will be of maximum benefit to them.

The principal is the instructional leader and sets both the direction and tone for the building. The principal is involved in all aspects of the school and provides support to other members of the team. The assistant principal's primary responsibility is to support instruction by coordinating the administration of all district-wide assessments, supporting MTSS, and acting as the administrative liaison to the Special Education department. The Dean of Students' focus is discipline, safety, and the social-emotional wellbeing of our students.

Chelsea's principal and assistant principal work closely with instructional coaches to plan professional development and analyze achievement data. The team also collaborates with our Director of Curriculum and Instruction and Director of Special Services on a regular basis to ensure that we are meeting all students' needs in alignment with the district's mission and vision.

There is a strongly defined focus on student achievement at Chelsea School. This is evident in our regular analysis of student data. All teachers meet to discuss the results of the FastBridge reading and math assessments, which are administered to students as interval benchmarks three times each year. This data is also used as a decision-making tool to determine whether students require academic intervention. With the help of our Director of Curriculum and Instruction, we organize data from our quarterly ELA Outcome Assessments by standard and discuss where our instruction was most effective that quarter. A similar process is followed with our summative math assessments. Finally, teachers, instructional coaches, Chelsea administration, and our Director of Curriculum and Instruction analyze the annual data we receive from the Illinois Assessment of Readiness. We use this data to plan for future instruction, identifying the standards where we may need refinement, facilitate conversation around instructional best practices and plan professional development for Chelsea teachers.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Chelsea school is a place where all are welcome. Understanding, valuing, and accepting the identities of our students and staff is of the utmost importance, and plays a significant role in our students' success.

Members of the Chelsea SEL team, along with administration, have facilitated professional development for staff focused on identity, privilege, and understanding implicit bias. These sessions encouraged teachers to reflect on their interactions with others and assumptions they may unknowingly make about their students and coworkers. This professional development, and consequent reflection, has sparked ongoing conversations about how perception shapes our learning environment as both students and teachers, and the effect this may have on student achievement. Chelsea teachers understand that students' identity and their lives both in and outside of school frame their concept of how they learn.

Teachers celebrate the unique identities of each one of their students through team building activities and opportunities for students to share their personal experiences with their classroom community. Providing opportunities for students to share their own personal connections to concepts and literature is another way we allow students to relate to one another as classmates.

Literature is a valuable tool beyond just the ability for students to share personal connections with their peers. Chelsea administration has worked closely with our district's Department of Curriculum and Instruction in expanding representation of a diverse community in our school and classroom libraries. This includes both informational text and literature, and the inclusion of both characters and authors of color, as well as subjects and events throughout history. Both as a building and a district, we value the presence of mirrors and windows in the texts that we read with our students.

Recently Chelsea participated in a district curriculum audit focused on equity and diversity. This audit included an evaluation of our instructional materials, assessments, and observations of instruction.

Currently, we are collecting and analyzing data related to disciplinary referrals, student participation in extracurricular activities, and eligibility for special education, 504 plans, and intervention supports. It is our belief that cultural responsiveness is a continuous process of reflection, discussion, planning, and implementation. This data will help us continue to refine the practices that allow us to be responsive to all student needs, while also demonstrating acceptance and affirmation.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The strategy that makes Chelsea School successful is one that colors everything we do. When it comes to instruction of any kind, we make decisions that are standards based and student focused. As we reflect, plan, problem solve, and teach, we are constantly asking ourselves two questions: what are the standards asking our learners to do, and how do we get them there?

The Illinois Learning Standards have been mentioned time and time again throughout our application, and with good reason. Everything we do – all of our instruction – is rooted in those standards. Their importance is communicated to our stakeholders on a regular basis. We explicitly state the focus standard of each lesson for students, using “I can” statements to make the standard student friendly and accessible. Assessment items are tied to standards as well, allowing both parents and students to see where strengths and challenges lie on the student’s learning path.

If each school year is a journey of learning, the standards are our map, directing us to our destination of mastery and understanding. The path one student takes to reach that destination may differ vastly from another. We begin our journey with each student exactly where they are in their development, and utilize standards-based instruction to take them as far as they can go. Every teacher guides their students as they travel multiple roads of varying lengths to reach their destination and meet the expectations of their grade level learning standards.

Regardless of ability, all students are exposed to grade level text and provided instruction based on their grade level standards. This may mean that learning must be scaffolded in order for it to be accessible. Chelsea teachers provide that scaffold, and any other additional accommodations, to ensure that students can access the instruction with an appropriate level of rigor. The goal is growth, in any increment, as it is that growth that will help our students succeed in meeting the standards.

In order to accomplish this level of scaffolded growth and differentiation, our teachers meet regularly to collaborate in both problem solving and instructional planning. Professional development, provided four times per month, is focused on the planning and execution of engaging, differentiated, and relevant instruction focused on grade level standards. Assessments are regularly reviewed with our instructional coaches to ensure that we are measuring exactly what the standard itself is asking our students to do in a manner that achieves a balance between accessibility and rigor.

Our unwavering focus on the Illinois Learning Standards, coupled with our desire to do whatever it takes to support our students in meeting those standards, is the key to our success at Chelsea School.